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METHODOLOGICAL LAGNIAPPE: A WALK IN REPRESENTATIONS OF THE RED STICK FARMERS MARKET

A Thesis

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts

in

The Department of Communication Studies

by
Jesica Speed
B.A., Butler University, 2005
May 2007

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks to many: those whose ears, eyes, hands, pens, garden-hoes, and tent-stakes are written all over these pages. Thanks to Mom, for phone conversations and Laura Ingalls Wilder; Dad, for shop-talk and Dirk Pitt; Alyssa, for great music, fashion, and listening to those paragraphs. Karen Hartman, Joy Banner, and Jenn Erdley, for encouragement, laughs, wine, and reality-checks. Tracy Stephenson Shaffer, for purple ink, time steps, heart-following, and opinions. Loretta Pecchioni, for sarcasm, hugs, encouragement, and basketball. Ruth Bowman, for history, words, and welcoming. Andrew King, for stories, memory, and space. Thanks to Zac Gershberg, Sarah Jackson, Ben Powell, John Lebret, and the rest of the department family for many, many various things… To the Clara household: Melanie Kitchens and Lucas O'Meara, for patience, signs, and for always leaving the light on. Thanks to Paul Sandin, Katie Suher, Danielle Morris, Gina Ventura, and Sarah Crist – you all know why. Thanks to the Red Stick Crew: Glen, Lee, Mr. Buddy, Lionell, Jessie, Beth, Ms. Carol, Derek, Copper, William, and David, specifically, and to all of the vendors and patrons who put up with me, fed me, interviewed *me*, and taught me how to talk like a Louisianan. I am blessed to have been here, to have been with these folks, and to have learned a little bit from "all of y'all."

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS……..…..ii

ABSTRACT……...iv

CHAPTER ONE – MAPPING OUR WALK (IN REPRESENTATION)…….……....…...1

CHAPTER TWO – THEORIZED FOOTSTEPS…….15

CHAPTER THREE – MUSHROOM SOUP AND NEW ETHNOGRAPHY.....33

CHAPTER FOUR – PERFORMATIVE COOKIE CRITICISM……..58

CHAPTER FIVE – DIRT, HISTORY, AND GROWING ETHNOGRAPHY……80

CHAPTER SIX – COMING HOME……...……112

WORKS CITED …..117

VITA……....122

ABSTRACT

In this thesis, I take you on a walk – a walk in the *making* of representations – around the Red Stick Farmers Market in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. This thesis is written at a moment of instability, or crisis. In a "crisis of representation," how do we represent *anything*? Experimenting with various methodologies of writing, representation, dialogic performance, history, and ethnographic inquiry, this thesis provides a walk over various terrains. We begin by building the framework for the walk, then tour three areas of ethnographic expansions and alternatives: new ethnography, performative writing, and historicity.

John VanMaanen calls for an "impressionistic ethnography," which is the telling and re-telling of the "backstage" stories of ethnography. Ask a dancer, and she might tell you that the "backstage" stories are not only about the costumes and the scenery of the ballet; the "backstage" stories are also about the blisters, the politics of who "gets" which role, the lives that dancers, choreographers, and set-designers live outside of the studios and stages, the people who sit in the audience, and many other things. The "backstage" stories of ethnography are also vast.

For these purposes, the chapters of this thesis focus on three of the more "banal" elements of doing ethnography at the Red Stick Farmers Market: mushroom soup, cookies, and dirt. These three elements provide an exploration of writing, making, and "doing" ethnography at this point in time.

CHAPTER ONE – MAPPING OUR WALK (IN REPRESENTATION)

WANDERING; A CHANCE-CHEF

I used to walk around the farmers' market to find ingredients to make something wonderful. If not wonderful, I could certainly hope that whatever I made with those ingredients would provide a little bit of entertainment and experimentation. As a chance-chef with only a few pots, a miniature oven and a stove with three mini-burners, sometimes more creativity than procedure was necessary to make anything beautiful and/or digestible. Even with a few more pots and a bigger oven, the process is no less chance.

The task I request of you is a simple one.

Will you go for a walk with me?

Some of you might be very familiar with the Red Stick Farmers Market; some of you may have never been to Baton Rouge. Did you know that "le bâton rouge" means "red stick?" Every Saturday morning, rain or shine, from 8am to noon, vendors line both sides of Fifth Street in the block between North and Main Streets to form the Red Stick Farmers Market. Here, Louisiana natives sell gourds, wine, squash, peppers, potatoes, onions, pepper jellies, breads, sweet potato pies, teacakes, plants, fresh shrimp, gator meat and more. I spent five months of Saturday mornings at the market. This thesis offers both an ethnography of the communities at the Red Stick Farmers Market in Baton Rouge, Louisiana and an exploration of the doing, performing, and writing of ethnography.

As you will find in this wander through the market, the heart of this thesis lies in its stories. The members of the community at the farmers' market generously shared/swapped their stories with me during five months of fieldwork in the fall of 2005. Attempting to write the stories from the marketplace has proven to be a tricky task. The "tricky" part of this task has

been the negotiation (and problems caused by my unwillingness to negotiate) between two seemingly disparate discourses: academic prose and our co-performed stories/histories at the market. I favor the discourse of the market.

Do not presuppose, however, that market-talk is at all "unscholarly." John VanMaanen writes that "stories, by their ability to condense, exemplify, and evoke a world, are as valid a device for transmitting cultural understandings as any other researcher-produced concoction" (119). Not only can stories be a helpful device for my researcher-aims in doing, creating, and writing about ethnography, they are also enjoyable, more likely read and appreciated by a general audience (VanMaanen 119). Who says that academic writing can't be fun, too? Any trip through the market in which you stop to engage with the vendors (or allow them to engage with you) will prove to be fruitful in respect to produce and/or stories collected.

"Inspired" by John VanMaanen to create something akin to an impressionist painting, I offer this "impressionistic ethnography" – a collection of ethnographic stories splashed and stylized as local, visceral, aural, historical, academic paintings on top of one other. As "they can stand alone and need not masquerade as anything other than stories," impressionist tales grant the teller freedom in language to play (VanMaanen 109). Of course, VanMaanen also asserts that "behind every story is the tacit claim that there is something being said worth saying" (109). Here I offer three collections of "backstage" stories. The first collection (Chapter Three – "Mushroom Soup Scholarship") is most explicitly about the people at the Red Stick Farmers Market and their use of this city space. The second collection of stories treat the doing of ethnography and an ethnographic performance at the market (Chapter Four – "Performative Cookie Criticism"), establishing both the spirit of performance criticism and a framework from which you can better traverse the next chapter. The final collection offers stories about my

writing and doing of ethnography, as well as an exploration of some intersections of ethnography and history (Chapter Five – "Sawdust, Dirt, I am Here"). These collections of stories treat the market, the performance of ethnography at the market (in the form of performance criticism), and the writing of ethnography (in the form of performance genealogy). You will recognize bits and pieces with each repetition of stories, but I think that you will be surprised at their differences, too.[1]

You begin wandering in the market with an empty "basket," whether your particular basket is a camera, mind, field journal, recipe book, bag, backpack, or (in fact) an actual basket. You might have a plan for your market-time, but someone or something will most likely surprise you. You meet a character familiar to someone you once knew in another place, touch a strange new fruit, see a jar of jam made of a fruit that you once gathered up from a childhood backyard to make "stew," hear a story of something seemingly un-market related, receive a new recipe for mushroom soup, answer a strange question posited about something you're wearing, note the sound of the church-bells as they keep the hour (and think about whether or not you will attend a service at some point over the weekend), succumb to the olfactory assault of whirls of cinnamon, filé, and cayenne wafting in the air, or anything else, really.

You leave the market with ingredients to make something wonderful. The process of research, as I understand it, is extraordinarily similar to walking in the market.

Here I blend public discourses (marketplace, aesthetic, academic) with the personal – three collections of stories both similar and very different. The tacit claim behind each of these chapters is in the rhetoric of the methodologies; through the use of these tales, I advocate this

[1] And if you're not surprised at the vast differences in the collections of stories, then… as my Grandpa would say, "I'll buy you a couple of Coney dogs the next time you're in town and we'll talk."

type of evocative, performative, full-of-potential writing about performance ethnography – I advocate for the telling and re-telling of ethnographic stories to paint an ever-changing, always unfinished impressionistic ethnography.

The first time I went to the Red Stick Farmers Market, I was lonely and didn't understand the vocabulary of the market. Simultaneously learning about standpoint theory and lagniappe sometimes caused theory/market overlaps and mispronunciations. You do not have to have the same experience; the next chapter will take you into a friendly (the market is friendly, after all) explanation of the theory behind the methodologies used to create the representations of the market found in this thesis. Chapter Three enables you to make a place for yourself in a community that would otherwise take weeks for you to enter – the adventure will continue from there. Your role in this thesis is the role of ethnographer: participant, observer, wanderer, performer, and writer. We're laying out a map; you just have to be willing to go.

WANDERING, SEEN/SCENE

Before you enter into an ethnographic site, you must know a bit about its immediate origins. The Red Stick Farmers Market was started in 1996 by the Baton Rouge Economic and Agricultural Development Alliance (BREADA) to promote the growth of both small farmers' economic stability and community in downtown Baton Rouge.[2] Vendors from across South Louisiana bring their wares to this street-turned-marketplace on Saturday mornings. Taking up merely a block of 5th Street, this marketplace attracts patrons into an otherwise empty area of downtown Baton Rouge. If measuring success by a steady community of vendors and a hefty

[2]BREADA also runs the Main Street Market, a permanent, indoor, Monday-Saturday market in the first floor of the parking structure on Fifth Street. I spent time in both markets, but the focus of this thesis is the Saturday-only market: the Red Stick Farmers Market.

clientele, the Red Stick Farmers Market has been a very successful endeavor. I, like BREADA, am invested in protecting and serving the small farmers of Louisiana (as well as academic comrades) who participated in and co-created performances of ethnography. This thesis, however, does not share in BREADA's agricultural and economic aims. Rather, this thesis aims to stretch the understanding of producing "ethnography" while *doing* ethnography, employing different methodologies of representation in its creation.

If this thesis is successful, it will prove to be a collection of stories that "opens up a field of historical possibility and contest at the same time that it re-marks the terms of its own production" (Pollock "Making" 26). If successful, this collection of stories will have historical agency, allowing you to enter into its midst without being overcome with the sense that you can "see" the doing of ethnography in the text. "Seeing" the past doing of marketplace ethnography erases the histories unfolding in each particular story, giving readers only quick glimpses of a stagnant, gone-forever, moment. Presenting the market and the doing of ethnography in static and purely visual terms would "disabl[e] [their] agenc[ies] through repetition and appropriation," which would do nothing but to immobilize them in life-stopping sight (Pollock "Making" 7). Rather than tell stories to make you imagine my once-seen (that which I saw and heard at the market), I would rather move you to the immediate telling of the story, and placing you in the context of the *scene* of the story's telling to interact with the people the environment however you desire. To fairly use these stories, I must write them some room to wiggle.

I have always wondered about Narnia. In C.S. Lewis's The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe, the Pevensie children enter the world of Narnia through an old wardrobe and become firmly entrenched in a very real, very dangerous adventure to save both Narnia and themselves. While in Narnia, their existences in England, from whence they came, are very much threatened.

They live lifetimes in Narnia, and re-visit this world throughout their London-bound lives. Upon every return to England, they find that their Narnian adventures have taken no more than a moment in time.

VanMaanen writes of the pen as "camera obscura" (119); let me try to explain what I mean by a jaunt into photography.



Figure 1 - Absent Voice

A photograph is taped to my mirror, an unceremonious display of an unceremonious moment in time. It is morning. I grab my green and orange messenger bag with the old manual camera and set about the city in my flip-flops. I wear green overalls.[3] I live in the Village, and disjointed voices milling on the street eleven stories below keep me company until three or four every morning. The only time of solitude comes just after dawn; everyone has gone to bed, the bar and restaurant workers have finished their shifts, and the day laborers have not yet hit the streets and subways in force. The last task of those in the service industry is to leave the night's garbage bagged on the sidewalks for the early-morning pickup crews. My morning walks smell sweet of stale sweat and garbage.

"Come on!" a voice yells from the shadowed inside of this café. "Sit down! I'll be with ya' in a second!"

I am sure that you have a photograph album with snap-shots of adventures, whether those adventures were exotic or of the everyday sort. All we can see in the photo is the snap-shot flash

[3]I think that I am quite possibly the only person in New York City voluntarily wearing overalls on this summer day. "What shall I wear today?" she wonders, glancing through her closet. "Overalls; green overalls."

image of a moment; we can't *see* any of the work (or spontaneity) that went into the decision (or non-decision) to get *this* particular shot at this particular moment in time. The lived history surrounding that moment is vast, but cannot be told from the image itself, unless you know something of the context in which the photo was snapped. What is in the history of a moment?

What would happen if while we sit here, flipping through an album of your images (as you tell me the stories surrounding them, since I've asked and am an attentive listener), we tumbled into the world of a photograph? Suddenly, rather than trying to see your particular details, I would have a moment to live the moment myself. Now, rather than imagine your once-seen, I *live* my now-scene.

As a collector and taker/maker of images, a photographer presents her images in an attempt to communicate her sights and experiences with another. She must present the image in a manner that allows the image to not *merely* be a split-second "freezing" in print (sight) of a myriad of actions, forces, cultural practices, insights, influences, motives, etc. packed into a compartmentalized, easily romanticized/fetishized, easy-to-manage, piece of paper, but rather as something else, something more.

A photographer must give the image agency to shape and mold the future viewer's experiences, as if the photograph itself could open a place into which *you* could enter and live a life in that moment. What would happen if you could walk through the wardrobe into Narnia? C.S. Lewis's evocative language allows us to wander through the woods with Lucy, Edmund, Susan, and Peter Pevensie. Would an uncontextualized illustration of Narnia allow us the same freedom to change and to be changed by these adventures? If a photograph *could* open a world into which you could enter, you could have a particular, unique experience as you engaged personally within the scene of the photographed moment. Your experience would be different

from the next reader's, and different from all other future readers' experiences. Those once merely represented in frozen (visual) photography would begin to move across the page, from the ink to the flesh, actively shaping the "new" history made in the course of their interactions with you. This is historical agency.

To give the subjects of this ethnography (if "subject" could even begin to appropriate the individuals who shaped these marketplace performances) agency in creating/shaping the history of future readers, I must write... somehow. Where to begin?

In Della Pollock's discussion of the hyper-visual representations at an Operation Rescue protest, a woman/subject eludes mythification of the multiple gazes seeing/seizing her by walking forward. This woman's movement "in some small way [exceeds] sight and [generates] something more: more agency, more pleasure and possibility, more conflict and contention, and, above all, more room for the embodied subject to enlist the resources of historicity on her own behalf" ("Making" 8)[4]. While certainly not guaranteed to be a success, this collection of ethnographic stories that document the doing of ethnography at the Red Stick Farmers Market strives to *walk forward* through this textual space. Norman Denzin calls this "mov[ing] forward by moving inward" (Interpretive 26); "moving inward," in this sense, means taking a textual turn that calls the self into question while creating space for the voices of multiple centers and trajectories to be heard (40). As a chance-conversationalist, I wander around the produce and academic markets, gathering up bits and pieces of conversations, some given with intention, others given by (my good) fortune. Sometimes more creativity than propriety is necessary to

[4] "Historicity" is historical authenticity or veracity, whereas "history" is the account (the story) about "what happened." By walking forward all of the cameras at the "rescue," this woman takes the authenticity of *her* account into her own hands.

make anything beautiful and/or digestible. We must go on a walk around this place. Before we get started, let me tell you a story.

WANDERING, BETWEEN FICTION AND HISTORY

The only school-bus fight that I ever almost started involved a friend, an American Girl doll, and Laura Ingalls Wilder. Kaleena saw me reading one of the many Laura Ingalls Wilder books that inspired my often-socially-scoffed decisions to wear petticoats underneath paisley jumpers and to carry lunches to school in a basket (as opposed to a lunchbox). She told me about an American Girl book that she had at home.[5]

Kaleena was in the other 4th grade class, but we had all already learned about the differences between fiction and nonfiction. Being the pioneer smart-aleck that I was (and still am), I probably made a snarky reply of, "That book is fiction. This is nonfiction." (Arms crossed across the chest, face turned sideways with nose in the air.) Of course, this was probably also whispered, as we were not supposed to speak loudly, lest Mr. Rogers (the bus driver, whose first name may or may not have been Fred), give me a write-up or speak to my mother. Kaleena didn't understand why her book was fiction and mine was non-fiction; they were both about

[5] At the time, as I believe they still are, the in-vogue historical dolls for young girls were American Girls, dolls from different eras in American history who all had different historically-based stories about their lives. Molly's dad was a soldier in World War II; Kirsten was an immigrant-girl who settled in Minnesota; Felicity was a spunky red-head from the colonial period; and Addy, (new, at the time), was a brave slave-girl who escaped from a plantation. I saved my allowance for a year and half in order to buy Addy. Apparently there are now new, "contemporary" American Girls in addition to the "historical" ones. Every time I take the South Shore Railroad on a trek between my parents' new northern Indiana home and Chicago, any number of small girls and their grandmothers load a bag from American Girl Place (the American Girl Mecca in downtown Chicago) into the overhead rack. Each of the dolls has books about her and her adventures – these books, as I understand, are historical fiction. If you are interested in these dolls, visit the American Girl Store Website (http://www.store.americangirl.com).

pioneer girls. (Her book must have been a Kirsten book). I explained that her book was about a doll and dolls cannot write books; hers was "made up." "Made up" meant make-believe and childish; I am sure that 4th grade Jesica made this clear to her then-friend. My book about Laura Ingalls was *written by* Laura Ingalls Wilder. My book, therefore, was true. There was no way that a book about Laura Ingalls *by* Laura Ingalls Wilder could not be real. If her stories were not real, Laura Ingalls Wilder would be lying. My knowledge of (better described as an "obsession with") pioneer life was not based on the fictitious accounts of a liar. Kaleena didn't appreciate my assertion/explanation, and started making fun of me.

Mr. Rogers pulled up to my house and I stomped off the bus.

I do not remember when, but at some later point I looked at the back of one of those beloved Wilder books, and it clearly stated, "FICTION."

Doing ethnography with the people of the Red Stick Farmers Market in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, allowed me to simultaneously be Rachael Ray and Thomas Edison (my favorite popular chef and inventor, respectively) while going on an adventure that young Laura Ingalls would have enjoyed, I believe. Now, writing about the ethnographic adventures encountered both at the marketplace and beyond its one-block, four-hour spatial/temporal framework, the challenge lies in crafting something in the liminal space between fiction and non-fiction, honest words that do not claim to be necessarily, undeniably *real*. Of anthropological writings, Clifford Geertz writes that they are "fictions; fictions, in the sense that they are 'something made,' 'something fashioned,' […] not that they are false, unfactual, or merely 'as if' thought experiments" ("Thick" 15). There is contested space between the lands of fiction and non-fiction. Despite the label of "fiction," I do not believe that Laura Ingalls Wilder's stories are

truly "made up;" she *lived* in the time period about which she wrote; she embodied her stories/histories.

Neither human thought[6] nor memories[7] are linear. Rather, they chase trajectories and make connections randomly associated with other sensory experiences and embodiments. Norman Denzin utilizes Deluze and Guattari to label the "new language" that represents these trajectories (and therefore resists the repressive structures of "history, economy, religion, etc…") "rhizomatic" (Interpretive 26). Plucking various trajectories and shucking the excessive forces upon them (in the form of singular stories) quite possibly renders a story fictitious, even if what the author claims to have happened actually happened. David Lowenthal tells us that writers of both history and fiction delude themselves and their audiences when they claim that their writings are impermeable by the other (229).

> "The history-fiction difference is more one of purpose than of content. Whatever rhetorical devices the historian deploys, […] he dares not fabricate a character, ascribe unknown traits or incidents to real ones, or ignore incompatible traits so as

[6] Sarah Pink asserts that the "linear narrative of printed text is not conversant with how we produce or use ethnographic knowledge" (157). Representations of ethnography/history are truer when presented non-linearly. To achieve this non-linearity, Pink advocates the use of hypermedia, which allows for images/texts to be connected differently than linear texts, "the way photographs are situated in relation to other texts or images determines the ethnographic meanings they represent" (Pink 161). Hypermedia allows for different/multiple connections/situatings which create greater difference in ethnographic knowledge, highlighting the "arbitrary nature" of meanings (162).

[7] David Lowenthal writes of the interconnectedness of memory, history, and relics, and that they "offer routes to the past best traversed in combination" (249). One path (memory, history, or relics) inevitably leads us to another, as we wind in a convoluted path of needs for substantiation, recognition of social memory, conflation of social/personal memories, etc (249).

> to make his tale more intelligible, because he could neither hide such inventions […] nor justify them when found out" (Lowenthal 229).

Since the stories/histories of Laura Ingalls/Laura Ingalls Wilder are presented in linear, moral adventure nuggets to be consumed by youngsters (and later adapted into a television show), maybe this title works. "Fiction" is certainly a "safer" title than non-fiction/history; "fiction" grants Wilder the liberty to embellish, flourish, embezzle, to tweak and to enhance her story/history without opening it to be challenged by pursuers of an archival record. "Historical fiction," though, acknowledges a foundation in lived history not overtly recognized by the title of "fiction," even though all written texts are written in a moment (or a long and drawn-out collection of moments) lived by an author. Stubborn me, present and wanting to wear petticoats and to play outside rather than to wear sweaters and play in the library, wants to re-label Wilder's work "historical fiction," to spite Kaleena and her American Girl and to justify my own historical/storied knowledge of this past.

Being the ethnographer in the field is done – the stories "from the field" are inevitably marked as historical. In order to make a point of "cultural, social, or personal significance," (Langellier "Perspectives" 260) I must tie the telling of this story/history to a current conversation without becoming nostalgic. Shannon Jackson writes of nostalgia as an ideological narrative that tells a story of something that never happened (280). Because of the temporal difference between the *then* for which I yearn and the now in which I yearn, nostalgia places a gloss on a history (280). As I look over the objects of this ethnographic inquiry: photographs, pink field-notebooks, a missing receipt for mushroom soup, these objects of the past "encourage the desire to possess lost performances, the ephemeral, affective, and embodied aspects of the past that leave only partial traces of having been" (Jackson 280). A nostalgic desire for the past

is both unreachable and idealized. Never will I be able to "go back to" the farmers' market in the sense of "being an ethnographer." Giving you the illusion that you can go there through my writing is dishonest, and more fictitious than either Little House in the Big Woods or any American Girl book. I write not to presentify a past/passed doing of ethnography, but rather to make the history of that ethnographic experience *move* forward into the future.

Hans Gumbrecht introduces the term "presentification" (123) to write about the underlying desire of historically specific cultures to reach beyond the borders of lived experience into something "before birth." A "presentification" of the farmers' market would allow you to meander through these words as if they made a static place (such as a sterile museum) in which you could "see" and "touch" the past doings and experiences of Saturday mornings at the market in the fall of 2005. This is the illusion against which Gumbrecht warns; I do not want to give you the illusion that you can, through the words on these pages, find yourself with the "possibility of 'speaking' to the dead or 'touching' the objects of [these past] worlds" (123), as that gives you an incorrect and static understanding of what I hope to happen here.

On the other hand, "making history go," or "mak[ing] history exceed itself, to become itself even as it rages past the present into the future," depends upon and is drawn from performance (Pollock "Making" 2). Through performance, then, I attempt to make this history go. Pollock also assures me that I can do this, using the essays that she has collected in the "name of exceptional space" as exemplars ("Making" 38). These essays, written "in the space between domination and disappearance," embrace the historical body in all of its faults and wonder, creating a framework in which the subjects of history can "recover and write their own histories" (19). These essays push language, in all forms, to "unmake and to renew itself, to exceed itself" (20). By doing this, these aforementioned essays are performative; "they bring the

trickster in history onto the stage of history –and challenge us to entertain him for a while" (20). They make history do something; they make the subjects of history active (again).

