IDENTITY POLITICS OF A SOUTHERN TRIBE: A CRITICAL ETHNOGRAPHY

MICHAEL SPIVEY

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by Robert Michael Spivey

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I'm leaving evidence and you got to leave evidence too. And your children got to leave evidence. And when it comes time to hold up the evidence, we got to have evidence to hold up against them.... They can burn the papers but they can't burn conscience....And that what makes the evidence. And that's what makes the verdict.

Ursa's great-grandmother in the novel, Corregidora, by Gayl Jones (1976)

A Falsehood is entirely true to those derangements which produced it and which made it impossible that it should emerge in truth; and an examination of it may reveal more of the "true" "truth" than any more direct attempt upon the "true" "truth" itself.

Let Us Now Praise Famous Men, James Agee and Walker Evans (1960)

This dissertation is affectionately dedicated to my wife, Madeleine, and
our four children
Chris (American), Kean (Canadian), Nadia (French), and Oliver (American
A truly multicultural family

Thanks for the many years of being there when I was not.

And to my late mother and father:

Fred and Margaret Spivey

ABSTRACT

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This dissertation is a case study of a non-federally recognized Native American tribe. Since the tribe's recognition on the part of the state of South Carolina as an "Indian Association" in 1974, the Pee Dees have been in the process of redefining themselves and their history as Native Americans. The present study is the first documented work on the reemergence of the Pee Dee. The author provides a synthesis of postmodern social theory and traditional symbolic interactionism in order to develop an interpretation of the Pee Dees' politics of Identity and tribal reemergence. This study provides an exceedingly rare ethnographic treatment of Native American everyday life in the southern United States. Finally, the author argues for a more critical symbolic interactionism in its potential for promoting cultural critiques of fixed notions of collective and personal identities, allowing for examinations of hybrid cultural forms.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Identity and culture, though traditionally standard concepts in the social sciences, are going through a transformation in meaning (see Dickens and Fontana, 1994). Critical postmodern forms of theorizing define traditional concepts of identity and culture to be essentialist and exclusionary, as products of modernity's will to categorize, as well as stratify, diverse groups and regions. James Clifford (1988: 15) theorizes that the historical development of the hierarchical relationship between the "West and the Rest" finds one of its important legitimations in organic notions of identity and culture as "wholeness" and "continuity". Clifford effectively argues that by defining non-western cultures as "organic" or "pure", the dominant society is thus enabled to define or represent them as either surviving in modernity or dying through contact with the West. Marginalized peoples' identity, both personal and collective, have been represented by the dominant West as essential and fixed (one can have only one identity), and that identity must also be pure and continuous in order to be recognized as surviving. Furthermore, since the West has written the histories of the Rest, marginalized groups become "people without history", essential, fixed, and pure until their deplorable short history with the advent of contact. In this fashion, there historically emerged a hegemonic border between a complex, hybrid, always changing (progressing?) western, white society and a simple, pure, homogeneous, always surviving, always dying "Other". As Clifford concludes, what has been lost under modernity's binary visions is any

sense of "emergence" and inventive cultural production on the part of such "people without history". At the time of this writing, debates continue in the academy, as well as in civil society, over the possibility that marginalized groups can also be defined as complex and contradictory peoples, ethnically and culturally hybrid and adaptive, inventing and reinventing traditions, imagining their own communities, hesitant, allowed to exist in paradox, to be ironic, to invent new meanings and rearticulate old meanings into new meanings, to accommodate and resist, to mask, appropriate, subvert, to change historical course, to change their minds, to speak and write their own histories—in short, to allow for emergence instead of just mere survival or, worst still, the death of a people at some point in the past. If we recognize the possibility of emergence and social interaction on the part of marginalized ethnic groups, then we are confronted with the sociological question: "how" is such an undocumented emergent identity, culture, and history socially constructed and lived?

This dissertation represents a rare exploration of the above question through an ethnographic case-study of the reemergence of a southern U.S. Native American tribe: the Pee Dee tribe of South Carolina. The Pee Dee tribe formally reunited under a state charter in 1974 as an "Indian Association". The historical Pee Dee, a small tribe that existed in the interior of South Carolina, along the Great Pee Dee River, are thought to have "vanished" around 1775, with the tribe splintering and some merging with the now federally-recognized Catawbas (Merrell, 1989) of South Carolina, while other merged with the largest non-recognized group in the eastern United States: the Lumbee of

Robeson County, North Carolina (Sider, 1993). The present leadership of the Pee Dee, while recognizing their close affinity with the above Native American groups, construct themselves as a historically distinct and separate people. The Pee Dee insist that other members of the historical tribe took a "third-path" to the present (informal conversation with leadership). The Pee Dee leadership are aware that this "third-path" falls outside the dominant society's expectations, as well as cultural and historical representations, of Native American tribal existence and "survival". The Pee Dee leadership are painfully reminded of their non-recognition, or, as they call it, their "invisibility", when confronted by popular cultural stereotypes of the "white man's Indian" (Berkhofer, 1978) and, most constraining, the formal recognition requirements of the BIA (Bureau of Indian Affairs). Faced with the hegemonic BIA requirements, which state that for a tribe to be formally recognized they must "document" a continuous political, cultural, and social tribal organization from contact to the present, the Pee Dee insist on their "third-path". This third-path is not about simple extinction or "authentic" survival, but of emergence: ethnic and cultural hybridization, merging, appropriation, masking, resistance, multiplex cultural reinventing, shape-shifting/multiple identities; all of which come to constitute the configuration of, what Anzaldua (1987: 22) calls, a "borderland". The borderland is a time-space transitional zone within which fixed meanings are in process of deconstruction and rearticulation, and where hybrid cultural inventions and reinventions, as well as identities, are in process. It is a "polyvocal rather than univocal Imaginary..., a...vector of multiple culture transfers and transitions..." (Alarcon, 1996: 47). By

evoking a less essentialist and developmental conceptualization of culture and history, the notion of the borderlands also refigures our Western construction of the subject. Constructing the subject more along the lines of symbolic interactionist theory, Cornelius Castoriadis (1987: 106) gives us his version of the borderland subject:

> The subject in question is...not the abstract moment of philosophical subjectivity; it is the actual subject traversed through and through by the world and by others....It is the active and lucid agency that constantly reorganizes its contents, through the help of these same contents, that produces by means of a material and in relation to needs and ideas, all of which are themselves mixtures of what it has already found there before it and what it has produced itself.

The everyday story of the reinvention of the Pee Dee, as evoked in their/my writing of culture, provides a much-needed ethnographic grounding of the larger theoretical debates engulfing the academic world between modernity/postmodernity. There are many points of argument over what constitutes the differences between modernity and postmodernity. The argument that this Dissertation addresses through the enactment of ethnography is the erected binary opposition between essence and difference. In relation to the concepts of identity and culture, modernists have defined essence as something that is "authentic": traditions, cultures, and selves, are either authentic or imitative—they must be "true" unto themselves, the meaning of which is fixed and transparent; on the other hand, postmodernists suggest hybridity and fragmentation of the subject as a form of deconstruction of, and resistance to, the essentializing and totalizing forces of modernity.

As this dissertation hopes to show through ethnographic example, there is, in the

everyday lives of "people without history", a living paradox between a need for "authentic" community—a nostalgia for a lost past and the necessary hybrid articulations that come to constitute the meanings of the past, as well as a present-becoming-future. As Lavie and Swedenburg (1996: 11) point out, claims of authenticity, enframed by tradition, folklore, and realism, come to conceal the hybrid nature of authenticity, "but also that hybridity is equally 'authentic'." In the end, the concept of "authenticity", like many other discursive concepts, e.g., "black", derives its temporary, yet seemingly natural, fixed meaning from hegemonic articulations, which conceals its ideological effectivity. This dissertation represents a much-needed exploration of the "borderzone" between identity-as-essence and identity-as-conjuncture, "whose practices challenge the ludic play with essence and conjuncture as yet another set of postmodernist binarisms". What do notions of authenticity and hybridity look like from the point of view of a people who have contended with their hegemonic meanings for several hundred years? In what ways can an account of their experiences delimit the, ironically, increasingly generalized and universalized theory of postmodernism? For living in a borderland is not just a place "of imaginative interminglings and happy hybridizes for us to celebrate". "Living in the borders," states Lavie and Swedenburg, "is frequently to experience the feeling of being trapped in an impossible in between...." Borderzones are also about "loss, alienation, pain, death".

The scope and purpose of this dissertation, then, is not to provide a full historical and/or political-economy of the Pee Dee people in order to make an argument either for

or against their claim to be a Native American tribe. On the contrary, without the needed documentation to even make such a claim, this dissertation modestly offers an ethnographic account of the life-worlds and social perspectives of members of the Pee Dee tribe, and the author's own participation in a collective effort toward the cultural reinvention of a people. The purpose of this dissertation is twofold:

1. To provide a rare and critical interactionist account of an ethnic people "in the making"; a polyphonic documentation of identities and cultures in the process of deconstruction and reconstruction. This dissertation hopes to provide a rare glimpse of actual people caught up in the contending borderzones between histories, races, and cultures, and the actual social practice of struggles over meanings;

2. The ethnographic material is strategic in grounding my theoretical synthesis between symbolic interactionism and critical postmodernist thought. Hopefully, this dissertation points toward a way for symbolic interactionists to engage in cultural critique, as well as symbolic interactionism's ongoing critique of all totalizing theories, including forms of postmodernism.

Methodology

The present dissertation research was conducted by way of a qualitative fieldwork methodology. This type of methodology, because of its highly flexible and emergent quality, is very suitable for a symbolic interactionist emphasis on the social construction of meaning in everyday life, as well as emerging postmodernist concerns with hybrid cultural productions.

Fieldwork for this study began in October, 1994 and continued for ten months, ending in July, 1995. However, I am a native of the community area in which the

research was conducted. As a symbolic member of the community, I have many years of experience with the people and culture of the region. I knew most of the tribal leaders as fellow students in Southtown's school. This "insider's" position was very helpful in negotiating my research role. In fact, being an "insider" may have been central in making the research possible at all. My familiarity with the culture and people of the Southtown area made the transition into the research role much easier and less time consuming than if I had been an "outsider". A sense of trust and rapport was established early in the research. My informants and friends were very open during conversation. Interaction, both between informants and with myself, seemed natural and unhampered by my presence. My insider ability to speak, as well as understand, the local "southern dialect" was a major factor in gaining empathy and understanding, as well as sustaining smooth interaction between myself and the people of this study. Having interacted intimately with Pee Dee members during my formative years made it possible to understand, thus appropriately react to, their shifting and culturally specific temperament. Many sensitive and "serious" topics which concern the Pee Dee are often treated with humor. That humor among the Pee Dee is preserved in this dissertation. An outsider would probably have many moments of confusion about these episodes of humor and seemingly silly behavior, as well as the expressive dialect and accent through which it is expressed. My familiarity with this expressive and informal local language made it possible, I believe, to gain a deeper knowledge of the people of this study than would have been possible for an outsider under the same time constraints. The Pee Dees of this study are not always

trusting of the "official" outside world. Though they knew that I also represented that outside world, they knew that I wanted to document their story from their "definition of the situation". I think my Pee Dee informants felt that only an "insider" could adequately document that definition. This was expressed to me on more than one occasion.

However, my insider standpoint does not preclude the possibility of, nor the need for, an outsider perspective. Throughout the research and continuing at this writing, the Pee Dee leadership rely on outside expertise and knowledge for their ongoing tribal efforts. Even the binary opposition between insider/outsider, as research roles, is highly problematic and, implicitly, is given a deconstructive treatment in this dissertation. Implied by the notion of the "insider" is that the researcher has some total and transparent insight into their home culture. In fact, it is only after being away from the region of study, living in Michigan and Canada, for more than ten years and spending most of that time in training in sociology that I have come to feel that I now "know" something about southern history and culture in the abstract sense, to place my early experience into some kind of theoretical framework. Furthermore, though I can trace some family members to the Pee Dee, I was culturally raised as a "white" southerner, which placed me not only in an advantageous position, but also, for many years, a segregated one. Ironically, I was very much an insider to the public "white" identity that my Pee Dee informants adhered to during and after segregation; I knew them as they wanted me to know them. However, returning to the research site and to the now emerging Native American identity of my informants and the undocumented and "hidden" histories that were spoken to me, I was

as much an "outsider" as anyone else could be. In all truth, the oxymoron position of being an "insider/outsider" became an increasingly "problematic" identity for myself, as I attempted to document the "problematic" identity of the Pee Dee. I was an insider/ outsider in relation to my informants' shifting of their identity between a shared past and that which was in process of articulation/emerging.

Several qualitative methods were utilized in this study in order to provide triangulation. Participant-observation and informal conversation were the main methods relied on for the research. However, recorded unstructured interviews and life histories were also conducted. Furthermore, primary and secondary documentary sources were used, such as the U.S. Census and secondary historical writings.

During the ten month period of formal fieldwork, I participated as a contracted part-time genealogist. Though I was contracted by the Pee Dee tribe for twenty hours of work per week, I actually spent from six to twelve hours a day, Monday through Friday, either in the band office or in the field. During my time in the field, I was also elected to be a member of the historical-cultural committee of the tribe, which furthered my ability to record the oral history of the tribe.

These formal research roles were very complementary to my own dissertation research agenda. In fact, the information for this study was gathered while performing these roles for the tribe. This was a very favorable situation for both the tribe and my research. Ongoing information that was gathered was constantly reviewed by the tribal leadership and permission was granted for what materials could be utilized in my

dissertation research. Not all information was made available to me. However, because I was able to give something back to the community, I feel that much information and access to non-public gatherings and meetings were made available for the present study.

A snowball sampling procedure was utilized during the research. Informants for the study were discovered as the research unfolded. Furthermore, the informants of the study made up a convenient sample. However, the notion of "representativeness" must be qualified here because my theoretical focus for this study is on hegemonic processes of identity formation, particularly on the part of the leadership. This study is not concerned with representativeness as much as it is with interpreting this process. Sampling carries the image of part to whole. In the case of the Pee Dee, there is no "whole" community to take a sample from. This is not a problem for the present study, however. The "problem" of defining the community and the identity of its members is the interpretive focus of the study itself.

Most of the information for this study came from observations in the field. The Band Council made up of ten members, five males and five females, acted as key informants. In particular, the Chief of the Pee Dee was the principle key informant. In promising full anonymity to tribal members, the Chief asked to be addressed as simply "Chief" in this study. While anonymity was fully given in terms of informants' names and the county and town in which the study took place, the leadership insisted on the use of their historic name. The reason given was simply that the leadership desired for the tribal name be attached to the historical and sociological information gathered for this

study. In the end, the Chief became more than the traditional notion of "key informant". He became a research partner in the truest sense. The project would not have been completed without the collaborative effort of the Chief.

Finally, there is a need to address the writing strategies utilized in this dissertation. My theoretical concerns with critical postmodern conceptions of culture and identity are reflected in my choice of writing style. The writing of ethnography has increasingly become one of choice among several styles (for a good overview of the literature see Van Maanen, 1988). To move beyond the notion of the detached observer and the traditional, normative analysis of society as an accomplished fact, experimental, "postmodern" ethnographers have turned to a polyvocal and first-person narrative style of ethnography (Kondo, 1990; Van Maanen, 1988; Marcus and Fischer, 1986). In order to evoke the borderland existence of my Pee Dee informants and their strategies to reinvent themselves as a tribe, I/eye must be a datum of that hegemonic movement to write culture into being. This is not a distanced account of an already accomplished social world/s. On the contrary, this is the final product of an ethnographic practice: an articulation of a polyphony of voices and social contexts that evoke emergent processes of multiplex cultural production and reinvention, as well as struggles over meaning. My voice is meant to pervade and situate the analysis, while allowing my informants room to speak for themselves. By allowing informants to speak in their own voice longer and more often, from a postmodernist methodological standpoint, we greatly increase the validity of our research (for examples, Crapanzano, 1986; Fontana, 1994). While I do provide my

own interpretations, by allowing my informants to speak in their voices, I hope that other interpretations and meanings can be given to the material. Finally, the writing follows basically the sequence of my fieldnotes. I do this in order to retain the emergent, almost rambling, nature of the research and subject matter. In this fashion, I reject the notion of society as accomplished order and sustain the paradox of becoming and crafting identities in the borderlands.

The Ethnographic Sites

The main part of the fieldwork for this study took place in a small town of two thousand in an eastern county of South Carolina, which borders North Carolina. The town is designated in this study as simply "Southtown". Unlike the expanding growth of the more urban areas, Southtown is located in one of the poorest counties of the State. Historically and presently located in the "black belt" region of the South, Southtown, as well as the surrounding county, is characterized by underdevelopment; leading some students of the region to label the black-belt South as America's "third-world" (see Billings, 1979).

African Americans of the county in which Southtown is located make up over fifty percent of the population. Southtown's population is nearly fifty percent African American. However, the percentage of Native Americans living in Southtown and the surrounding county is statistical "invisibility". The latest U.S. census reports the population of Native Americans living in the county to be under five hundred. The Chief of the Pee Dee laughs at this number. The tribe already boasts over twenty-five hundred

members. While a large portion of the "white" population of Southtown are now members of the Pee Dee tribe, they have all been identified on official records as "white".

Most of the fieldwork for the present study took place in the context of Southtown and the surrounding county. However, a field trip was taken to the State Archive in Columbia, South Carolina, the State Capitol, as well as a trip to a township in a neighboring county.

The county in which the research took place is still largely agricultural. Cotton is still "king" in the area, overshadowing the meager industrial development, historically cotton mills and later, low-wage apparel industries. The last of the cotton mills closed in the 1970s. The apparel industries come and go: as my fieldwork began, a hosiery company located in the county closed its doors. Those laid-off said that the company was "going to Mexico". Agricultural interests still rule economically and politically in the county. It is common knowledge among the folks of the county that several higher-wage industries that wanted to locate in the area were voted down by the local agricultural elite. It seems that low wages are the rule and "unionization" is an unspeakable word. As many locals say: "things never change 'round here'!" Even now, there is a strong sense among the people of the county that there is political corruption among the elite. Yet, there is still a silent fear of this powerful group. There still exist local rumors of people that come up missing, "who knew too much!" The owner of the county newspaper carries the surname of one of the wealthiest plantation families during the antebellum period. He still owns an extensive cotton farm.