That is what we are going to do. We're going to go on a walk, a walk in the market. Using performance in writing to write about performance, I attempt to open a space in writing to allow the subjects of this history of performance and ethnography to "go." I attempt to open a space in writing to allow the subjects of this performance of ethnography and history to take the stage while marking my position in the piecing-together of all of this text. I challenge you to entertain them for a while. We are very close to leaving for our walk in the market. Before *we* go, we have to visit some neighbors in my field.

CHAPTER TWO – THEORIZED FOOTSTEPS

WANDERINGS, THEORIZED

D. Soyini Madison writes: "Performance helps me live a truth while theory helps me name it" ("Performing" 109). We cannot move into the doing of this ethnography without first establishing a vocabulary, as this writing is informed by a set of theories that innately shapes how I word-smith.

> "Breaking the parts open, piece by piece, theory demands that you take notice – pay closer attention […] Things are more complicated, because things *are more*. Whether you agree with theory or not (even if you argue with it) it makes you feel and see differently. You speak differently and more. The recognition is not unrecognized" (Madison "Performing" 109).

The theory I have learned helps to sort through the past experiences at the farmers' market, just as the time spent at the market and with the people of he market mediates my understanding of this jargon.[8] When I come to write, though, the language of the marketplace begins to win the battle of word-choice and image-making. Norman Denzin advocates a new language, understood as an "evocative act of creation," that allows "ordinary people" to "speak out and to articulate the interpretive theories that they use to make sense of their lives" (Interpretive 25-26). "This language will always be interactive as it moves back and forth between lived experience and the cultural texts that shape and write that experience" (26). The challenges in the creation of this thesis, therefore, lie in the use of language that informs and is informed by the lived experiences of doing ethnography in the market as well as the cultural

[8]Shannon Jackson writes of the inextricable link between the "knowledges" built by the present, the past, and the interaction between them: "whereas the selective filter of the present represents the past, the (no less selective) filter of the past mediates my understanding of the present" (274).

texts of the academy and South Louisiana, acknowledging the inescapable interrelatedness of these networks of influences. As begun in the previous chapter, the discourses of the market, ethnography, history, academy, lived experience, cultural knowledge, and adventure will combine on this walk through representations of the Red Stick Farmers Market.

"The walking of passers-by offers a series of turns (*tours*) and detours that can be compared to 'turns of phrase' or 'stylistic figures.' There is a rhetoric of walking" (de Certeau 100, emphasis in original). Walking is a metonymic act; walking "selects and fragments the space transversed; it skips over links and whole parts that it omits. From this point of view, every walk constantly leaps, or skips like a child, hopping on one foot" (de Certeau 101). Walking, and the patterns that we weave while writing/walking, are riddled with holes. Regardless of the leaps, skips and hops of this child-like text, maintenance of balance is integral to its success.[9] As a chance-scholar with only a few theories, a (not so) trusty laptop and but little patience for abstractions, sometimes more creativity than procedure is necessary to make anything beautiful and/or digestible. I asked you to come on a walk; I think that we're ready to go. We're going to walk around the market(s): this is ethnography, after all. The space waits for its introduction to you, as do the "informants" who co-produce/d this performance of ethnography with me.[10]

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[9] As I began to type a footnote about my unfortunate clumsiness and how I hoped that I could prove more able-footed in prose, I spilled a mug of hot tea all over myself. Back at the computer after having cleaned up, I can only chuckle and share this with you. Do I write myself into my own world?

[10] Madison believes that ethnography should be co-performed with the "studied" people – I agree with her (Critical 168). In the making and doing of ethnography, two communities shaped my experiences; the community of the persons at the farmers' market, and the community of the persons whose words I read, whose classes I took, and whose editing pared/shaped my own words. Both communities co-produce/d this doing of ethnography, and therefore, the challenge lies in representing *both* without doing harm to either.

WANDERING, BEGUN

We walk down the street; other than the few people headed in the same direction, the city is almost abandoned this morning. The ease of downtown parking on weekend mornings almost makes up for the weekday driving in Baton Rouge. We walk down (up, actually – we're headed North) 5th Street, closing in on Main Street. Either Copper or Derek (the Director and Operations Director of the market, respectively) has placed the orange-and-white striped barriers across the street – a formal reminder of the Saturday morning re-use of this city space. People mill in front of us, making market-loops where the one-way traffic stops/flows during the week.

> "The moving about that the city multiplies and concentrates makes the city itself an immense social experience of lacking a place – an experience, that is, to be sure, broken up into countless tiny deportations (displacements and walks), compensated for by the relationships and intersections of these exoduses that intertwine and create an urban fabric, and placed under the sign of what ought to be, ultimately, the place but is only a name, the City" (de Certeau 104).

You and I do not have a place in this space; we wander. Only our interactions cause us to intersect with and relate with one another, transforming us from millers in this market-city-space into members of a community of vendors who have a *place* here. Michel de Certeau differentiates between place and space; "place" refers to "an instantaneous configuration of positions […] an indication of stability;" "space" exists when one "takes into consideration vectors of direction, velocities, and time variables" (117). "Space is a practiced place;" space is place that has been personified, where many voices are able to be heard (117). The Red Stick Farmers Market exists as a space, where people can participate, move, arrive, leave and *be*. Until a particular level of relationship has been established, however, the place-ness of the market is ephemeral, unstable. "Stories," writes de Certeau, "carry out a labor that constantly

transforms places into spaces or spaces into places," as specific times and items are marked (places) and action takes place over a period (spaces). The telling of stories, the exchange of one tale for another, aids in the changing of space to place in conversation. Once integrated into the community (through the telling of stories), the market-goer can recognize his or her own place within the market community, "thus exclud[ing] the possibility of two things being in the same location" (117).[11] Until that happens, however, the ringing of voices and church-bells and the wafting smells stirred by the human bodies walking around on Fifth Street transform an otherwise generic place into a neat space for Saturday morning adventures. Those at the market can call this space their own… at least on Saturday mornings.

As we make our way around the market, you soak up for the first time the bright summer green of the overhangs; they starkly contrast with the creamy-colored cement of the building on the right. Those overhangs shade the sidewalk on the east; the west side does not have a sidewalk. Vendors are set up along the sidewalk and in the parallel-parking spots on the west side of the street, but today those vendors have their trucks pulled in perpendicularly to those spots; their trucks are perpendicular to the Mississippi – she runs only a few blocks west. The sun is rising up over the top of the building on the east/right side – that building is a parking garage, but it looks much nicer than you might imagine (if you've never been to the market before). Inside the parking garage there are layers and layers of empty spots that will fill again

[11] There is a stability in place, contradicted by space's general sense of freedom. For the market-goer and the ethnographer, there are certain implications of space and place. Place and space will be addressed more or less throughout this thesis, and re-addressed as far as community and communicative implications in the final chapter. I challenge you, however, to think about what it means to find yourself (albeit partially on your own terms) "placed" into a position in a community (as an ethnographer and/or writer/scholar); how do you withdraw? Do you withdraw? Can you ethically leave your place in the community and still share in the same space?

come Monday. Wine, crabs, Papa Tom's cornmeal, and eggplants – I think that it is… I think that it is… I think that it is Clementine season, but it's not. We call those little oranges "Clementines" at home, but that is not what they're called here. Remind me to ask what they are, ok? Mr. Buddy is busy today; let's go back and visit him later. Do you want a cup of coffee? Let's place ourselves for a little while; let's feel for a little while; let's absorb what this space has to offer us. Get your field/class notebook; this *is* ethnography, after all.

BABY STEPS INTO THE MARKET

Watch the painter.[12] His easel stands tall and erect; it mirrors the steeple from the cathedral and the government buildings around this downtown space. He paints scenes from the marketplace; every week he paints something new. Every week he splashes and styles a new story of the market across his canvas; he paints each new story on top of the previous week's painting.[13] Sometimes you can see little patches of previous weeks' stories through spaces that he has not painted over.[14] He does not sell his paintings.[15] He always has a crowd watching him

[12] Asking for ethnographers to write/paint "impressionistic" ethnographies, John VanMaanen is the painter.

[13] VanMaanen draws connections between a style of writing ethnography and the impressionist painters' *breaking* of traditional painting styles. He writes: "Materials are metaphors, phrasing, imagery, and most critically, the expansive recall of fieldwork experience. When these are put together and told in the first person as a tightly focused, vibrant, exact, but necessarily imaginative rendering of fieldwork, an impressionistic tale of the field results" (VanMaanen 102).

[14] The beauty in this kind of work is the openness; the beauty of this kind of work is its unfinished seams. There is no static way of seeing or representing the culture that we study; VanMaanen presents this in the form of a "phenomenological war whoop," where he declares "that there is no way of seeing, hearing, or representing the world of others that is absolutely, universally valid or correct. Ethnographies of any sort are always subject to multiple interpretations" (VanMaanen 35). Stories that are told again and again leave holes, previous theories seep

make scenes; the stories that he tells bring life to the color, just as the color brings life to his stories.[16] I want to paint like him. Can these words let last week's experiences show through as colors bring life to *my* stories?[17]

Smile for the camera; she's at it again.[18] She comes every week to the market with her camera and takes photographs. She doesn't sell her photos, either, but she *will* give you the ones she's taken with you if you ask. Don't worry, she will also ask you before she snaps your photo.[19] She takes photos of everything; she takes photos of the proudly displayed eggplants and

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through, new connections are made. The "impressionism" of impressionistic painting leaves fuzzy (literally) room for multiple interpretations, while the artist still paints his version of "reality."

[15] Impressionist tales do not often find their way into print, but "they are certainly familiar among fieldworkers at the podium, hanging around airports with cronies, in the classroom, at the local saloon, holding forth at a party, or loafing on the beach drinking wine from screw-top bottles with friends" (108).

[16] "The idea is to draw an audience into an unfamiliar story world and allow it, as far as possible, to see, hear, and feel as the fieldworker saw, heard, and felt, […] to imaginatively place the audience in the fieldwork situation" (VanMaanen 103). Largely evocative/colorful language, VanMaanen asserts, is the way to do this (103).

[17] "They [impressionist tales] draw attention not only to the culture of study but also to the way of fieldworker's location and experience in the field help [her] produce a text to interpret"… telling stories indicates that I have some degree of "interpretive authority" over the world of the farmers' market. Similar to VanMaanen and a particular fieldwork story of his research with policemen (109-115), I can interpret my stories in a number of ways. We (VanMaanen and I) assure ourselves that you can (interpret them) too (118). These stories, however, are something of "paradigmatic scene[s]" upon which "my understanding can be put to test by its representation" (VanMaanen 118).

[18] Sarah Pink's version of ethnography is visual; she is the photographer.

[19] In her Visual Ethnography, Pink calls for a reflexive approach to photographic ethnography, meaning that "the photographer [who is also the ethnographer] is aware of the theories that inform her photographs, the relationships that she has with her subjects, and the theories that inform the subjects' approaches to photography" (54).

jugs of milk while she chats with the people who brought them to the market; she knows the people at the market very well.[20] She let me take a few shots when we chatted not too long ago. Sometimes she very carefully works with us to stage a shot, sometimes she doesn't, but she's never made me feel uncomfortable.[21] Since she's become a member of this Saturday morning community, sometimes it is hard to tell whether she takes the photos for herself or for whatever artistic purpose she pursues.

Dr. Cheese likes to talk to everyone![22] That's what he calls himself: "Dr. Cheese." Every once in a while he arrives at the farmers' market and sells cheese with his wife – I think that he might be a medical doctor of some sort – I can't say I know anything about him other than cheeses that he sells and the fact that he obviously likes talking to people![23] The man with

[20] To present photographs reflexively as ethnographic photographer, I must take into account a consciousness of how I play/played my role as ethnographer in this particular cultural setting, a consideration of how my choices are related to the cultures I represent in both the Red Stick Farmers Market and in the academy, as well as an awareness of the aforementioned theories of representation (Pink 57).

[21] In the previous chapter, I used an extended example of a photograph/snap-shot to illustrate what I meant by "historical agency." Pink firmly advocates sharing agency in photographic ethnography by focusing on collaboration and "creating something together" (44). Rather than extracting data (and then "giving back" to "make up" for the extraction), Pink's encourages a "model both researcher and informant invest in, and are rewarded by, the project" (44).

[22] H.L. Goodall is Dr. Cheese. Dr. Cheese actually *does* exist at the Red Stick Farmers Market, but I only very briefly met him. Something about Goodall's conversational, witty, very-grounded style of writing makes this characterization apt. Goodall calls for "new ethnography," which is based in a "writer's ability to hold an interesting *conversation* with readers" (14, emphasis his).

[23] Goodall writes about career advancement as an ethical threat to ethnographic enquiry, "appropriating of others' cultures, performances, life histories, and so on" for lines on a vitae, kudos on a thesis, or to in some way, shape, or form actively *use* the people of the culture that you study (while giving nothing in return) (110).

the video camera over there is recording for a local television show; he comes here frequently to gather "public opinion" about "controversial" issues. Last week he nabbed me when I walked by; he wanted to know my opinion on the state of education in Louisiana. I said a little something, and Dr. Cheese stepped in and answered the question with enthusiasm. He had overheard our conversation… with a smirk, he grinned and said, "My wife and I have nine kids. We don't believe in sending them to school. I home school them, my wife works." I wish you could have seen the camera-man's face! Dr. Cheese started laughing and pitched his cheese stand to the poor (I thought) journalist.[24] They both started laughing; this was a hoax to make *me* believe that Dr. Cheese had duped someone other than me![25]

There is a knife-sharpener over there; the science of his sharpening and his tools look very intimidating.[26] He is not quite as stand-offish as he might seem at first, and knows *a lot*

[24] When writing about fieldnotes, Goodall warns that "nothing we can know about a culture or about ourselves is free from *interpretation"* (87, emphasis his). As ethnographers, we collect facts and figures about a culture, but "facts are *personal* interpretations. Examined reflexively, they show us not only *how* we see the world, but also *why we interpret it* as we do" (95, emphases his).

[25] As an organizational scholar, Goodall's emphasis on conversation is not surprising. In new ethnography, the goals shift from goals associated with modern speechmaking to those more aligned with interpersonal communication. "Writing based on interpersonal relationship gains authenticity from the quality of personal experiences, the richness and depth of individual voices, and a balance between engagements with others and self-reflexive considerations of those engagements" (14). I can't imagine that Goodall would purposefully dupe readers or ethnographic subjects, as he emphasizes ethical conventions and that "authors are accountable for what they have written" (170). I do believe, however, that he would certainly be interested in maintaining a certain level of literary suspense or jest.

[26] The knife-sharpener is Norman Denzin. There is a knife sharpener at the Red Stick Farmers Market, and for a long time I was intimidated to go near him because of the appearance of his machines and tools, just as I was

about the history of the market *and* about sharpening knives![27] He can sharpen anything with a good blade, but without a decent blade, his job is futile – the knife and the sharpener must work together to make anything worthwhile (and useful). Does he sharpen knives or do the knives sharpen him?[28]

The lady over there, the one with the hat and curls, wearing wool socks and hiking boots – she's a volunteer.[29] She used to buy her vegetables here and started volunteering at the coffee table for BREADA; she returns, week after week.[30] She helps all of the vendors set up their

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immediately by the vast array of unfamiliar references in Denzin's Interpretive Ethnography. Like the kind knife-sharpener, however, Denzin provides guidance through and history of the movements of ethnography.

[27] Denzin tracks through six "moments" in ethnographic research. For our purposes here, his comments on ethnographic poetics are most helpful. He asserts that experimental (ethnographic) writing must both hold its weight against both critics of science and literature and that its use of self-reference must *do more* than tell "realist, emotional stories about self-renewal, crisis, and catharsis" (200). These types of works should both cause social criticism and action, spurring the reader to *move* forward to *do* something in the world.

[28] "The reader and writer of the ethnographic, or cultural, text are coproducers of the very text that is being written and read […] How do writers (and readers) speak of the other while being implicated in the very representations (and interpretations) that bring the other into existence?" (Interpretive 240).

[29] The volunteer is D. Soyini Madison; her critical ethnography demands the ethical treatment of all in the ethnographic process. This critical view of ethnography "understands that the Other is always already a subject in their own right, and it is the ethnographer who must cross the boundaries into the territories of Otherness in order to engage with the Other in their terms" (Critical 97).

[30] If people "simultaneously recognize, substantiate, and (re)locate ourselves as well as Others through performance," (150) then it is necessary to talk about ethnographic experiences as performances that are repetitive acts of becoming (154).

tables and tears them down; she has learned each vendor's routine from him/her,[31] but I don't think that she only comes here to help them out. I think that she just likes the market, too.[32] The market would still continue without her, of course, but her poise and demeanor add a wonderful quality to this place.[33] The tasks that she performs are varied – some days she's helping serve samples of someone's sausage, some days she's bouncing a patron's baby, some days she's toting carafes of coffee between the BREADA table and the kitchen inside.[34] If you are ever wondering how to help or how to get involved and give back to the market, she will certainly

[31] The critical ethnographer is aware of power and status differences in the field, and aware of the privilege that the position of ethnographer brings (32). That power comes from both studying "those whose status is unjustly subordinated" and "the power to tell their story and to have the last word on how they will be represented" (33).

[32] In sharing ethnographic experiences, performative writing is an option that is both relational and full of *care* for an audience (192). "Performative writing emphasizes the relational dynamic between writer and reader in a spirit of caring about the dialogic and communicative quality of the connection. This does not mean that the performative writer must repress his or her unique voice or soul to appease the reader. Nor does it mean that the performative writer *only* writes *for* the reader, of that every word or idea is focused on what the reader might think, but we do not focus on our own individuality, either" (193).

[33] Madison writes of "coperformance" as dialogic performance. As dialogic performance, coperformance "means you not only do what your subjects do, but you are intellectually and relationally invested in their symbol-making practices as you experience with them a range of yearnings and desires" (Critical 168).

[34] In critical ethnography, there must be a degree of etiquette – a degree of decorum upheld – and a sense of performing multiple tasks with grace. Of the ethnographic interview, Madison writes: "Interviewing is a dynamic process fundamental to ethnography. It is part technique, part ethics, part theory, part method, part intuition, part collaboration, and part openness to deep vulnerability" (Critical 35).

help you come up with an idea, whether it is volunteering at the coffee table or something else completely.[35] I think that she helps out during the week, too. Remind me to ask.

Did you see the flowers on the sidewalk this morning? She comes every once in a while, the lady who sells the flowers. They are from her garden; her table at home always has the first pick of what she grows. She sometimes comes to sell bunches of flowers at the market, but she is always working in her garden. She might ask you about your intentions with the flowers when you buy them, and she will watch intently as you select which ones that you want. Occasionally she will make a suggestion if your selecting abilities show especially poor taste (or if you are harming the flowers as you rummage through her buckets), but she will normally allow you to arrange your flowers however you'd like.[36]

WANDERING, TOGETHER

These embodied "informants" of my/our ethnography are "fictitious," but what they have written (and what I have written about them in the footnotes) is documented and can be verified against historical/academic record.[37] Maybe we do have some room to play with literary

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[35] "As critical ethnographers, we are compelled to act morally; in other words, we feel the responsibility to make *a difference in the world* – to contribute to the quality of life and to the enlivening possibilities of those who we study" (Critical 83).

[36] The flower-lady is an undeniably necessary characterization of my professor of Performance Ethnography at Louisiana State University, Tracy Stephenson Shaffer. She intently watched as my ethnographic project for her class (Chapter Three) developed into a (too large!) bouquet of assorted words. She laboriously guided some of the choices, helping to arrange a not-to-bad looking (for a first shot) arrangement for my (and others') desk(s).

[37] I borrow this idea from D. Soyini Madison. In her article "Performing Theory/Embodied Writing," she performs scenes (in text) with four theorists. While these "characters" who you just met might be creations of my imagination, they were certainly present in spirit in the doing, performing, and writing of ethnography of the Red Stick Farmers Market. So while the painter, volunteer, photographer and flower-lady aren't "live" contributers to

conventions. These participants inform the stories that I choose to tell and the manner in which I choose to share them with you. These participants shape the voices exercised and heard in this (hopefully) polyvocal space. We have many voices – yours, theirs, those of the people from the market (whom you have yet to meet), and mine. None must be privileged for the entirety. How can we co-perform ethnography?

How do I bring you into the market, into the sensual, bodily experience of the Sassafras tickling your nose as it hitchhikes on the whimsy of the almost-stagnant air? How do I bring to your tongue the taste of dough and cinnamon dissolving as they mix with black coffee from a Styrofoam CC's cup[38], closer to the size of a shot glass than to a decent cup of coffee? How can you become the body of a young woman weaving, in the constantly-contradicting manner that only belongs to someone still growing into her own presence, through other bodies of Southern strangers? She brushes sweat-sticky shoulders with other market-goers, presumably market-goers there for produce and Saturday morning chit-chat. She does not know anyone else there.

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the Red Stick Farmers Market, (Dr. Cheese and the knife sharpener *do* exist, but certainly not as characterized here), they certainly had a hand in shaping the ethnographic practices performed in the market, in the classroom, and on these pages. While I recognize that the archive of "things written about" ethnography is vast (as is the archive of ethnographies), these *particular* writers carried the burden of following me around the market and sitting in my office and apartment, commenting about and guiding my ethnographic practice and prose. Without them, there would be no written ethnography. Other people who contributed to the making (and talking about) of ethnography will rise throughout this thesis.

[38] CC's, or Community Coffee, is a Louisiana family-owned chain of coffee cafés, beans, carafes, etc. Every Saturday morning at the Red Stick Farmers' Market, a small table, manned (or womanned) by a volunteer or two, is home to two tall brown carafes of coffee. Whether or not the coffee is actually CC's is questionable, but since the little red cups have "Community Coffee" printed across the side, we at least have the façade of something "local" and organic.

Can you become her? How do I give you the agency to be that young woman, wondering what on earth she thinks she is doing? Her contacts grate against the tired insides of her eyelids as she blinks back the need to call someone who loves her. How do you become her, that young woman, sitting on the tailgate of the pickup truck of the grandpa-man who sells the mushrooms? You listen to his stories and imagine your own; all the while you word-smith in your mind. How can I write *you* into this ethnography that has nothing (and everything)[39] to do with you?

WANDERINGS, PRESENT-ED

"The final rule: No text can do everything at once. The perfect ethnography cannot be written" (Denzin Interpretive 287).

I certainly do not write to attempt to capture the "whole" doing of ethnography at the market, nor do I write with the aim to create a cohesive and always sense-making re-presentation of the market.[40] These aims allude to the desire to create a master narrative,[41] which is not my intent. Kristin Langellier's discussions of personal narrative offer to me a way to avoid this master narrative. "Personal narrative," she writes, "situates us not only among marginalized and muter experiences but also among the mundane communication practices of ordinary people" ("Performance" 126). The performance of a personal narrative is a performative that has the potential to be both emergent and reflexive; the performance of a personal narrative has the

[39] Jacques Derrida might say that the mere fact that I write indicates that I write to *you* in your absence, assuming my future absence (1172).

[40] Michel Foucault, using Nietzsche, would argue that anything that attempted to produce a holistic and stable representation/history of the market would, in fact, be a parody of the market. A complete representation is *never* possible; stability is *never* absolutely guaranteed - anything claiming as much is, in fact, parodic and farcical (161).

[41] See Foucault, Levine (1-13), and Roach ("Introduction") for arguments against the creation of a master historical narrative.

potential to rearrange itself (as story) but also the situations but also the social situations in which it takes place (132). The personal narrative, (when tying successfully the past with the present conversation, as she reminds us in "Perspectives" 260), then, has the power to re-arrange, if even momentarily, the "master narrative" under which it is spoken.

> The focus on performance emphasizes the way telling intervenes between the experience and the story, the pragmatics of putting narrative into practice, and the functions of narrative for participants […] Personal narrative performance is situated not just within locally occasioned talk – a conversation, public speech, ritual – but also within the forces of discourse that shape language, identity, and experience. ("Performance" 127)

The process of translating lived experience into a story (or personal narrative) is best studied, according to Langellier, through performance. The telling of personal narratives is not a "safe" practice; does the storyteller construct her stories, or do her stories construct her? (138). The guidance of writers of both history and ethnography (such as Madison, Pollock, and Jackson) have called for this embeddedness of performance into the practices of history and ethnography, heightening reflexivity in the writing of ethnography. On these pages, I am the only person who can perform her personal narratives in text, although I will (at times) attempt to embody quips of personal narratives from those who shaped this ethnography with me. Necessary, though, before we move on, is a differentiation between the weaving of personal narrative into an ethnographic text and *auto*ethnography.

After giving examples of "social science writing [that] sustains alienated and hierarchical relationships," (what we might equate with the aforementioned "master narrative"), Mary and Kenneth Gergen propose that "alternative ethnographers" break traditional conventions that render the writer "the source, the seer, [and] the knower" to a "passive [and] ignorant" audience

(14). The method of breaking these conventions lies in the writers' experimentation with "polyvocality, poetry, pastiche, performance;" these experiments "open new territories of expression" and "new spaces of relationship" (14). This notion of "alternate ethnography" is very similar to Langellier's discussion of postmodern stories that break modern conventions of linear, chronological storytelling in order to develop multiple selves (139). In "Performing," Langellier weaves personal narrative with aesthetic and academic discourse, reminding us that "as we move between narrative and literary performance or between narrative and scholarly discourse […] we do not leave our bodies behind to enter a separate realm of aesthetics or academia but rather extend and transform embodiment" (140). Langellier's extension and transformation of embodiment, which blends personal (narrative) and public (aesthetic and academic) discourses, *also* "open[s] new territories of expression" and "new spaces of relationship" (Gergen and Gergen 14).

Gergen and Gergen immediately offer autoethnography as the (preferred) alternative, arguing that "in using oneself as an ethnographic exemplar, the researcher is freed from the traditional conventions of writing" (14), thus allowed to "play" with the "new language" of which Denzin (26) writes. Autoethnography, they argue, opens the door for poetics and performance that can re-configure the relationships between readers and writers – by focusing on the writing/subjected self (14). "Shamelessly advocat[ing]" autoethnography (31), Gergen and Gergen articulate benefits of autoethnographic poetry and performance. I argue, however, that these benefits and practices need not be necessarily tied to an "*auto*-," but rather could inform ethnographic representations of all kinds. While I am unavoidably (and purposefully) at times written into the text (my experience of having lived and performed the history of which I write into ethnography disallows my absence), *I am not the subject/object* of this ethnography. No – the Saturday morning market in Red Stick is the subject, explored through the practice of *doing*

ethnography in body and text. To claim myself as the only or most important subject exploits the market and the people who make this communal place.

WANDERINGS, "MOVING FORWARD"

This thesis aims to explore different modes through which text un/does the documentation of *doing* ethnography. What will follow this chapter are three separate and (inherently) not-whole accounts of the doing, performing, and writing ethnography of the Red Stick Farmers Market in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, employing the methodologies of new ethnography, performance criticism, and genealogy.

In Chapter Three, "Mushroom Soup and New Ethnography," I embrace the style of ethnography advocated by H.L. Goodall. Based on the notion of dialogic conversation, Goodall charges that his "new ethnography," (when done well, mind you), is not aimed at academic arguments and not aimed at the expansion of a vita, but rather aimed at "evolving to a higher state of scholarly consciousness, […] to build closer relationships with our readers and a stronger, more open, more diverse, and certainly a more thoroughly humane, scholarly community" (198). In this chapter, you and I will be wandering around the Red Stick Farmers Market, talking with people, listening to others' conversations, and contemplating the spatial use of the farmers' market. This chapter requires an easy stroll. While asking you to bump along on some crowded sidewalks, the toll on your body will not be a large one.

In Chapter Four, "Performative Cookie Criticism," I offer for discussion both an ethnographic performance at the Red Stick Farmers Market as well as methodologies of *writing about* performance ethnography. In this chapter I recognize the community of vendors at the Red Stick Farmers Market and the community of comrades at LSU as bodies of co-performers in this performance of ethnography. Borrowing vocabulary from Peggy Phelan and Jill Dolan to discuss metonymy and performativity, respectively, I place the discussion about a particular

performance ethnography side-by-side with discussions about *writing* about performance ethnography (performatively), using the metaphor/metonym (you decide, once we get there) of baking cookies as an organizing principle. All of this positioning of texts/contexts is necessary to explore Madison's "performance ethnography" as a method of *doing* and of *giving back* as it (possibly) makes the ethnographer/author present in the field/text. The walk in this chapter is over steeper terrain than the city sidewalk, with steeper climbs interspersed with easy meanders. I will ask you to contemplate your feet, though – where do you stand?

In Chapter Five, "Dirt, History, and Growing Ethnography," I employ a genealogical approach, delineated by Foucault and Roach and exemplified by Michael and Ruth Bowman's "On the Bias," to explore my practice of writing ethnography about the Red Stick Farmers Market. "The very process of communication demands creative change to make the past convincing and intelligible" (Lowenthal 218). The product is a conglomeration of stories, practices, tours, images, spatial/temporal leaps, and footnote-based "tracking" comments that help you to negotiate this (at times) tricky traipse through "people doing things." Both ethnographic and historical voices comment (in the footnotes) on the politics of writing these types of documents. This chapter explores the historical moment of "becoming the ethnographer" in the marketplace, leaping between practices and manifestations that tie (and do not tie) together the vast web of "people doing things." Langellier writes that postmodern tales (and this genealogy is fragmented and partial enough to be considered "postmodern"), may feature "fragmentation, borrowings, and indeterminacies; glitzy, glossy, and high tech strategies that break down grand stories and frustrate unity, essence, and truth" ("Performance" 139). Have you ever gone hiking in the woods and come to a wide stream? Have you ever hopped from rock to rock to get to the other side? This chapter is the stream in this walk. We will have

come far; there will be great loss in not crossing the final challenge. I will guide you through the process, putting most of the stepping-stones in place before we get to that challenge.

Hopefully, you will reach the conclusion of these trajectories having traversed an "expanded archive" of ethnographic and historical information, with ever-morphing threads tied to and by performance in the doing, performing, and writing of ethnography. As you begin this journey, I leave you with John VanMaanen's final words to his readers:

> By telling our stories and telling them over in different ways, we are admitting to those who we trust that our goals are not necessarily fixed, that we are never free of doubt and ambiguity, that our strategic choices in fieldwork are often accidental (guided by more inchoate lore than by a technical logic), and that our data to be meaningful require development over time, and that we are far more dependent on the people we study than we can know or say. The rub, of course, is by that such an admission we must recognize that we are flying by the seat of our pants much of the time. There is risk here, but there is also truth. (VanMaanen 120)

As a chance-chef, I like to work without recipes. Each time the same ingredients turn out something slightly different; normally the results are edible (even if not completely satiating).[42] Come play with me in the kitchen/in the field; it's time to make some mushroom soup (scholarship).

[42] Mind you, of course, that while working without a recipe, I *do* have enough sense of form to make sure that my attempts at mushroom soup do not produce gumbos. VanMaanen, although identifying chance and the admission of that chance in the practice of story-telling in impressionistic ethnography, still produces *ethnography* (120). While the flavors, thicknesses and colors of each batch might (and most likely will) differ, we *will* be eating mushroom soup at the end of the day.

CHAPTER THREE – MUSHROOM SOUP AND NEW ETHNOGRAPHY

A WALK, WITH YOU?

I want you to find a place in this space[43] that I'm making with these words - a *place* where you can engage me. Let's go on a walk through a market – how are we going to negotiate all of the people, noises, sounds, words, and extraordinary everyday[44] images all around us as we weave ourselves in and out of this place? This space is "vastly, hugely, mind-bogglingly big,"[45] I concede, but the path that we will walk is negotiable in both hiking boots and flip-flops, or in my bare feet and your tennis shoes, or the whatever-you-call-them that you're wearing this morning.[46] We go for a walk. We go for a walk around the market with my green and orange bag; I collect things. Stopping, chatting, picking up green beans here, a quip there, a really-great phrase somewhere else: this is all a part of our journey.

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[43] Michel de Certeau distinguishes between space and place in The Practice of Everyday Life, emphasizing the endless possibilities in a space and the ordered reality of a place (117). A city planner can make a street, and our walking down that street can turn that street into a space, "a practiced place" (117). When we, however, find our particular spot in that space, we *place ourselves,* finding a special place for ourselves in human-created space. Robert Sack also explains that place exists not on its own, but through human agency (41).

[44] Brian Morris (676) uses the "extraordinary everyday" in a re-analysis of Michel de Certeau's "Walking in the City" and its relationship to cultural studies. He questions the transformation of this concept from a post-war avant-garde term used to study spectacle and consumption to its more current use to organize the banal existence of our everyday lives.

[45] Adams, Douglas, The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy (New York: Harmony, 1979) 76. For reasons you may or may not see, I identified greatly with this piece of literature throughout the writing-process of this essay.

[46] This multiple-shoe metaphor pays tribute to Norman Denzin's discussion of multiple audiences and their relationship/s with the writer (Interpretive 234-240).

All of the other market-goers have long gone; I stayed to snap a few pictures of the empty space left behind after everyone else went away. A lone car rolls slowly past as we begin crossing the street to my car. I toss the bag in and wedge the little pots of lavender in and among the tape recorder, old manual camera, and books in the back seat of the car. Books: The curly-haired blonde at the library gave me a grocery bag for those books when I turned into a library-juggling laughing-stock as they all crashed from my arms onto the floor in front of the check-out desk. (Said event put a hold on my circus aspirations…) Later he gave me my very own copy of The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy, but that's on my nightstand. I weave through downtown and around town, avoiding the inevitable football traffic en route to my little pink stucco apartment. (This is Louisiana, after all.)

At home, you sit at the table and have some iced tea while I put away the goodies. Glen gave me two bags of mushrooms: oyster mushrooms and shiitakes. I purchased Cajun seasoning from Papa Tom's, onions from the couple who use the red-and-white checked tablecloths. What am I going to do with three pounds of beautifully cloned mushrooms? I have flour, oil, parsley, garlic; Winn-Dixie provides the sherry, fat-free evaporated milk, and chicken broth. I take a bit of what I came home with, a bit of what I already had at home, and a bit of what I had to search for. I have discovered "bit by bit not the pleasure of eating good meals (I am seldom drawn to solitary delights), but that of manipulating raw materials, of organizing, combining, modifying, and inventing" (de Certeau and Giard 153). I walk around my apartment complex with potholder hands gripping a stock-pot full of mushroom soup. Do you care for a bowl? My neighbors enjoy the meal. (Or out of neighborliness and guilt, they pretend). Something that was one thing has become another.[47] The essence of the mushrooms is preserved, amplified. Soup makes

[47] Sarah Pink discusses "ethnographicness" as a function of the context created for a visual artifact (19).

mushroom consumption a little more understandable and palatable for my neighbors, many of whom normally flick those little decorations off to the side of their salads. The oft-overlooked becomes the main course.[48]

I offer you my mushroom soup scholarship, taking the everyday Saturday extraordinary of place and space and culture and rules and mixing it with the mushrooms, cornmeal, and Smith's Creamery chocolate milk of the Red Stick Farmers Market in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. I am going to provide you with the ingredients and complete the intermediate steps while you stir the pot to see that it all comes together. Of course, each batch will taste a little bit different, but that's the beauty in this kind of work.

CITY WALKING, USING

Let's go for a walk; make dinner. Do you mind if I bring my camera along? That same camera-strap that kept me company on my first lonesome visits to the farmers' market in Baton Rouge also kept me company during long days of lone adventures in Manhattan. Snapshots of café fronts, regurgitated red beans, a torn American flag, a decrepit nightclub entrance, and the Empire State Building decorate my albums and the walls of my old room in my parents' house. These albums of snapshots capture symbols of the "rich and poor, vigorous and feeble, talented and ignorant, well- and ill-intentioned," people of all circumstances, for whom, argues Yi-Fu Tuan, the city provides coming-together grounds ("The City"). I took those snapshots on days when a manual camera, an un-air-conditioned eleventh floor room, and summer-school paper-writing procrastination provided me with an excuse to explore the city in a manner different from

[48] Mushroom soup is both a metaphor for the methodology of ethnography and a means for meta-communicating about my representation of ethnographic material. Norman Denzin, Sarah Pink, H.L. Goodall and D. Soyini Madison all define these processes from slightly differing perspectives.

how I normally *used* it. Those days of exploration provided a necessary reprieve. As I sneaked to corners and crevasses of the city to play with f-stops and other things that I didn't quite understand, I found a bit of quiet where I could reflect upon myself as an 18 year old in a huge metropolis.[49]

I find myself in a corner again, three years later, in the not-so-large metropolis of Baton Rouge, Louisiana. Something about this farmers' market community differs from the regular weekday use of this space, and I am intrigued enough to sacrifice my sleepy Saturday mornings to learn more. I arrive and expect to be embraced with open arms and breadbaskets.

The east side of the street is lined with benches and green overhangs that jut out from the parking garage structure, and vendors set up tables and tents on the sidewalk. A park sits to the west of the street, and vendors pull their pickup trucks up onto the sidewalk, perpendicular to the road. They often sit on their tailgates as they wait for patrons to approach their tables of goods. The vendors' tables on the east and west sides of the street face one another, forming a passageway, an in-between space, through which patrons pass. In the aisle of the farmers' market, patrons walk and chat leisurely with one another. They conduct business transactions across a barrier; business takes place across vendors' tables. Most interactions between vendors and patrons at this market occur across a line; both the patrons and vendors express discomfort when this pattern of interaction is abandoned. The line of tables that separates vendor-space from patron-space is a line "that separates the region of the same from the region of the other" (Bachelard 222). The patron-space is largely available to me, but the resulting communicative

[49] Gaston Bachelard's introduction to his discussion of corners (136-138), draws connections between corners, imagination, solitude, and immobility. As I reached the less-traveled areas of the city, I too enjoyed spats of imaginativeness, the peace of solitude, and a near-fearful leap to immobility.

activities carried out in this space appear to carry over from patrons' other, non-farmers' market relationships with one another. The vendor-space, is inaccessible. Behind the line of tables marks the separation of not only patron-space and vendor-space, but also the communities present at the Red Stick Farmers Market. The vendors at this market travel from all over southeastern Louisiana, and as I will discover later, very few know each other outside of the context of the Saturday morning market.

Inside the parking garage structure lives the Main Street Market, a permanent market open during the weekdays, as well. Patrons walk in loops through these spaces, walking north through the Red Stick Farmers Market and south through the Main Street Market.

I develop my own pattern of walking through this space. First, I pass through to see what everyone has brought to the market, noting prices. Then I walk through the inside of the Main Street Market, "checking out" the cooking demonstration and any additions of art-glass pieces in one particular booth. For the first several weeks, I always buy the same produce from the same vendors.[50]

Today, after finishing my loops through this space, I retire to my corner to watch. Sitting on the east side of the street, I steal a spot of sidewalk beside a bench, hiding behind black-ink scribbled words on my pink notebook and my camera-strap, watching people milling around long after the lone purchase of an eggplant or a half-gallon of chocolate milk, eventually ending their conversations and dissipating as the churches' bells begin to ring their noontime bells. New to town and to the market, I have no one with whom to meander through the patron-space at the market. For now, I must sit where I am welcome (in the patron-space), and hope to find the

[50] This pattern of market-going is very similar to that of Joseph, as described by de Certeau and Luce Giard (108-113).

meaning in the seeming community of this space. I would rather talk to people, but they all seem to know one another. Tired of waiting to be approached and nervous about awkward first conversations, I prefer to learn about this community from a distance. Knees tucked into my chest, I watch the goings-on. Surely, no one notices that I am here.

INVISIBLE TRAJECTORIES

The allure, the seductive quality of the city is the promise of anonymity. In the city, surrounded by the physicality of others who we fail to recognize or pay mind, our physical being takes control of our experiences (Tuan "The City"). We find the aesthetic and relational dimensions of experience spinning, forgotten, in the wake of the domination of the physical. I spent an afternoon with my dad in the French Quarter; at three o'clock on a Sunday afternoon we ended up in the Cat's Meow, the famous (or infamous) karaoke bar on Bourbon Street. After an hour of bumping sweaty shoulders with other non-New Orleanians like us, the air-conditioned reprieve and promise for entertainment beckoned us from the busy street. The mass eye-consumption of bodies moving all around us caused such over-stimulation that we no longer paid attention to any *one* of those bodies, but only to the trajectories that *our* bodies wove through the crowd.

Individuality, then, becomes tangled up and lost in our negotiation of the space through which we must travel to arrive to wherever we must go (on time). "Many of us experience the city almost solely as a physical presence: even the people who live and work there tend to be perceived as bodies" (Tuan, "The City"). The allure of anonymity of the city quickly erases our cognition that these bodies have personalities. Attention to particular personal traits wanes.

Only "speaking and communicating with one another" can preserve the essence of "human life of the city and indeed the material city itself" (Tuan "The City"). As attention to

personhood slips from the urban-minded radar, the attention to the beauty of the city-space becomes lost, as well. Rather than enjoying the city for its aesthetic offerings, we of the city exploit streets and landmarks as mere markers to help differentiate one turn from another on our journeys to other parts of the city (Turner 544). Only the tourists wander around and gawk at the beauty of the grids where city life unfolds. While the tourists wander around with *their* camera straps, we curse them under our breath and hope to goodness that we don't look like *that* when we visit cities other than our own. I sit in my corner at the Red Stick Farmers Market, I snap photos with my new digital camera (I have the old manual one along for nostalgia) of the feet of passers-by. As users of downtown, we "insinuate [our]selves into public space in order to appropriate it for [our]selves" and our needs, (de Certeau and Giard 23) carrying out our business (until five o'clock),[51] then leaving for another part of the city or its sprawl. But, today, invisible and hiding in the corner, I have the freedom to *experience* the city.

Gaston Bachelard writes that to find meaning, "one must speak, if not to others, at least to oneself" (222). I "speak to myself" through scribbled words and pictures in my field notebook. Through conversation, "waves of newness" (Bachelard 222) flow over [my] space, introducing me to new thoughts, visions, and experiences as others share their stories with me as I watch the goings-on. Slowly I begin to talk to other patrons, and through their spoken stories, I begin to belong.

Words create community, a living, social thing that occupies space, has social patterns, and oftentimes, collective goals (Kauffman 9). The farmers' market provides a "convivial activity" that keep people around town and downtown (Turner 536), encouraging the use of

[51] See Robyne Turner (536), for more discussion of the assumptions of change and progress that accompany the presence of an after five o'clock crowd.

words and the sharing of stories in a space (the city street) where these exchanges would otherwise not occur. These extraordinary happenings take place in the same locations where city-users and their neighbors carry out the banal activities of everyday life. These alternative gatherings in city spaces create "urban experiences marked by shifts into different affective registers" (Morris 693), fostering a sense of community among those in attendance. These events alter the city space, thereby altering the social patterns that occur. The Red Stick Farmers Market provides altered city-space in which both business transactions and community-building simultaneously (and leisurely) take place. Let's pick up a few things at the market.

WALKING IN THE MARKET-CITY

On the weekends, the time constraints placed upon normal travel and work in the city disappear. This "freedom on Saturdays" allows city-dwellers to act out their "desire for the practice of the city" as a "spectator" rather than a hustler in a larger commercial game (de Certeau and Giard 102). Downtown-dweller David, an LSU student who lives in an apartment building directly across from the farmers' market, skips work on Saturday mornings to wander around the market for awhile. "I feel like I'm leaving the city for a little while."

The mystic awe that inspires us to take a moment to snap a photo of a building or skyline in a city apart from our own gives us permission to "always dream about an other life, an elsewhere" (de Certeau and Giard 103). The farmers' market might not necessarily provide fantasy-dreams of another life, but the community of the Red Stick Farmers Market as performed by the participants and vendors is distinct from the anonymous body-driven perceptions that fill the non-interactions that take place in the same space during different times of the week.

A young man and woman walk by, she tucked next to his taller frame, sipping coffee. They stop for a moment to look at the pecans that Mr. Buddy sells. Mr. Buddy's hands are

grandfather hands: soft with age, rough from hard work throughout the years, playful in the creation of clever contraptions that he entertains himself and others with. "My wife tells me to keep a cool and level head," he tells these twenty-something lovers at the periphery of his booth-space. They don't know him, her puzzled face and glance at me give him the fodder to keep up his playful charade. He steps from under the white tent, into the sun, flipping a switch on his Aussie-looking "safari" hat that he has converted into something oh so much more. His suspender-decorated shoulders tilt forward as he takes off his hat, showing the twenty-something couple what he's rigged up: a solar panel, a miniature level and a small fan. "A cool and level head."

At the downtown market-place, that "dream" of downtown plays out in a different framework, a framework intrinsically and extrinsically separate from the corporate power dreams of the weekday downtown. "Downtown maintains its role of attraction through the orchestration of urban sensations," continuously and "spontaneously hand[ing] over to the dweller" the urban pastimes of "consumption, spectacle, strolling, [and] exploration…" (de Certeau and Giard 104). The event of the Red Stick Farmers Market changes this little block of the city to a market-city, "open[ing] up a unique space" (de Certeau and Giard 254). In our meandering, we the patrons find local produce and home-grown business transactions. We wander in the patron-space and interact with other people "like us," out to support our city and the local farmers (a reason that many of the vendors give to explain why patrons continue to return to the market). This unique space provides for alternative veins of conversation, separate from the exacting deliberateness of everyday business conversations in the city. At the market, the lines of conversation wander as circuitously as the patrons, weaving in and out of the consequential and the highly inconsequential. In this space, our unspoken dreams of separation from everyday life and

purification in thought and action are realized. Distinct from the urbanity of weekday downtown Baton Rouge, the Red Stick Farmers Market allows our dreams to manifest in a strangely unprecedented sense of community.

Separated from the normal orchestration of downtown space arrangement and usage, those who venture downtown on Saturday mornings receive the freedom to truly stroll and explore, soaking up the spectacles that (un)intentionally beckon their attention. The Red Stick Farmers Market does not know the rational division of space[52] that so easily marks the otherwise geometric linearity of downtown Baton Rouge, and the community at the Red Stick Farmers Market mirrors the non-linearity of this space.

Here, I have the freedom to pass through the market while taking the time to know this space intimately (Phillips 509). I can tell you about the nooks and crannies at the market, detail the different vendors' table-cloths, tell you in what order to expect the vendors to erect their tables and tents every week. At the Red Stick Farmers Market, the everyday downtown practices of socializing, selling, consuming, networking, etc. occur in a different context and arrangement. This community centered on produce and locally-made goods rearranges the space of the normal geometrical sterility of Fifth Street at North, and calls for a different use of that space. Carrying out the "habitual practice" (Morris 686) of walking and negotiating a space familiar to many Baton Rouge residents, patrons at the farmers' market circuitously wander around. Walks through this space require many passes through the same space to satisfactorily complete their visits, producing a choreography inflected within the social aspects of the market (Turner 509).

This ritual of walking in circles directly contrasts the linear trajectories through which we propel our bodies in this same space during the business week. "Thus, in being, everything is

[52] De Certeau and Giard further discusses the rationality of spatial divisions (107).

circuitous, roundabout, recurrent, so much talk; a chaplet of sojournings, a refrain with endless verse" (Bachelard 214). The repetitive paths and actions/transactions wound around the marketplace on Saturday mornings bring familiarity and a sense of recognition to this community.

"Glen, why do people come to the farmers' market?" I ask the mushroom seller this question.

Among interruptions and transactions, he says (tongue-in-cheek, at first), "Uh, for the same reason that you go to the circus. It's exciting. And we have regular customers who are here every week, and they'll buy certain items every week. For their weekly groceries. And I have regular customers who always buy."