Southtown thrived as a cotton mill town from the early 1880s until the mills closed in the early 1970s. Southtown is surrounded by extensive cotton fields. When the cotton mills were running, Southtown was a local center for the trade and processing of local cotton, as well as the shipping by train of semi-finished cloth. Since the mills closed in the 1970s, Southtown has been in decline. Many of the local residents accurately describe Southtown as a "dying town".

Most of my time during the fieldwork was spent in the tribal office, which is located on a side street just off main in Southtown. Most of my conversations and interviews with the leadership took place at the tribal office. However, observations and informal, conversational interviews were conducted in Southtown, as well as in the rural areas of the county. Most importantly was the time spent in what is known by the Pee Dee as their original community area. The community area in this study is given the name: Carolina Community. Carolina Community is a rural area characterized by large cotton fields, swamp areas, and dense pine forests. Large antebellum-style homes still dot the countryside, as well as worn sharecroppers' homes. The large homes are still occupied by white farmers; the sharecropper homes are occupied by Pee Dees. The Little Pee Dee River runs through the Carolina Community area. The Pee Dees claim to have journeyed down the river to this area in search of sanctuary from encroaching white settlers. Many community members state: "We've been pickin cotton ever since!"

The Predicament of Histories

To urge people to claim a different reading of the past and a different

> vision of the future is to mobilize people to accept a new history that still does not fully make sense, that moves against the still strongly flowing currents of power and of present history. To say that this new, emerging sense of history simply "legitimates" new claims is to turn away from all the tensions, gaps, pressures, fears and hopes that live in and between people's multiple, uncertain senses of the past and of the impending future—the multiple, coexisting histories that people live within and against: the histories of their own dreams and hopes and fears, and the histories of power—of what they know has been, and still could be, done to them.
>
> (Sider, 1993: 8)

In this historical section, I am faced with the dearth of historical information on the Pee Dee tribe. Furthermore, I am confronted with the exceedingly rare analytical treatment of Native American life in the Southeast region. Most of the earlier historical works on Native Americans in the region provide only brief sketches of the "small tribes", such as the Pee Dee, and their disappearance during the eighteenth century (see, for example, Brown, 1966; Milling, 1969). Also, most of the early historical writing is highly descriptive, lacking any explicit analytical focus. However, relatively recent historical-anthropological research has emerged which analytically resonate with the focus of this dissertation (see Blu, 1980; Merrell, 1991; Sider, 1993).

Blu's (1980) historical ethnography of the Lumbee of Robeson County, North Carolina, with whom the Pee Dee share many kinship ties, is considered the first serious, analytically informed scholarship on the largest non-federally recognized group of Native Americans east of the Mississippi. Blu utilized the "problem" of Lumbee identity in order to problematize the traditional literature concerning race and ethnicity.

The only sociological field study of the Native Americans of the region was

Brewton Berry's well-known book, **Almost White**, published in 1963. Based mostly on the ethnographic accounts of local whites and blacks on the problematic identity of, what Berry called, the Mestizo people of the eastern United States, Berry's work contributes a first glimpse of a "forgotten" and hidden people. Berry's work resonates with the present ethnographic dissertation by focusing on the problematic of, and the struggle over, identity among the "mestizo people", especially at the controversial site of the local school system. However, Berry's study falls prey to the local "white" construction of the "mestizo" as "wanting to be white". My Pee Dee informants describe this ideological standpoint among whites as their attempt to "whitewash" the local Native Americans. It is obvious (and which this dissertation attempts to correct) that Berry did not spend enough time among the people he studied and did not present a study from "their" point of view, but that of "outsiders".

It has been very recently that a new scholarship has emerged on the Native peoples of the Southeast region. The historical-analytical works by Merrell (1981) and Sider (1993) are highly informative and excellent examples of new historical-anthropological research which are rewriting histories from the standpoint of symbolic interaction and emergence.

Utilizing all the major historical and anthropological literature on Native Americans in the Southeast region, these authors rearticulate an historical imagination of, as Merrell expresses it in the title of his book, "The Indian's New World": not a "world" lost forever at the point of colonial contact, but a "new world" of fluid change and

redefinition. Merrell's work concerns the "creation" of the Catawba tribe in South Carolina during the colonial period, of which the Pee Dee played a part; the work by Sider, on the other hand, looks at the same historical period, yet with an emphasis on the "creation" of the Lumbee, which, again, concerns the history of the Pee Dee. While both works provide an exciting and fresh perspective on the transformation of Native peoples in the Southeast region during the colonial period, the work by Sider considers the implications of its fresh historical insights for a deconstruction of dominant notions of what counts as Native American culture and identity, and especially their codification in the regulations for Federal Recognition provided by the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA). In fact, the work by Sider, as well as by Merrell, provide the key to unlocking the "problematic" of identity among the Native peoples of the region. It is the contradictions and the paradoxes invented in the colonial period, by the imposition of histories from above (e.g., the white man's Indian), that still inform the lives of my Pee Dee friends and informants in the present.

In order to engage an understanding of the present ethnographic context of the Pee Dee, I will review the historical interpretation of the colonial context made specifically by Sider. I do so for several reasons:

1. The work by Sider is strategic for my symbolic interactionist-postmodern argument concerning culture and identity as hybridity, process and emergence;

2. to place the case of the Pee Dee historically in the larger and shared arena of the colonial political-economy and migration and settlement patterns in the Southeastern United States and;

3. to provide the historical forces that continue to constrain and shape the lives and strategies of the Pee Dee.

Finally, I will utilize some of Merrell in conjunction with Sider in order to make an argument for emergence. My review of this specific literature is not for the purpose of critique, so that I can show where my work departs (though my work does radically depart from the above literature in terms of its postmodern emphasis on polyphony), but for the strategic purpose of providing historical deconstruction of dominant readings of the past in order to "see" the seriousness, as well as the paradox, of hybrid and reinvented cultural productions and discourses in the present.

The Invention of the "Southeast Indian"

The title of the above heading is not intended to be taken in any haphazard way. The colonial forces which recreated the political-economic as well as cultural arena of the Southeastern United States, at the same time "invented" various Native social formations (most of this invention coming from "use" on the part of the dominant society as well as adaptation for survival on the part of Natives themselves) as well as cultural stereotypes which embellished the invented radical "otherness" of Native Americans from white Europeans—images which helped in legitimating the "use" and eventual marginalization of Native peoples. As Sider (1993: 188-189) points out:

> [T]he developing "Indianness" of the native peoples must be taken to reveal, rather than to conceal, the dynamics of native peoples' integration into the colonial political economy as Indians. Their Indianness was, indeed, their otherness; simultaneously, and equally fundamentally, it was the form of their inclusion....The creation of "Indians" and Indian societies through the transformation of aboriginal

> social systems—a process that increased the cultural and social-organizational differences between ordinary Native American village farmers and ordinary European village farmers over the two hundred years from, say, 1550 to1750—played a key role in the social, political, and economic processes of accumulation that were the pre-condition for the emergence of capitalism.

In what follows, I hope to show (admittedly in the form of a sketch) how the contradictory and paradoxical outcomes of the colonial context in the Southeast preclude the possibility of "a history" of the Pee Dee. Even if much documentation existed on the early history of the tribe, to write a standard linear history of a distinct and separate people (which is one of the requirements for federal recognition purposes) one would be "inventing" a "white man's Indian", not the social realities of an "original" aboriginal way of life. In short, while non-recognized Native groups in the Southeast are required by the BIA to document a continuous and separate history from other groups, including whites and blacks, from contact to the present, the reality of unified and separate groups of Native peoples in the colonial Southeast is the "invention" of European colonial forces, not the continuance of an aboriginal social form. This is the continuing contradiction and paradox that informs the demeaning requirements for federal recognition: that one must prove, with hard historical and anthropological "facts", that one's history resonates with and supports a fantasy world of the White imagination—an imaginary which is nearly impossible to document, even for the most stereotypical "Indians" of Western history.

In order to provide insight into how the "Indianness" of the Southeast Native Americans was invented, I provide a brief comparison between emerging information regarding the social organization of aboriginal "pre-contact" society and the various ways

in which Native peoples were "used" by Western and colonial society so that we may see the emergence of the fantasy "Indian" that is reflected in the discourse of BIA requirements for recognition.

The myth of relatively isolated and unified tribes. To understand the mythological requirement that Native groups must document a history of their autonomy from other groups in their area as well as their internal political and cultural coherence, it is best to begin by looking at the mere numbers of Native peoples in the Southeast just before the contact period. As Sider (1993: 214) points out, early estimates of Native peoples in the Southeast bordered on the ridiculous. Anthropologist, A.L. Kroeber, estimated a population of 150,000 in the pre-contact Southeast. Modern, conservative estimates place the number at ten times that of Kroeber, at 1.5 million. "At stake", argues Sider , "is not only the issue of aboriginal social organization but the magnitude of the European-precipitated genocide: the issue is very controversial." It is Sider's opinion that, as dominant society comes to a fuller understanding of the actual magnitude of the genocide of Native peoples in the region, estimates will come to be substantially much higher than those at present: possibly two million. "Even this figure may turn out to be embarrassingly low". From such revised figures, Sider provides his main argument:

> The basic point is that with such a figure the whole notion of clearly demarcated and separated "tribes" at the point of contact, with substantial empty space between them, collapses. In its place, we can come to see a social landscape in the pre-contact southeast that was constituted by networks of native villages and towns with multiple and diverse kinds of connections between them.

The pre-contact Pee Dee, as well as many of their neighbors, based their social organization, not on the Western notion of a "tribe", but in terms of "town" and "clan":

> Throughout the entire southeast, through and beyond the end of contact period, the town and the clan were the basic units of native social life, and the emergence of confederacies—which from the native perspective were confederacies of towns, not "tribes"—took place through an imposed and increasingly necessary transformation of the relations between native towns.

The trade and marriage patterns between towns and clans were very complex and mobile and have yet to be fully understood. However, it is clear that such connections crisscrossed language and other cultural barriers:

> The town was, here as elsewhere among native peoples, the basic political unit. Between towns there were a number of alliances and relationships of different kinds, and these alliances almost always included, at least until confederacy formation was much further developed, peoples that the colonists regarded as separate tribes of nations. Some of these "different" groups were, however, partly tied together by each having members who belonged to the same clans. Even when specific native peoples—specific peoples as the colonist saw them—were under severe military pressure, the native town, complexly connected to diverse other towns, remained the basic political unit....Each town was connected to an array of other towns through ties of common clan membership, marriage relations, trade, religious customs..., through ties to common ceremonial centers called "mother" towns, military alliances, and in a variety of other ways.

Certainly, groups retained differences in terms of language and other cultural elements and practices. However, the main point is that such differences did not undermine the complex ways in which boundaries, both geographical and cultural, were flexible and open to the ever shifting relationships and ties between towns and clans. If the complexity of relations between towns deconstructs our stereotypical notion of

relatively autonomous and isolated "Indian tribes", the web of clanship even furthers this complexity:

> The most important point about these ties is that starting from any one town the map of its ties to other towns, for any one of these kinds of connections, would not be likely to have boundaries similar to the boundaries of its other kinds of connections. Clanship, for example, would tie together one cluster of towns, military alliances a different cluster, shared language dialect still another cluster, and so forth. What European domination did was to reorganize many of these ties in the direction of one coordinated package, transforming the fundamental basis of regional native social organization—these non-overlapping ties—by welding together, in the heat and pressure of domination, much more sharply demarcated groups, one set antagonistically against the other. This imposed unification was never completed successful.

The Pee Dee, in the pre-contact period, like many of their neighbors, lived in relatively egalitarian communities. They fished, hunted, and grew crops along the Pee Dee River near the center of the now state of South Carolina. However, the mythical notion of the "forest dweller" and fierce hunter is another form of radically making "other" the native peoples of the southeast region. As Sider points out:

> [T]he English used an ideological rationale for their seizure of native land that created the reality it invoked: that *they*, the Europeans, were farmers who followed the Biblical injunction to subdue the land and make it multiply, whereas Indians were merely creatures of the forest who used the land but had no divinely sanctioned claim to it. All this was capped by a European need for *savages* to their west, partly to keep the White indentured servants and the Black slaves from fleeing westward.

When the colonists first came upon native peoples in the southeast, they found them to be primarily farmers. While the natives hunted deer, it is not with the same connotations the word carries for whites. The native people "cultivated" the deer

population in much the same way that modern cattle, poultry, and fish farms do. Enormous deer herds were managed by creating browsing-grounds through the burning of forests near villages.

> In this context we might better think of native peoples as *collecting* deer, which were, by the contact period, a semi-domesticated (controlled, managed) population of animals. It is crucial to realize that native people became forest hunters *not at all* because of any special native abilities to move around the forest, and not even as the most obvious way to enter into what became necessary trade relations with the Europeans. Native peoples taught the Europeans how to grow both corn (maize) and tobacco....[T]he colonists' self-serving lies... concealed and still conceal the histories that the colonial encounter created: imposed lies for which young Indian boys, and others as well, are still paying the price....Native peoples, in sum, became commercial deer-hunting Indians, rather than commercial tobacco or corn farmers, *more because of the logic of European domination than for any reasons whatsoever within native social systems*, other than their ability to organize themselves to do this kind of work.

It is clear from the above sketch that as Europeans transformed the southeast for their own purposes, they also "reinvented" the "Indian": not in his own image, but that of a radical other: an other that could be, ultimately, removed, marginalized, and denied precedence. It is also important to make clear that this invention of tribes, traditions, and all the other invented aspects of the "white man's Indian", were both imposed from above and chosen from below. As will be seen in the ethnography to follow, such imposed images are appropriated and, in a paradoxical fashion, are strategic for finding pathways to social visibility and group identity.

The myth of the "recognizable", real Indian. There has long been an argument in both the academy as well as the society at large over what constitutes a "real" Native

American. For many years, the answer lay somewhere between notions of cultural purity and blood. In the commonsense of the larger society, and no less so in the southeast historically and even still today, if a person claiming to be "Indian" did not act like, speak like. dance like, and, most importantly, did not look like an "Indian", they were easily dismissed.

Most of this stereotypical thinking comes from images of relatively isolated, "full-blooded" Indians of the plain. A good bit of this type of essentialist thinking comes from rigid binary thinking on the part of scholars and government officials regarding the neat classification of "pure" races. From the outset, manatee people in western society, including academics, would dismiss the claim on the part of such groups as the Lumbee and Pee Dee of a Native American identity on the grounds of their "racially mixed heritage". Sider (1993: xxii) deconstructs the binary opposition between the "pure blooded", "real" Indian and the "half-breed":

> [T]wenty or more years ago, some anthropologists and some local Whites in Robeson County said that the Lumbee had a contestable identity because they were either partly Black or something that was called in professional jargon a "triracial isolate". But the Seminole [a federally recognized tribe], for example, were substantially mixed with African Americans, yet few if any contested their Indian identity; moreover, a great many Indian peoples have intermarried with Blacks as well as Whites, many far more than have the Lumbee [or Pee Dee], without calling their identity as Indian people into question. How then did Lumbee history differ from the history of other Native Americans so as to make their Indian identity more an issue?

For Sider, the answer lay, again, in the ways Native peoples in the southeast had been "used" by colonial powers, as well as "...recognizing some of the complex intertwining

between the ways history is claimed and the ways it is silenced, both by those who dominate and those who are dominated."

Into the Borderlands

In this last section, I, admittedly, provide a simplified review of Sider's (1993) and Merrell's (1989) work for the purpose of highlighting the historical roots of the "paradox" facing and informing the present Pee Dees' claim and social construction of a Native American peoplehood.

One of the most important and profound historical processes in the creation of the paradox concerning Native American identity in the southeast region was the degree of "use" of Native peoples by the colonial power, and the pressures toward the "unity" of diverse Native groups. In order to simplify for the sake of argument, I review the colonial forces which eventually created two types of Native social organization in the southeast in general and in North and South Carolina in particular: the Native confederacies, which have come to stereotypically represent the "visible", more "real" Native American of the western imagination (as well as the tribes more readily recognized by the federal government), and the historically more hidden and "invisible" Native communities, which represent the non-federally recognized groups such as the Lumbee and Pee Dee. It is this second, more ambiguous, more silent/silenced (claimed less both from above and below), historical social form which constitutes the Pee Dees' social construction of a "third-path" to the present.

In order to fully understand the divergent development of these two Native social

forms, one must have a grasp of the geography of the southeast region. Sider (1993: 221-222) gives a cogent summation:

> Along the region bounded by the Savannah River in what is now Georgia to the James River in southern Virginia, the coastal plain is exceedingly flat, primarily sand or clay soils, and about 70 to 80 miles wide. West of the coastal plain, stretching inland a further100-150 miles, lies the piedmont—low, rolling, sometimes rocky hills and uplands. At its western edge the piedmont rises increasingly sharply into the Appalachians. The "fall line", where the piedmont river drops off the hard-rock interior onto the coastal plain, although not a dramatic feature of the physical landscape, was nonetheless a crucial zone for the organization of Indian-White relations. In some areas the fall line is a specific break in the landscape, marked by waterfalls and sharp changes in the local ecology. The Great Falls of the Potomac River, just above Washington, D.C., is probably the best-known of such points. In other areas, including Robeson County [North Carolina, home of the Lumbee and adjacent to the South Carolina home of the Pee Dee], the fall line is a transitional zone, 10 to 20 miles wide, and between the piedmont and the coastal plain there is a belt of sand hills and pine forests. The fall line is also marked by regions of extensive swamps. On summer afternoons the offshore winds pile clouds against the piedmont updrafts, and for a few hours almost everyday the rain pours down, flooding fields and swamp alike....These different kinds of swamps, all far more extensive in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries than they are now, shaped the patterns of early European settlement and trade, and for a time provided areas of shelter and relative safety for the coastal native peoples.... European settlement in the area of Robeson County indeed occurred later than in any other coastal or eastern piedmont area between Charles Town, South Carolina, and Jamestown, Virginia. This subregion was, until the late 1700s, the main "blank spot" on the English manuscript maps: there is nothing comparable east of the Appalachians. European colonists for long had much less use for this area than did the native peoples, who settled it long before the Europeans arrived and who continued to migrate to it throughout the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries....The kinds of native societies that developed along the fall line in the contact and colonial periods took a substantially different form from the kinds developing on the coastal plain, the piedmont, and in the mountains.