THE NEIGHBORHOOD-MARKET

Do you care to join me in my corner? I will share with you what I'm writing in my notebook if you will sit and stay awhile. Do you see that woman over there, in the hat? She hates balloons. On the special days when the balloon-animal-making man comes to the farmers' market, she puts her hands over her ears when little boys with balloons militantly march by, torturing their balloons, grinning when they POP! She always sighs a breath of relief when the BANG happens; she no longer has to wait in fearful anticipation of sudden noise.

Can you hear that gentle pounding? That's the noise of a pestle hitting a mortar; Lionel's family has had that same pestle and mortar since the early 1900s. He likes tradition, loves history, cherishes the sweat on his brow and stories he can tell when he makes gumbo filé alongside the street. Rhythmic, soothing, the beating of Sassafras leaves between age-smoothed wood spurts little puffs of grassy-smelling dust into the air to tickle our noses.

Those small white and tan dogs, Heidi and Holley, come every week with their owner. They stand on their hind legs and sniff for cheese biscuits from the woman who sells artisan breads and beg for samples of sausage from the woman who sells homemade wines. Their owner will join us as we depart the nearly empty market; she remains to help the vendors tear down their stands, leaving with her yellow canvas tote-bag filled to the brim.

Anonymous in my corner, chicken-scratch words write about these people, these faces who I have come to expect to see, who fulfill different roles in this market-city on Saturday mornings.

"William, why do people come to the farmers' market?" My standard question, this time asked of William from Ponchatoula, Louisiana, who sells strawberries and seasonal vegetables.

"It's another way to interact with people." An older woman walked up to his table, fragmenting our conversation as are all conversations at the farmers' market. "You know, it's a social thing," he adds. They chat for a few minutes, about her health and his produce. "Like her, how else would I know her? She's an old black lady from Baton Rouge, and I'm a young white kid from Ponchatoula. I don't know her name and she probably doesn't know mine, but we know each other and I know what she likes. She comes every Saturday. It's an outing for her."

The Red Stick Farmers Market, which lives in an otherwise abandoned (on the weekends) downtown business district in Baton Rouge, is, in fact, a "neighborhood" market.[53] In the neighborhood market, the frequent vendors and patrons know themselves to be recognized (de Certeau and Giard 12). A certain degree of familiarity comes from the circuitousness of the paths and stories woven Saturday after Saturday through this limited amount of space. When

[53] A neighborhood is a social organization. De Certeau and Giard's similarly named chapter, "The Neighborhood," discusses neighborhoods in depth (9-14).

you see someone time and time again, you will recognize that person's face. Possibly, quite possibly, you might even begin to exchange greetings with the now friendly face you see on a regular basis. Through this process, a vendor-lined street becomes the Red Stick Farmers Market community. From my (now our) tucked-away position behind my notebook, this neighborhood "is the place of passage by the other, untouchable because it is distant, and yet recognizable through its relative stability; neither intimate nor anonymous" (de Certeau and Giard 12). As you and I walk around, some of the vendors and the owner of the dogs recognize me. We exchange greetings. Next week, they might or might not ask me about you.

"Personal relationships are said to be warm" in the community. Warmth found in the community comes from a seeming "sustained care and concern for one's fellows" (Tuan "Community"). At the farmers' market, our particular patterns of walking inscribe in our memories the faces and actions of the others who surround us. My patterns of walking (and sitting in corners) at the market have given me a certain perspective; through my repeated Saturday journeys through this neighborhood-market, I have come to recognize certain friendly faces while others recognize me. Today I share that with you. For the most part, we do not know these people; but we feel as if we have some sort of "farmers' market" bond with them.

I walk into the golf shop at City Park Golf Course one Saturday after the beginning of my market-Saturday mornings. I receive a warmer-than-normal greeting. The men at City Park are always friendly; this greeting is simply much more "familiar" than previously experienced. I recognize the face behind the counter, but not from my many golfing trips.[54] Just a few hours

[54] City Park Golf Course is a historic landmark and provides some of the only hilly golfing in Baton Rouge. At $5.50 a person for an unlimited day's worth of golf, it's a steal. As of the spring of 2007, the course is closed for renovations. If you're ever in Baton Rouge and like to golf, you should check it out once it re-opens.

before, I stopped in to see if his wife had put any new art-glass pieces in their booth in the Main Street Market. Although we only exchanged a simple "Hey!" at the market, he recognized me as I walked into the clubhouse. He introduces himself as "Pete, from the farmers' market," and we chat for a few minutes about school, my research, his wife's art, and the scar on my knee from the last time I played golf at City Park.[55] If we had passed each other while perusing the produce section at Winn-Dixie, would I still have received the same friendly greeting at City Park? I do not believe so. We probably would never have recognized each other at City Park, because we most likely would not have paid the other any attention when passing each other to get a crown of broccoli at the grocery store.

Harold Kaufman and Yi-Fu Tuan argue that community warmth and attention do not come from a deep and innate care for the uniqueness of the individual, but to the role that the person plays within the community (Tuan "Community"). While "personal relationships are said to be warm" in the community, the community itself "deemphasizes the individual." Looking at community-as-stage, different roles exist that need to be played by various community actors. "The community actor or participant may be identified by who he is and what he does" (Kaufman 11). As long as the roles are filled by persons more or less competent to carry them out, the social drama will continue. As in all plays, though, there only exist so many roles for so many individuals; the others must simply sit and watch as the drama unfolds, unengaged.[56] Recognizable only by the characteristics of the actions that they carry out, the actors in this

[55] This is neither the time nor the place to tell you about my clumsiness on the golf course. After a drink or two, I'll tell you all about it, whether we see each other at the conference or elsewhere. If you're lucky, I'll even show you the scar. It's fading, but it's still a pretty good one.

[56] Kaufman talks about community as social drama (10-11), and Erving Goffman devotes an entire chapter to "The Theatrical Frame" (123-155).

community drama are replaceable. If I don't come back, I might flit through their memories in a few weeks. I'm easily replaceable – we all are. There are a lot of people here who play my role: young woman, buying produce, wandering aimlessly about the street, chatting with anyone who will entertain. I wonder who would play *me* if I never came back.

"I've seen you a lot. Who is that girl who sits over there in the corner and writes? She doesn't buy anything, why is she here? You must have made friends here, because you stopped sitting in the corner." As William and I sit on the bed of his pickup truck, shaded from the still-warm November sun, he tells me that he has noticed me before. Twisting his wedding ring, "not that I was looking at you or anything, but you can't help but notice." He laughs as I tell him that I thought I was invisible, that no one noticed my notebook and scribbling, as if he's finally letting me in on the secret that I thought I had hidden from him and everyone else so well for so long.

Let's go back to the week just before. I show up at the market after having had missed a week for a family reunion in Pennsylvania. I see Glen, the Mushroom-Seller, and greet him with a warmly accented "Good mornin!"

"Hey! We missed ya last week."

I walk behind his table, and my already-recording tape recorder picks up a strangely accented, "I missed y'all last week! I just said y'all. I missed you guys last week." Something in the air of Baton Rouge transforms my Midwestern voice with a southern twang.

"Well we talked about you, me and, uh, Beth." Beth is the owner of the dogs, Heidi and Holley; she has come to the farmers' market every Saturday morning for years. She stays until the marketplace is cleared, helping Glen pack up his jellies and coolers (hopefully not) full of

mushrooms and Jessie, the wine and sausage seller, collapse her tables and lift the heavy and awkward white tent into the back of her SUV. "Whatcha been up to?

SITTIN' ON THE TAILGATE

Entrance into this community manifests itself in the crossing of the invisible boundary between the vendors' tables and the patrons' aisle. The vendors, tucked away from the walking-paths woven by the patrons, share stories with one another and those who linger long enough in the area surrounding their booths to listen for a moment. That which you and I can see and hear as we walk by various tables and stands is only half of who "lives" there on Saturday mornings. We may notice Bud and Betty, overhear something that they say to Derek, the BREADA Operations Director, but we do not attend to the full story that they tell him. We only see and hear half of what they say. The vendors at the Red Stick Farmers Market live in the shell of their booth-space. Everything about creatures that live in shells is dialectical – "since it [the shell-living creature] does not come out entirely, the part that comes out contradicts the part that remains inside" (Bachelard 108). These booth spaces, which house the vendors, are "built by and for the body," providing shade and a place to display jellies, pecans, milk, whatever. This booth-place creation takes its form from the inside, depending on the personality of the people behind the table and the way that they interact with the public across it. [57]

Something happens, though; something happens that allows some patrons to negotiate *both sides* of the shell, continuing in their actions as a patron while also becoming part of the vendor community. "What are the appropriate signs that will clinch and stabilize the signs of recognition?" (de Certeau and Giard 22). Let us go for a border-crossing walk in the farmers' market; I'm going to sit down on Glen's tailgate and you will come with me. Are you ready for

[57] See Bachelard (101) for a discussion on the formations and implications of various types of space.

this? When you meet Glen, he will tell you stories. He will tell you why three-legged dogs "are mathematician dogs – they're "puttin down three and carryin one." Then, of course, he will ask you some probing questions to get you to story-tell, too. Good friends – you go way back. You talk about his mushrooms and his wife's jellies; he tells you about what happened when he and his wife accidentally went to a nude beach in Miami. You ask about anything distinct about the other. He tells you about how he lost half of his thumb, but only after he tells you a few tall tales about "what *really* happened," because the real story is not quite as exciting. While he is at it, he'll make a few comments about his perception of some of the doctors with whom he has had to work, and their lack of a sense of humor. You cannot escape audience-shoes.

Once you cross that safe line, your personal life is suddenly projected into words and stories in this meeting ritual. Just as patrons walk by, asking about the various produce and goods laid out on vendors' tables, Glen asks you probing questions about anything that he can see on you or about you. He might ask you about that ratty-looking yarn bracelet that you're wearing, if it hurt when you pierced that particular part of your ear, or why you chose to wear the shoes that you've got on this morning. He wants to know "why you're waitin'" to start "datin' a nice southerner," not accepting any of your protests. He asks about your origins, just like you and I have asked about the process that he uses to clone his Shiitake and Oyster mushrooms. When you cross that border into the shell-space of the behind-the-table crowd of vendors, you suddenly enter another market, where *you* are the source of the "produce" exchanged. Once you cross that safe line, you enter into a different market completely. In the vendor-space at the Red Stick Farmers Market, there exists a storytelling market. The rules are exceedingly simple: my tale for your tale, and only stories and commentary that bring a chuckle are allowed. Come on over; you are with me today, and I have been invited to be a vendor in this storytelling market.

Herein lies the true community at the Red Stick Farmers Market, functional only on Saturday mornings, made up of people otherwise unrelated. Here, inside this shell-space hidden from the typical market patron, I belong.

STORYTELLING MARKET

Welcome, friend, to the Red Stick Farmers Market Community. This shell space is a product of human agency in a city street by pickup trucks and tables. In it, the shell-creatures (farmers' market vendors) "weave together a wide range of components of reality" (Sack 41). These "components of reality" weave together to form stories, and these stories become the "produce" traded in the storytelling market. The same dreams realized for the patrons of the Red Stick Farmers Market are realized for the vendors of the storytelling market as they swap tall (and not so tall) tales and story-tell their way into community. Those stories create identities, positions for us (us, since you and I are now members of the storytelling market), as individuals and valuable members of the Red Stick Farmers Market. In the market, those stories, identities, those positions are attended to carefully by other members of the community.[58]

The thing is, you see, contrary to the theories of Kaufman and Tuan, I'm pretty sure I'm a part of the farmers' market community, and that the people with whom I interact would actually *care* if I never came back.

Sandra J. Ball-Rokeach writes of the "storytelling neighborhood" as the narrative-telling in which residents participate in order to construct an identity as a member of a particular neighborhood (394). "Interpersonal storytelling positions the individual in more active

[58] Morris comments on the social effects of "acts' articulation to social formations and sites," explaining that articulations lead to various interpretations and permutations of the same utterance/performance (682). In this storytelling community, the stories and identities constructed in the shell space have many meanings to different vendors, but together form a universal community-building act.

imagining of community;" through the telling of stories, individuals build a framework for a larger social network (401). A storytelling market exists in tandem with the farmers' market, as stories and tales are exchanged alongside and on top of money and goods. Together we breathe in this fresh-breath of storied air, "imaging and constructing community" (Ball-Rokeach 419) through every tale (tall or otherwise) shared. In this community, "those who want to become members enter because they want to contribute" (Sack 250). What have I to contribute as a twenty-one year old researcher wandering around a market-space with a notebook, pen, a desire for some Saturday morning companionship and a strange curiosity about Louisiana produce? My stories. Through story-telling and listening, I have become a member of the community at the Red Stick Farmers Market.

My market friends offer their lives and opinions in story-form, commenting on various elements of Hurricane Katrina aftermath and corruption through Cajun-accented jokes about Thibodeaux and Boudreaux. Sitting on the tailgates of their trucks, I laugh along and entice them for more. I share stories with them about my family and my weekend adventures with companions closer to my own age, explaining what "karaoke" means as I go along to sing a little bit of "Walkin' on Sunshine" for the benefit (or to the chagrin) of the those listening.[59] Story-telling in this farmers' market culture is "obedience to the logic of the symbolic benefit of which all the agents of the neighborhood are, in different ways, the beneficiaries" (de Certeau and Giard 22). This sharing, community-making ritual of the performing of our lives through story-telling keeps us entertained, keeps us coming back and back again, Saturday after Saturday. Through this continuous storytelling, the rhythm of the farmers' market drums on as we rely on

[59] "Walkin' on Sunshine," by Katrina and the Waves. As I became part of the Red Stick Farmers Market community, I simultaneously discovered the power of having "my song" for karaoke outings. I recommend it!

one another to mutually create and bring life to our personal narratives (Langellier "Personal Narratives" 256).

When the stories start to pour out, changes in your identity as a member of the Red Stick Farmers Market occur. Orality "constitutes the essential space of community" (de Certeau and Giard 252). Only through these "story-telling performances" do individuals gain entrance to this community (Langellier "Personal Narratives" 256).

I have been invited into this shell-space of the vendors, swapping stories with my fellow community members. Today, you are here with me. It's a pretty welcoming community, I promise. I'm back to sitting down again, but this time, I'm sitting with a different perspective. Instead of hiding, tucked in my corner, writing, lonely, after making a few circuitous passes through the farmers' market, you and I have arrived to perch somewhere else. Now, on our walk through the market, we see people that I recognize, yes, but you and I stop to chat with them for a few minutes rather than passing with a smile and "Hello." I've swapped stories with them. Now when I see Glen, Jessie, Mr. Buddy, William and the others while I walk through the market, I dash behind their tables and help to carry out business transactions while we swap stories about life in the past week.

Spatial interactions, a defining quality at the Red Stick Farmers Market, indicate different levels of knowing-ness among people (Sack 74). Although I do not know all of the vendors at the farmers' market, I am recognized and attended to as a member of the vendor community, permitted access into the staging-area of even some of the vendors with whom I haven't yet story-told. This storytelling community-making *thing* works with you and me as we walk around the space on these pages, as well. As my reader, you and I meander through stories and theory, co-constructing our identities in this paper neighborhood in which we are both engrossed.

My fingers itch to weave more, to tighten the twine that binds and shapes the reeds of the stories that I tell. Fragile, tender, our reeds are nothing when not soaked and braided and woven together, in a form. Craig Gingrich-Philbrook encourages the use of temporal, surprising moments to evoke emotion; "this snaking temporality, winding back and forth between tellers and audiences," moments expected and surprising, is what wraps those pliable and lyric weavers in and out of the anchored stakes that drive my story and research (305). Our exchange begins to take a shape. You are left with a basket, a tool that you can use to carry the things that you have picked up along the way of our adventure and market-going. It appears as though your basket is nearly full. Before you go, I am going to throw in a little lagniappe.

"SOMETHING EXTRA," LAGNIAPPE

In South Louisiana, the giving of "something extra" is called "lagniappe." Lagniappe abounds at the Red Stick Farmers Market. Here, the offering of lagniappe occurs when "a little somethin' extra" (Glen, who gave me South Louisiana vocabulary lessons), is added to whatever transaction is currently taking place. Since there exist two "markets" (both the farmers' market and the storytelling market), "lagniappe" takes two forms. If stories are exchanged, the lagniappe is produce. In the storytelling market, the main currency and gain lies in the "reciprocal giving and receiving" of stories and dialogue (Madison Critical 9).[60] The produce that they share with one another is simply lagniappe. It is through the sharing and attending to each others' stories that we are most fully ourselves (Conquergood, qtd. in Madison Critical 9). Through the creation and performance of stories at the Red Stick Farmers Market, members of this particular community give each other the opportunity to better know themselves. Among

[60]In "Community, Society and the Individual," Tuan also writes of the "ideal of social reciprocity," referring to the unspoken expectations of exchange of one person's goods for another.

vendors, that self-knowingness is the purpose of their interaction; it is why they engage one another at all. Leftover mushrooms, extra handfuls of green beans, lettuce: all of this and more might end up with various vendors and a few patrons; the bags and coolers of those who have crossed behind the not-so-invisible line into the market shell-space. Just as certain patrons buy mushrooms from Glen every week, certain vendors swap stories every week; getting a week's worth of interactions to carry them through to the next Saturday.

"Thanks. *You* made my day today," says Glen as I thank him for sharing his stories and laughter with me. He hands me two bags of mushrooms and some other produce; "What are friends for?" He will not take my money. Today, through listening, I have paid him well enough.

The other form of lagniappe, of course, gets tossed into the traditional transactions between most patrons and the vendors. As business transactions (money for produce), occur, lagniappe takes the form of stories and quips shared across the tables of goods. This lagniappe travels away from the market in the minds of the patrons; the lagniappe that they receive is information about turning Red Zinger seed-pods into jelly "that tastes sweet, you know, with an, um, zing," and what *exactly* a Mayhaw is.

Tuan posits that there exists a "gifted" class of people, who "truly have something to offer" over and above the inherent simplicity of words and stories that they exchange ("Community"). I propose that all individuals possess "gifts" that they can choose to share to add something extra to the current situation. Let me show you.

"Now I get to do what I want to do. Grow mushrooms. My wife makes the jelly."

As I sit back in my kitchen one afternoon, thinking about the things the mushroom seller (whose name, at this point, I do not know), I write:

> And talk to people. He loves to talk to people. The mushrooms are a hobby; he comes to the market every week so that he can see people, watch them, ask them questions about their jobs and their kids and their yarn bracelets. Ever since his retirement, my Pap has had the extra time to talk to the people wandering out of the grocery store as he waits outside on the bench for Gram, the receptionist at the otherwise-empty dentist's office in the middle of the afternoon, the young but tired-looking waitress with stains on her apron and the wisp of stray hair dancing in front of her eyes. He leans back in his arm chair, stretching. He has been working in the yard all morning, and can feel his muscles reasserting their authority over his body. He closes his watery blue eyes for a moment; his leather palm comes to rest on my forearm. He tells me a story about Gram… at the beginning of their stories. Waterfalls, the Pennsylvania riverside, a summer camp. Dirty dishes, excuses to go swimming, turtle stew… I am lost in his past with him, his tagalong pal from another land. I listen, I travel, he relives. The mushroom seller has stories to tell, too.

These stories throughout have been my gifts to you, the lagniappe that I have tossed into your basket as we have wandered through the Red Stick Farmers' Market, swapping information and knowledge. Through listening, through writing and representation, the stories of "the gifted," of these people who I have come to know, become immortalized as they pass from one mouth and life into another (today, your) ear and mind. My stories to you are the lagniappe in the transaction of scholarship that we are conducting.

DINNER BELL, RINGING

The bells from the nearby churches ring twelve times, this Saturday morning community comes to a close. Along the street, vendors pack up the few things that they have left; this has been a good morning. The Red Stick Farmers Market is in the city of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, but not *of* the city. My first moments, awkward and alone in this public space have disappeared into Saturday mornings filled with laughter and jokes about my weather-inappropriate clothing and late-October "Happy Birthdays." My integration into the farmers' market community has been "a slow progression that [has become] more and more intense" (de Certeau and Giard 108). After hiding in my corner for weeks, a happenstance conversation with a middle-aged man about ballroom dancing and our similar shorts propelled me into the shell-space of the vendors when he introduced me to his cousin, Mr. Buddy. At the farmers' market, I am in the community and *of* the community.[61] Given its location in the linear downtown of urban Baton Rouge, this community should not even exist. But, it does, and the community of the Red Stick Farmers Market thrives. This farmers' market community is truly a "space we love" (Bachelard xxxi), and a place that we must defend. As we act out our dreams of downtown, "[the real and the good] can never be seen in their entirety; like the sun, they are too brilliant and they stand as a source, a guide, and as an object of wonder" (Sack 173). This organic community is real *and* good, and I'm glad that you have come on a walk with me to pick up the things for our dinner.

By now, I am sure that you have had your fill of mushroom soup. I am going to make another batch; but this time, I will do it with someone else. Even though we have enjoyed our walk and talk together, it is no longer necessary for you to spend time story-swapping with me.

[61] A slightly twisted phrase of Kaufman's used to criticize the current community studies at the time when he wrote "Toward an Interactional Conception of Community."

You itch to live and relive those moments as yourself, rather than *my* tagalong pal from another land. You have crossed boundaries from city to market to neighborhood to real storytelling community. Next week you can return to the market on your own; be sure to take your basket and fill it however you please. *We* are not alone in this adventure; our moments together simply characterize "the way we were, the way we are, and the way we might be" (Jones 54) on any other Saturday morning. Next week you can take your basket to the market and fill it up with your own goodies to make your own creations. I look forward to you sharing it with me.

CHAPTER FOUR – PERFORMATIVE COOKIE CRITICISM

BAKIN' UP A… WALK?

> "Throughout the semester, we will discuss alternative means of publishing/sharing ethnographic findings with a variety of "audiences," from audio/visual presentations to websites to fully staged performances. Each of you is asked to develop some sort of visual presentation of your ethnographic project. I'll leave the focus, style, and form of this project pretty much up to you. However, it should be developed in accordance with the models we will study, and it, too, should be considered a culmination of your work during the semester" (Shaffer).

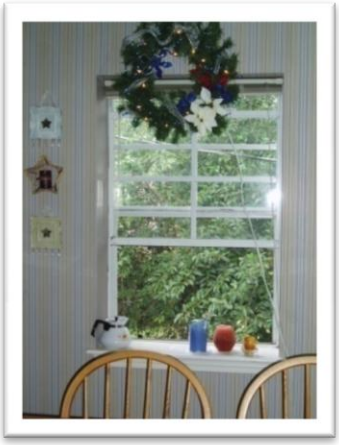


Figure 2 - Feet from Window

The needs for baking therapy, baking nostalgia and baking community-making rear their sugary heads around the Christmas season. A red, white, and blue Christmas wreath hangs over an open window in a little kitchen and a woman covers her ceramic-topped kitchen table with yet another batch of warm cookies. She consults a mini yellow legal pad and pours another bag of sugar into the Tupperware, scooping out two cups before she snaps the lid into place and reaches up to set the container above the stovetop again. She is barefoot. It is December. She pauses from her baking for a moment, looking out at the luscious green landscape through the screen on the window. She laughs to herself as she turns back to the sugar dusted countertop. How has so much time come to pass that she is now barefoot in December, baking from her mother's and grandmothers' cookie recipes in a Louisiana kitchen with a wreath she made herself hanging above an open window?

WALKING, STANDING



Figure 3 - Mine or Yours?

I have pictures of my feet from many of my adventures, including footwork at the Red Stick Farmers Market in Baton Rouge during the fall of 2005. Attempting to collect images from the market after reading Sarah Pink's Visual Ethnography, I grappled with the feat of documenting the public nature of the farmers' market, but felt uncomfortable taking photos of market goers who I did not know.[62] While the photographs of feet may not appear to be "ethnographic," I argue that placed in this context, they function as ethnographic text. Sarah Pink writes that "any experience, action, artifact, image or idea is never definitely *just one thing* but may be redefined differently in different situations by different individuals and in terms of different discourses" (19). The actual photographs that I have of marketplace feet provide, in many ways, the metonymic body of which Peggy Phelan writes in Unmarked (150-151). I will discuss Phelan and the metonymy of

[62] Sarah Pink advocates a reflexive approach to ethnographic photography, calling for the ethnographer/photographer to develop "a consciousness of how ethnographers play their roles" as cultural photographer, to consider how photographic choices are related to/informed by both discourses in academia and the cultural setting, and to have "an awareness of the theories of representation that inform their photography" (57). At this point in becoming-ethnographer, I took more pictures and notes than I interacted with people. Joking with a classmate that I was informed by "standpoint theory," I said that I ought to take photos of market-goers' feet. Once arriving at the market with my camera, I felt ethically obligated to engage my photographic "subjects" more on the issue of photography prior to snapping shots of them. There are many feet in this chapter whose "drivers" I observed often, but never met. I took photos of market-goers' feet, and photos of market-vendors' faces. There are a few feet in this chapter who belong to people very instrumental in shaping these performances.

the body near the end of this chapter. Until then, experience the photographs as they arise. In this discourse of ethnography and ethnographic presence and possibility, these photographs are situated to function evocatively and performatively. The journey around the farmers' market is one on foot. There is a lot of footwork that goes into raising (and selling) the produce and goods at the market. A lot of footwork goes into ethnography, as well.

Articulated as "ethnography's sixth moment," standpoint epistemologies offer an ethnographer a style of writing that starts with lived experience and the "standpoints that experience brings to the ethnographic text" (Denzin Interpretive 54). How many times have you taken (or thought about taking) pictures of *your* feet? Norman Denzin overviews standpoint epistemologies (Interpretive 53-89), highlighting their move away from the positivist, static ethnography of earlier "moments" while raising a critique of the erasure/lack of attention to the ethnographer's position in the ethnographic product. Denzin praises the cinematic ethnographic works of Trinh Min-Ha (72-85), positing that she brings "a reflexive reading" to documentary filmmaking (which Denzin closely aligns with the process of doing ethnography), helping the audience to understand that every rendering of a "reality" is but a socially constructed frame (76-77). Of Trihn, Denzin writes: "She writes and makes films to create spaces for the retelling of the stories that the science of ethnography has stolen, reduced to history, categorized as fiction and subaltern literature" (81-82). Trihn embraces multivocality *and* reflexivity, highlighting the contractedness of her works. Trihn's accomplishment in writing and film is my goal; I strive to create space (in text) for an evocative conversation about performance ethnography that is oftentimes robbed of its potential through textual inscription. Both discussing and attempting to use principles of performative writing, I hope to produce a text that becomes a "site for multiple experiences," where "meaning is not confused with truth" (as are Trihn's films, Interpretive 77).

Throughout this chapter, I will address some of the notions of performative writing by attempting to perform on page for you, with you as you read.


Figure 4 - Bare feet

In the third chapter of Utopia in Performance, "Finding Our Feet in One Another's Shoes," Jill Dolan introduces three multi-vocalic performances by Lily Tomlin, Danny Hoch, and Anna Deavere Smith for consideration. Dolan argues that in witnessing these performers' acts of embodiment, the audience has the potential of "imaginatively walking, even if metaphorically, in the shoes of someone else" (28). Borrowing Joni Jones' approach to "performance ethnography," Dolan discusses the possibilities for utopian performatives in "performances that invoke multiple characters across the same person's body," (28) ultimately arguing that these three exemplars of performance ethnography have the ability to lift the audience (even if ever so slightly) above the current situation and to allow them to feel the sole/soul of another.[63]

PERFORMING ETHNOGRAPHY

Pulling out old legal pads filled with field notes as I begin to prepare to write about my performance at the Red Stick Farmers Market on December 17, 2005, I find a notebook labeled "NCA 2005 Notes." Rewind to November of 2005, just a month before my marketplace performance. I sit and listen to numerous panels on performance ethnography and

[63] This is Dolan's "utopic performative." Dolan writes that the utopic performative is a small moment in performance that lifts the audience above the present and into a "hopeful feeling of what the world might be like if every moment of our lives were as emotionally voluminous, generous, aesthetically striking, and intersubjectively intense" as *this* particular moment in performance (5).

autoethnography at the meeting of the National Communication Association in Boston. I stand in the back of a small hotel conference room. The room is far too small for the interest piqued by both the topic and the prestige of the persons scheduled to present. A dusty plant and I fight for the same view; as the panel wears on, my knees become tired and the heat in the room begins to rise. This is a good conversation; I have a premonition that the words that I'm hearing are driving the future of performance ethnography. My notes, however, have wonderful snippets that I can no longer put into a cohesive context. Nearly a year later (just before leaving town for San Antonio to attend the 2006 National Communication Association convention) I arrive home one afternoon after an in-class discussion of the first two chapters of Dolan's book. A package waits for me next to the coffee maker. Using my keys to rip the plastic, my new Text and Performance Quarterly falls to the floor. Scanning the authors' names (Do I know anyone?), I see names that have become very familiar to me: Della Pollock, Norman Denzin, D. Soyini Madison… halfway down the first page of John Warren's introduction, I read magic words: "2005 National Communication Association Convention" and "Performance Ethnography: A Temperature Taking" (317). I experience my own little utopic performative moment.

While TPQ does not "perform" in the sense of the live performers discussed in Dolan's Utopia, its serendipitous arrival on my counter offers resuscitation to my once "dead" scribbles. The ephemeral performance of the panel participants at NCA, lost to time, bad handwriting, and the momentary attention-lapses when I concentrated more on my tired legs rather than on the conversation in the room, is born-again in text, text(s) that are at once static and performative as I re-imagine Della, Soyini, and Norm giving *me* their words in a hotel conference room in

Boston.[64] Now their words, along with others', are mine to keep on my bookshelf. Their words speak about ethnography; specifically, their words speak about performance ethnography.

Instead of those people who *I* have come to call upon for everything ethnographic, Dolan cites "performance ethnography" as belonging to Joni Jones. Unfamiliar with Joni Jones' work, I set TPQ aside and dive into a publication with which I am much less familiar: Theatre Topics. Most simply, Jones describes "performance ethnography" as "how culture is done in the body" (7). Jones writes of an experiential performance staged in Austin, Texas; this performance is ethnography, embodied. Counting on an audience of persons generally interested (or at least open to) expanding their knowledge of culture and its creation, Jones' performance ethnography of Yoruban culture in Nigeria strives to "disrupt notions of 'the real' by encouraging the participants to question what they accept as truth, and to examine how their truths are shaped by their perspectives" (1). This performance provides participants with Yoruban clothing/culture to "try on" (literally and figuratively) as they move through the performance space (4-7). Jones articulates "performance ethnography" as a method that finds its foundation in the assumptions that both identity and interactions are improvised from cultural guidelines, and that participation is excellent pedagogy (7).

Highlighting the necessities of context, performers' accountabilities, ethnographers' subjectivities, textual/performative multivocalities, audience participation, and the ethics of representation (8-11), Jones offers a list for the making of performance ethnographies, six principles that underscore both the personal involvement in ethnographic fieldwork and the bodily understanding attained through performance. This very metonymic list paradoxically makes both invisible and very present her laborious efforts of research, compilation, scripting,

[64]I spend enough time with "them" in print to, in this moment of elation, refer to them on a first-name basis, although I would never dream to do so "in person" without an introduction or invitation.

casting, rehearsing, preparing, and all of the other labors of love (and hate) necessary to produce a performance, ethnographic or not. She argues that performing ethnography provides a new authenticity based on the shared and mutually constructed bodily experiences of performers and audiences, who "feel themselves as both familiar and strange" as they navigate the gaps in cross-cultural embodiments (14). Cross-cultural embodiments in this performance ethnography take the form of actors "playing" as Yoruba, Yoruban women "playing" themselves, a white woman "playing" African-American Joni, and an Austin-based audience "playing" ethnographer(s). The multivocality in this performance ethnography comes from multiple forms of information (video, relics, etc), the casting of multiple persons, and asking the audience to participate in the "tour" or "trying on" of Yoruban culture.

For Dolan, the utopian performative moves the audience member into the "theoretical and experiential realm of affect, into the live, present-tense relationship between performers and spectators in a particular historical moment and a specific geographical location" (65). In moments of utopia in performance, I momentarily experience an inter*personal* relationship between myself as performer and the audience or myself as audience member and the performers, and the theory that I study becomes engrained in my flesh. Frederick Corey would argue that these moments make us question how we "audience ourselves," as well (332). These moments, though, do not end at the relationship between audience and performer; these moments elevate those present *now* into a time beyond the present into an imagined "no-place" *future*. This future is an ideal that imagines the utopia felt in performance rippling out into other social realities (Dolan 34). The multivocalities of the performances that Dolan calls "performance ethnographies" allow Dolan to "listen differently" – spectators are enabled to listen "from a position of embodied imagination in which other people's lives become meaningfully detailed alongside our own" (88). The multivocalities in these performances are expressed by the

performers, altering their physical mannerisms to allow various characters to "possess" the body. Tomlin, Hoch, and Smith have quite separate "characters" in performance; both Tomlin and Hoch create personas that are fictional, based in their observations and experiences (76). Only Smith performs "mimicries" of "real people whose stories, words, and gestures refer back to a particular, historical body in time and space" (86).

Within these multivocalities lie the utopic performative potentials of performance ethnography. When spectators are required to do the work of the ethnographer (listen, watch, participate), we are moved forward by a critical pedagogy of participation (by listening) that renders us nothing but citizens in always already re-imagined democracy.[65] The same multivocality *could* be true about performance ethnography as done in writing. D. Soyini Madison encourages me to embody a dialogic performative in order to allow (more!) others to jump in for the ride/write ("Dialogic" 321). In writing performance ethnography, this dialogism manifests itself in the creation of space for readers to "plug in" to the text, requiring many various strands of discourse, text, and language. I am encouraged to disappear into the body of the field, immersing the scholar/ethnographer/writer into the undulations of the ethnographic text/performance.[66] "Democracy-as-citizenship is radically performative, dialogical, transgressive, pedagogical," posits Denzin ("Pedagogy" 333), and the hope in the theater lies in the possibility of this democracy. Writing about performance, then, must not lose this radically democratic possibility – hope.



Figure 5 - Circle feet

[65] This is the "embodiment of community" of which Dolan writes (80).

[66] This is Pollock's "immersion" ("Making" 326).

MARKET(ED) WANDERING, PERFORMED

On December 17, 2005, fourteen people from Baton Rouge, Louisiana and its surrounding areas participated in performance ethnography, ethnography performed, at the Red Stick Farmers Market. As the culmination of a semester's worth of ethnographic field research at this Saturday-morning marketplace, I "hosted" a performance of sorts to "introduce" my colleagues at the market and in academe (as well as a few others) to one another and to the method of co-creating the performances of ethnographer-informant and ethnography-writer/performer. Amidst the booths set up by the vendors, BREADA has a table of its own, where volunteers sell small cups of CC's (Community Coffee) for a dollar, point newer patrons to the nearest restroom (inside the parking garage/Main Street Market just across the street) and sell various Red Stick Farmers Market merchandise (such as canvas tote bags and ball caps).[67] I volunteered to (wo)man the BREADA table on the morning of December 17, and invited colleagues and friends from the Louisiana State University community to attend the market and my performance, to lend their hands to serve a few cups of coffee and chat about their experiences in the market/market-performance.



Figure 6 - Yams and Feet

A few days earlier, in the midst of final papers and exams, red plates adorned with mini-presents wait in the mailboxes of some of my colleagues. My baking skills have not yet been tested by this public. The cookies on these plates are both Christmas presents and invitations to a performance. Each recipient of the cookies has already received a small handmade invitation to

[67] BREADA, the Baton Rouge Economic and Agricultural Alliance, created the marketplace as a means of community-growth and economic stability for both downtown Baton Rouge and small Louisiana Farmers.

serve coffee at the Red Stick Farmers Market on the morning of Saturday, December 17, 2005. Just a few days before the marketplace performance, baking completed, the time has come to issue official performance invitations. Folded underneath each cookie-plate is a sheet of paper with the following "history"/invitation/explanation of lagniappe.

la napa (the gift) goes

Creole and becomes

lagniappe

In The Poetics of Space, Gaston Bachelard writes about creatures that live in shells. Everything about creatures that live in shells is dialectical – "since it [the shell-living creature] does not come out entirely, the part that comes out contradicts the part that remains inside" (108). On the quest to know a creature that lives in a shell, it becomes necessary to watch from the outside (to see the part that comes out of the shell) *and* to play on the inside of the shell (to learn about the part that stays hidden from the public view).

lagniappe

It is still used in the Gulf states, especially in South Louisiana, to denote a little bonus that a friendly shopkeeper might add to a purchase.

At the Red Stick Farmers Market, vendors and patrons interact across a visible line that creates the invisible edge of a shell.

Patrons walk down the aisle in the middle of the street, while vendors spend their Saturday mornings between truck beds and tables.

The visible line: the tables and booths.

The invisible edge: you cannot feel it unless you have been invited to cross it.

What is on the inside of these vendor-shells?

Figure 7 - Lagniappe, con't on next page

la·gniappe

By extension, it may mean an
extra or unexpected gift or benefit.

These cookies are Christmas lagniappe; on Saturday, you're going to help me give some of my own kitchen-made lagniappe to these vendors who have shared so much with me this semester.
There's a method to this baked-good madness, though, I promise.

I thought, and I thought, and I thought some more about how to show you this farmers' market world that exists on the other side of that shell. I decided that you must cross it yourself.

This is an experiment.

"Lagniappe," I should say.

> This little lagniappe might just give you a way into that space, where you may be introduced to the storytelling neighborhood in which these Saturday morning vendors live. So come to the market, walk around and do your "market things," then come and see me for some lagniappe to give to a few special vendors.
>
> And then you get to tell me *all about it* when you come into *our* booth space behind the coffee table.

If performance ethnography has the potential to create democracy-as-citizenship as Denzin argues, does reading a written text about performance ethnography have the same effect? Jones' articulation of her particular performance ethnography gives me, both a student and practitioner of performance ethnography, a method of "doing" ethnographic performance. What is lost in this discussion is an evocation of the performativity of the ethnographic performance. By "performative," I mean something's ability to create action through repetition. Dolan's utopic performative rests in the cementing of community/connections between the performer and the performed, the performed and the audience, the audience and the performer. While I

understand Jones' method in making and doing performance, her discussion does not move me to make new performance, to feel the possibility of social change that can occur when a performance is *audienced collectively*. Watching performances very often makes me want to make performances; reading about performances very rarely makes me want to make performance. As a mode of publication, performance can bring research to life for an audience of people often outside of those who read journals in communication studies, performance studies, and theatre, including, very often, those who "inform" ethnographic research. As a mode of publication, writing about performance has the potential to reach an audience unable to attend a live performance, but writing also potentially robs a performance of its performativity.

ETHNOGRAPHY, PERFORMITIVITY

Peggy Phelan argues that "performance's only life is in the present" (146). Performance *only* lives in the present; tokens and/or repetitions of performance only serve as relics to spur memories of performances never to be performed again (Phelan 146). While her view on performance appears very nihilistic, Phelan does address the issue of documenting (in language) performance as a challenge to "re-mark again the performative possibilities of writing itself" (148). Exemplified earlier by the disappearance of the performance of the speakers on the panel at the NCA convention into a flurry of memories and scribbled notes, performance *is* ephemeral. However, the arrival of TPQ and that journal's ability to evoke the lost performance gives the text therein great power. While she argues that applying the rules of written language onto a performance event irrevocably changes the event, Phelan does not advocate *not* writing about performance. Phelan's suggestions for achieving performativity in writing about performance lie in her advocacy of metonymy over metaphor (150-151). Metonymy provides an axis of addition and association in language that enables an audience member to insert her body into the text, "trying on" the written language as her own, like how Jones's audience "tried on" Yoruban

clothing. Metaphor, posits Phelan, operates through the conflation of one thing into another, "as if" one "thing" can be equally exchanged for another thing (151). If I wrote, "The market is bustling today," the "missing" word is *people*. People are what make bustling happen at the market; in the metonymic statement "The market is bustling today," the immediate association of people to bustling. People's activities change the state of the market, which is now "bustling" because *people* are bustling about the space. A metaphorical statement, such as, "The market is a zoo today," conflates "market" with "zoo." Rather than add or associate the bustling bodies into an image of the market (as in the metonymic example), you (the reader) would probably imagine a zoo instead of a market. The market is not literally a zoo; conflating the market with the zoo does not allow you to add or associate anything to/with your image of the market. Moving from metaphor to metonymy, one moves from a "grammar of words to the grammar of the body" (Phelan 150).[68]

While Phelan does not address the issue of performative writing as explicitly as others (Pollock, Madison, and Fenske), the discussion of metonymy and metaphor in performance certainly helps to clarify her thoughts on the *doing* of performative writing. Metonymy is "additive and associative;" the holes in the list highlight the absence of that which is not present (Phelan 150). The photographs I took of (mostly) feet are metonymic "lists" that evoke the number of images, the time spent at the market, the missing bodies of the market goers (and of the ethnographer), the faces of the vendors whose hands largely shaped the performance of ethnography in text and performance, and the absence of my university colleagues from visual representation. The pictures of feet cause the association with both the body taking the shot as well as the bodies attached to the feet scurrying about the marketplace. These photographs are

[68] This illustration very closely follows Phelan's (150), using market-words instead of her kettle example.

not meant to be metaphors "for life" or for the literal "walking in another's shoes," although I am sure that they could certainly be read that way if so desired.

In terms of Jill Dolan's radically democratic utopic performatives, how can we better *feel* the performative moments in conversation *about* performance ethnography – the moments that elevate us as an audience to moments of community and endless potential? Corey charges us to conceptualize performance ethnography as a form of textual engagement, which can offer us greater possibilities of understanding audience – "how we audience ourselves, each other, and audience cultural change" (332). We turn, then, to evocative, performative writing – writing that has the potential in its metonymy to evoke bodies and potentialities otherwise written out of text. Madison writes that "performative writing as a relational act means that we do not write purely as individuals. We live in a world with Others, and their imprint is upon who we are and what we write" (Critical 193). Writing in which an author employs self-reflexivity (making known the politics of construction), embracing multivocality (celebrating the impact of Others in the creation of a text), presents an audience of readers with possibilities to experience utopia in the performance of the text.[69]

COOKIE CRITICISM, SCURRYING

Mindy Fenske writes: "Performative writing is fraught with risk because it has been the object of critical suspicion" (156). She advocates, instead, for another type of performance criticism – hypertextual criticism. Hypertext is an interactive text that has holes and caveats for the audience/reader to engage, inviting a "consideration of a different sort of movement through the process of signification" (146). While hypertext has the additive and associative qualities of

[69] Self-reflexivity and self-reflection are important terms to differentiate. Self-reflexivity is an author's turning on the self, questioning and making apparent the politics of the construction of the text. Self-reflection is an "auto" turn, offering information about the authorial self.

Phelan's metonymic statements, the leaps required of the audience who reads hypertext are much greater. As performance criticism, hypertextual criticism is not a breaking down of the dialectic(s) of meaning/body, but rather an "addition to the dialectic because it is not easily situated within the dialectic" (144). Performative writing could *potentially* be a type of hypertext, in that it is both evocative and (when used as a tool in academic writing) aimed at exploding some sort of meaning while actively engaging a reader in the passage. Without prescribing a method of hypertextual criticism, (for if prescribed, then the criticism could not be hypertextual), Fenske offers two examples/exemplars of hypertextual movement in performance criticism; these models are termite (criticism as consuming text) and viral (criticism as infection) (152-156). Let's try this.

I hate being sick; I take Vitamin C and avoid sick people to prevent viruses from getting into my body. I hate cockroaches; I set traps and spray, sometimes putting my own health at risk in order to ensure their death and/or invisibility (from my sight). I am, however, a baker, and baking has very much engrained itself into the fabric of my ethnographic performance at the farmers' market and on the pages written about the farmers' market. I recently made a performance that helped me to engage and investigate works by Martin Heidegger and Hans Ulrich Gumbrecht. I took my classmates and professor into a quad-like area on LSU's campus and played a tape-recording of myself reading a text about trees and origins while drowning that tape in music from a CD player. The technologies were stacked on top of one another; the bulky tape recorder/player served as base for the CD player. I turned on the recordings, put on my headphones, and walked over to the railing of a crawl-space/basement exit, and proceeded to do ballet barré work while my classmates spread out in the space. I have no idea what happened during this performance; my focus was on my performing, athletic body completing the movements that it was once very used to practicing.

Later, after watching a performance paying homage to the class' performances (among many other complications), I left the theater saddened that my performance had not been evoked. My classmates looked puzzled when I told them this; a scene with "ants in the pants" in this classmate's performance was the homage/evocation of mine. Ants? My performance was about trees, presence and meaning effects, ballet, Heidegger, Gumbrecht, the temple; my performance, to me, was not about ants. To my classmates, left standing around the base of a large tree covered with thousands and thousands of ants, my performance was very much about ants. ANTS! Thousands and thousands of little segmented bodies competed for attention as I danced in my own headphoned world. I include this side story now to highlight one thing; as much as I want to believe that my performance at the farmers' market was about co-performance, the method of ethnography, the ethics of care and "world traveling," to those involved, my performance was very much about *cookies*. Thus, we have cookie criticism. There are three important things to remember about cookie criticism: many of the ingredients do not taste good when alone; cookies require both sweet, wonderful things and more "base" ingredients such as flour and butter/shortening; and the cohesive whole, the end product, must bake for some time and then sit and cool so as not to burn the mouth and fingers. We are back to the beginning of this chapter, with a woman standing barefoot in her Louisiana kitchen, wondering how on earth how much time has passed. The story repeats. Baking cookies requires patience.

BAKING PERFORMANCE, WANDERING

In October, I help Glen, the mushroom seller, box up blueberry preserves and Muskogee jellies. The sides of my face still ache some from laughing at the antics of Thibodaux and Boudreaux, so carefully hiding the social commentary that drives the telling of their stories. The sun wins the battle against the "cold morning" that brought everyone outside in jeans and jackets; they peel back their layers as they gather up their tables and remaining produce. I pull

down one side of the tent; Mr. Buddy walks over and grabs another. Between the three of us, Glen's tent collapses in no time at all. "Nice seeing you," Mr. Buddy puts in as he goes back to his pecans. I gather up my things: three bags of mushrooms, four cartons of guava/pineapple fruits with an unpronounceable name, three persimmons, my camera and notepad, and a crumpled cinnamon roll wrapper and 2lb cloth bag of "stone ground" cornmeal. (No preservatives, keep refrigerated). Every week that I go to the farmers' market, I spend less money and leave with more goods.

Glen says, "See you next week, Jes," and waves goodbye.

Mr. Buddy hears him; "No, she won't be here next week. She has a family reunion." Turning to me, Mr. Buddy continues, "You'll be back the first weekend in November. That'll be a good day."

After a semester of giving and receiving comments, feedback, criticism, performance help, etc. inside and outside of the ethnography classroom, the relationships borne among colleagues incited the giving of lagniappe (in whatever form of lagniappe we individually had to offer). For me, this type of lagniappe in December is as much fun to make and give as it is to receive. Admittedly, I also wanted to give my colleagues "a little somethin' extra" to convince them to sacrifice their Saturday mornings to volunteer and wander around a marketplace performance. After several months of attending the farmers' market, I was in many ways an "honorary" member of the community of vendors at the market. The transition from market-goer to member of the vendor community had drastically changed my marketplace experience; my invitation into the vendor space was offered after several weeks of "being there."[70] Wanting

[70] Clifford Geertz writes that the primary task in doing ethnography is learning how to converse *with* the people whom you study ("Thick" 24). After weeks of being in the market, watching, learning, and engaging in small talk, this invitation came at a point when both the vendors and I felt ready to begin crossing borders.

to give my colleagues a sense of the happenings behind the scenes at the farmers' market *and* at LSU, I desired to make an ethnographic performance that challenged the notions of representation and co-participation while still accurately and ethically introducing them to the simplicities and complexities of the communities at the Red Stick Farmers Market and in the university classroom. So I asked my colleagues to attend the farmers market, and I asked the vendors with whom I had developed relationships if they would chat with my colleagues for a moment as they (colleagues) delivered something to each of them. I began to bake.