It was historically in the more western hill country that we see the development of such well-known Native confederacies as the Cherokees, the Choctaw, the Creek, and, in

the piedmont, the Catawba. With the "invention" of such confederacies for the purpose of "use" on the part of colonialists came, eventually, stereotypical visions of such groups as "real Indians", existing in strong political-cultural unity and possessing the great warrior spirit. Sider addresses the invention of such confederacies through colonial use:

> Indian confederacies were intensely *used* by the colonial powers: used as procurers of skins and pelts, used as allies and mercenaries in colonial wars, used as sources of native slaves, used as an inland wall to keep slaves and indentured servants from running west, used as troops to assault other native peoples for settlers' purposes—used....Throughout the colonial period the most predominant, intense and regular use of native people, particularly in the large confederacies, was as sources of supply for "the Indian trade". In the southeast this was primarily a trade in deerskins, but slaves, other pelts, and war against other natives were purchased by the colonists.

Sider goes on to speak to the mistaken understanding of such "unity" as reflecting western notions of "confederacy" and "nation":

> The various "confederacies", "nations", and "tribes" that attacked each other were often more closely interwoven with one another than the defective, ultimately inapplicable concepts of "confederacy", "nation", or "tribe" permit us to see, and the problem is compounded by the heritage of European colonial policies and practices inter-woven in our historical concepts....The notion that the great colonial Indian confederacies (Cherokee, Upper and Lower Creek, Choctaw, Chickasaw, and so on) were ordinarily unitary entities, episodically shaken apart by tensions and cleavages, misses a fundamental point. All these social groups were created as one form of native response to the pressures of domination and incorporation, but they were never fully consolidated into completely separate and distinctive peoples except in the fantasies and policies of the Europeans, who had the brute power to give these fantasies some social reality....[T]hese confederacies—this emergent social reality—never fully replaced nor completely subordinated the underlying town and clan matrix of social relations, relations far more widespread and complex than could be contained within the boundaries of the emergent confederacies. To ask, in sum, for a history or an anthropology of "the Cherokee", or "the Creek" or "the Tuscarora"—or "the Lumbee" [or "Pee Dee"]—is to miss, from the

> outset, some of the most fundamental features of native social life and historical process.

The notion that such emergent confederacies were actually made up of various native groups and clans, which expressed a loose alliance of native peoples with differing political leadership, cultural practices and languages is no better seen than in the following description by Merrell (1989: 110-111) of the makeup of the early Catawba confederacy of South Carolina, which emerged on the piedmont from continuing colonial-induced pressures of disease, white settlers, and military threats by the more powerful native confederacies to the west. Many of the still migrating smaller tribes of the fall line and piedmont found relative safety with the "Catawba". Part of the fragmented and still migrating Pee Dee (in the early writings known as the Pedee) found sanctuary and relative autonomy among other closely related groups gathered with the Catawba:

> The Shawnee headman who observed in 1717 that "there were many Nations under that [Catawba] name" would have found many more two or three decades later. James Adair heard more then twenty different languages spoken by the Indians in the Catawba River settlements when he traded there between 1736 and 1743. Adair listed only Eno, Cheraw, Congaree, Natchez, Yamasee, Wateree, Coosah (probably Creek), but to these he could have added Saponi, Waccamaw, Pedee, Santee, Sazapahaw, Keyauwee, and many others. Siouan or not, small or large, all migrant groups had to rearrange their lives. Many were by now masters of the art of uprooting and resettling, and they could draw on experience to smooth the transition to yet another new home. Those with enough people kept their distance from the Sugaree, Esaw, and Shuteree peoples at the Catawba core. Waccamaws, Cheraws, Waterees, and Pedees built their own towns nearby, each village choosing its own leaders, sending out its own war parties, scattering to its own hunting camps in winter, and in the spring probably heading to its own fields....his physical segregation nurtured

> cultural persistence. A people with its own headsman in all likelihood also conducted ceremonies, told stories, tended the sick, and buried the dead without interference from Nassaw or Weyaline. Well past mid-century, Cheraws, Pedees, and probably others kept their language, that badge of independence, distinct from "Katahba", the Nation's "standard, or court-dialect".

So much, then, for the dominant society's requirement for recognition that a tribe document a continuous history as a distinct people from their neighbors. What current research is pointing out is the fact that the history of the southeastern confederacies is much more ambiguous than previously thought, and that much of that history is the construction of the western imagination. It is western society which has named and distinguished for its own purposes.

It is from this more complex and less essentialist notion of native social organization that we are only beginning to understand the nature of what the Pee Dee call their "third-path"—neither a product of western notions of native "survival" as a distinct and unitary (visible) people or complete cultural and physical death. Such a deconstructive and emergent historical narrative is important because, as Sider puts it: "Over these struggles for identity, rights, honor, and benefits—for an Indianness that is more than poverty and oppression—hangs the weight of the fantasy image of "real" Indians".

As Sider argues, perhaps the biggest irony of the increasing "unity" among the confederacies is the devastating effects that such a unity had on other native peoples.

> This observation is an impression that emerges from reading in and through the colonial records and from attempting to reconstruct the perspective of peoples of the piedmont and the fall line, who suffered

> intensely from the destructive power of the confederacies and whose colonial cultural and social organization was forged in the vise between the colonists on their east and the confederacies to their west.

The development of a "third-path", an emergent and less stereotypical and essentialist historical narrative, is only now being constructed around the little known migration patterns of fall line and piedmont Native groups starting around 1600 and ending near 1750. The history of the migration pattern is complex, yet what has emerged is the fact that many groups during this period migrated due to pressures from colonists as well as native confederacies to the west. During this migration, many smaller groups mentioned by Merrell (1989) along the fall line and piedmont, including the Pee Dee, splintered, combined and recombined with other groups, and, eventually came to settle in the swamp lands that provided temporary shelter and "invisibility" both culturally and physically. It is this emerging historical narrative that provides a glimpse into the profound paradox, as well as politics, of identity engaged by modern-day Pee Dees and others: (Sider 1993: 240-241)

> In the last quarter of the seventeenth century, starting shortly after the founding of Charles Town (a colony that soon became much more intensely involved in the large-scale Indian trade than was Virginia), there was a major northward shift of the piedmont native population. From central South Carolina, northern South Carolina, and the southern and central portions of what became North Carolina, native peoples moved quickly and in large numbers northward, many settling near what became the Virginia-North Carolina border: that is, at the southern reaches of the Virginia Colony. They did not last long in their new locales. The defeat of the Tuscarora in 1713 opened the coastal plain and eastern piedmont to an outpouring of European settlement....In the migrations northward and back south, native peoples regarded as separate and distinct by the colonists combined, split, and recombined. What seems to have happened in this region is that the town, a social and cultural construct, gave

> way to the settlement under the pressures of migration, fragmentation, and recombination. These settlements were rural villages or hamlets, populated by Indian people, that were culturally and economically organized by cross-cutting lines of kinship and affinity, by local cultural practices, and *by a necessary social and cultural isolation from an increasingly dangerous milieu.* The native peoples in this southward migration stream, some of whom went as far south as southern South Carolina and then turned back north again, came to a stop by the mid-1700s, primarily in one of three locales: among the Catawba [some Pee Dees stopped here], who held the inland region on the northern boundary of South Carolina, approximately at the east-west midpoint of the piedmont; among the Cheraw [Pee Dees combined with Cheraw also], on the eastern-most edge of the piedmont just south of the North Carolina-South Carolina border, and in Robeson County, on the inland edge of the coastal plain, just north of the border with South Carolina. From the Catawba to the Cheraw is about 80 miles; from Cheraw to Robeson County less than 30. This whole border region, contested between North and South Carolina from the founding of the North Carolina colony in 1711 and for at least the next fifty years, was unsettled, open country, ineffectively governed by anyone, and inhabited by peoples who were not easy to see or engage. [They lived as] ordinary farmers, their autonomy and their survival as a people partly preserved by their social, cultural, and physical invisibility....What we find, in sum, is the emergence and consolidation of groups of native peoples along the eastern piedmont, the fall line, and the coastal plain, and their development of a complexly based isolation—is more than isolation: a substantial, if incomplete, autonomy. Native peoples were moving into relatively isolated regions, especially swamps in the borderlands between different colonies, and taking up, at least superficially, Euro-American characteristics: European names; usually the English language; cabins of Euro-American design, with horizontal, rather than vertical logs; and some components of European agriculture, at first especially orchards and hog raising. This Europeanization of native peoples was not simply acculturation but the frame-work for *social* isolation—for being left alone, for being seen as neither Black nor Indian nor, in some profoundly ambiguous ways, White—an isolation revealed by the long-lasting, continuing separateness of many of these peoples, who have endured as distinct groups until the present.

It is from this profound and paradoxical "invisibility" that the present ethnography attempts to evoke the dilemma and politics of Pee Dee Indian identity. The following evocations are not intended in any way to bring synthesis to the contradictions and paradoxes associated with Pee Dee identity, but, like my Pee Dee friends and informants

themselves, to document and sustain an engagement with the emergent, non-finished nature of these ongoing struggles over meanings.

The last time a Pee Dee was documented as identifying with the tribal name is not back in the mid-seventeen hundreds, but in 1933. The following comes from Blu's (1980: 83) founding study of the "problem" with Lumbee identity. The passage is important not only because a person in this century actually claims to be, for public record, part Pee Dee, but also in its reflection of the continuing complex webs of social relationship, especially family, in terms of native identity, the tensions of that complex and paradoxical personhood:

> In 1933, a bill introduced into the U.S. Senate provided for the enrollment of the Robeson Indians as Cheraw Indians and permitted their children to attend government Indian schools. However, the Secretary of Interior objected to the bill, stating that it would be too costly to provide school facilities, that in any event the federal government had no treaty relations with these particular Indians and should not "Assume the burden of the education of their children," but that he favored legislation to "clarify the status of these Indians." He suggested that they be designated "Siouan Indians of the Lumber River" rather than "Cheraw Indians", on the basis of a report by anthropologist John R. Swanton of the Smithsonian Institution. One of the men active in trying to have these bills passed explained that they had first had a bill for the name "Cheraw", but there were too many other names, so they took the name "Siouan" because it was the family name for all the groups. He said that his own grandmother was a Pee Dee and his father's father was a Cheraw. "There are many Cheraw here," he added. His feeling was that it would not be fair to take the name of any one of the remnants and apply it to the whole group, because the identity of the others would be lost.

Conclusions

This first chapter has provided the purpose and scope of the research, as well as

methodology and historical background. In the second chapter, I provide an analytical framework by way of a synthesis of traditional symbolic interactionist thought and emerging postmodern themes, especially in relation to redefining culture and identity for the purpose of cultural critique. I further address the appropriateness of such an analytical framework, for the study of problematic ethnic identities. In Chapter three, I ethnographically explore the struggle over the meaning of "invisibility" as it relates to the politics of Pee Dee identity. In Chapter four, I provide ethnographic description and dialogue concerning strategies for claiming history and the everyday dilemmas of searching for a viable past. I attempt to evoke the paradox of writing culture. In Chapter five, I provide extended room for informants to speak about their social and cultural life in a sharecropping community, as well as the life of their central tribal leader. Chapter six provides ethnographic highlights of ongoing struggles and debates over Pee Dee identity. Finally, Chapter seven will address the analytical, methodological, and substantive contributions of the research, as well as the limitations and need for further inquiry.

Most of the data for this dissertation was gathered in the form of fieldnotes. Fieldnotes were constructed every evening after leaving the field. Many of the direct quotes, except where being specified as tape recorded or from fieldnotes taken in the field, were reconstructed during the evening.

All informants in this study were told that the information that they were giving could be part of this academic investigation. Furthermore, participants were informed that their identities would be protected. Some of the information came from recorded unstructured interviews. Direct note-taking was permitted during tribal council meetings, as well as during time spent with the Chief in the field. Primary written sources were also utilized, such as the local county Book of Wills

and the U.S. Census. Finally, secondary historical, anthropological, and sociological materials were utilized in this study.

CHAPTER II

GROUNDING THE POST: AN ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

Introduction

Since the publication of Lyotard's, **The Postmodern Condition** (1984), a growing body of literature has challenged the major assumptions of modernist thought (for a good introduction to the debates see, Theory, Culture and Society (1988) Volume 5 (2&3) and the edited collection, Universal Abandon: The Politics of Postmodernism, Ross 1988). The long-held goal to produce a monolithic, generalizing paradigm in order to organize the multiplicity of "sub-disciplines" under one canopy has been effectively challenged (Marcus and Fischer, 1986: 7).

There is the problem from the outset in trying to isolate a determinant meaning of "Postmodernism". As some authors have pointed out, there are now several "Posts" on the intellectual scene (Smith, 1992: 494; Hebdige, 1988: 183). There are the post-structuralism philosophies of Baudrillard (1981), Lyotard (1984), Foucault (1980), and Derrida (1978); the postmodern Marxism of Jameson (1991); the postmarxism of Laclau and Mouffe (1985), as well as both liberal and conservative variants. Each of these posts have their own perspective: from the nature of the organization of the "world-system", to the construction of personal and collective identities.

For many postmodernists, the multiplicity of perspectives currently on the postmodern scene is a cause for celebration. They interpret this plethora of perspectives

as a healthy critique of the modernist quest for a monolithic, unifying paradigm for social inquiry.

However, if there is an overarching perspective of critique shared among the posts it is Lyotard's (1984) definition of postmodernism as an "incredulity towards metanarratives". The modernist quest, (including orthodox Marxism), for an abstract, universal and positivist science of society has been labeled, following the lead of Foucault (1980), as a modernist "will to power". Thus, a "crisis of representation" has emerged in the academy (Marcus and Fischer, 1986: 7-15).

One of the most enduring and powerful critiques offered by postmodernists is in defining language (thus, writing), not as a transparent window through which to describe a "fixed" social reality, but as involved itself in the "social construction of reality" (Weedon, 1987: 21). As Stephen Tyler (1987: 171) asserts: "discourse is the make of this world, not its mirror". Universal and objective "Truth" is deconstructed in favor of "partial truths", as all cultural representations are seen as situated, temporal and political. Even academic writing is implicated in the ongoing "struggle over meaning", as academics compete for the "correct" interpretation, all the while constituting the social realities that they come to describe. As Clifford and Marcus (1986: 18-19) put it:

> When is the gap in knowledge perceived, and by whom?....Culture, and our views of "it", are produced historically, and are actively contested. There is no whole picture that can be "filled in", since the perception and filling of a gap lead to the awareness of other gaps....Culture is contested, temporal, and emergent. Representation and explanation--both by insiders and outsiders—is implicated in this emergence.

However, for all the postmodern rhetoric concerning Difference, providing space

for the voice of others, and the insistence on seeing social reality and subjectivity as fractured and multiple, the ghost of modernism comes to haunt its claims. Some working within postmodernism have raised criticism of postmodernist theorizing (Coombe, 1991; Smith, 1992).

Criticisms have been put forward on the tendency of postmodern theorists to produce a removed and convoluted language, to construct a homogenous "Other", as in Laclau and Mouffe's (1985) theorization of social movements, as well as being insensitive to people's actual lived experience. I quote McRobbie's (1992: 725-730) critique and appeal in order to move on to the purpose of the present chapter:

> [T]he problem in cultural studies today...is the absence of reference to real existing identities in the ethnographic sense. The identities being discussed, and I am as guilty of this myself as anybody else, are textual or discursive identities. The site of identity formation in cultural commodities and texts rather than in and through the cultural practices of everyday life....What is required is a methodology, a new paradigm for conceptualizing identity-in-culture, an ethnographic approach which takes as its starting point the relational interactive quality of everyday life and which brings a renewed rigor to this kind of work by integrating into it a keen sense of history and contingency.

In this paper, I attempt to ferret out an analytical framework from the emerging abstract conceptions of postmodernism. In the spirit of postmodern analysis, I provide a framework that can act as a "theoretical toolkit" for socio-political critique, rather than as a formal theory as such (Foucault, 1980: 145). As Foucault puts it: "The notion of theory as a toolkit means:

1. The theory to be constructed is not a system but an instrument,

a logic of the specificity of power relations and the struggles around them;

2. That this investigation can only be carried out step by step on the basis of reflection (which will necessarily be historical in some of its aspects) on given situations."

I take on the task, then, of specifying an analytical framework that is partial in scope and self-reflexive in relation to my present ethnographic fieldwork among the Pee Dee Indians of South Carolina.

With these qualifications in mind, I begin by drawing out the general contours of postmodern theory as method of socio-political critique. However, I avoid the present stalemate over the political problems with ethnographic writing itself, by focusing on what some of the more potent reconceptualizations found in postmodern theory can offer to qualitative research. In this fashion, I attempt to modify the notion that critical post-modernism represents a radical break with modern sociological theory and sociological interactionist theory.

Secondly, I move on to address the reconceptualization of "culture" and "identity" in critical postmodern theory. These concepts are central to my substantive and methodological concerns in my present fieldwork.

Finally, I show how such reconceptualizations can shed new light on the emerging cultural politics of hitherto marginalized and silenced ethnic groups, especially in relation to non-federally recognized Native Americans. I highlight the contributions made by James Clifford (1988) to postmodern theory in regards to problematic ethnic identities, and the framework's utilization in the case of Mashpee Indians of Cape Cod. I also

introduce my case study of the Pee Dee Indians of South Carolina, and the relevance of a postmodern framework for a critical interactionist exploration of their identity politics. Concluding, I argue that the flexible ethnographic method of interactionism can help in grounding the "post" by allowing us to be engaged in the everyday identity problematics and cultural reinventive efforts of marginalized peoples.

Postmodernism

An emerging literature indicates that postmodernism is now well engaged with sociological theory (Alexander, 1991; Antonio, 1991; Baker, 1990; Balsamo, 1989; Brown, 1990; Denzin, 1989a, 1989b, 1990a, 1990b, 1991a, 1991b; Farberman, 1991; Hilbert, 1991; Lemert, 1991; Lynch and Bogen, 1991; Maynard, 1991; Peters, 1990; Plummer, 1990a, 1990b; Richardson, 1991a, 1991b; Richardson and Lockridge, 1991; Schneider, 1991; Seidman, 1991a, 1991b; Seidman and Wagner, 1992; and Young, 1991). In particular, Symbolic Interactionists are tracing the similarities between postmodernism and SI. Some have called for a convergence (for example, Denzin, 1992).

Critical postmodernism seeks to negate all totalizing theories and visions of society. Through its ironic use of language, postmodernism attempts to deconstruct the foundational paradigms of social science, interpreting them as decontextualized universals, masking their social and historical embeddedness in relations of power. As Coombe (1991: 193) puts it:

> [Postmodernism] rejects all theories which purport to offer totalizing accounts of [a] history, [a] society, or [a] culture (which would include structuralist and hermeneutic accounts of culture as singular systems of

> meaning) because such unifying schemes are both reductionist and exclusionary, suppressing existing and emergent differences in the name of order.

Postmodernism, through its method of deconstruction, goes against the grain of the modernist project of legislative reasoning (Bauman, 1992). Social science theories are seen as sharing in the modernist will to power, offering blue prints of foundational and totalized societies. These blue prints can provide legitimation for modernism's ethos of a rationally programmed society. Postmodernism seeks to decenter the essentialism of the modernist project through its concept of "Difference" (Lemert, 1992: 34).

The writings of Foucault (1978, 1980) are informative on the concept of difference. He insisted that we look to the margins of society in order to critique modernism's taken-for-granted vision of universal progress. "He attacks the metaphysical idea of a universal subjectivity in order to write a series of histories of the ways in which people, especially in the modern era, have been subjugated—in mental hospitals, in clinics, in prisons, in confessionals, by means of public health instructions on sexual conduct, by the teachings of the social sciences" (Lemert, 1992: 38). For Foucault, to decenter our modern form of thought is strategic: "...to remove it from any form of the modernist belief that there are essential, single truths to history". Lemert provides the political and moral reasoning behind the concept of difference:

> The intellectual and political world must be decentered in order to free us to experience and understand the differences of social reality—differences experienced most acutely by those in the excluded positions in Western society: women, homosexuals, the poor, the working class, nonwhites, and third world.

Language in the Post

Postmodernists see it as their task to relativize all forms of knowledge. All "texts", even sociological theories, are seen as carrying the "imprint of the particular prejudices and interests of their creators" (Seidman, 1991a: 134). What hides these prejudices and interests? For postmodernists, it is language.

In the modernist project, language acted as a medium through which to mirror reality (Baker, 1990: 23). By interpreting language and social reality as one and the same, (as transparent), language came to conceal its constitutive power, while essentializing and simplifying social complexities and differences.

Yet, for postmodernists, "language is not merely an apparatus of transmission". Language does not describe, but constitutes social reality (Richardson, 1990a: 233). This is true of social theories, as well as the discourses of popular culture and everyday life. Thus, postmodernists have repatriated the study of rhetoric (see Brown, 1990). Social scientists, for example, must persuade their readers of the reality effects behind their "social fictions" (Atkinson, 1990). If rhetoric persuades, it does so by way of exclusion. By relying on authorial control, modernist discourse retains the power to socially construct a unified and universal vision of the social world, "thereby creating a vast realm of submerged, discredited discourses, knowledges, and communities" (Seidman, 1991b: 187). For postmodernists, this silencing is both social and political: "If the available narrative is limiting, people's lives are limited, textually disenfranchised" (Richardson, 1991b: 37). A major theme of postmodernism has been

the return to local, excluded narratives: "Hearing them helps individuals to replot their lives. New narratives mean new lives. The transformed life, in return, becomes a part of the cultural heritage affecting future stories, future lives".

To overcome monological and universal renderings of social life, postmodernists have returned with force to epistemological questions of social process, emergence, irony, fractured and multiple realities and their relationship to mainstream sociological categories such as, identity, culture and tradition (Rosenau, 1992: 1-24). They interpret modern social theories as having done violence to the elusive, complex, and paradoxical realities of living in the late Twentieth Century (if not in earlier periods).

Unified images of the self and subjectivity have been deconstructed in favor of investigating how subjectivity/self are constituted in discourse. Because many discourses compete for and impinge on the individual, postmodernists now interpret subjectivity/self as in a state of flux and fractured and always in a state of becoming (Weedon, 1991: 33). Instead of complete and unified images of identities, cultures and traditions, post-modernists seek to show how they are the complex products of hegemonic processes of struggle over meaning; meanings are not unified and universal, but struggled over and contested. To provide unified and universal images of identities, cultures and traditions is to

> evade the historically specific processes by which certain meanings become privileged, while others are deligitimated—the practices through which unity is forged from difference by the marginalization and silencing of oppositional voices and alternative understandings....Culture [as well as identity and tradition] needs to be addressed in terms of the conflictual relations of its

> production, as intersections of struggle as well as harmonious fields of integrated meaning (Coombe, 1991: 191).

Summary

Postmodernism can be defined as a critical method of socio-political critique. Through its deconstructive efforts, it reveals the hegemonic ideological processes behind all efforts to construct a universal and objective reality.

Through limiting and essentializing personal and collective identities, the modernist project explicitly and implicitly limits the polyvocal cultural forms of expression of marginalized peoples. Thus, the "struggle over meaning" is perhaps the defining feature of postmodernist thought. Linda Hutcheon (1988: 12) sums it up best when she states:

> There are all sorts of orders and systems in our world and that we create them all....The local, the limited, the temporary, the provisional are what define "postmodern truth".

Postmodernism and Symbolic Interactionism

Symbolic Interactionism (SI) shares many similarities with the major themes postmodernism. Several symbolic interactionists (for example, Balsamo, 1989; Farberman, 1991; and Denzin, 1990) have commented on the similarities between postmodernism and SI. Denzin (1992) has been at the forefront in attempts to inject SI with postmodernism's cultural critique. I will here only highlight some of the similarities.

Balsamo (1989: 37) says that SI has always carried an ongoing cultural critique

of the reified world. Of all the mainstream sociological theories, SI has been most concerned with the discourses of everyday life, giving voice to the silenced narrative of marginalized people through its flexible ethnographic methodology. SI also has been least interested in building a monolithic theory of society. As Rock (as quoted in Visano, 1987: 344) puts it, SI is

> a relatively modest project whose humility is not quite recognized by proponents of other schools. It does not seek to capture the essence or spirit of society; it does not claim to master the basic logic of social life; it does not pretend to address issues of majesty. It merely tries to cast some light on those tracts of sociation which might yield tenable knowledge.

Like postmodernism, SI is directly concerned with the social construction of reality. Visano puts it in a succinct manner:

> The combination of interactionist thoughts and qualitative methods challenges the normative determinism of positivism. The task of science, therefore, is not to describe reality as it exists in itself, but to account for the constitution of the world. It is a science activated not by a rage for order but a passion for freedom.

One of the most salient themes shared by postmodernism and SI is the notion that "society" is an ongoing process of the reification of an objective and natural world. The SI conception of the "social construction of reality" is everywhere to be found in the postmodern literature. Critical postmodernists are concerned with the hegemonic "social construction of reality" through discourse and the possibility of developing alternative social constructions of reality (for example, see Laclau and Mouffe, 1985).

Social reconstruction is seen as impossible without the deconstruction of social

constructions of reality that have become sedimented and seen as "the way things are" (Laclau, 1990). SI has always displayed this tenet in its investigations of everyday worlds. Furthermore, such postmodern literary deployments as irony is pervasive in SI ethnographic studies (see for example, Atkinson, 1990: 157-174).

As we have seen, questions of the social construction of self and identity have reemerged in the postmodern literature. This area of concern is a mainstay of classical SI. The postmodern notion that the self and identity are not essential but relational, developed in specific contexts and discourses would not contradict SI theory. Identity and culture are seen by both to be emergent, contingent, and temporal.

SI has always shown that the social construction of reality is partial, because actors orient themselves through "definitions of the situation" (Reynolds, 1990: 40-42). Postmodernists take this classic SI concept and inject it with a much wider political and cultural importance. Postmodernists are most concerned with the ongoing struggle between contending "definitions of the situation" or the "struggle over meaning". Critical postmodernists see the struggle over the definition of the situation as central in the hegemonic movement to constitute "society" as a totality in discourse (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985).

There are also methodological points of convergence. Qualitative, interpretive methods have returned with force with the advent of postmodernism (Marcus and Fischer, 1986: 15-16; Rosenau, 1992: 184; Bauman, 1992: 105-106). Denzin (1990:

151-152) sums up best SI's overall similarities with the major tenets of critical postmodernism:

> All of [SI's] cardinal tenets (with the exception of one), including respect for the empirical world, fitting theory to that world, entering that world and becoming near to it, listening to the voices that speak, and writing their interpretations, are postmodernist. [The exception]: What puts interactionists outside the postmodern space is the assertion that there is an empirical world out there that must be respected.

Yet, as McRobbie (1992: 730) stated earlier, the problem for postmodern cultural studies today has been the neglect of identities in the ethnographic sense. Postmodernism has, ironically, deployed highly abstract conceptions of the contemporary world. Though important, it has been identity as "text", as "subject positions" within discourses, usually either in the form of large political social movement discourses or the cultural "texts" of popular culture—TV, magazines, etc., which have served as the major empirical focus in postmodern cultural studies.

In the next three sections, I review the reconceptualizations of culture and identity in order to offer a critical postmodern interpretive framework for qualitative sociological research. I argue that symbolic interactionists are strategically positioned to ground the abstract thought of critical postmodernism, by employing the following critical post-modern readings of culture and identity in the study of people's everyday cultural discourses and practices. We are enabled to ground the post by providing insight into how everyday actors negotiate, in complex fashion, the "subject positions" in which they find themselves. We can show that "subject positions" are not just discursive "black

boxes", but contextual, negotiated and relational; the ways by which they are struggled over in multiple ways and lived.

If postmodernism has lightened SI's burden of the "A-structural bias" (Reynolds, 1990), seeing both text and context as socially constructed, SI now has the opportunity to reveal the importance of cultural politics as it emerges in multiple ways through the everyday practices and narratives of real, living people.

Reconceptualizing Culture

The concept of culture in the traditional social sciences has been under attack from those working within postmodernism and cultural studies generally (Grossberg, et al., 1992; Bauman, 1992; Clifford and Marcus, 1986; Clifford, 1988; Coombe, 1991; Fiske, 1989; Van Maanen, 1988; Said, 1978; Willis, 1977; Marcus and Fischer, 1986; Smith, 1992; Rosenau, 1992; Kondo, 1990). The traditional view of culture as a "system of shared meanings" or, in its anthropological inflection, as "the whole way of life of a people", has been deconstructed in favor of more critical directions.

Cultures were once interpreted as discrete and bounded essences (Brenkman, 1987). They could be inferred or "read" by looking at the symbols and behaviors of a group of people (Geertz, 1983). Cultures were seen in light of their differences from other cultures (Coombe, 1991). Conflict and power were not seen as important in the understanding of a cultural system (Said, 1978; Kondo, 1990). An organic bias existed which interpreted cultures as being born, living and dying as they came into contact with

Western society. In short, cultures and cultural traditions were conceived as reified systems that, once interrupted, were on their way to disappearing (Clifford, 1988).

Critical postmodernists suggest that the concept of culture needs to be reconceptualized in order to examine the cultural politics of everyday life. As Coombe (1992: 189) suggests, "postmodernism provokes us to reconceive the concept of culture in terms that integrate it into a study of power; it asks us to consider meaning in terms of relations of struggle embodied in everyday practice..." For critical postmodernists, culture is not viewed as a "structure" of unified meanings, but as a dynamic arena for creativity and struggle over meanings, as well as a possible mode of being in the world (Kondo, 1990: 300; Bauman, 1992: 210). Moreover, cultural meanings are embedded in relations of power. As Kondo notes: "for some ways of being in the world were and are more legitimate, more rewarded, more recognized than others—as anyone in a marginal or minority position will attest."

To overcome the modernist simplification of cultural realities and the consequence in restricted images of cultural identities, critical postmodernists suggest ethnographic investigations of complexity, power, contradictions, contending discourses, irony and ambiguity as they emerge and become dynamic in the quotidian practices and strategies of everyday actors (Kondo, 1990: 301-302; Valverde, 1991: 182-183; Fischer, 1986: 195). In contradistinction to the "conceptual hegemony" of the traditional sociological literature on culture and cultural identity, critical postmodernists, such as

Fischer (1986: 195), call for investigations of culture as a fragmented reality, often highly problematic and puzzling to the individual actor.

From this complication of the concept of culture, postmodernists insist on a return to the local sites of its production, to interpret the dynamic and oft-times conflicting relations of its production, and provide space for the differences that deny a unified vision of cultural realties. In the past, the dominant motif of culture invoked a realm of universal and timeless values. As Coombe (1992: 190) puts it:

> Culture was seen in idealistic fashion. "Cultures" or "traditions" are characterized as unified systems of meaning. This characterization is made possible because the social and political processes through which cultural meanings and texts are constructed, their social relations of production, and reception, are ignored or drained of all specificity.... The people who produce and interpret meanings are not considered in terms of class, race, age, or gender-nor are they seen as having concrete interest or agendas. Interpretative processes are represented without reference to cultural differences or social conflicts within communities ....By defining it [culture] as a system or a text, we remove it from the process of its construction.

Culture, then, rather than being viewed as a bounded space of unified meanings, must give way to interpretations of its emergence and social construction; and the willingness to tolerate ambiguity, as cultural actors socially construct cultural realities from contending positionalities. Thus, critical postmodernists are moving towards an interactionist stance in understanding social life.

Furthermore, communities and traditions are no longer viewed as given once and for all, as essential abstractions, but as imagined and reinvented in relational contexts of power. The Invention of Tradition, as historically explored by the authors in the edited

work by Hobsbaun and Ranger (1983), as well as the notion of "Imagined Communities" in the historical work by Anderson (1983), are central to the social constructionist stance of critical postmodern theory. (Yet, there have been few attempts to ethnographically explore these concepts at the point of their social construction in everyday discourses and strategies). In a world of competing images of community and traditions, marginal peoples are active in such cultural constructions and reinventions. As Coombe (1991: 196) suggests, the cultural politics of identity is increasingly a matter of reinvention through the construction of images of communion and "must increasingly be a cultural or hegemonic process given the mobility of populations and the heterogeneity of peoples to whom...local activists must appeal." These hegemonic processes of cultural reinvention are often heatedly contested, both within marginal groups and social movements, as well as with the outside dominant society.

Summary

The critical postmodern reading of culture deconstructs the view of culture as organic and, instead, re-defines it as conjunctural and the product of strategic practice. In this fashion, critical postmodernism articulates with many of the ideas set forth by Gramsci (1971; see also, Laclau and Mouffe, 1985). As Grossberg (1988: 168-169) defines the Gramscian concept of articulation:

> The problem of interpreting any cultural text, social practice, or historical event must always involve constituting a context around it....But contexts are not entirely available because they are not already completed, stable configurations, passively waiting to receive another element. They are not

> guaranteed in advance, but are rather the side of contradictions, conflicts, and struggles....In Gramscian terms, any interpretational...[or] historical practice is an articulation, an active insertion of a practice into a set of contextual relations that determine the identity and effects of both text and the context. Articulation is the continuous deconstruction and reconstruction of contexts. These articulated connections are sometimes fought over consciously or unconsciously, but in any case, an articulation is always accomplished...and will always have political consequences.

By moving us beyond the essentialism of "historical necessity", the postmodern theory of culture as dynamic praxis and articulation calls forth the need for critical ethnography. In this view, people are not passive "dupes" of class domination nor passive receivers of "Culture" (Willis, 1981), but dynamic actors involved through communication and interaction in the crafting of themselves and their cultural contexts—always already caught up in relations of power. Cultural meanings are not given once and for all time, but ambiguous, struggled over in contexts of interaction, and historically "unfinished".

"Culture", then, becomes not only political and strategic, but also highly problematic, not only for the "cultural actors" of ethnography, but for the position of the ethnographer as well. Both ethnographic actors and the ethnographer are caught up in the embattled strategy of "writing Culture" (Clifford and Marcus, 1986). The critical postmodern reconceptualization of "Culture", not as organic, but relational and conjunctural, based not on empirical "givens" but containing representations, directly implicates the ethnographer's position. New (and, perhaps, experimental) ways of telling are called for and our methods of representation reconsidered (Van Maanen, 1988).

Finally, the reconceptualization of culture in postmodern theory has coincided

with the reconceptualization of identity and the subject. In the next section, I turn to an examination of identity/subjectivity in critical postmodern theory and highlight the debate within postmodern theory itself over the interpretation of this now embattled concept.

The Return of Identity and the Subject

In her book, **Post-Modernism and the Social Sciences** (1992), Pauline Rosenaw draws out a distinction between two broad positions in Postmodern theory: the skeptical and the affirmative postmodernists. In her view, the skeptical postmodernists are of the more extreme postmodern stance, associated with the work of Baudrillard, Foucault, and Derrida.

She describes the skeptical postmodernists as nihilistic, negative, and pessimistic towards everything associated with modernism: from the possibility of representing reality in the social sciences to the modernist belief in positive political action. The affirmative postmodernists, on the other hand, are described as more positive, politically engaged, and accepting of the possibility of forming alternative representations.

The more extreme skeptical postmodernists have called for the complete "decentering" of identity and the subject. The reasoning behind this total rejection of identity and the subject is based on the viewpoint that modern identity and subjectivity are the basis for modernity's claims to universal truth and authority of representation.

The affirmatives are in agreement with the skeptics on this issue. Both would argue that the construction of the modern subject paralleled the development and growth

of Western capitalism and imperialism. They both interpret the bounded "whole subject" as having been the foundation for the construction of the binary opposition between the "West and the rest". As Kondo (1990: 310) remarks:

> The construction of a bounded, unified self was the construction of an "iron cage", and those undesirable qualities not admissible in the cage were projected outward, differentially, onto various groups: Blacks, Native Americans, Asians, Women, the working class.