She spends an hour on the phone with her patient mother, who reads to her far-away daughter from the recipe cards carefully filed in the treasured wooden box tucked into her kitchen cabinet. As she reads the ingredients and portions written on the cards, she shares stories about the women (mostly) who gave her these recipes, as well as the "tricks" that can only be learned through years of repetition. Her words enter into an ear deafened by hands that already know many of these tricks; the younger woman's hands have practiced this same Christmas cookie regime from a time long before she could (or was allowed to) follow a recipe on her own. This year, embarking on her first solo- Christmas baking adventure, she chooses not to make a few types of icing-involved cookies, electing instead to make more traditional oatmeal-raisin cookies and *her* much-loved (and embarrassingly easy) chocolate and peanut butter fudge. She repeats this cookied tradition with slight differences.

Regardless of my sentimental attachments to the act of baking Christmas cookies, my colleagues' appreciation of the baked goods make the recipe-transcription and making process completely "worth it," as they try each type and trade each other for newly-claimed favorites.

The morning of December 17, 2005, I arrived at the Red Stick Farmers Market at 7:30am, dismayed at the grey, rainy weather. The cold in Louisiana can be biting, even if the temperatures do not drop as low as they do in regions north of here. I pulled into the parking

garage adjacent to the street market, and the interior of the structure was a-flurry with people setting up tents. On rainy days (such as this December morning), the market moves inside the parking garage. The market is truly "rain or shine." Somewhat disoriented at the space change, as the "walking maps" for my performers no longer held true to the spatial arrangement, I scanned the vendors to look for familiar faces.



Figure 8 - Cropped feet

The few faces of the vendors with whom I became close framed the many feet that passed in and out of the market space. I found Derek (the BREADA Director of Operations) and we set up the coffee table. Just before eight o'clock, I wandered to each of the vendor participants/performers to remind them that my colleagues would be visiting the market today, and that each of those colleagues had something to give them. As I walked back to the table, the first the LSU participant/performer wandered into the entrance of the parking garage. She came over to the coffee table and I took her things, then invited her to walk around the market and to do a little bit of shopping/browsing/looking – whatever she might normally do at the market. Twenty minutes passed before she came back to the coffee table with some bags (and Creole tomato soup, to take home for her family's lunch). I handed her a stack of red plastic plates; they were the same plates on which she had received a plate of cookies of her own. On the top of one of the plates, I placed individually-wrapped pieces of banana chocolate-chip bread and a slip of paper with descriptions of the recipients of the goodies. I asked her to deliver the goods and to return to the table to tell me about her experience in the market. She returned to work at the coffee table with a grin on her face. She expressed an initial nervousness; when the threat of changing traditional role interactions (between vendor/patron, which had been performed during the initial "wandering" through the market) loomed, she realized that she was performing "me" as

ethnography student. *This entailed a lot of work*. When presented with the baked goods, however, the vendor who she approached realized the connection between this colleague/performer/audience member of the young ethnographer he had come to know and fell into the vendor/storyteller role performed between him (as "informer") and myself ("ethnographer"). They chatted for a few moments before she moved along. More colleagues came; they wandered, delivered goodies, came back and helped me at the coffee table for a while.

I return to the market in November after the family reunion that Mr. Buddy had mentioned. I buy a cinnamon roll and sit on the sidewalk to pick at layers (of pastry and text) while jotting notes on my pink notepad, aware that my memory of the marketplace performance unfolding around me is but fleeting. The observer becomes the observed. Rather, the observer's cinnamon roll becomes the observed – the new gaze (glaze?) comes from the blue eyes of my new pink jacketed two year old friend (her fingernails are pink, too). I do not know this little girl; I later write about her as "Miss Ponytail." Her grandma offers her an oatmeal cookie and she joins me on the edge of the sidewalk. We share our sweet breakfasts and converse in a language that we both seem to understand, noises made by chickens and dogs. I write in my field notebook:

> They must trust me; they have no idea who I am. Dad glances at us every once in a while from his conversation; Miss Ponytail easily convinces Grandma to indulge her with the other half of the cookie. Who is the lone woman on the sidewalk, dressed for summer when the rest of the market goers have on appropriate fall clothing? Tank top and skirt next to jeans, jacket and light-up tennis shoes checked out by every little boy rubber-necking from his stroller vantage-point. She's prey for their sight, although the lights on her shoes are

surely the main attraction. The sequins on my flip-flops certainly do not attract the same reaction from the young men passing me by. Should I take a few cues from her?

On the morning of December 17, the observer (wandering ethnographer) became the observable market vendor. Although not a vendor (as a BREADA volunteer), I was also not *not* a vendor. Standing in vendor-space (behind a table) was not a new experience in the marketplace, but having real responsibilities in the operation of the market, responsibilities that prevented me from wandering freely about, chatting with vendors and patrons and sharing sticky breakfasts with small children, changed the context of my use of the space. University colleagues performed ethnographer, wandering around the market alone (as I had done upon first moving to Baton Rouge, lonely and looking "for a place to land,") while market vendors performed themselves, as both vendors and vendor/storytellers, highlighting the variances in those two roles. I was lonely. I hoped that my colleagues would come back to the booth to keep me company, to entertain me with their stories about the market and their weeks. I wanted to know what my university colleagues and farmers' market friends talked about, how they interacted, what had gone on in their lives since the last time that we had met. I had set up this experience for colleagues at the market and in the university. Both of these communities co-produced the paper that I had handed in the previous week; I wanted to "give something back," as Madison encourages us to do through this performance.[71]

[71] Madison advocates a "critical ethnography" (Critical). The word "critical," she writes, indicates that our "intent will always already encompass moral action" (83). "As critical ethnographers," she writes, "we are compelled to contribute to the quality of life and to the enlivening possibilities of those we study" (83). As critical ethnographers, always already intending to act morally, we must not only *take* from our co-performers in ethnography, but do for them somehow, acting reciprocally.

In order to create an experience of "audience" community, I opened space for those classmates to discuss their experiences in the market as they performed both market-goer and market-ethnographer (me, in essence, at various points in the process of *doing* ethnography at the market). I believed that I had written myself out of the performance. Merely a facilitator, I baked contentedly, writing and grading in between chirps of the magnetized digital timer that alerted me to switch racks or take baking sheets from the oven. I found myself lonely, wanting to perform as storyteller/ethnographer for an audience that did not exist. The people who bought coffee from me did not want to stand around and talk; I would have loved for them to have done so. No – I was the vendor/volunteer, not quite a vendor because I did not grow and make the coffee that I sold, but not also not quite a volunteer because I knew too much about the goings on at the market. When colleagues stopped by after their marketplace performances/handing out of baked goods, I could "perform" for them my knowledge and stories about the market as they shared stories of their experiences with me. I, supposedly written out of this performance meant to "give back" to these communities, found myself entirely more implicated and affected than I anticipated. No longer free to move about at will, my new, static position in the marketplace left me looking not for someone to engage, but rather for someone to engage *me*. Not until the loneliness of this new role encompassed me did I recognize my performance.

> Finding our feet, an unnerving business which never more than distantly succeeds, is what ethnographic research consists of as a personal experience […] We are not, or at least I am not, seeking either to become natives (a compromised word in any case) or to mimic them. (Geertz "Thick" 13)

I wish that I had a camera to take a picture of my feet at this moment. My footprints are irrevocably all around all of these other feet.

CHAPTER FIVE – DIRT, HISTORY, AND GROWING ETHNOGRAPHY

DUSTY IMAGES, MARKETPLACE

Sawdust from the basement workshop has worked its way through the many layers of images that collected in this old shoebox, size thirteen. The "good" pictures are all upstairs, encased chronologically in plastic sheets in the family albums. Her grandmother gave her mother a nearly empty brown sandwich bag "full" of childhood photographs; her mother's mother did not take time to create photographed archives. When this daughter became a mother she vowed to document moments of her daughters' lives. Living amidst her father's woodworking tools and old license plates, *these* images are either duplicates of those already archived upstairs, or they are images not important enough to archive, but still not disposable. She selects one photograph and carefully holds its edges. With a puff of air she blows the sawdust from the shiny surface so as not to scratch the faces.[72] Two young girls, one taller than

[72] Carol Mavor, in "Touching Netherplaces," must wear white gloves while perusing the Mumby Box, a box which holds the photographs of working-class women collected by Arthur Mumby. While this collection contains many photographs of many women, both Mavor and Mumby share a particular interest in a woman called Hannah (Cullwick), a lower servant. Rather than cement Hannah in a power-relationship with Mumby, thereby making her disappear, Mavor's essay "registers her as invisible" (195). Invisibility, far from disappearance, is called from Maurice Merleau-Ponty's efforts to "imagine the other (as well as the subject) without sacrificing of closing off the possibilities of his or her identity" (195). Mavor's white gloves that she wears as a historian starkly contrast with the photographs of Hannah's bruised, torn, callused, and blackened hands, implicating her in the process of perusing the archive and writing about Hannah. Mavor concludes: "I close the box and take off my white gloves that are covered with a black soot that is impossible to see. Knowing that the box never *really* contained [Hannah], knowing that her ashes will never rest, knowing that I can never wash her off, I know that I love her and that she can never be mine" (227). When exploring in an expanded archive when writing histories, our encounters should leave us somewhat "dirty," the "dirt" forgotten, a large stain, something loved or not even liked (or anywhere in between) that works itself under your nails and fills your vehicle on the way home (Madison "Dialogic" 323).

the other, stand holding the hands of an older woman with a square face. The girls' button-up coats swallow their jumpers; they wear white stockings and Mary Janes. The littler one wears a winter bonnet tied tightly underneath her chin. The day is grey. The girls are very young; the older one cannot be more than four or five years old. The little girls' parents have gone away; their fathers' parents have come into town to stay. The little girls' grandparents tell stories about their parents, great aunts, and uncles; the little girls' grandparents tell stories about the people who made the antique furniture in their houses, about the reasons why both of the girls have the greenest eyes and the jawbones that they do; they tell the little girls about the women whose names they now share. The three women stand in the grey wet wind, holding hands in a cemetery with grey headstones all around them. They are smiling.

This is meta-history; this is meta-ethnography.[73] This is autobiographical performance of the making of an ethnography in this moment in time, after the "ethnography" has been written.[74] What's in the history of a moment? *Gather round, pick up the conchs and clams from the shore of the sea. She will swallow your footsteps back into herself, and this will but all fade away.*

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[73] In this genealogy of meta-ethnography/meta-history, I make many leaps and bounds between points on this "family tree" of writing ethnography. You can read through the text without the explanations in the footnotes, enjoying the aesthetic qualities of the writing, making your own general connections between the various performances and practices that will appear. If you desire, however, the footnotes will articulate further the leaps, highlighting the implications inherent in the writing/doing of ethnography and history.

[74] Of performance and performativity, Judith Hamera writes, "[they] proceed from the premise that culture, and the myriad acts of daily poiesis that produce it, are always already in motion…" (62). Writing about performances to write a genealogy of making ethnography only makes sense; in the politics of creating an ethnographic history *my* memory jumps and fails and is "continually produced through ongoing dances between there and then, here and now; places created out of spaces, artifacts become animated through consumption" (Hamera 62), implicating me in the process of this production in its making both "here" (in this chapter) and "there" (in the previous two).

Grey metal makes lines through the space; grey metal anchors grey metal that rises in this paint-chipped room underneath rooms where grey matter(s) rush past the lips. Grey metal makes shelves, grey metal makes rows; grey metal shelves grow up out of the linoleum tiled-floor. The edges peel back; there are no new technologies in this grey place. Black boxes and cords archived, numbered with stenciled white letters, on rows and rows of grey metal. We search for the perfect box, shopping in the grey sterility accented by the scant sunlight casting shadows of the shelves on the peeled-back floors. We move through rows; who archives in this place? He swears that the black box for which I search does not exist; the coveted black box that I search for, surely, buried long ago. She is old, an archaic remnant who once belonged in this space, pushed aside by newer and smaller black boxes.[75]



Figure 9 - Market Reflection

[75] The old battery-operated sound recorder for which I searched finally revealed herself in the back room on a shelf of equipment thought to no longer work correctly. "She," personified, as her ears and tape-wound memory picked up and preserved sounds that my body failed to hear and/or remember. I have two perfectly recorded tapes; she made those for me. I also used my digital camera and the old manual camera. I found that I wanted large equipment to feel less like a spy, stalking traitors and victims on some international clandestine mission. If interested in spy cameras, however, you should visit the Pinhole Spy Camera website at http://pinholespy.com. The site provides excellent step-by-step directions for making your *own* spy camera. You can be the "real deal" with a hand-crafted instrument of precision.

DANCING BODIES, MOVING IN SPACE[76]

She walks through the marketplace, propelled through the Louisiana morning. She carries her notebook and tape-recorder. The needle spikes and leaps with the pounding of the feet, the pestle; the needle spikes and leaps with the rhythm of the French accents ricocheting between the mirrored looking-glasses of windows and glass doors.

She marks beats of steps on her taught thighs. Notes travel through her fingertips. She taps the table, perched with one leg raised like the flamingo in Spanish Town next door, cup of coffee in hand. She taps the keyboard, cup of coffee on the desk, head cocked and contemplative – a loaded gun. Words make rhythms as they burst forth and she taps her fingertips, at the mercy of the music.

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[76] Walking through the farmers' market, one disciplined body communes with another disciplined body. The practices of dancing, writing, reading, farming, walking, and gardening all impact the body; these practices all discipline the body. Writing of dancers, Hamera identifies places of community in professional companies, semi-professional companies, recreation centers, and neighborhood studies (51). "In each of these locations, in myriad idiosyncratic ways, communities of dancers deploy and circulate rituals and stories through and about performance that help them examine and navigate relations between the body, agency, and time" (51). Time at the farmers' market is limited; it only lasts for four hours. Time, for farmers and dancers, shapes livelihoods – farmers by seasons and dancers by seasons of life. Time for writers provides *kairos* for an opportune time to make an argument; time shapes the body time and time again planting seed, planting feet, and planting words on paper. At the Red Stick Farmers Market, the performances of farmer, ethnographer, dancer, writer, reader, and walker, embodied and interacting, both reflect disciplines on the bodies and converse to help "examine and navigate relations between body, agency, and time" (Hamera 51). The language in this section of this piece is meant to evoke the body of the dancer *doing* ethnography at the market, her body brushing against and juxtaposing bodies disciplined by farming and writing. The bodies that carry out these practices are not separate from one another, nor are they engaged in singular practices.

Excesses of the melted tendon overextend backwards. The needle spikes and leaps with the pounding of the passers' feet, the pestle; the needle spikes and leaps with the hand-clapped ruptures of word rhythms to which she taps her fingers.

The music and movements are learned, poised; the work is exhausting. She feels heat on her shoulders. Straps pull at her shoulders' skin. She feels the creeping tension growing between them. Her arms are full, tired from opening, closing, lifting, drawing; her arms are fatigued from embracing; she continues to practice.

Callused tarsals commune with one another, shaped by years of flesh friction. A writer's lump converses with dancer's toes as the farmer uses callused hands to speak of the origins of those callused tools. Flesh memories, hands and feet bear blood-stained skin memories of planting, lifting, and heaving. Blood-stained skin memories cover joints that creak in the cold, when the cold days come.

She retreats to the parallel horizontals when the openness of the space overwhelms her; she retreats to the corners to watch, to count the spikes bounced on the knee of the passing mother, baby and bag of vegetables quivering in the stroller – to count the spikes on the sharpened pencils – to count the spikes extended from the palm gracelessly flung out to catch herself as she loses balance. Striking, plotted, movements away from the core, stricken into the humid air; sweat drips dot the ground. Heated muscles pump, with each step blood rushes through veins; messages leap across synapses. Body recall. Her body knows the rhythm of performance years before vocabulary overwhelms her presence. Her fingers tap meaning into space, she gathers, makes, moves, tears - she goes home.

AN ETHNOGRAPHIC TOUR[77]

> We'll cut our bodies free from the tethers of this scene/ Start a brand new colony/ Where everything will change/ We'll give ourselves new names (identities erased)/ The sun will heat the grounds/ Under our bare feet in this brand new colony/ Everything will change... (Postal Service).

The green overhangs seal the deal, for me – look at how they hang over the benches! The color looks like palm trees. Did you know that palm trees and banana trees *grow* here? As the sun moves up with the morning, though, they don't provide any shade, since they're on the West side of the building. I'm going to walk backwards so that I can talk to you; warn me if I'm about to bump into someone or something. I gave tours in my bare feet at Butler; normally the Indiana sidewalks were too cold for bare feet by this time of the year. This is Main Street right here; this store here is where you can buy that great 47 lb. Rooster pinot noir; it's always closed on Saturdays (and Sundays, too, I assume).

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[77] Michael Bowman writes of the disconnect between the "staged" performance of a southern tour-guide and the "backstage" performance of this same young woman, and how these performances of "acquiescence and attack" both contradict and complement one another (153). This young woman performed as a southern belle, wearing her "dolly-[dress]" and enchanting tourists with her "cute little southern [accent]," (151), just as I (as thesis-writing ethnographer) attempt to walk like, dress as, speak to the issues important to, and even cook as *both* the people in this academic field *and* the people at the farmers' market, taking you, the readers, (who at the same time are working as ethnographers), on a tour of ethnography and historical impact. Much like the tour-guide with whom Bowman is enamored, however, I cannot remain "in character" seamlessly, as I am sure you've seen throughout this thesis. Slipping in and out of character(s) and performing as too-excited writer, "tourist" of the past, and teachers/"tour-guides" of someone else's past, the "acquiescence and attack" (153) with which I attempt this feat both disseminates information and provides the "experimental context" of performance as outlined by Bowman (154).

Parking is free here on the weekends, but finding parking during downtown weekends is never an issue. This is just another option. When it rains, and it often does, the market goes on. Glen, the man who sells the mushrooms and jellies, says that the market is just like the postman; it goes on, "Rain, sleet, snow…" How does the rest of the saying go? The big post office on 8th Avenue in New York has it scrolled across the top of the building, and I always tried to quiz myself as I neared the building to see if I could remember, but it always did and still does evade me.[78] When it rains, everyone just pulls their trucks inside this garage and sets up like they do on the street. There are just as many people here on those rainy Saturday mornings as there are on the sunny ones; sometimes there are more. During the fall, early games on sunny mornings keep people away, so sometimes the nicest days see the fewest people (or the most people in purple and gold). So, more people than you would think come to *do* the market in here.

After I moved here, the first weekend that it rained was the weekend of the first hurricane. I didn't come to the market that weekend, or the one after, so my first time at the market was outside, but there were not very many people here. I somehow got myself stuck on the roof of that building over there, the one that's all boarded up now, on the Saturday night

[78] Writing about the debate surrounding "recent American historiography," Lawrence Levine posits that the debate of "political history versus social and cultural history, or narrative history versus analytic history, or fragmentary history versus history" only make sense when put into the context of what he calls "the root" of these issues (8). At the root of these debates is *the* debate "about the extent to which we should widen our historical net to include the powerless as well as the powerful, the followers as well as the leaders, the margins as well as the center, popular folk culture as well as high culture" (8). Moving so quickly from the words of a South Louisiana farmer to a national institution to my own encounters with the adages of that institution (and the faults of my memory), we see in an instant movement between a certainly powerful, nationalistic force (that shapes how we live) and the everyday sorts of forces enacted when we take an everyday statement from the Post Office and use it to describe the resilience (that's a way of life, not merely an adage) of farmers in a Baton Rouge parking garage on a rainy Saturday morning.

before the storm. The roof was dry, so I assume that the market was outside that day. The clouds were rolling in as we tried to figure out how to "get off the roof" before the hurricane. A man called "German" leaned over the edge of the roof and accidentally snapped the crest in half; the wood was rotten. In the end, the building manager said that no one really cared about the broken crest; the hurricane came the next day. We got off the roof and danced in the empty, empty street as the winds blew through and made the bushes dance with us.

Most of the farmers were affected by the storm, to some degree or another, whether the storm damaged their farming equipment or crops or a person in one of their lives. They'll all tell you about their experiences, but you have to hang around and give them a story before they'll give you theirs.[79] There is an ethics to asking those questions around here, you know. (We're a little more collectivistic here in South Louisiana than we are elsewhere, and I think I'm picking up some of those habits.) You might have to buy a jar of red zinger jelly and ask about red zingers to break the ice before you're invited to stick around. Do you know about red zinger jelly? "It's jelly, with a zing!" That's what Glen will tell you. You can tell them that you know me, if you want.



Figure 10 – Crestfallen

[79] Mr. Buddy – the one in suspenders – he sells pecans. He has twenty-four different types of pecans, I believe – he'll show you the display himself when you come to the market. Pecan trees are very brittle; their branches snap easily. In August of 2005, the winds of the hurricane whipped through his pecan trees and left many of them armless. The photographs of his pecan groves, their thick trunks still standing upright out of a mess of limbs and rubble, were among the images of the hurricane that affected me the most. That's a story I have to share with you about the hurricane and the market.

Talking to him about me will gain you entrance before asking about his jellies. You'd have to ask about red zinger, muskadine, wild plum, and probably the shiitakes, too, before you could ask about his thumb (or lack thereof) or about his mean Pentecostal wife. (When you meet her, that lovely, witty woman, you'll realize the extent of his kidding and probably doubt a few of the things that he has told you.)

If you talk to Glen now, when it's cold in December and the market is inside the garage on a rainy day, he'll let you stand next to his propane heater to warm up. Just be careful not to stand too close; your jacket will melt. That's what he did with a few of the people who experienced my performance in here last December. I got all thrown off that morning because it was rainy, and I had attached "maps" to go with the plates of cookies to be handed out and chatted-about.

The market feels different when it's in the garage, because everyone's out of order. I'm not sure how everyone is arranged on the street; if they go where they go every week because of tradition or territoriality, or if Derek or Copper have pre-determined spaces for everyone. Space is an issue, that's for certain. I asked Derek if I could perform as a vendor, and there was no space for an additional table. He didn't deny me space to perform, just space for the table that I needed to "do" the performance I originally had in mind. (It wasn't the *original* performance, anyhow; that had been done and was still being done by me and my audience – the ethnographer and her "subjects.") Anyone can perform at the market; it's free. I'm not a small Louisiana farmer; it would be hard to justify giving me one of their spaces (or future space that they will use). The market is only a block and four hours long, after all. When it rains, the market takes up the first row and a little around the corner; market-space is still confined. "Buy Fresh, Buy Local," doesn't end when we're buying from where we're parking. I just learned a few days ago that this garage is called "Galvez Garage." Who is/was Galvez?