Yet, the more extreme position of the skeptical postmodernists, claiming the "death of the subject", while workable in relation to the humanities, undercuts the basis for most social science investigations. The concepts of identity and subjectivity are central to academic disciplines like sociology and anthropology. The critical post-modernists (which equates the affirmatives), however, have called for a return of identity/subjectivity, although in altered form (Anzaldua, 1987; Butler, 1988; Chow, 1986; Fischer, 1986; Haraway, 1988; Hollway, et al., 1984; Irigaray, 1985; Kondo, 1990; Takaki, 1979; Valverde, 1991; Weedon, 1991).

Critical postmodernists are exploring ways for "retaining the subject in new and novel forms while at the same time avoiding those aspects of the modern subject that the postmodernists find most objectionable (Rosenau, 1992: 61)." Weedon (1991: 32) locates the most objectionable aspect of the modern subject in humanist discourse. Postmodernists focus on the nature of the subject because the modern notion of a whole, bounded, and transparent subject is interpreted as the foundation of Western philosophy and the basis upon which Western social and political organization is built. "Humanist discourses", noted Weedon, "presuppose an essence at the heart of the

individual which is unique, fixed and coherent and which makes her what she is ." The interpretation of a "true human nature" is central to liberal political philosophy, forms of radical-feminism, and the "new" humanism, as well as humanist Marxism, which views "human nature" as being alienated in the context of the capitalist system. In contradistinction to the modern version of the subject, "poststructuralism/ [postmodernism] proposes a subjectivity which is precarious, contradictory and in process, constantly being reconstituted in discourse each time we think or speak." Smith (1992: 501) reinforces Weedon's interpretation of the subject, and succinctly describes the interactional and symbolic dimensions of postmodern subjectivity:

> Postmodern subjectivity is thus inextricably implicated in sociality. The social production of subjectivity is embedded in symbolic processes of signification that give meaning to "subject positions" formed, to be sure, at the intersection of such structural categories as class, gender, race, ethnicity, and sexual identity, but always emergent within specific "language games" and their discursive practices. Accordingly, subjectivity is neither natural nor universal, but fragile, decentered, and emergent, like a candle in the wind, always in process of being formed, unformed, and reformed through communication and the semiotic exchange of signs.

The growing concern with investigations of peoples' everyday practices and discourses by critical postmodernists is grounded in the notion that "...there are no clear-cut roles waiting for subject to occupy in pursuit of their historical mission. Rather, there are a multiplicity of roles that people come to play in history" (Smith, 1992: 501). Critical postmodernists attempt to deconstruct the essentialist modern readings of identity/subjectivity because they are perceived as rendering personal and collective identities as stable and enduring, not allowing for what they push to the margins: the

complexities, ambiguities, and fluid nature of identities. Seeing people as occupying a multiplicity of roles in historical time "produce[s] a "self" experienced not as a single, completed identity, but multiple, incomplete, and partial identities, formed in historically specific relation to the different social spaces people inhabit over time." Ethnographies of the cultural production of selves, in relational and interactional contexts of power, are called for precisely because, as Kondo (1990: 306-307) remarks, "at the level of what we would conventionally call "collective" identity, we see that identities are multiple, fraught with tension and contradiction, and asserted in specific performative contexts....Identities on the individual level resist closure and reveal complicated, shifting, multiple facets. And selves [are] never separable from context." By moving away from structuralist determinism to a renewed emphasis on "agency", as it is creatively asserted in specific contexts, critical postmodernists have reinvigorated the ethnographic study of everyday life in the social sciences (although, methodologically, in altered form) (Marcus and Fischer, 1986).

Finally, as Kondo points out, while the postmodern theoretical call for a radical open-ended view of identity/subjectivity is compelling, there remains the problem of "conveying the multidimensionality of experience in a linear, discursive medium, and the problems of just how we do go about imparting a sense of pattern in our experiences and in the materials we bring back from the field." In Kondo's opinion, it is probably impossible to overcome the narrative conventions of ethnography. Ironically, ethnographers reproduce essences and dichotomies in their writings, even as

they try to overcome them. However, Kondo provides a pathway toward non-essentialist forms of conveying selves in the plural:

> The unity, fixity, and boundedness of [the] "self" can be challenged through explicit arguments of a conventionally "theoretical" sort, but it strikes me that the real challenge is to enact our theoretical messages, thereby displacing a theoretical/empirical opposition. Toward that end, my aims are first, to make issues of power central to our discussions of the "self", and second, to experiment with rhetorical strategies that might be more compatible with "theoretical" emphases on multiplicity, contradiction, complexity, power, irony, and resistance....We might do this...by asking how selves in the plural are constructed variously in various situations, how these constructions can be complicated and enlivened by multiplicity and ambiguity, and how they shape, and are shaped by, relations of power.

The postmodern move from seeing identities as static abstractions to an emphasis on identities as creative process returns us to an interactionist position. The new questions being asked, however, deal with power in everyday life and the cultural critiques of exclusions and silences produced by static "portraits" of others. While not exclusive of the theoretical usages of the above postmodern reading of identity/ subjectivity, the above theoretical developments on culture and identity can be "enacted" ethnographically to advance cultural critiques at two strategic levels: static conceptions of collective and personal identities. Kondo provides a successful cultural critique at both levels in her ethnographic effort to reconstruct ready-made stereotypes associated with the unified imagery of the collective "Japanese".

However, caution is required if we are to avoid replacing one "conceptual hegemony" with another. In reconnecting with other research sites, especially in those sites where the informants are themselves already engaged in "cultural critique" of

dominant representations, the above framework, ironically, must also remain on the terrain of "sensitizing concepts" a la Blumer (Reynolds, 1990: 80-81).

In the next section, I provide an example of the application of the above postmodern framework in relation to non-federally recognized Native Americans. I highlight the work of James Clifford (1988) in relation to this contribution to the above interpretative framework and its utilization in the case of the Mashpee Indians of Cape Cod.

An Application of Postmodern Theory: The Case of the Mashpee

> One no longer leaves home confident of finding something radically new, another time or space. Difference is encountered in the adjoining neighborhood, the familiar turns up at the end of the earth.
>
> (James Clifford, 1988: 14)

> Postmodern social inquiry...is not a blueprint for intellectual despair. Rather it requires a provisionality premised on a willingness to cross border zones, consider the cultural improvisations in these sites of intercultural production, and critically rework the representations and intellectual constructs through which we have come to know the world.
>
> (Michael P. Smith, 1992: 513)

In this section, I rely mainly on the work of James Clifford (1988). I do this for two reasons:

1. because Clifford has made major contributions to the above analytical discussion of culture and identity in relation to problematic ethnic identities; and

2. he is one of the few postmodern ethnographers to utilize a

> postmodern framework in analyses of the cultural politics of non-federally recognized Native Americans.

In his collection of essays entitled, **The Predicament of Culture** (1988), Clifford, ironically, also finds himself in the predicament of "straining for a concept that can preserve culture's differentiating functions while conceiving of collective identity as a hybrid, often discontinuous inventive process." As a critical postmodernist, Clifford hopes to provide analytical conceptions that further cultural critiques of mainstream sociological categories and dominant common-sense knowledges, allowing for the cultural critiques that exist among marginalized groups to be heard and considered. Clifford provides his political reasoning:

> I explore how non-western historical experiences-those of "Orientals" and "tribal" Native Americans-are hemmed in by concepts of continuous tradition and the unified Self. I argue that identity, considered ethnographically, must always be mixed, relational, and inventive. Self-identity emerges as a complex cultural problem.

Clifford says that the aim of his analytical thought "is to open space for cultural futures, for the recognition of emergence. This requires a critique of deep-seated Western habits of mind and systems of values." Clifford is highly skeptical of a universal vision of history which would "relegate exotic peoples and objects to the collective past." Because of modernity's universal vision of progress "exotic traditions appear as archaic, purer (and more rare) than the diluted inventions of a syncretic present. In this temporary setup a great many twentieth-century creations can only appear as limitations of more "developed" models." As Clifford succinctly argues:

> "Entering the modern world," their (marginal peoples) distinct histories

> quickly vanish [as historically seen by the Western imagination]. Swept up in a destiny dominated by the capitalist West and by various technologically advanced socialisms, these suddenly "backward" peoples no longer invent local futures. What is different about them remains tied to traditional pasts, inherited structures that either resist or yield to the new but cannot reproduce it.

To deconstruct the monolithic and hegemonic Western historical reading of "primitive" peoples, Clifford coins the phrase, "a local present-becoming-future", to evoke the cultural politics of marginal peoples. To summarize the logic of the phrase, the historical narratives that are emerging among various ethnic "islands of history" are not part of a Western project of "salvaging" authentic aboriginal pasts, but (re)collections from the fragments that inform the tactics for a present-becoming-future. From an "inarticulate muddle of lost origins", many marginalized and silenced peoples are inventing traditions and working toward present and future viable imagined communities. Coming out of silence, and coming out from under the universal Subject of the West, these peoples are inventing futures that allow for "a plurality of emergent subjects." Clifford uses the symbolism of a "half-breed" Native American woman to stand as a critique of a unified and hegemonic history: "Let this problematic figure with her "dash of Indian blood", her ungainly female form, her inarticulateness stand for groups marginalized or silenced in the bourgeois West: "natives", women, the poor."

Clifford's theoretical discourse is grounded in the central postmodern metaphor of the "Border" (Smith, 1992; Giroux, 1992). As Smith (1992: 517) summarized the notion:

> The "Border" is a powerful metaphor in postmodern social analysis.

> The "border tensions" of postmodernism as method have blurred boundaries between genres and disciplines, high and popular culture, theory and practice, and a host of binary oppositions—center-periphery, global-local, assimilation-ethnic purity—which validate or authorize restrictive cultural images of social actors, inscribing them in terms of fixed being rather than fluid becoming. Modernist social actors were often viewed as stable, if not natural subjectivities rather than socially constituted and hence contestable representations. In Culture and Truth, Rosaldo uses the metaphor of "border crossings" to challenge this view, envisioning the formation of ethnicity as a process of "intercultural borrowing and lending," and viewing immigration as a dynamic process of cultural heterogeneity, improvisation, blending, and creativity rather than as a timeless site of cultural loss.

Giroux (1992: 205) extends an understanding of "border politics":

> Reading in opposition to [modernist] assumptions, the notion of difference has played an important role in making visible how power is inscribed differently in and between zones of culture; how cultural borderlands raise important questions regarding relations of inequality, struggle, and history; and how differences are expressed in multiple and contradictory ways within individuals and between different groups....In this perspective, culture is not seen as monolithic or unchanging, but as a site of multiple and heterogeneous borders where different histories, languages, experiences, and voices intermingle admidst diverse relations of power and privilege....Within...[these cultural borderlands]...subordinate cultures push against and permeate the alleged unproblematic and homogeneous borders of dominant cultural forms and practices.

Clifford, however, does not play down the destructive side of the development of Western capitalism. "Many traditions, languages, cosmologies, and values are lost, some literally murdered (1988: 16)." In spite of this fact, Clifford suggests that "the results have been both destructive and inventive." He claims that "much has simultaneously been invented and revived in complex oppositional contexts." Instead of a simplified vision of total cultural loss, Clifford moves us to consider that "something more ambiguous and historically complex has occurred, requiring that we perceive both the end

of certain orders of diversity and the creation or translation of others." In the end, Clifford beckons critical ethnographers to document the unfolding of "hybrid and subversive forms of cultural representation, forms that prefigure an inventive future. In the last decades of the twentieth century," notes Clifford, "ethnography begins from the inescapable fact that Westerners are not the only ones going places in the modern world."

As stated before, Clifford is perhaps the only postmodern ethnographer to apply the above postmodern framework to the emerging cultural politics of non-federally recognized Native Americans. He utilizes the framework in his observational study of a courtroom battle over the tribal status of the Mashpee Indians of Cape Cod.

Like many Native American groups in the Northeastern and Southeastern United States, the Mashpee of Massachusetts filed for federal recognition in the 1970s. The Mashpee, like most Native American groups in the Eastern United States, came into contact with colonial powers much earlier than those more popularly known in the Western part of the country. As a consequence, their pre-contact cultural traditions and tribal political organizations were severely disrupted early on.

Furthermore, unlike the Western tribes, many groups in the Eastern U.S. have lost any clear claims to tribal lands and any identifiable language. Even the notion of "blood ties" is highly ambiguous for most eastern groups like the Mashpee. Yet, despite these losses, many eastern groups have reasserted their "Indianness" over the past three decades.

In increasing numbers, the eastern Native American groups are coalescing into a

social movement (Paredes, 1992). Grounded in a cultural politics of identity, their movement offers a popular cultural critique of Western notions of what can count as culture and identity among Native Americans. The reemergence of their identity and the re-invention of their tribes calls forth the postmodern sensibility that Native American identity is not a "lost" and authentic essential, but ambiguous, fluid, multilayered, and political; it is a call for the recognition of the complexity of their humanity, which has historically been the privileged portrayal of Western "white" society.

The Mashpee Indians entered a Boston federal court in the Fall of 1977. In order to sue for lost lands, the Mashpee had to "prove" their identity before a mostly white jury. In essentialist fashion, the Mashpee had to "demonstrate continuous tribal existence since the Seventeenth century" (Clifford, 1988: 8).

Yet, how were the modern Native American citizens of Massachusetts to prove that they were the same people of the Seventeenth century? If different from their white neighbors, what was the basis for this distinction? Seeing that for many eastern groups intermarriage with whites, as well as with blacks, has not been historically uncommon, on what grounds could an "Indian identity" reemerge? These were some of the profound essentialist questions confronting the Mashpee. As Clifford notes:

> During a long, well-publicized trial scores of Indians and Whites testified about life in Mashpee. Professional historians, anthropologists, and sociologists took the stand as expert witnesses. The bitter story of New England Indians was told in minute detail and vehemently debated. In the conflict of interpretations, concepts such as "tribe", "assimilation", "ethnicity", "politics", and "community" were themselves on trial.

Clifford came to see the trial as a "crucial experiment in cross-cultural translation". He goes on to state:

> Modern Indians, who spoke in New England-accented English about the Great Spirit, had to convince a white Boston jury of their authenticity. The translation process was fraught with ambiguities, for all the cultural boundaries at issue seemed to be blurred and shifting. The trial raised far-reaching questions about modes of cultural interpretation, implicit models of wholeness, styles of distancing, stories of historical development.

Clifford came to see the courtroom battle as a contestation between the dominant ideology that demanded "archaic survival" and a modern set of Native Americans pleading for their identity to be interpreted "as an ongoing process, politically contested and historically unfinished."

In the end, the Mashpee Indians lost the court decision. Clifford suggests that the Mashpee could not be considered for what they were and are: modern Indians living "within and against the dominant culture and state." Clifford concludes:

> The plaintiffs could not prevail in court because their discourse and that of their attorneys and experts was inevitably compromised. It was constrained not simply by law, with its peculiar rules, but by powerful assumptions and categories underlying the common sense that supported the law.

Of these assumptions and categories, Clifford stresses three which inevitably undermined the Mashpee case, and which are the major constraining Western ideologies affecting non-federally recognized Native American groups:

The idea of cultural wholeness and structure. The "organic" bias of the culture concept, while allowing for a diversity of roles within, does not allow or pushes to the margins "sharp contradictions, mutations, or emergences." Clifford states: "It has

difficulty with a medicine man who at one time feels deep respect for Mother Earth and at another plans a radical real estate subdivision." The concept has a linear bias, seeing Native "traditionalists" as those looking backward and the "moderns" as looking forward. It cannot allow for "contending and alternating futures."

Another problematic aspect of the traditional culture concept is that it has a bias towards seeing cultures as stable and rooted. Yet, how rooted are Native Americans expected to be in our highly mobile twentieth-century? "Common notions of culture persistently bias the answer toward rooting rather than travel." Clifford suggests that, instead of seeing Native American cultures as "dead" or "dying", we should be attuned to the ways in which Native American groups have discovered new paths to being different by "risking" themselves historically in novel situations. "Metaphors of continuity and "survival" do not account for complex historical processes of appropriation, compromise, subversion, masking, invention, and revival."

The narrative of continuity of history and identity. In the Boston court, the attempt by the Mashpee to reinvent their culture was defined as "inauthentic". An identity could not be brought back after it had "died". "But is any part of a tradition "lost" if it can be remembered, even generations later, caught up in a present dynamism and made to symbolize a possible future?"

As Clifford argues:

> In fact only a few basic stories are told, over and over, about Native Americans and other "tribal" peoples. These societies are always either dying or surviving, assimilating or resisting. Caught between a local present and a

> global future, they either hold on to their separateness or "enter the modern world." The history of Native Americans has basically been a Western history. Tribal people "may refuse it, embrace it, be devastated by it, changed by it." Yet, the familiar stories of assimilation and cultural loss do not begin to capture the complexities and multiplicities of meaning that characterize Native American groups like the Mashpee. Seen from the standpoint not of finality (survival or assimilation) but of emergence, Indian life in Mashpee would not flow in a single current.

Clifford sees the Western history of cultural contact and social change as having structured an enduring dichotomy: either total assimilation or total resistance. "A fear of lost identity", states Clifford, "a puritan taboo on mixing beliefs and bodies, hangs over the process."

> Yet what if identity is conceived not as a boundary to be maintained but as a nexus of relations and transactions actively engaging a subject? The story or stories of interaction must then be more complex, less linear and teleological. What changes when the subject of "history" is no longer Western? How do stories of contact, resistance, and assimilation appear from the standpoint of groups in which exchange rather than identity is the fundamental value to be sustained?

Finally, along side stories of resistance, Clifford suggests stories of hesitation. A history of continuous existence could not capture the "deeply contested identity and direction" of Mashpee life. A single monolithic story of development could not connect the differing paths of Mashpee existence, "the dead ends and hesitations that, with a newly conceived future, suddenly become prefigurations."

> It is important to distinguish hesitation from resistance, for hesitation need not oppose or acquiesce in the dominant discourse. It can be an alert waiting, thinking, anticipating of historical possibilities. Along with a history of resistances we need a history of hesitations.

The hierarchical distinction between oral and literate. Clifford briefly

analyses the modern binary opposition between oral and literate forms of knowledge in relation to the Mashpee trial. The trial resulted in a contest between these forms of knowledge. The Mashpee trial was a contest between oral and literate forms of knowledge. In the end the written archive had more value than the evidence of oral tradition, the memories of witnesses, and the inter-subjective practice of fieldwork. In the courtroom how could one give value to an undocumented "tribal" life largely invisible (or unheard) in the surviving record?

Clifford notes that the fragmented "ethnographic" voices were "too many" and contradictory, while the documentary evidence provided space for "too few" voices. "A historian's seamless monologue", notes Clifford, "was followed by attorneys' highly composed summations, two fully documented stories. There was no way to give voice to the silences in these histories, to choose the unrecorded." The court, in the end, was grounded in a "literalist epistemology." The historical "record" did not provide the hard "evidence" in documented form for the "literal" survival and continuity of the tribe. But, as Clifford concludes: "Their wholeness is as much a matter of reinvention and encounter as it is of continuity and survival."

The Reemergence of the Pee Dee Indians

> More than a few "extinct" peoples have returned to haunt the Western historical imagination.
>
> (James Clifford, 1988: 16)

While it is true that cultural studies cannot be characterized by a particular

> ideology or position, it does offer a terrain through which cultural borders can be refigured [and] new social relations constructed.
>
> (Henry Giroux, 1992: 210)

The three ideological assumptions, as outlined by Clifford, hegemonically deny many Native American groups from gaining a voice and full recognition as modern Indians. From my research among the Pee Dee Indians of South Carolina, the three dominant assumptions provide for a highly problematic situation—both in regards to how the ideological assumptions inform institutions, such as the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and the local white "common sense". They provide the contested discursive terrain in which the modern Pee Dee Indians are struggling to "refigure" cultural borders and construct new social relations.

Many of my informants are highly aware of these dominating assumptions and their voices tell stories that explicitly and implicitly deconstruct such taken-for-granted knowledges. In constructing a different path through the historical and contemporary South, whose imaginary is still grounded in the binary opposition between "white" and "black", the Pee Dees offer discourses of de-naturalizing critique. Through their voices, which offer a deconstructive reading of dominant notions of identity and culture and the dominant imagery of the South, the Pee Dees provide a different "telling" of domination, silence, accommodation-resistance-hesitation-masking, and embattled identity in an emerging multicultural southern landscape. As the Chief of the Pee Dees stated in a timely manner: "We are finally coming out from under the whitewash."

The above critical postmodern framework, while explored in the restricted context

of a courtroom battle, has not been fully utilized in the ethnographic sense in relation to non-federally recognized Native American groups. We need to know more about how reemerging Native American tribes are reinventing themselves at the everyday, interactional level.

Seeing that most of these groups, especially in the southern United States, fall outside the dominant restricted range of cultural images of Native Americans, it is timely and important to provide descriptions and interpretations that allow for their stories to be told from their definition of the situation. Few studies attempt to concretize Native American groups in terms of regional and local contexts, and the effects that those contexts have, in complex fashion, on Native American identity that is both Native American and Southern. The postmodern notion that identity is not essential but relational, in contexts of power further grounding in the case of Native Americans (Blu, 1980; Sider, 1993). Focusing on the relations with outside groups (white, black, as well as with other Native American groups), and the struggles over the cultural and historical imaginary of "Indianness", a process can begin of deconstruction of stereotypical constructions of the "American Indian" as an historical and monolithic "other". Starting from this deconstruction, then, Native American groups struggling to reinvent themselves in the borderlands of contemporary America can gain voice and the cultural products of their reinventive efforts seen as more than superficial mimicry. In relation to the ethnographic construction of others, Clifford (1988: 23) writes:

While ethnographic writing can not entirely escape the reductionist

> use of dichotomies and essences, it can at least struggle self-consciously to avoid portraying abstract, ahistorical "others". It is more than ever crucial for different peoples to form complex concrete images of one another, as well as to the relationships of knowledge and power that connect them.

My ethnographic investigation of the multiple ways in which the Pee Dees are reinventing themselves within relationships of power, draws upon the above general interpretative framework in order to explore the complex cultural and political "problem" of their collective and personal identities. It provides the critical space through which to "voice" my informants' concrete, everyday strategies of reinvention and their embattled discourses of identity. I focus on the everyday as the site where the Pee Dees are engaged in struggles over meaning in the ongoing process of, as Bourdieu (1977: 94-95) coins it, "deculturation" and "reculturation". Specifically, in relation to the case of the Pee Dee Indians, it is the complex cultural politics of deconstructing the historical and cultural dominant designation of members of the Pee Dees as either "white" or "black", or "mixed", and the reinvention or "reculturation" of an American Indian identity, both personal and collective. It is yet an/other critique, not yet fully articulated and formed, of the "naturalness" of the monolithic "South". The cultural boundaries of the once hegemonic "South" are again blurred and decentered, allowing for the emergence of "other" stories of identity, silencing, accommodation and resistance, and the crafting of a radically specific and context-dependent "Native American" cultural possibility. Finally, by utilizing the above critical postmodern framework, I attempt to problematize my own research role, as a "symbolic member" of the community under study, by making ironic and displacing the binary opposition between personal/political, object/subject; allowing

the possibility for an exceedingly rare "insider" ethnography of experiences and practices within the borderlands of the South.

Conclusion

In this analytical chapter, I have provided a synthesis of the most salient reconceptualizations of culture and identity that have emerged in the critical postmodern literature. Ironically, these postmodern reconceptualizations are themselves highly general statements about contemporary social life. Without grounding through empirical studies of the everyday, they are, perhaps, only a critical sounding board that rings hollow.

Without having to accept all of the deconstructive logic of postmodernism, which can lead to paralysis in any attempt to provide sociological insight, we can take an eclectic stance, borrowing from postmodernism those conceptions which can sensitize us to fresh ways of interpreting situations of novelty, paradox, ambiguity in meanings, contradictions, and problematic identities, as they relate to the cultural politics of marginal groups—which, from traditional readings, may appear as superficial and historically "incorrect". However, it certainly would be erroneous to conceive of postmodern cultural studies as representing a total dismemberment of what has come before. As Raymond Williams (1981: 14) once put it: "What is now often called 'cultural studies'" should be considered as "a distinctive mode of entry into general sociological questions rather than...a reserved or specialized area."

In making interpretations of problematic situations and agents' strategies towards

resolving these problems, the postmodern conceptions of culture and identity can help critical interactionists avoid premature theoretical closures on their "cases", promote a more open-ended interpretation, and allow for experimental strategies for cultural critique. "In the end," notes Valverde (1991: 183-184):

> what the [postmodern] view of subjectivity [and culture] can do for critical social theory is to give us a few methodological pointers and—most importantly—to warn us against the potential oversimplifications that result from both humanist and structuralist conceptualizations. But that is, perhaps, no small contribution....The challenge...[now] is...to develop ways of theorizing social subjectivity [and culture] that break through the structure/agency dichotomy by highlighting the dynamic process of struggles over meaning.

By utilizing the postmodern readings of culture and identity in the spirit of Blumer's (Reynolds, 1990: 80-81) framework of sensitizing concepts, critical interactionists, concerned with the everyday through qualitative fieldwork, can provide for their complexities, nuances, and multiple expressions in investigations of their "empirical instances".

Conversely, a critical postmodern framework can provide symbolic interactionism with yet another avenue towards the realization of its critique of "metanarratives". It can do so by allowing space for the cultural critiques that exist "out there" among ethnographic subjects themselves; and by sensitizing us to the multiple social constructions of such "voices", in arenas of struggle over meaning. Through the case study of such groups as the Mashpee and the Pee Dee, we are offered a chance to

hear how these contending theoretical positions inform and are struggled over in the borderlands of the everyday vis-à-vis a critical postmodern interactionism.

CHAPTER III

INVISIBILITY AND THE POLITICS OF IDENTITY

Introduction

I felt very anxious about meeting those on the tribal board that I grew up with in Southtown. The tribe is in the process of re-defining itself. I came in to the organization at a critical time when ideas/discourses were being formed about the tribe's past, present strategies, and future visions. The tribe was officially reorganized in 1976 by way of a State charter.

However, while the tribal leadership constitute themselves as being a "very old tribe", the State only recognizes the Pee Dee as an Indian "organization" and not a "tribe". The Pee Dee leadership recently began the project toward federal recognition. Part of my bargain for this research was to help in gathering historical and contemporary information that would benefit their effort toward federal recognition. However, the information that I gathered for that purpose will remain confidential, as agreed between myself and the Pee Dee leadership. My study focuses on their "story" about their history and their present reinventive efforts and everyday cultural discourses.

There was during the first tribal board meeting a sense of urgency to find out as much as possible about the history of the Pee Dee Tribe. The history of the Pee Dee tribe, like their close relatives, the Lumbee, is sketchy and filled with discontinuities and ambiguities. There is little literature on the early tribe, and virtually none on the contemporary Pee Dee. This is the first academic study of the contemporary Pee Dee.

Most historical narratives simply say that the Pee Dee tribe "vanished", becoming extinct by the mid-18th century. There is only "hints" and speculations about their existence after they were "all" thought to have joined the historical Catabwas in Lancaster County, South Carolina, as well as their known existence among the Lumbee Indians of Robeson County, North Carolina. As my informants construct this ambiguous and fragmented history, "We are all mixed together—the Pee Dee, Lumbee, Cheraws. We have always done that. But we did not come from the Lumbees, we are not Lumbees! Many of them come from us!" It is a discourse which recognizes the complex history of Native American life in the region. They recognize their affinity with other groups, yet construct themselves as distinct. As we will see, this type of accommodation to Western disruption and displacement works toward an historical construction of meaning that allows for the foundations of present discourses that construct an imagined community.

The leadership were very much interested in finding out as much as possible about lands that could still belong to them. That first night, I found out that the first meeting of the strategic planning committee would be held two days later. I felt the first night that I had a great responsibility to find out as much as possible. I felt uncomfortable about my own identity in this changed context into which I had plunged. I had known the chief and several of the board members earlier in my life. During that time, my relationship with these members was on the basis that we were all "white" . Even though I knew that they came from a mixed background, not I, nor others in the

local school, related to the now Pee Dee as "Indians". They construct themselves as a people "invisible".

Talks with the Leadership

The Chief is a very large-framed man, with broad shoulders, a very handsome face and heavy lidded eyes. He is thoughtful and, at times, quiet. He is also very humorous, often joking and laughing. He is a careful person, streetwise and pragmatic. He is not always in agreement with the other board members about how to reconstruct of the past or how far to go with reinventing traditions. He often stated both publically and during board meetings—as well as with me—that the Pee Dee were historically "whitewashed"; meaning that they were not recognized by the state, through such practices as being designated as "white" on birth and death records, the census, and on marriage and school records, as well as through the local white common sense of just thinking of the Pee Dee as "white" or "mixed". "We had to go as white just to get along," is a favorite saying of the Pee Dee.

Others on the board, like Charles and Tony, feel strongly about re-interpreting the past and constructing cultural practices from many sources, "but, mainly Sioux Indians. That is what we are." Charles, with his long dark hair and deep dark eyes, is very much Native American in appearance. He is tall, thin, and casually dressed. He is known by the board as one of the founding members of the re-united tribe and the tribe's historian of Pee Dee culture. Charles stated in an interview:

I want to get land for a possible Pee Dee village in the future. We do

not want to live in the past like we did before. But, we do want a center where our children can once again go to school together and we can give them a better education based in learning Native culture and language. It is impossible to be the way we were before. But, we want to continue hunting—we want hunting land. We want to have a satellite for educational purposes and a cultural center, with a museum for our local artifacts. Some members of the tribe want to live there and live their Indian ways. We need, for sure, to have our history, we need roots, but roots in order to go forward, to start where we are now.

The tribal leadership is continuing to construct traditional practices, even traditional forms of political and cultural organization. The tribe has a "tribal mother" and a medicine man or shaman. Tony is seen by the tribal leadership as the tribal Shaman. We had a conversation about his role:

M.S.: Where did you learn about all you know?

Tony: I studied with Geronimo's grandson and I have been to many workshops on shamanism.

M.S.: What types of things do you do?

Tony: I work a lot with herbs. I know how to make a lot of the ceremonial pieces for the tribe. Like, at the last strategic meeting, I used the burning of sage and sweetgrass and used the feathers to fan the smoke. It is a traditional blessing before tribal meetings. I know about the interpretation of visions and dreams. I know how to talk to animals. My Indian name is Talks-to-Owls. I do Owl Medicine. I've had visions. I interpret the meanings of animals, like when certain animals appear to you. We don't see sometimes the message they are trying to give.

M.S.: Do you practice with Pee Dee members in the community?

Tony: I get calls all the time to go out and practice medicine for members of the Tribe. Many of them can't afford to go to the doctor or hospital. They call on me. We tell people to call on me. Like, not long ago, a man called the center and told the Chief that he was going to die from cancer. He said that he didn't believe in the white man's God. So, he wanted me to come and give him Indian prayers and medicine. So, I went.

Tony is a tall and healthy looking man. He has very light skin and long brown hair that he wears in a pony-tail. Except for his style of clothing and jewelry, he does not appear as Native American. He is explicit about his "mixed blood" heritage: "My father is of Irish decent. But, we have many family members that are Pee Dee Indian." He refers to his last name as being a common Indian surname.

On the day of the strategic planning meeting, both the Chief and Tony wore traditional costumes, breast plates, feathers and ceremonial knives. Colorful necklaces hung about their necks. On that day, Tony talked to me about Pee Dee Indian history:

> We have to have our roots! It was destroyed. Now, we want to bring back our history and culture. Most members are not that informed or interested. Not yet! Many Indians in this area still feel ashamed that they have Indian blood. What I want to see is our history and culture brought back as much as possible so we can educate the children about their heritage and identity. It will happen.

Charles thinks of himself, as do most of the tribal leadership, as the tribe's historian. That first night, I was asked to join the historical and cultural committee, which is made up by Charles, his wife, Sara, and myself. Many committees are being formed that are part of a strategic plan proposed by a State University project.

Charles' wife, Sara, was brought up in a family that has strong grounding in academic concerns with local Native culture, especially Native artifacts. Tammy's father is an archeologist who taught for years in a nearby private college. Charles is very motivated and animated when it comes to discussing Native American history and culture. Charles expressed his experience in growing up Native American in the South:

> The white man destroyed our culture. Look at us today. We don't know our history! When I was young, my Grandmother always taught me different about Indian history. The school taught "white" history. The Indian was portrayed always as a savage. I knew I was not white. Yet I had to go to school as if I were white! I was taught by the school to be white. Now, we can't get back our history like it was. But, we can learn as much as possible about it! When I come home from work, I do research for two or three hours. The more I learn, the more I become "Indian".
>
> Charles and I discussed the importance of the historical-cultural committee.

Charles continues:

> We need to know our roots to become Indian. Many people in the area are Indian but do no know anything about their culture or history. We want to write our history so that those who do not know can identify with their Indian heritage. We will never know all of it, but what we want to do with this committee is to make our history now—to bring it back to life! That is what the reestablishment of the tribe is all about! We are our history! We have re-united the tribe. What we are doing now will one day be our history. We do not want to lose it again! We are planning to start an archive, with our own history books, tapes of our meetings, pow-wows, oral histories from our Elders, so that Pee Dee children can come to the future village center and know what we did and learn about their history. Who else is going to do it! I've been struggling with the high school and the [local technical college] to bring in more books about Indian history. Did you know that there is very little in the local schools? Without it, how are future Pee Dee children going to become Indian when their parents have already been thought of as "white"? Many still thinks of themselves as white! We are trying, to change this.

After the meeting that night, I stood outside in the dark parking lot of the center with Charles and Sara. Charles and Sara state that they live their Indian identity 24 hours a day: "We eat mostly traditional wild game, fruits, nuts, and traditional bread. We make it ourselves." Charles works for a living in a local manufacturing plant, as does Sara. They live in a modest house with their one son. "We teach him all about being Indian and how to live his culture."

Charles would like to live the ancestral life: "I would give this all up to live like our ancestors. When we get the land we are looking for and build our village, we are going to live on the land and get back to living our Indian life."

I talked to Charles and Sara about my earlier experiences in the local fields when I was younger. Over many years, I had gathered a varied collection of Pee Dee Indian artifacts. "Can we come and see them?" stated Charles. So, we left the center for my home, a few blocks away. When we entered my driveway, I came out of my car and walked over to Charles. There we continued our conversation about the tribe. Charles talked about the "underground" history of the Pee Dee Indians:

> The white people in the area, they don't believe that we have been here all along. You see, we are not in the history books! Take a look at the historical census. You will find our names, but we were put down as "black" or "white". Later in the census, you do see us put down as "Mulattos". But, that is not good enough for the government! They want to see "Indian" put there, or you don't exist! But, we need to get our story out! The Lumbees, they have books on them! But, I don't think that their history is right! We are made to look like we are part of them. Like, we were just swallowed up by the Lumbee. But, that's not the way it is! We need to get our story of what happened. You see, when we were on the move after the breakup of the tribe, sure! We moved toward the swamp areas of Robeson County. A lot of Indian groups did that. We mixed in with all the local Indian groups. We mixed with whites and blacks! When the first white people found the Lumbees on the Lumber River they say that the Indians were already speaking English and farming. How that happened, no one knows. That is where the whole business about mixing with the Lost Colony comes in.
>
> But, this much we know about our tribe and few know this about us. Our names are on the census way back, on the 1790 census. We were here then! You see our names in this county all the way up. It doesn't matter that some of us went to Robeson County or that some of us came from Robeson County! Why should it matter? Look at the mixed up history of the area.
>
> But, we know from those living now, that we were many of us, living together in what is known as the Carolina Community, just ten miles from

here, on the Little Pee Dee River. We don't know how far back—you won't find it anywhere on record. We didn't exist, right! But, we were raised there, and our parents and grandparents and their parents—and on and on.

We were a community of sharecroppers on the white farms. We still have our churches there! We didn't talk to white people about being Indian. White people thought we were "white" or "black" or "mixed". But, you see, to say that you were anything else but white back then was dangerous. We were treated differently! So, to go as white made life better! Well, if you lived in the town. But, with us? We knew we were Indians. We always talked about it. They might not talk to you about it! Especially the older people of the tribe. But, we always had our meetings together.