AUTHENTIC JAUNTS

"In order to assure the consumer that they are buying authentic Louisiana products when shopping, we encourage Louisiana food producers to include the "Certified Product of Louisiana," "Certified Cajun Product of Louisiana," or "Certified Creole Product of Louisiana" logo on labels and packages of products grown, processed or packaged in Louisiana" ("Certified Logo Program").[80] At the farmers' market, there are many trucks with these certified stickers on

[80] According to a "Fun Farm Facts" flyer produced by the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry, there are over 550 agricultural products and food manufacturers in the state of Louisiana. "These companies ship products with a distinctive Louisiana flair and flavor all over the world." This paper was written in Louisiana, therefore it should bear the mark of "authentic" to Louisiana, correct? Disregard the fact that I am not from this place, that I learn about and am informed by historical and performance theories of people who may or may not have ever been to Louisiana; disregard the fact that the ink and the paper on which this history will be produced are more likely than not *not* from Louisiana soil; disregard the fact that many of the images and back stories provided in this paper have nothing (and everything) to do with "Louisiana history." Disregard all of those things; this paper was written in Louisiana and I claim it to be "authentic," therefore, I stamp *this* product with this seal of authentic Louisiana certification. Is this doing of ethnography an authentic product of Louisiana? David Lowenthal writes that "recognizing the past as a foreign country cost historians dear. Distanced and differentiated, it ceased to be a source of useful lessons and became a heap of quaint anachronisms" (231). Reading this statement, I momentarily think that I *ought* to label this thesis as authentically Louisianan, so that I don't indicate having thoughts about "Louisiana as a foreign country" (even though I am a foreigner in this place). Clifford Geertz, however, writes that while doing anthropology, the aim should be to write descriptions of people cast in terms that we imagine them to place upon what they live through, "the formulae they use to define what happens to them" ("Thick" 15). He continues to say just because an anthropologist writes descriptions of people based in those people's terms, the work produced is still *anthropology.* So while I might write in Baton Rouge of the Red Stick Farmers Market in *terms* that I imagine that people of the market would be comfortable with, the work that I produce isn't "authentically Louisianan;" this work is ethnographic.

them, advertising pride and authenticity. Labeling one's body Creole or Cajun is a modern act of authenticity once looked upon as lesser, false.[81]

In seventeenth-century New Spain (modern day Mexico), *la criolla*, the Spanish for "Creole," is a person born in the New World of Spanish parents. When the Spanish were arriving in New Spain (current day Mexico), oftentimes women of privilege were sent back to Spain upon becoming pregnant, not returning to New Spain until well after giving birth to their children. These children, born in Spain and raised in New Spain, retained the more-esteemed title of *los peninsulares*, thus enhancing their stations in the New World. Born in 1651, Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz was a *criolla* nun in New Spain whose childhood ruses at cross-dressing in order to attend classes at a Mexico City University built her quite a reputation before she ever picked up a pen. Without a dowry or an inclination for marriage, she chose to take the veil and to write in the convent. Sor Juana got herself into quite a debacle with "Sor Filotea de la Cruz," the Bishop, who used a feminine penname to chastise Sor Juana for her "liberated" theological writings *in print*. In response to this attack, Sor Juana penned "La Respuesta a Sor Filotea de la Cruz," often claimed to be the New World's first manifesto of women's rights to an education and the pursuit of literary endeavors. Very few people seem to have much interest in this manifesto, barring a few Latin American feminist scholars who re-earthed Sor Juana in the mid-nineties to celebrate the 300th anniversary of her death. They commemorated her life by debating over the reasons that she ceased to write after the aforementioned "La Respusesta."

[81] Placing one's body into a category brings a more homogeneous flavor to the mouth. Michael Billing calls the process by which we place things into groups "categorization;" categorization robs individual things of their "particularizations" (161). The state's reclamation of "Authentic Creole/Cajun/Louisiana" as a selling-point, as a mark of authenticity, categorizes (thereby losing particularities) of individual "Creole," "Cajun," and/or "Louisianan" individuals.

Authentically *criolla* by birthright, Sor Juana did not adhere to the *criolla* standards of womanly behavior: marriage, subservience, and a willingness to remain less educated than men. She cloistered her body in the convent, which allowed her freedom from marriage and the opportunity to study and to write. But when she produced products that indicated that her mind was not cloistered her quiet positions were published and attacked, first publicly by Sor Filotea de la Cruz, and then by threats of the Spanish Inquisition.[82]

"I WALK THROUGH THE GARDEN…"

Rodales's Illustrated Encyclopedia of Gardening and Landscape Techniques offers basic insights to the beginning gardener. The first step to becoming a good gardener is soil; a good gardener knows her soil. The best pH range for growing fruits and vegetables is 6.0 to 7.0; most soil, however, is slightly acidic. A gardener must try to neutralize her dirt lest her growing plans become soil(ed) by the acid inevitably present. Soil testing is a (basic) thing to do when beginning a garden. The gardener must make herself familiar with the dirt through which she sifts. She must be grounded enough to understand how that soil will affect anything that her garden might bear.

[82] The word "Creole" alone, with its myriad meanings, uses, implications, and histories, could spin into a genealogy of its own. I certainly do not assume in this passage about Sor Juana that the label "Creole" is a generally static category that defines (and continues to define) a homogenous group of people. Generalizing all of the particular uses and meanings of "creole" into one lump category, as Levine might say, makes this "futile" (12). A history of "Creole" and its implications in "authenticity" and on the people of the Red Stick Farmers Market and South Louisiana would make a fascinating history, and another history altogether. While we certainly cannot include *that* particular history in the footnotes of this paper, a mention of the lack of that history on these pages is necessary. Information on this fascinating woman is hard to come by. I recommend reading "La Respuesta," although I have yet to find a decent translation. The Spanish version is far superior to anything I have found in English. Willis Barnstone provides a good biographical and literary sketch in his anthology.

"*More specifically soils are formed through the influences of the interactions of climate, relief, organisms, parent material, and time, acting upon the exposed land surface of the earth*" (Soil Conservation Service, italics in original). I stand in my bare feet in a rented grassless backyard in Baton Rouge and move my feet in a rond de jambe à terre, a rond de jambe on the ground.

> An exercise at the bar or in the centre in which one leg is made to describe a series of circular movements on the ground. Both legs must be kept perfectly straight and all movement must come from the hip, along with the arching and relaxing of the instep, the toe of the working foot does not rise off the ground and does not pass beyond the fourth position front (fourth position ouvert) or the fourth position back. This is an exercise to turn the legs out from the hips, to loosen the hips and to keep the toe well back and the heel forward. There are two kinds of ronds de jambe à terre: those done en dedans (inward) and those done en dehors (outward) (American Ballet Theatre).

The circle that I trace with my pointed toe scrapes the dirt and I am an organism stirring the soil of which I know very little. Land use reports tell me what I do not know about South Louisiana soil: the components of chemical compounds, the runoff of water, and many other facts I might want to know, but the soil reports can't tell me what the dirt feels like until I put my hands in the ground.[83]

[83] While Mavor and Madison indicate that we are marked at the end of the processes of history and ethnography, respectively, they both clearly recognize and discuss the implications of that markedness. If we try to approach this as a very clean history, knowing the facts and figures and nothing else, what might be lost? What is lost when we peruse an archive so pat, so lined, that all of the forces and counter-forces in a historical event are rendered… clean? What happens if we walk away from ethnography, claiming to know everything about the soil of South Louisiana,

Dirt is a funny thing. In every place that I have lived, the dirt has been a different color, a different texture. In Kentucky, the red clay holds water and held our small-girl shoes when we became stuck in the thick, thick mud. Sometimes the mud rendered us immobile; Mom and Dad would come and rescue us from the muck that we had gotten ourselves into. This same dirt, though, when shaped into pots and thrown into brushfires, turned into nearly indestructible pieces of girl pottery.[84] We built "teepees" in Connecticut creek beds in August, when the creek beds were still dry. The September rains washed our creations away from their sandy, coarse bases; the creek beds rushed full of water for three weeks, then froze for the winter. A handful of Connecticut mountain dirt in a hand with fingers just barely apart falls through them like salt through a sieve.

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and have never actually recognized the fact that although the soil on which we live is rented. Although "renting" limits interactions between hands and soil, "getting dirty" isn't *just* about planting, growing, molding, picking, and shaping – "getting dirty" is when the dust flies from the soil conservation book when you clap shut its cover; the dust gets in your eyes. You blink back tears. It makes you sneeze. You smell like library and farmers' market, your feet are tanned from wandering in the market in flip-flops, your fingers cut/callused from chopping mushrooms to make/write mushroom soup.

[84] This is history – wandering around in dirty muck, sometimes I get stuck and need someone to help me out of the mess I have gotten myself into. No longer a young girl, I do not need to be rescued, but am fortunate enough to have colleagues in this field of historied performance to hear my cries and to lend a hand, should I ask. Clifford Geertz writes that to discover "who people think they are, what they think they are doing, and to what end they think they are doing it," you must gain a "working familiarity with the frames in which they enact their lives" (14). Gaining this framework involves nothing more (and nothing less) than learning to "live with them" (14). So, maybe learning how to "live with them" does not necessarily mean "getting dirty," but it does mean embedding in and on yourself the practice's of someone else's everyday life, in which you can become intrinsically bound and sometimes lost.

Missouri dirt in the Gumbo Flats, where the pumpkin fields are now being developed, is still quite fertile. This valley most recently flooded in 1993, when, according to local legend, a man avoiding an inevitably uncomfortable confrontation with his wife after a night out gambling on the Mississippi River ran his boat into the levy, already barely holding back the springing-forth of a very swollen river.[85] The flood brought a new kind of parasitic grass into the yard of local artist Don Wiegand. Ten years after the flood, I was still pulling this grass from around the bases of the sculptures in the sculpture park around his home, a grounded tree house-type structure of wandering additions to an original slaughterhouse. I tended the banana trees inside Don's atrium and dusted around plaster renderings of famous men: August Busch, Jr. ("Auggie," who came to Christmas parties that always left me scrubbing red wine stains from the cement floors of the studio with bleach and a toothbrush), Bob Hope, Charles Lindbergh, Amelia Earhart, Bartholdi, Mark Twain, Ernest Hemingway, Christopher Columbus, and other more "local" heroes.[86] His father, of the Chesterfield Valley aristocracy, was rescued from his restaurant/house across the street, with his dog, on national television as the floodwaters rose to his attic.

"It is best to eliminate the grass [sod] completely from the start. A healthy stand of lawn grass is a thick, dense mat of leaves and roots. An easy way to dig it up is to cut it from below and roll it up, just as professional turf growers would handle it at a sod farm" (Ellis 2). Tilling the soil oftentimes leaves grass rhizomes that will germinate and sprout soon after the initial

[85] While rooting around in Louisiana soil, traces of dirt from past experiences come along in my bag, in my book, and in places I'm sure I don't recognize, all somehow marking me as "Other" from this place and people.

[86] Wiegand has several statues of young girls and one very large and imposing statue (I believe that she stands 12 ft tall) of the Virgin Mary that add to his collection of "famous men." Amelia is the only woman represented with a bust in his collection of "men of note."

tilling; cutting to expose the underbelly will yield better results than mixing the grass and the dirt.[87]

> We, the survivors, see everything from above, see everything at once, and we still do not know how it was. The desolate field extends all around where once fifty thousand soldiers and ten thousand horses met their end within a few hours. The night after the battle, the air must have been filled with death rattles and groans. Now there is nothing but the silent brown soil (Sebald 125).

"Such was the growth of interest in gardening among women that manufacturers started selling smaller and lighter versions of garden equipment especially designed for them" (Bennett 83). A postcard made in 1903 features Miss Marie Studholme with a lawnmower.[88] In nineteenth century England, as hopeful suburbanites began to purchase villas, the back garden, traditionally an area for servants and service work, became a popular place for the gardening of upwardly-mobile women.[89]

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[87] Doing impressionistic ethnography, the aim is to tell the backstage stories of the doing and making of ethnography, making and re-making an image of a culture (VanMaanen 119). Doing history, the process is very much the same, removing the cultured lawns and exploring the underneath (Levine 8). Rather than pull at strands of parasitic grass, both destroying the highly cultured lawns and irresponsibly scattering bits of the dirt underneath with the force necessary to wrench the roots of the parasites from the soil, I would rather cut up sections of the lawn, setting it aside, trying to avoid its rhizomes from irrevocably permeating the fresh soil I have just exposed.

[88] Miss Marie Studholme is merely posing with the lawmmower, she is not *using* the machine. Sue Bennett writes of Studholme's pose in her treatment of the photograph (83).

[89] Bennett provides a fascinating and beautifully illustrated history of women in the garden. I call on this particular gardening tradition, that of mostly white, suburban, middle-class women in Great Britain in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, to problematize what might happen in the writing of ethnography if I simply take to clipping an already refined lawn. While the creation of these machines for women was a great step in freeing women's abilities

Edwin Beard Budding invented the lawn mower in 1830, after seeing a machine at a cloth mill that used a cutting cylinder to slice material. Budding teamed with John Ferrabee, another local engineer, and together they mounted a cylindrical cutting device to a set of wheels that made the cylinder rotate to cut the grass when pushed. Volià![90] Grasses in America were much coarser than the refined grasses of Budding's and Ferrabee's native England; these thicker grasses called for thicker, stronger blades in the machines made to tame them. Sharpen the blades, sharpen the blades. There are hedges to be mowed; pieces of prairies to be tamed into yards. "These early machines were all made of cast iron and featured a large rear roller with a cutting cylinder (reel) in the front. Cast iron gear wheels transmitted power from the rear roller to the cutting cylinder. Overall, these machines were remarkably similar to modern mowers" ("Mower History").[91]

PLANTING HISTORY, BURYING ETHNOGRAPHY

Spreading, pushing slowly, stretching its reach, the roots of the gnarled Oak tree extend themselves into the base of the mound. Searching for moisture in this studio of collected

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to manicure a garden, I would prefer to crawl on my knees with a spade to turn up the sod. As Bennett shows in the very last chapters of her book, women who garden have calluses, dirty knees, and (from the photographs), often wild/wiry hair. Women who *work* in gardens aren't, in fact, manicured themselves (at least not while working in the garden). To write an ethnography of the Red Stick Farmers Market and merely "pose" with the people and/or place, without letting the practice of writing shape *me* as I write, merely glosses over this vendor community, manicuring its presence to keep it refined and in the backyard for my own enjoyment and pastime.

[90] The Old Lawnmower Club is an organization dedicated to the preservation and (sometimes) restoration of antique lawnmowers. For a mere £10 a year, you too can join this club and be privy to their mailings, which are member-exclusive. Visit http://www.oldlawnmowerclub.co.uk/ for more information.

[91] A deep structure of refinement can totalize a history; a deep structure of refinement can totalize a nature into a landscape.

bucketfuls of earth, the roots overextend themselves in this quest. Extending, turning, undulating, and soaking into them the flow of the trickle of the water dripping back, back and forth, and back and forth through the particles of placed dirt.[92] A tree with gnarled limbs grows from the base of an Indian Mound on the campus of Louisiana State University. Surely the mounds are older than the tree. "Two large earth mounds situated on the first terrace above the present Mississippi River floodplain. It is judged that these mounds date back to well before the Christian era" (Haag 8). Similar mounds exist as far north as Cahokia Mounds State Park in Collinsville, Illinois, where the mounds were long misattributed to the local Cahokia Indians. The Cahokia mounds have now been attributed to the Mississippians, but the name remains.[93] At the museum in Collinsville, an interactive map claims that the Baton Rouge mounds are Mississippian mounds, too. The map also claims that these that conical mounds are ceremonial burial mounds, although most of the bodies found at Cahokia have been found in shorter, rectilinearly-shaped mounds. The mounds in Baton Rouge make one of the more safely preserved, although not very important, archaeological sites in the greater Baton Rouge area.[94]

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[92] This language evokes the body of the tree, pushing its roots into the Indian Mounds to anchor its own stakes and stability on a precarious, slanted slope. As the roots do damage to the internal structure of the trees, we too sometimes do damage to those things we try to unearth. Madison's focus on methods and ethics attempts to thwart, through preparation and awareness of moral responsibility, this type of "use" of ethnographic research to stake one's self (Critical 109-129).

[93] Of course, the Mississippians didn't leave traces of their civilization at the state park; we've "parked" the "state" on top of where they once had a relatively large empire.

[94] William Haag, in "Land Use Report No.1," identifies both the "most important" archeological sites in the greater Baton Rouge (10 parish) area, as well as the "most endangered" sites. LSU's mounds are listed as one of the two "safest" archeological sites because of its relative safety from development. This site is not included in the list of "most important" sites.

> *Hunter-gatherers built these two mounds 5,000 years ago. Part of the oldest earthen-mound complex in North America, they were placed on the National Registry of Historic Places on March 1, 1999. They are older than the great Egyptian pyramids and predate Poverty Point, long believed to be the oldest earthen mounds in North America. Archaeologists are not sure what they were used for, but there were no temples or houses built on them.*[95]

These mounds rise up and out of the ground as rare markers of "high land" in this swampy area of the country. Make a mound, roll down a mound, tailgate on a mound: these mounds can be used for any purpose that best suits the LSU community. By "LSU community," I refer mainly to those who populate the LSU grounds on any given Saturday in the fall – LSU football fans, although the "Indian Mounds" are also a great place to sit and read a book.

> During the depression years of the 1930's, archaeological excavations were ideal WPA projects because a maximum number of hand laborers could be used compared to a minimum expenditure of tools and material. At that time laborers

[95] This sign appears between the two mounds. Although the mounds age a year, every year, they will permanently remain 5,000 years old. I suppose that when something is 5,000 years old, one more year does not matter. These are mounds of dirt, after all. They were made by people who would be *really old*, if you can forgive my vernacular for a moment, if they were still alive, although I am pretty sure that the people who built these mounds were not very old when they participated in the construction. I imagine that the lifespan of people is significantly longer now that we are no longer "hunter-gatherers." Although, I would argue that many of us on this campus and in this town still very much participate in the activities of hunting and gathering, even if no furry animals are caught in the process. As you can see, there are conflicting messages in the historical record that exists, too. The authority with which the Cahokia site claims these Baton Rouge mounds to be ceremonial burial mounds of the Mississippians is certainly not reflected at the on-site sign.

were receiving twenty-five cents an hour. Today's labor costs make the slow careful procedures of the past an impractical approach. (Haag 14)

Whether using careful, meticulous, and slow or quicker and more economical means to excavate archeological sites, archeologists are continually displacing land, moving it from one location to another (and most likely, back again).[96] As of 1968, backhoes were the most efficient and economical manner through which to peruse the underground secrets of the archeological remains of prehistoric and archaic men who were able to subsist on nothing but the land.[97] Although simply speculative, there exists a possibility that this land on which I write was populated as early as 5000 B.C. These people must have subsisted wholly from the land; the

[96] Regardless of the method, historians and ethnographers are always already dealing with "buried things" in culture. The degree of care employed in "excavation" and "re-construction" or "representation" of these cultural artifacts marks the separation between careful exploration and plunder, although these definitions vary by perspective.

[97] Between archeological practices and preservation "from progress," Lowenthal highlights the present society's tendency (or propensity) to unwittingly destroy the past (360). To use tools to excavate or represent the past that weren't available to those who *lived* that past poses a quandary for the historian. The ethnographer, who can talk to her subjects while studying the culture in which they live, has the opportunity to share her technologies with them (if they are not technologies with which they are familiar). To use these technologies (or theories) ethically, the ethnographer must be reflexive, or aware of how her theories are shaping her perceptions of others and how their cognitive frames are shaping their perceptions of her. Discussing the practice of visual ethnography, Sarah Pink tells us to use photography reflexively in ethnography, the photographer must make clear the theories informing her use and framing of the shot as well as the culture's norms and expectations of photography. "Archival research about vintage photographs should therefore investigate not solely the content of the image, but also the personal and professional intentions of photographers and of other institutions and individuals with whom they negotiated" (Pink 55).

only traces of *their* civilization which *we* recognize as theirs are the mounds of earth rising up from the ground.[98]

The Highland Road Cemetery, just off of Highland Road at Oxford and some other little road in College Town whose name currently evades me, has been in use since 1815.

> *Interred here are Armand Allard Duplantier Sr. (1753-1827), French officer who served with Lafayette in the American Revolution; his wife Constance Rochon Joyce (1766-1841); and Pierre Joseph Favrot (1749-1824), officer under*

[98] The Indian Mounds were physically built by the hunter-gathers who lived on this very Louisiana (although it wasn't Louisiana at the time) land, but our pride in the mounds and the apparent need to "preserve" them are cultural constructions of our own. While the civilization, way of life, and apparent want/need of the hunter-gatherers to *build* these particular mounds is relatively unknown, the mounds are valorized as a "pride point" of LSU's campus, pointed to during tours and drive-bys with out-of-town visitors. The mounds are mentioned in both of the Louisiana guide-books given to me as gifts before I moved here. At LSU at this point in time, there seems to be a general sense that we ought to take pride in our *possession* of the mounds, even though the mounds certainly do not (and never have) belonged to us just because our campus has been built around them. The Red Stick Farmers Market is also used as a "selling point" for downtown neighborhoods; who "owns" the market? Does BREADA own the market? Do the vendors own the market? The patrons? Derek and Copper, the Directors? Do I own the market through my writing about it? Do you, through reading this writing? In a sense, the market (or the mounds) only mean as much as we are willing to protect them, only as much as the qualities to which we are able to attribute to them, to the value that we assign to these places. The fundamental difference, however, is that the market's history allows us to go, to wander, to look, and to *talk* to the people who are active in the creation of this community. We do not have that freedom with the people who built the mounds; ethnography brings to history a history of the "now," allowing those who are currently *in the act* of shaping their own communities and histories to have a voice in the construction of my history of them on the page.

Bernardo Galvez in the 1779 expedition against the British fort at Baton Rouge and commandant here 1779-1781 [sic].[99]

This cemetery is one of only two I have seen in Baton Rouge where the bodies are both buried in the ground as well as in above-ground caskets.[100] The plaque outside of Duplantier's

[99] So reads the sign at the entrance of this cemetery. Not too far away from the Indian Mounds on campus, this cemetery holds many of those whose names still mark buildings, businesses, and streets in Baton Rouge. The Galvez Garage at the farmers' market is presumably named after *this* Galvez. Unlike Sor Juana in New Spain, *las criollas* in this area, those initially born in Louisiana of Spanish descent, who were related to powerful military leaders such as Galvez, were treated with high honor.

[100] The plotting of the land is very similar to the plotting of the 7th Street Senior Garden in downtown Baton Rouge. In this garden, plots of dirt in both raised (approximately the size of stone caskets) and in-ground beds have little markers signifying that which is buried in the dirt. This garden is in Spanish Town, the neighborhood closest to the Red Stick Farmers Market. Playing tour-guide to an out-of-town friend, I took him to the farmers' market (very much like one would drive past and point to the Indian Mounds on LSU's campus), showing him with pride "my" market. (I was later very uncomfortable, as you might guess, with the implications of that statement.) Wandering around Spanish Town after a traipse through the market on this November morning, we noticed this garden and were struck by its similarity in spatial-arrangement to a cemetery. The spatial arrangement of the garden almost immediately made me feel a sense of loss; we both behaved in the garden the same way that I have been taught to behave in cemeteries. Lowenthal writes that the language of historical accounts "restructures images of the past" (217). When writing ethnography, language used structures/restructures the images of the culture, much in the same way that the spatial arrangement of the garden, in its similitude to a cemetery, restructured my image of how I ought to behave in a garden (as cemetery). How does the ethnographer create a space that doesn't "feel" or "look" like a type of writing that she does not want to use? If avoiding positivism is a tactic, then the textual space created through her writing must not appear positivistic or use a positivistic frame, as that similarity might just cause behaviors/attitudes in readers contradictory to her intent. I cannot imagine that those who designed the garden in Spanish Town wanted to evoke "cemetery," especially given the garden's location – immediately behind a home for elderly persons.

gravesite refers to him as Gabriel Armand Allard Du Plantier, and his children and grandchildren, generations and generations of Duplantiers, whether surnamed as such or not, are buried in this earth, as well. They were, at least. Augustine, Augusta and Lillie Duplantier (d. 1886), "Little Daughters of Joseph," were reinterred in Catholic Cemetery on Main Street when vandals raided their tombs, along with the tomb of their father, Joseph Allard Duplantier (1824-1884) in the 1920s.[101]

She sits at her desk with a glass jar of ink and a blotter, penning a letter to a dear one. The shutters are opened; a thick trickle of air shuffles her letter-writing papers every so often. Time has passed; she has seen much. What shall she write for this dear young relative whose words were brought to her just a few days before?