We have always had leaders in the community and we always had a medicine man. My Grandfather was a medicine man. When he died, I was given his trunk. I still have worn papers in it that have lists of herbs and plants that he used for medicine. My grandfather and grandmother always talked about the Indian way of doing things. Now, not all of the Pee Dee Indians of this area think of themselves as Indians. That is because of the many years that they suffered and so it was survival, you can say, that made many Indian people give up their identity. That is what we are trying to overcome now!

You see, if you don't have your story out, if you don't start bringing out in the open our history, then how are we going to overcome the "white-wash"? That is part of what the re-united tribe is all about! We may never get federal recognition! But, that don't matter much to me! I know who I am! We don't need to be stuck out on a reservation! We want to get a Pee Dee Indian bank, so we can get loans to buy our own land. We have a site over near the Carolina Community, near the Little Pee Dee River. We don't need federal recognition to rebuild our tribe. We want to build a Pee Dee Indian village. We would have our own school, like we did before. We would have satellite hookup for classes. We will have our hunting land. We really want to build a monument to the Pee Dee Indians there. We will have our own cultural center, job training center. We will have our own library and museum for our artifacts. Many of us plan to live on our land. This is so we can regain for our children their heritage. We have been neglected in the fight between black and white. The blacks in the area, they have moved forward and have more to say for themselves and have advantages now that we don't! We have been left behind. Now, we are coming out and reclaiming our Indian pride.

These are the things we would like people to know about us. We had a school, a two room school in Carolina Community. We had our much loved Indian leader and teacher, Mr. Brayboy. Because we all worked and lived together, went to our churches there, went to school together there. That made us a strong community of Indians. Mr. Brayboy won state

> teacher of the year in 1969 and was first runnerup in the national competition. But, little was really made of it. Why? Because we weren't white. We want that story told! We want that strength back again!

In the context of the racial ideology of the South, the Pee Dee Indians have always lived within and between the shifting borders between White and Black. Their very identity is symbolic of their historical "bordercrossings", within the rigid racial system. Negotiation, masking, accommodation, resistance and hesitation; of these concepts are enacted by the lives of my informants. Hebdige (1988: 229) sums up well the present strategies of the Pee Dee Indians:

> Henceforward,...we live in a world where sense, meaning, value—nothing —is given, where everything has to be worked for, where, under and against the superordinate sign of exchange value, properly human values have to be reinvented on a new terrain: reterritorialized, redimensionalised... [A] condition in which, following Marx's dictum in the Communist Manifesto "all" that's solid melts into air" in a decisive rupture with the past...making it possible for the first time in history for men and women collectively to make their own history.

Charles and Sara came into my home. We sat and talked for a short time about my past work and his job in the factory. "I have people at work that tell me that I'm not an Indian. I tell them about my past, about the Pee Dee Indian history, and, sometimes, they really listen. They know that I'm serious about it!" I brought out my artifacts. Charles and Sara looked over them carefully. They would speak to each other, "that is Pee Dee, no, that is Cheraw." They knew well what each arrowhead and stone tool was and its archeological name. I was very impressed by their knowledge of such artifacts. Charles held a stone axe head in his hands for a long time, softly rubbing over its surface as he talked. He spoke to me directly and convincingly, "Do you know what this is?" I

replied, "An axe head." Charles, looking somewhat disappointed in my answer, said, "Well, yes. But it is not just an artifact. White people just treat them as that. They are for our link to our people. It is all we have left of them. We don't want our heritage put in a white museum. We have stopped several digs by the state around here. They belong to us! We will want you to give some of these pieces to us for our cultural center." I agreed.

The following day was my first official day on the job at the Pee Dee Indian Center. I had to only walk a few blocks to the center. As I walked down the quiet street, a man surprisingly spoke to me from across the road; "Do you know who is dead?" I didn't know why he would ask me such a question. "At the funeral home, someone is dead. Do you know who it is?" I thought only in a small town would someone ask such a question. Everybody supposedly knows everyone else. "No", was my only reply. I turned the corner for the downtown area by the small fire department and town hall. I had made this walk countless times during my formative years. It was the same, yet different. No longer did one sense the outward signs of segregation. Above the store doors, no longer did I see the "white only" or "coloreds not allowed". That was gone. Whites and blacks walked the streets together now, no longer one street for whites and another for blacks. That was a very good sign. But, the dilapidation of homes and buildings was stronger now in the main area of the town. Southtown carries all the signs of a "dying town". The local drug store had recently closed. It was a family run drug store for decades. The local druggist had taken a contract with one of the major drug

store chains in the county seat, closing the doors on so many poor residences of Southtown who would now have to find transportation to get their much needed medications. Several storefronts in the small downtown area are now empty. There is also the always present feeling of emptiness that comes with poverty and unemployment; a small group, young and old, black and white, can be seen on any day walking and standing on the streets of downtown. They talk to each other and then move to the next corner and regroup again. Several businesses were destroyed by a killer tornado in the 1980s. The buildings appear to have been bombed during an air raid. Half standing, they give one a deep sense of powerlessness and depressed mood.

I walked up to the center, which is located on a side street just off main. There is no sign out front that says, "Pee Dee Indian Association". I asked the chief when I entered why there was no sign for the center. He simply stated, "We have enough problems for now. We will put one up very soon." The atmosphere around the center is very casual and informal. Two offices exist on each side of the short hallway that leads into a large activities room in the back portion of the building. The entrance walls are filled with posters of Native American life and advertisements for upcoming events. In the large activities room, the walls have been sprayed with graffiti, "Be proud to be a Pee Dee Indian," is painted in large letters on the back wall of the activities room. The Chief's headdress hangs on the wall there, as do the furs and skins of deer and raccoons. A large skin-covered drum sits in the corner of the activities room. "We have a drumming group that plays at some of our meetings," stated the Chief.

My work space was in a corner of the Chief's office. I was to work directly with the Chief. "You have to get the O.K. from me about the work you are doing. When you want to talk to somebody just let me know who it is. You have to keep a record of your activities every week. Most of the time, you will go with me to talk to people," stated the Chief. I was not allowed to go at my research on my own, though I had the freedom to guide my topic and suggest where I needed to go next. But, the Board was not allowing me all access to tribal meetings nor documents. The Chief was very careful about all of this, "You just take it as we go. There ain't no rush on all of this." The Chief admitted that a lot of this information was new to him also. "That is why we want you to get our story out there," stated the Chief.

We entered the Chief's office. He had a computer and fax machine on his desk. There was a long table: "That is your work station," as the Chief pointed. In his office, several Native American posters hung on the wall. The skull of a buffalo, painted in white and red, hung there, along with a long wooden staff with the hoof of a deer mounted on the staff's head.

Two of the secretaries walked in. They had a problem for the board to discuss on the next day's board meeting. "The town council want to know if we are going to participate in this year's Thanksgiving parade. Several of the board members are concerned about this. Some feel that celebrating Thanksgiving by dressing up like Hollywood Indians is bad. They feel that we should stay out of it this year," stated one of the secretaries. "Well, it is a big problem," stated the Chief. "It ain't our celebration!

That's for sure." We all laughed at this statement. The Chief continued, "But, we need to let the whites in this town know that we are Indians every chance we can. We will discuss it at the meeting," said the Chief.

After the secretaries left, the Chief discussed with me some of their strategies to get local recognition:

> You know that we have lived here all our lives. We never talked to white people about being Indians. Many Pee Dees don't think that they are Indians. Well, they don't want to be identified as Indian. It goes back to segregation and our history of being labeled as black or mixed. You know the problems that has caused us. So, every time we can, we enter the parades and other events, dressed in our costumes to help both our people to identify with being Indian and to let the white and black people know that we are here and that we are not ashamed of our identity. Some white people around here take us as a joke. That is another reason why we want to get our story out. They don't know our past or our tribe. People have always thought of us as going for white, because we did to get along. We kept it to ourselves. Now, you see local Indians with headdresses hanging in their car windows and bumper stickers that say, "Proud to be a Pee Dee Indian." wear our traditional knives on the outside. You know we always had them in our pockets before! [laughter] We wear necklaces and some now have their hair long. We wear T-shirts with Native American symbols on them. We want Indians in the community to know we are here and that it is all right to speak out and be counted as an Indian. We want the whites and blacks to know that we are a distinct group of people, not just a mixed group. But, we do have a problem with Thanksgiving. Why celebrate the taking away of our culture?

I had earlier seen the bumper stickers and headdresses in the windows of passing cars. I noticed several Pee Dees in the local convenience store with Native-American T-shirts and traditional knives on their side. I was excited to see this movement. The South had always been a space of silence and fear in the face of racial domination and segregation. The power of such politics haunted me daily during my formative years.

The fear to be different. The overriding sense of an eye always watching for a turn away from the principles of racism, with its peculiar codes of conduct of avoidance of issues of human being and freedom and its ideological rationality of each person in his/her place in the racist scheme of things.

Certainly, the discourse of the Civil Rights Movement had had a great impact, on the now reemergence of Pee Dee Indian identity. The discourse of the Native American social movement is also having a profound impact and provides the discursive space for the reemergence of Indian identity in this southern region. Several of the board members had talked about upcoming national meetings in Washington, D.C. The Chief and Vergie, one of the vocal founders of the Pee Dee Indian Association, and member of the board, would soon be attending the first national meeting in Washington, D.C. of non-federally recognized tribes in the United States. Also, the Chief and Charles talked about upcoming programs on T.V. on Native American history at a weekly meeting:

Chief: Everybody listen up, there is a series coming on T.V. this week about Native American history, told by Native Americans themselves. Everyone needs to tell others in the tribe to watch it. Also, next week, a movie about Wounded Knee will be on. It will be told from the Native American point of view.

Charles: Also, you might want to know that Native Americans across the country are celebrating the birth of the white buffalo calf. It is part of Indian beliefs that the return of the white buffalo would signal the reunification of Native Americans and our come back.

The Pee Dee leadership articulate their identity as both a local struggle, refiguring the cultural boundaries of the context in which they live their daily life, and a more global identity, which is articulated with the broader discourses of the Native American

social movement. At several meetings, the Chief and others would talk about Native American news that they had read. They are aware of even international issues affecting Native peoples, such as the Natives of the rainforests in South America.

I was excited abut this kind of political and cultural engagement going on again in such a seemingly "dying" southern town. The last time I saw the chief, which was many years earlier, he was the owner of a small bar and grill. I would come and have a beer with him then and talk about the "old days" and the good times we had together in high school. Now, here he was a political activist and cultural leader.

The Chief told me that many Native American leaders come to the center to give talks and provide help with the work of the re-united Pee Dee tribe:

> A large group of Natives from Maryland came down last Christmas to observe the conditions that our people are living in around Carolina Community and to help us hand out our annual Christmas packages. We were in the newspapers and on the local T.V. They give all their support in our struggle to better the conditions for the tribe and our federal recognition efforts. One of the people from the group said that he had never seen worse conditions for Native Americans.

The Chief is in constant contact with several other Indian organizations in the state. The Waccamaws, Edistos and the Santees are other local groups that are in the process of re-uniting their tribes. The Chief stated: "We have Pow-Wows together. We are trying to help each other out with finding our historical roots. Sometimes, we find a person wanting to be on our roll and we find out that their family tree goes back to the Waccamaws. So, we send them to that tribe. Sometimes, the Santee will refer a person to us. Their tree comes back to the Pee Dees. There is a Native there at the Waccamaw

center. He is doing the same work for them that they are doing for us. He has been doing research for many years on the different tribes in this area. He is someone I want to hook you up with. He can give you some pointers on how this stuff is done. I'll call him soon."

Coming back to Southtown, I thought I knew the place and the "Indians" that I grew up with so intimately. I would be an insider looking in on my own community. To some extent this was true. But, quickly I realized that I was both an insider and outsider. I was an insider in the sense of having grown up in this community, with all of my experiences growing up in the turbulent years of the Civil Rights movement and having known the Pee Dee leadership. To that extent, and on that basis, I think that I was an insider to be trusted. But, now there was a strong power relationship developing, as I tried to get my informants to hold to an identity that I once knew and their continuing construction and rearticulation of Indian identity. I was now an outsider, a white man, looking in on a different set of identity discourses. That tension would always be present during the research.

Over time, the sense of being an insider/outsider, an oxymoron, would grow stronger. There was fine line between the past as I interpreted it and what would be revealed to me. I thought in my formative years that we were all the "same". My informants would teach me the difference.

When I first arrived in Southtown, I called the Chief to let him know of my interest in the tribe. He was excited to hear that I had a strong interest in Native

American culture. "Well, you should come home and work for those that you grew up with." There was a sense of the shared friendship that we had growing up together. We would be together again and working on some important issues that mattered, a quest to find and give voice to the silence that had long been the way of life of the Pee Dee Indians.

Forms of Invisibility

My first day in the field was spent negotiating with the chief on how to best go about documenting the past. I discussed with him my own research plan. We decided that I would take notes and record the voices of various members. I would be allowed to take certain information as it unfolded during our searches and meetings I attended. Information obtained from genealogical research would remain confidential.

At the end of the first day, the Chief stated: "Well, tomorrow I think the best place for use to get started will be with my Aunt. We call her Aunt "Missie". She is ninety-two years old and the oldest Elder of the tribe. Now, she probably won't talk about being an Indian around you. The old people are like that. It was to their advantage in the old days to be silent about their race. But, she can tell you a lot about how Pee Dees used to live. But, she can't hear very well."

The next morning, I arrived at the center early.

The next morning, the Chief ordered breakfast for us. We had a short conversation on the strategic planning project:

M.S.: So, you are having the strategic planning meeting this afternoon. What is the plan all about?

Chief: Well, it is a community development plan for the Pee Dee Indian tribe. There are these two black professors from [the State University] that have developed the plan. They have helped several poor communities in the State. We contacted them and we wanted to see if their plan would work for us.

M.S.: What kinds of issues will you be looking at?

Chief: We just have this big problem of being "invisible". We don't have hardly any statistics on the tribe. The whole problem of being thought of as white for so long has made many of our people's problems invisible. Most whites and blacks have the recognition of being located in the towns. But, most Pee Dees live in the rural areas around Carolina Community. Have you ever been there?

M.S.: I lived here all those years, but I never heard of it. No, I've never been there.

Chief: Well, you will be going near it today to see my Aunt. We need to get organized. We have all these problems that have to be worked on. The plan will look at our problems from several directions. The biggest is economic problems. We have almost 80% unemployment among the Pee Dees. Many are not on social assistance because they don't read or write well and many don't know how to go about getting it. They are also too proud to be on it.

M.S.: What other problem areas exist that you will be looking at?

Chief: Well, you name it! We have problems with education and job training. Over a third of the children up there at the local school are Pee Dees. But, the school records have them down as white. We want to document that. We only have only one Pee Dee Indian teacher in the county—that's my wife. We need more representation. We hardly have no tribal members with a college education. We need to know what kind of programs are out there for Indian students. We are wanting help to get information on how to get grants and funding for economic and social programs. We need to know about culture and our history. That is part of your job. We don't have a tribal paper. We want to know how to get one started, so people will know that we are here and we can get information out about the tribe. It is all about organizing us for our future.

The Pee Dee tribe already has in place several economic projects that provide some

employment for Pee Dees. The tribe has a tree-cutting program that employs a small group of Pee Dees. The program is government-funded. They also have a greenhouse that is growing plants and flowers. These are small projects, but a start. The tribe has in place a job training program and some small school grants for Pee Dee students who want to learn a skill at the local technical college. The county at present, overall, has an unemployment rate of 11%. It is a rural county, still dominated by cotton farming. Besides a few low-wage manufacturing plants, jobs are hard to find in the area. The Chief feels that the unemployment rate is much higher than the official statistics show. "That reflects only those that are now on unemployment benefits. Most of the unemployed in this county are not receiving unemployment. Just think how high the unemployment rate really is!"

I knew that the county was one of the most impoverished counties in the State. The State is one of the highest on all negative indicators, making the County one of the poorest counties in the United States.

The Chief was ready to head out into the countryside to see his Aunt. We left the center together in his pickup truck. On the way out, the Chief and I talked awhile about people we grew up with and stories of high school exploits.

We drove a good distance into the countryside. I was so spellbound by the Chief's stories that I did not notice the directions we had taken. We were in a deeply wooded area. Suddenly, the wooded area ended. On both sides of the road were large cotton fields extending as far as the eye could see. We turned up a dirt road. We drove

along side a cotton field. It seemed like a long time before we came to the Chief's Aunt's house.

It was a simple farming house, made of plank boards and a tin roof. Many abandoned sharecropper homes dotted the cotton fields on the way. Rain had left several mud puddles in the small yard. Just across from this house was a large cotton field. Two dogs sniffed about the truck. "Is it safe to get out," I said, alarmed by their presence. "Naw, they ain't gonna hurt you!" said the Chief, as he was getting out of this truck.

The Chief knocked on the door. An Indian lady, who appeared to be in her mid-forties, opened the door. We stepped inside. The smell of "soul food" was overwhelming in the kitchen. The house was simple and rustic.

We stepped into the living room, where Aunt Miss and another Indian couple were sitting. The Chief introduced me to Aunt Miss. She was hard of hearing. The Chief had to shout at her.

Aunt Miss appears to be ninety-two, as the Chief stated. She had recently broken her hip and was sitting in an old chair, with her cane close by. She really appeared to be Native American. Her silver hair contrasted sharply with her dark skin. I noticed that she was hard to understand. Though I recorded much of what she said, not much of the conversation was clear.

The Chief introduced me to his Uncle and his wife. Both appeared as Native American. The Chief explained what was going on with the tribe, but not much was said.

The Chief asked several questions to Aunt Miss. I turned the recorder on. He told

me to ask questions when I felt like it. He told Aunt Miss that he wanted to know what life was like back at the beginning of the century for people living in the Carolina Community.

Chief: Well, Aunt Miss, what was it like back in the old days?

Aunt Miss: Back then, you know, times was hard. Times was hard. We just share-cropped on the big farms. They called them plantations back then.

M.S.: When were you born?

Aunt Miss: I believe 1903.