> *You were wise to tell me not to worry about our amiable Tennessean [Louis], because I was beginning to become uneasy. Something else is worrying me about the young colonel. Tongues must not be wagging too much; he would become too excited. Our great General [Wilkinson] came to inspect Baton Rouge. He stayed with the Legendre's. Your uncle told me that he [Wilkinson] had decided to establish an arms depot here and that he would also send a thousand soldiers to the city. I would have liked to see this warrior. He bought a plantation at Houma. I am glad you had the pleasure of hearing the music; you would have enjoyed it. I*

[101] The veracity in Paul Connerton's discussion of our need to find our past of our blood and lineages through genealogy (85) displays itself in the gathering of information from burial markers. These tombstones are evidence of the "true social position of [the] people" who are and are *not* buried here (85). We can only know this by the names associated with the marked graves; the inscribing practice of burying, marking, and unearthing genealogical connections help to figure out where we, in the present, figure(d) into the "mechanisms and ceremonies of power" of the passed/past (86).

know that you have had stomach trouble and that you [have to] eat whether you feel like it or not. Poor child! It seems to me that country air and outings would do you some good. Please take care of yourself. Put that above everything. I gave Augustine [Duplantier] your message. She said that she will write to you on Friday. Her father has decided to make her take baths with calomel. He wanted to bring her back yesterday. I refused, using my authority as her aunt. Titine [Augustine Duplantier] asked me to send you her love.[102]

DOING ETHNOGRAPHY

Turn right from Clara Drive onto Highland Road; continue down Highland Road through LSU's campus. Veer to the right and cross Government Street; Highland Road becomes St. Charles Street. Take St. Charles to North Boulevard, where it becomes Fifth Street. After crossing Laurel, find parking along the street. Walk north to North Street and you can't miss it.

[102] This comes from a document in the LOUISiana Digital Library; it is a translation of a letter. There are two mentions of Augustine Duplantier in translated documents in this digital library; both of these documents are letters. Neither the sender nor recipient of either letter is marked in this archive. The letter that I have cited here was written by a woman, and aunt of Augustine. The other letter also appears to have been written by this same woman; the handwriting in both of the letters appears strikingly similar. I assume that this aunt is a sister of Joseph Duplantier. His wife is not mentioned at the Highland Road Cemetery. Maybe she died when his daughters were very young. Snippets of "lost" stories and histories, such as the stories untold (but mentioned) in this letter make me nostalgic – they make me want to drive down River Road and look for the remnants of the Duplantier mansion, to imagine a perfectly romantic vision of what the past must have been like. In my mind's eye, I *become* Augustine's aunt, sitting at my writing desk in the middle of a sunny afternoon. I brush away from my face a curl that the breeze coming through the open plantation shutters has loosened. Enraptured by the romance in my vision of life as Augustine's aunt, I "live" an idealized narrative that never occurred and that I will never live. These effects of nostalgia are those mentioned in the first chapter; my imagination shows the precariousness with which nostalgia is encountered. (You can find this letter at http://louisdl.louislibraries.org/u?/LPC,272.)

It's between North and Main. Remember to bring: cameras (digital and old camera), tape-recorder, the notebook, a pen, money, sunblock. 8-Noon. Talk to: Glen, Mr. Buddy, Lionel? Pick up: mushrooms, onion, coffee, cornmeal, a plant, breakfast, a taste of chocolate milk. Take notes and pictures. Ask for permission to interview. Get the recipe. Find out when you can visit.[103]

Sleepy eyes, Saturday morning too-early blues. The keys turn and the clutch grabs and we all slide into gear. Mushroom soup of pink notebook chicken-scratch scribbles itself while

[103] Lowenthal warns that when in the business of writing history, the writer must constantly judge how much her audience knows and write to challenge the audience rather than giving readers a pat, easy-to-swallow, comprehensive "list" of things. You now have directions you might need to get from my house to the Red Stick Farmers Market and *do* ethnography. At least, that is the list that I had before I left for the market the first time – doesn't that encompass everything that goes into the doing and making of an ethnography? I would imagine that the metonymy of this list (and the relative feeling of unpreparedness that you would have if sent to make an ethnography with just this) causes you to think of that which is left out of the list. Lost in this list are any number of elements: time, energy, worries about parking, worries about ethical representations, laughing, searching for tape recorders in the archives of the IT room at LSU, and the list goes on. Albeit a list, this particular metonymic list actually carries out Lowenthal's task; while reading the things you need to do ethnography, hopefully you were somewhat implicated in the amount of things *not* on the list. Lowenthal attributes this to using or creating emotive language. History is persuasive, he argues, because it is "organized by and filtered through individual minds," and this subjective interpretation gives history its "life and meaning" (218). Writing metonymically to engage you, to highlight the *lack* in language, opens a framework in which I call on you to use your own devices to make connections, to recognize the leap, and to be persuaded by this particular history. The following paragraphs are a more explicitly poetic metonym of "doing" ethnography at the market. Drawn from the style of W.G. Sebald's lists in The Rings of Saturn, which rather than evoke a list-form (as does my first list), shows the partiality of this form in its structure. Notice that in the first list, the bodies at the market are lost, while in the second list, the presence of bodily feelings and images are almost overwhelming – how can one "make sense" of the sensations almost always lost in an everyday walk through the market?

POP goes the balloon. POP goes the balloon becomes scratched onto the page. The little boys run away. Eight white dog feet - photographed feet stuck in place - all moving around in circles. Bare feet feelin' the heat of the midday sun; she's wearing hoop-earrings and doesn't have any friends. Beat-up feet, bruised and a little torn – they are Midwestern feet. Drip, drip, sweat on the forehead as the pestle beats, beats on the mortar. The thump, thump, thump of the filé man wiggles noses and Sassafras fills the wind. Muskadine wine and blue-legged crabs disappear as the sun rises, scuttling away in the big bags and into the pot. Milky milk and chocolate swirls like coffee grounds; who are you in there? Beautiful sprout people speak golden in the sun, our shadows disappeared at noon. The three legged mathematician dog wanders by, our noses in the air for a cheesy biscuit or cinnamon roll. He keeps on puttin' down three, carryin' one - the mathematician dog. Shitakes and oysters cool in the foot-rest bench and he warns against getting too close; our coats might melt. Pentecostal dreams kept him young and still make his eyes glint when he talks about how mean she is. His grandpa hands thumb (without a thumb) through memories and recipes. Too bad the pretty little Missouri thing isn't cooking for someone at home. Yellow flowers bounce their way on the floor back to the pink apartment; roux-full adventures for afternoon entertainment. Once-again the Mushroom Man speaks from the invitation, watching onions from red-checked-table-clothed homes fall into pieces. Sherry sizzles, simmering down. Cream and milk thicken the blood and spice falls into line: salt and pepper and a dash of this and me.

THE FAIREST OF (AF)FAIRS

Blue ribbons, "The World's Largest Hog," carnies, alligator wrestlers, vouchers for "American Wraps" at the Pork Tent, 2am tissue-paper-flower-making for 89 county Queen Pageant winners – the Indiana State Fair. First held in 1852, the Indiana State Fair was the main goal of the newly-formed (1851) State Board of Agriculture. The fair was an amazing success;

in the summer 2006 the Indiana State Fair celebrated its sesquicentennial anniversary.[104] It was a landmark in the agricultural history of Indiana, for "to make two blades of grass grow where one had formerly grown, to increase the crop yields, to preserve the soil fertility was a very worthy thing and almost a sacred duty" (Indiana State Fair). In the summer of 2004, two of the three 4-H buildings on the Indiana State Fairgrounds reopened. Built at the turn of the last century, these dormitories on Voss Farm (what are now the Fairgrounds on 38th Street in mid-urban Indianapolis) housed girls and boys as they learned the finer points of domesticity and farm life. Fallen into disrepair, the buildings were condemned in the early 1990s. Gearing up for the sesquicentennial celebration, the Indiana State Fair Commission, 4-H, and many individual donors contributed to "reawaken" the 4-H tradition at the Indiana State Fair for the future generations of future farmers in Indiana. Then and (still) now, each donor to the 4-H restoration project receives a clear polymer plaque engraved with her name of choice (a "memory," "in

[104] According to the Indiana State Fairgrounds website, the Fair has occurred annually since the first amazingly successful Fair. If this is true, the "true" sesquicentennial Fair went uncelebrated in 2002. If the Fair continues, will the 300th anniversary be the sesquicentennial anniversary of the "true" sesquicentennial or of the true sesquicentennial? (You can determine which sesquicentennial is/was true and "true.") Does it matter, anyway? Who from the original state fair, was present at the either the 2002 or 2006 Fairs? When writing about the hunter-gatherers who built the mounds at LSU or even the people who began the Indiana State Fair, a historian is held accountable to a historic record, but not to the living, breathing people about whom they write – that is, the historian is not held to the same degree of accountability to *the individual people about whom they write* as is the ethnographer, who writes an account based on the face-to-face interaction and observation experienced first-hand. "We are responsible for the creation of what and who is being represented; we are representing the represented, and our representing most often carries with it political ramifications far beyond the reach of the performance" (Madison Critical 178). You might contact the Indiana State Fair and voice your opinion about this matter, however, if you feel strongly one way or the other. Their special events coordinator, Bobbi Bates, would "get a kick" out of your email. Her contact information can be found on the website, http://www.in.gov/statefair/.

honor of"). Each plaque has two small holes and must be individually mounted with two small screws to one of two renderings of the state of Indiana, made by a local artist out of local hardwoods. For two weeks in the middle of a not-yet (re)air-conditioned building in August, two women with two electric drills screwed hundreds and hundreds of these plaques into large clovers on the state of Indiana; two pairs of sleep-deprived eyes continued to tear up as the eyes tried to wash away the small bits of Indiana hardwood sawdust ingrained in them.[105]

On August 16, 2004, at 2:26am, a farmer wraps chains around the ankles of a baby and helps Barbie deliver. They heave together; he pulls firmly and lovingly. She will die if he does not help her through this painful delivery. The baby bull lays in the straw of his mother's stall while she lovingly, exhaustively, licks him clean. The night on the grounds is quiet; something rustles in the hog barn and then silence wins the night again. Twisting informational placards twirl in the moon and scant-street lighting, showing translations for pig ear-notching and statistics about beef production in Indiana. The baby bull and his mother lay together in the straw of their stall as a police car flashes, sirens running, screeching down 38th Street. Momentarily, another siren joins the chorus, coming from a different direction. The men at the livestock nursery celebrate the birth of their eighth baby during the Fair. Two women, both running their fingers through frizzy, curly hair, emerge from the Communications building next door when they hear the phone ring. They kneel down on the straw outside the birthing pen and admire the new baby. The women ask the bull's name; a farmer's eyes glint with a small smile – "Speedy."[106]

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[105] The work of commemorating others in ethnography and history is both an act driven by love and good-will as well as work that takes a toll and leaves an imprint on the ethnographer's body.

[106] Although I never asked the farmer to name this baby bull after me, I was thrilled that he chose to do so. Although not a farmer, nor having any experience in the delivery of or care for livestock, that summer at the Indiana

The space that we love is that *w*hole in the middle of the picture where no one stands, in the missing shadow in the missing outline in the empty space in the missing frame that has slipped away. "They seek to determine the human value of the sorts of space that may be grasped, that may be defended against adverse forces, the space that we love" (Bachelard xxxv). It is the space framed by the plains and crevasses and the mushroom caps that let the rain splish-splash around our feet instead of upon the tip-tops of our mountainous heads.[107]

The space that we love is that *w*hole in the middle of the picture where no one stands, in the missing shadow in the missing outline in the empty space in the missing frame that is slipping away. "In the realm of images, the play between the interior and the exterior is not a balanced one" (Bachelard xxxvi). It is the space framed by the slippery-smooth red caressing the sun burnt forearm speckled and sticking and the weight in a plastic-bag pendulum keeping time with the pace of day.

State Fair bore more than just baby animals and record-breaking attendance. The Fair also bore relationships between people who typically did not interact; I learned from the men and women whose livelihoods were far outside of my skills in communication, stage-managing, and marketing the Fair, and I think that they learned from me, too. It is impossible to leave Others behind, and some will affect you more than others (Madison "Dialogic" 323). At the Red Stick Farmers Market, I interacted with people with whom I would probably never have met otherwise. I learned a lot from them, and I have to believe that I impacted their Saturday mornings with my presence, too. They still smile and razz me when I return to the market, and I'm still invited into the spaces behind their booths to chat for a spell.

[107] Following Mavor, I attempt to present language that captures the farmers' market calling on sensations *other* than sight. Her "*gaze of the invisible* seeks to truly entertain a sensate gaze from both inside and outside of a reticulated body, which must come at the cost of shattering the *visualized* construction of the subject-object dichotomy" (Mavor 197, emphases in original). Image the previous "scene" and the following three as fuzzy snapshots; photographs or images that you cannot see clearly and are rather being told to hear, touch, taste, smell, and *feel*, generally.

The space that we love is that *w*hole in the middle of the picture where no one stands, in the missing shadow in the missing outline in the empty space in the missing frame that. . . It is the space framed by the echoes of the ding-dong from the needle piercing the skin of blue stretched taught and crackling at its sharp edges as they reverberate from heart to heart to ear to the lantern flashing and the orange essence of the candy cane pulling down through the valley of the middle of the tongue on its way into the air.

The space that we love is that *w*hole in the middle of the picture where no one stands; in the missing shadow in the missing outline in the empty space in the missing frame that slinks into us. "The image has touched the depths before it stirs the surface […] we begin to have the impression that we could have created it, that we should have created it" (Bachelard xxiii). It is the space framed by the twing-tang-twang of the calloused fingers plucking the taut strings on the face of the banjo player's black knee bursting through the soft petals of tissue sunrise and thick cream churning into butter and spilling egg-yolks oozing through the morning's slice of toast.

> It is Monday… September 25, 1933… how glorious it is to be alive, to be still living. (I am an old man; I have walked along many streets, through many cities, through many days and many nights. And now I have come home to myself. Over me, on the wall of this small, disordered room, is the photograph of my dead father, and I have come up from the earth with his face and his eyes and I am writing in English what he would have written in our native tongue. And we are the same man, one dead and one alive.) Furiously I am smoking a cigarette, for the moment is of great importance to me, and therefore of great importance to everyone. I am about to place language, my language, upon a clean sheet of

paper, and I am trembling. It is so much of a responsibility to be a user of words. (Saroyan 52)

Ideally, ethnographic work folds back on the researcher-subject, catching her in surprising, even disarming, processes of transformation. In so doing, it gives the lie to fantasies of activist instrumentality, as if we were in possessive charge of the knowledge produced, rather than dispossessed and charged by it. (Pollock 328)[108]

In this space I am two years old and a hundred years old. In this space, I am both an infant pushed in a stroller and an old woman whose hunched back propels her forward; I am both of these women, and we move forward, together.[109] I have grown all of these vegetables from the earth and have never had cleaner hands. I have never touched the earth, and my hands are filthy. I am here for but a moment,[110] I dissolve as the tape wound around the spool of the cassette wears with each playing, as I transcribe notes from the captured market sounds. I

[108] This Della Pollock quotation highlights the potential of critical, reflexive ethnographic work. Highlighting the potential of performance ethnography, Pollock writes to encourage continued reflexivity, continued challenging of the norms of ethnographic work, and a continued outward-looking approach to the standpoints of and between ourselves and the worlds of which we write.

[109] Lowenthal writes that the past lengthens the span of our lives beyond the physical lifespan by linking us to worlds (people and events) prior to ourselves. By this extension of life, "we are enriched by what underscores the brevity of our own span: living in an old house, communing with museum relics, wandering in an ancient city imbues life with longevity" (48). This unlived past (by you and me – and the future generations of people who did not live in ancient cities), however, can only be known through the evocations of that past as they exist in our lived pasts and presents.

[110] My performance "here," as ethnographer at the Red Stick Farmers Market, is a performance and a life that is ephemeral, fleeting, only to be remembered and *never* to be performed the same.

dissipate into particles as the camera flash captures my body and steals my spirit;[111] I last forever and was never here.[112]

[111] I believe that somewhere in my history education I learned a story about Crazy Horse; unlike any of the other warriors, Crazy Horse never allowed his spirit to be rendered flat into a photographic image. I have not allowed myself the same freedom, nor have I allowed the same freedom of the persons whose images (and voices) I captured at the farmers' market in Red Stick.

[112] Peggy Phelan writes that documents of performance serve only as relics to evoke memories of something forever lost, indicating that media and "mediatized" forms are *not* performance as they endure longer than the fleeting event of "live" performance (148). Philip Auslander, however, argues that media disappear, as well. Photographs fade, audio and video tapes wear down, indicating that using mediated technology does not bar something from being "performance," as those media disappear, too (45). When I was a child, my sister and I played the "Barbara Ann" track on our father's Beach Boys cassette so many times that eventually the song disappeared, the imprint of the music on the tape's ribbon worn away from continued, repetitive friction. Even if "captured"/documented, *live* performance is not "fixed" by "media," for media disappears, as well. What is in the history of a moment?

CHAPTER SIX – COMING HOME

> Cultural analysis is intrinsically incomplete. And, worse than that, the more deeply it goes the less complete it is. It is a strange science whose most telling assertions are its most tremulously based, in which to get somewhere with the matter at hand is to intensify the suspicion, both your own and that of others, that you are not quite getting it right. (Geertz "Thick" 29)

BACK HOME AGAIN, IN. . .

"Back home again. . ." Whenever I hear those words, the immediate images are vast: coming back to my Louisiana home after a long trip to my folks' home, a chorus of small Indiana children wearing Hawaiian shirts, playing ukuleles, and singing "Back Home Again, In Indiana;" returning to a public speaking classroom after courses in performance, statistics, and rhetoric; sitting in an outdoor amphitheater in Bardstown, Kentucky, watching "The Stephen Foster Story;" finding ourselves back at the doorstep of ethnography and the Red Stick Farmers Market, wondering if we ever left in the first place. . .

We have had a long walk. Walking-wise, the terrain has become increasingly more difficult as we have progressed through this thesis. At least there were snacks along the way. Maybe after you rest up, you can make some mushroom soup or bake some cookies – I do hope that you share them with me. Maybe you can play in the dirt. You are probably ready for a break, though. I am too.

I will not keep you for long; I have already taken up a lot of your time. One final stop.

I grew up in the "country" – the fields and the woods of the Midwest and mid-South (with a brief stint in New England); the cities of my childhood can more aptly be called "village centers" than "cities." I distinctly remember wandering around walking-only downtown Richmond, Indiana with my mother. We wander in and out of storefronts; I (impatiently)

pretend to be patient as she visits with the tellers at the bank. We stop into the department store for a pair of school shoes for the coming fall; the clerk wonders aloud if I am ready for a pair *without* straps; we look at Mom for approval. Big girl shoes bought, we drop in to the office at our church around the corner to say "Hello" to Jayne, whose position there I cannot remember. We move away to another little town. Through visits, college in Indianapolis and three months in Manhattan, I find that I love "city" cities, too.

Wandering around downtown Indianapolis many years later, I clutch my Starbucks and move (safely) into an area where my parents never would have taken me as a child on a trip to the "big city." "The city is much safer now." When they come to visit me at college (which is just up the road on 46th Street), they excitedly make reservations downtown and Mom and I look forward to walking around the mall next to the restaurant. The next winter, I ride in a car down the new (to me, it has been many years since my last visit) road cut through downtown Richmond's once-walking-only sidewalks; the storefronts are nearly empty. The department store has gone out of business. I feel comfortable in this "seedy" area of town safely tucked behind the headlights of our car. I make sure that the doors are locked.

In a call for further research in the field of cultural geography, Yi-Fu Tuan suggests that much knowledge could be gleaned from studying the "distinction – and conflict – between nature and culture" ("Cultural" 731). Embracing the admittedly uncomfortable form of the dyad/dichotomy to articulate the differences between nature and culture, Tuan posits that all societies, although through different rites, make an essential purpose "to turn a *natural* child into an *acculturated* adult" ("Cultural" 732, emphasis his). This transposition shows societies' recognition of both nature and culture, and the progress of the "uncultured" nature to "high" culture. In city (re)development, the *naturally* dilapidated city must become the *acculturated,* gentrified (adult) city to become (once again) acceptable to "cultured" society. Reject or renew,

reject or renew; the natural city is rejected until renewed. Once renewed, the population of the no-longer "rejected" downtown must move to another place (rejected already, or rejected because of their presence). The village-center model of "old" downtown Richmond yields to progress; we can speed through this space with little interaction with that (and those) which/whom make this rejected downtown space "seedy" and/or "dangerous." We can transverse this space while listening to our FM stereo transmission of the music on our iPods as we drive to cleaner, newer, suburban shopping malls. Gone are the friendly downtown interactions of people who might actually know one another. *That's so quaint, isn't it?*

Tuan highlights our (modern societies) turn away from the natural as manifest in the building of cities full of orderly, geometric lines – cities flooded with light at all hours of the day and night ("Cultural"). Concluding with "unsolicited advice," Tuan calls for a "degree of disengagement" and a walk "a little out of step" with the rest of society/academe.

> We may be deemed irrelevant thereby, but it is a dubbing we gladly bear if, given our historically grounded, non-reductionist view of culture and given our more leisurely pace of work, we can come up with an idea or two that help people see themselves and the world in a slightly different light. ("Cultural" 733)

Locally grown and sold fresh, the produce at the Red Stick Farmers Market in Baton Rouge, Louisiana consists of much more than vegetables and hand-ground cornmeal. In this marketplace exist two communities; a market for the traditional economic exchange of goods for money, and a community market for the exchange of stories. I take Tuan's challenge to study "a little out of step" (733) as a charge to take a moment, leave the cell phone aside, and to go for a walk in the city in which I study, and to guide a walk through the material that guides my writing about that walk. Space and place are inevitable in my investigations of communication happenings and performances in the city. Taking time to wander around the Red Stick Farmers

Market in the fall of 2005, I revisited the weekday city-space of Baton Rouge, Louisiana during the weekend, and found an "organic" community in the middle of the city.

Place and rhetoric have long been in relationship; Greg Dickinson provides a clear history of the relationship between rhetorical mnemonic devices and architecture (2-4). "Memory space" provides places to remember. In ancient rhetorical exercises, rooms provided space for memory of arguments; in modern cities, spaces and storefronts provide places for the memory of community. The Red Stick Farmers Market creates a kairotic event (extended across four hours) for community – the market provides the "right" qualitative time for the swapping of stories behind and across vendor tables. The market is a site of connection and action. Storytelling at the farmers' market in Red Stick (Baton Rouge), Louisiana teaches culture and morality in the performative, kairotic, and utopic moments of performance.

The storytelling performance, ideally, engages both the minds and emotions of the listeners. Linking storytelling to "world traveling," the storyteller's performance has the potentiality to transport listeners to different temporal and spatial planes. D. Soyini Madison writes of stories as literal lifelines that breathe life into new generations. "The stories the old folks told us – the stories we tell each other – press against hard surfaces for us to touch and hold" ("Performing" 120). Working through performative writing, Madison performs on the page a rectification between those studied, her histories, her position as scholar, and any number of life-taking/making forces against which she battles. She walks a tightrope of fear, rage, screams. . . she remembers that she "can walk the tight rope and not fall. [She] make[s] a new story for this occasion" (121). She concludes with a beginning, for *all* conclusions are just the beginning of something new.

> Beginnings are important.
>
> Each word makes the story older and more new.

Some of us have forgotten the beginnings and how to change them and now there is craziness in our people.

The see the tower from the river.

The river points in all directions.

The story will save us, but we must make more beginnings.

Here it is. Another beginning.

I will perform it for you. ("Performing"121-122)

I began this journey by asking you to come on a walk with me. I began this journey under the premise of "doing" John VanMaanen's impressionist ethnography, telling stories of ethnography. These stories have been about the people at the Red Stick Farmers Market and a performance and ethnography done and written "for them," but these stories have also been about the people in the academy who informed, shaped, and inspired this thesis, and me. These stories have been about me, about my positionality and reflexivity in market- and textual-space.

Is this finished? How can work like this ever be finished?

> … But the things that began to happen after that were so great and beautiful that I cannot write them. And for us this is the end of all the stories, and we can mostly truly say that they all lived happily ever after. But for them it was only the beginning of the real story. All their life in this world and all their adventures in Narnia had only been the cover and the title page: now at last they were beginning Chapter One of the Great Story which no one on earth has read: which goes on for ever [sic]: in which every chapter is better than the one before. (Lewis, The Last Battle, 767).

The aim of this walk – a pedagogical one.

What does it do? Well, what does it do *with you*?

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