Chief: Aunt Miss, did the people talk about being Indian back in those days?

Aunt Miss: No!

There was nothing but silence after this question. The room was dead silent. The Chief looked up at me and smiled.

Chief: Where were you born, Aunt Miss?

Aunt Miss: Right over yonder in Carolina Community.

M.S.: Tell me about what kind of things you did everyday on the farm. Did you pick cotton?

Aunt Miss: Pick cotton! [big laughter] Son, that's all I did was pick cotton! Me and my sister, when we was just little, we would get up before the sun and hook up the mule to the wagon. We would get the whole family together. We'd pick up people on the way. We'd drive five miles over yonder on McDonald's place and pick cotton all day! You see these big moles on my face? They comes from bein in the sun all that time! Shoot! Did I pick cotton. Son, you knows so! [laughter]

Chief's Uncle: Well, there was a lot of Indians here. We went from all black to white! [big laughter] Man, I picked cotton all through growing up! All these people around here did!

Aunt Miss: Now, me and your daddy [Chief's father] we'd never had no schoolin'. We had to work! Later on, they built the little Brayboy school. Some kids started gettin' some education. But, they'd still have to pick cotton! Your daddy moved you kids to [Southtown] so he'd could work in the cotton mill. Now, you kids got a better education! You didn't pick cotton. Thank God! [big laughter]

Chief: Aunt Miss, was there any black people working in the fields around Carolina Community?

Aunt Miss: No! [long silence]

M.S.: So, you say that there was a school?

Aunt Miss: Yea! There was the Brayboy school! Just a two room school for the kids working in the fields. They'd had that school right up to here not long ago.

Chief's Uncle: Mr. Brayboy was a dedicated man. I went to the school. Most of us did around here. If it weren't for Mr. Brayboy, we'd never had no education. All the people in Carolina Community was sharecroppers. We lived hard. We didn't have all the things that people got now. No T.V., no running water. We had to live on what we could grow. We had gardens and hogs and chickens. We had community hog killings. No such thang as a inside toilet back then! [laughter]

M.S.: Were the white farmers good to work for, Aunt Miss?

Aunt Miss: Son, there ain't nothin' good about pickin' cotton! [laughter] Some farmers was good people. Some was a sons-of-a-bitch! [laughter]

M.S.: Aunt Miss, what kinds of problems did you have with these farmers?

Aunt Miss: Pickin' their damn cotton! [big laughter] Look at my hands! That's what pickin' cotton does to ya! I come home many a night with my hands bleedin' from pickin'! Son, I picked all my life.

The conversation was now drifting away. Aunt Miss asked the Chief what was going on with the tribal association. "Well, we got this community development meet'en tonight." We left the house and headed back to Southtown. The first thing the Chief said

to me in the truck was: "I told you that the older people won't talk to you about being Indian. My Uncle opened up a little. But, I'm telling you the truth, when we are alone, she talks about it with us." The Chief talked on the way back to the center about the invisibility of Pee Dee Indian people. "Now, could you tell me where Aunt Miss lives? We weren't even in Carolina Community. There are families hidden all over this area. You will see!"

I was just beginning to put together a few themes from the fragments of individual stories that I had collected over the past two days. The Pee Dee leadership construct their people as "invisible". This invisibility is constructed in multiple ways. First of all, the Pee Dee are invisible because of the lack of State and federal recognition. Charles talked about the changing of State maps, so that Indian towns and lands were no longer visible. The maps represent a textual construction of reality that makes invisible the presence of Pee Dee Indians still living in the area. Charles talks about the census, where many Indian surnames are written in as black or white, sometimes Mulatto. Sometimes the census taker put down several racial classifications for one family household. For the federal Government, if Indian is not by the name, you can't be Indian; this is the dominating context, the practices through which to make a people "disappear". Invisibility was also constructed economically. Pee Dee Indians live in isolated rural areas for the most part. Their poverty and unemployment go unrecorded. Invisibility in terms of education. Pee Dee Indian children in the local schools are not statistically counted. Most are put down on record as white. Invisibility in terms of representation:

no Pee Dee teachers in the schools, the lack of college educated Pee Dee young adults. Invisibility in terms of any written history. Invisibility in terms of cultural identity. The southern racial system produced an accommodation on the part of the Pee Dee. They actively had to "hide" their identity in order to get along under the segregation system.

They were segregated for the most part. Most attended Indian schools in Carolina Community; some family members had to attend the local black school, though few did; some, going as white, entered the white school in town. Even the segregated children at the Brayboy school could go on to the white high school, but few ever did. Invisibility in terms of not being recognized by whites as "Indians"—Invisibility.

There exists a dialectical relationship between "silence" and "silenced". The invisibility is the result of a historical combination of silencing by the State and the southern racial ideology and segregation system and the "hidden" dimensions of Pee Dee everyday identity. Several informants talked about their lives as "hidden" from the dominant white knowledge. To hide was to survive. Thus, the Pee Dee construct their identity as a submerged, not lost, reality.

Accommodation to white society was a maneuver for advancing their lives, especially in terms of jobs and getting an education. To some extent, there was a flexibility in the rigid racial system. Pee Dee Indians could work in the "all white" cotton mills and have their children attend the "all white" school in town if they went along with the labeling of being white. The results were not singular. Over time, Indian identity was "submerged" or left "dormant" for the accommodation to the racial system. Many Pee

Dee children were simply socialized as "white". Others, such as the Chief's family, kept alive their Indian identity, but in the "back regions" of family and community relationships between Pee Dee Indians themselves. The Chief explained that his mother did not socialize much with whites when his father took a job in the local cotton mill. "She tried to keep us from gettin' hurt." said the Chief.

The current reclaiming of Pee Dee Indian identity has to be constructed through multiple strategies. Pee Dee Indian identity can be interpreted as a "nodal point" around which to join the many fragments of personal and collective identity; a refashioning and prefiguring of historical experience which could act as prefigurations for their future invention. But bringing out of silence the hidden dimensions of their personal and collective identity is a complex cultural practice.

It was never elusive and ambiguous. As we will see, there is a great flexibility about "Pee Dee Indian" identity, which provides for a more complex definition of "Indianness". In their resistance and arguments about their history, my Pee Dee informants construct a more emergent and paradoxical portrait of Native American identity.

I was given the opportunity to interview several members of the board about their experiences growing up in a racially divided society. Their life narratives resonate with the themes already uncovered: invisibility, prejudice, segregation, accommodation, resistance, and the reinvention of a Native American voice. Their lives provide us with insight into how the specificity of context, along with the broader features of southern

political economy and history, merge and are registered in lived experience. The emerging order in the themes of Pee Dee collective experience further support the notion that identity can never be abstracted from context, even as the Pee Dee were changing the boundaries of that context. More and more, I was realizing that Pee Dee identity was a merger in and an articulation of, southern histories and culturalisms. If one were looking for a "literal survival", with the underlying stereotypes of a "bracketed" Indian imaginary, one would be disappointed. What culture goes unmediated by historical relationship, and the broader cleavages of race and class, gender and age? Pee Dee identity is an emergence, articulated out of the shared experiences of living in the context of southern histories: differing standpoints, a polyphony of experiences in the sharing of a common historical context. Pee Dee Indian identity is about emergence, risking, blending, deculturation and reculturation, all of which is "placed" in a certain positioning in the context of racial ideology. In short, Pee Dee identity is context-dependent, and reemerges as a refiguring of context/s; not essential and bounded, but emergent, forming and reforming—fluid.

But, the notion of an "emerging" identity can conjure up images of an identity in the singular. There is yet further complexity and contradiction in the constructing of Pee Dee Indian identity. Part of the ambiguity of Pee Dee Indian identity is in attempting to articulate its multiple facets. As we will see later, Pee Dee identity, both personal and collective, is being constructed on various fronts. There is no necessary connection between these differing contexts for constructing identity. Nor are their effects known

beforehand. These varying contexts are not separable from power and contests over meaning. As relational, outcomes are often contradictory and unintended, producing irony and ambiguity. Nor should we assume that emerging identity is forever about deconstruction or dissemination, at other times it is about attempts to fix identity, though this attempt to fix identity is not free of unintended consequences and irony.

Vergie

Vergie is one of the more vocal founding members of the tribe. She was born in 1945. She is very articulate, giving one the sense that she was in control of many aspects of Pee Dee Indian tribal concerns. Vergie is very Native American in appearance. She has a wide-ranging knowledge of the conditions for Pee Dee Indians, and highly aware of Native American issues generally. Vergie is very critical of the "whitewash".

Vergie constructs her own life as being "lucky". She was able to leave the area for many years. Her husband was in the military. As a consequence, Vergie was able to live in Germany for several years, traveling throughout Europe extensively. Vergie feels that this time away gave her insight and comparative contrast to change her views about the "silence" that has characterized Pee Dee Indian life.

> I guess you could say that my family has been lucky because we have risen above the local bigotry that many Pee Dees struggle with. Racism has destroyed their identity. I tell many local Pee Dees that if they wan to step forward, to go forward, they will have to tell the world that they are more than just "half-breeds", or worse, "white".

Vergie grew up on a sharecropping farm in the Carolina Community. She describes the community as a "tight community of Pee Dee Indians". Her family picked

cotton for the large white farm owners. Vergie talked about Pee Dee Indian life in the community as a product of a paradoxical relationship between the surrounding racial segregation system and the demands of the sharecropping system and the closeness of the Indian community. She also talked about the "silencing" and "silence" of Pee Dee Indians:

> Both my father and mother are Pee Dee Indian, and they remember the horrible times when Indians were killed for nothing. They, like many parents in this area, have a fear of standing up and being counted as an Indian. My mother told me, I don't know how many times, "You're going to get hurt." The family division is really strong among Pee Dees because you have had generations living as "white", but there are many Pee Dees now who are getting their birth certificates changed to show they are Indian and not white.

Vergie spoke about the isolation of the Pee Dee Indians in Carolina Community. Most of the many Indian families have extensive family ties that make it possible for most Pee Dees to find a kinship link to most others in the tribe. There are only a few surnames that connect the members of the tribe. The surname is the best indicator of Indian identity in the area. As Vergie states:

> White people in this area have a strong stereotype about Pee Dee Indians. They think that we all are mixed, white, black, and a little Indian. They see us as dark complexed people with blue eyes and kinky hair. But, while some Pee Dees have these features, our people have a wide range of physical characteristics. Many Pee Dees have all the features of being Native American. Others are blonde, white, with kinky hair. Some have just white features. That is not a problem with us. It is the surname that is most important. If you have a Pee Dee Indian surname, or if many of your blood relatives have Pee Dee Indian surnames, then we consider you a Pee Dee Indian. Pee Dees have strong family ties that show relationship with everyone else in the tribe. We also have our history in the Carolina Community area, though most people don't recognize our history together.

> The State did not recognize us, though we were segregated and it was well known that our school was an "Indian" school.

Vergie constructs historical Pee Dee Indian identity as having become "invisible" because of the dominant historical racial division between black and white. "White people around here have always seen the world in black and white. We could not stand in between. We had to be classified as one or the other. Sometimes, we were white; other times, black. We have been "whitewashed"," stated Vergie. She gave an example:

> One of the most subtle lines of bigotry I've ever had spoken to me was a man who said, "You know, you're the only white [surname] I'veever known!" We now have a hard time overcoming the whitewash because we don't have many records. We are only a few pages in the history books!

Vergie gave a narrative that resonated with the experiential dilemmas of many Pee Dees. Vergie constructed her childhood as a "strong sense of belonging" to an Indian community. "We relied on each other, we helped each other." Vergie stated that in their farm community, "there were no blacks working, no whites." She constructed a world of large white-owned cotton farms and a sharecropping community of Indians. "We had a common goal: just to survive the poverty that we lived in," stated Vergie.

She talked about her early experiences as a child picking cotton in the fields. "We started as soon as we were able to drag a sack!" She provided vivid portraits of the work in the fields.

> My family had ten children. When you were old enough, about six or seven years old, you had to pick cotton. Your hands would bleed from picking cotton all day. My mother and father had tomake us work just to get enough money to survive. The white farmers expected you to have a big family. We worked hard to grow and pick the cotton, but the farmer got most of it. We were always in debt. You stayed in debt all the time, so you had to

> stay and pick cotton. In the fields, you could see young children, some just babies, sittin' under the shade tree while their mothers and fathers, older brothers and sisters, picked cotton all day. For us, it was a way of life.
>
> We lived in a shack! That is all I can call it—it was a shack! [laughter] We didn't have running water. We used the out-house. In the winter it was cold—but that is where you had to go!

I asked Vergie about what was particularly "Indian" about their way of life. The answer she gave reflects both fragments of "Indian ways" that emerged and merge with the historical context of southern rural culture, and the strong connotations of "awareness of kind" in the sharing of a structural position within the historical southern political economy of the sharecropping system. It is within the living out of this historical paradox that a strong sense of "Indian community" emerges:

> Well, there was a lot of things we did together that I think reflects our being Indians. They don't do it now but we do have a class for our children in basket weaving. But, I remember the women elders would weave baskets out of reeds in the old days. We had several women that did that. Some of the older members would also make bowls and dipping spoons out of gourds. Now, most people use them for bird feeders. Like I told you, the men would always call each other "cuz". It was a way to recognize each other as being Indians. Most of the people were connected to each other through family ties. The girls and women always wore their dresses below the knees. This was a way to recognize each other as Indian women.
>
> Now, the women, young and old, would come together to make quilts. They were so beautiful! Now, they would be worth a lot of money! Now, we have a class for teaching the girls how to make quilts. My grandmother always made them for our large family. They also made them for the white farmers' families. They would get paid or get some supplies for them. That is another thing, the white farmers always knew us as Indian people—not white or black.
>
> We also had a medicine man in our tribe. From what I know, we always had one. The one I remember was Charles Grandfather. We couldn't afford to go to a doctor. Most of the people in the Community did not have a car. We only had mules and wagons back then. When someone was sick, they would call on him. Someone would go get him. He knew how to work

with herbs and other natural medicines. He was Christian, and would say Christian prayers, but he used herbal medicines to help with what was wrong with you. When I had colds, he would come and put his medicine on my chest. He helped a lot of people get better. I think even the white farmers called on him sometimes.

Another thing about our culture that we would think as being a part of our Indian heritage was the sharing of food and meat in the community. The women always shared what they grew in their gardens and the men would have community hog killings and went hunting in groups for deers, rabbits and squirrels. You see, you couldn't just make a living picking cotton. If you got fifty cents a day sometimes, you were lucky. We got some supplies from the white farmers, but it weren't enough. Having the garden and the hunting kept you alive! Our people down in Carolina Community, they still have their gardens and still have community hog killings and hunting. It is a part of our heritage. Many still work on the farms, but they don't sharecrop any more. But, they were still sharecropping right up to the early 1970s. Now, all the farms use machines to pick the cotton.

We had three churches. They were all Indian churches. We always went there to socialize and talk about what was going on in the community. A lot of the people would complain about the white farmers they were sharecropping for. We always talked about being Indians to each other. We knew who we were. There was no doubt about it!

One of the strongest centers of our culture was the Brayboy school. I believe that the school was opened back in the 1920s. Now, the State must have recognized us as Indians as that time. Because, the school was an Indian school! It was opened just for us! We were segregated at that time. We call it the Brayboy school because of our beloved teacher, James K. Brayboy. He's dead now. But, he taught at the school for almost forty years! He taught our parents and some grandparents! It was just a two room school and he taught seven grades in those two small rooms. He was seen as our political leader in the community. He had more education than any of the Indian people. He was a blessing to us.

In 1969, he won State Teacher of the Year in South Carolina and won second runnerup in the National competition! He got recognition for the hard work he had done for the Pee Dee Indian people. But, he didn't get enough recognition. People recognized him for a short time, but it was soon forgotten. I think the state recognized us as an Indian school. But, you just call them for any written records and they say that they were either destroyed or lost! You have a teacher that gets that kind of national attention and the State tells you that the school records have "disappeared"? They know we want to be recognized and I think they just want to keep the information from us. But, anyway, Mr. Brayboy was an Indian from North Carolina. He

> always taught us about Indian history in this area and he wanted us to be proud of being Indian. He was very dedicated to the community and the children. When the schools were integrating, he refused to close the school. He felt that the children could not really integrate well in the white schools. He kept the school open until the early 1970s. The state finally made him close the school. He was our leader in everything. He gave us back our pride to be Indians. That is why we want to open a school in our future village—in his honor.

One narrative fragment that Vergie gave was particularly haunting in its connotations. It reflects a strong sense of imagined community with the past. It also helped to explain for me the strong attachment that my informants have for local Pee Dee artifacts. It also reflects the rich, complex merger of Indian identity and southern history at the level of the experiential:

> When I was a child picking cotton in the fields, I remember the excitement of finding arrowheads and stone tools and pieces of pottery that you would find between the rows of cotton. The children and adults would stop picking and run together when something was found. We would stand there and look over an arrowhead or piece of pottery. I guess it broke the boredom of the day in the fields. It also gave us a connection, now looking back, to our past. Most of us who grew up in Carolina Community still have these artifacts. Many of ones in the glass cases out there in the hall came from tribal members who collected them when they were picking cotton. I remember thinking all day as a child in the fields about the Indian people that lived there. I thought about the life they lived. It was a strong connection with our heritage.

Invisibility and the White School

The cultural borderlands through which my informants have lived their lives, and are still struggling to refigure, emerge again in their narratives of their experiences in entering the local white school. Again and again, that experience was articulated during my fieldwork. In fact, the contest over meaning, and central to the Pee Dee's present

politics of identity, is ironically most visible at the strategic site of the school. My informants' experiences of both "Indianness" and the process of becoming "invisible" is most vividly invoked at the site of the school. Furthermore, resistance to the dominating context of white racist ideology is asserted most clearly at this site of struggle, as it is also the strongest evidence for my informants' claims for an Indian identity from the experiences in the Brayboy school.

Unlike the black experience of being totally segregated until the passing of desegregation laws, at which time black students began to enter the all-white schools throughout the 1960s, many Pee Dees, living in the border zones of the southern racial segregation system, were able to enter the white school as early as the last 1940s. From my own early experience, entering the local school in 1960, many Indian children were already present.

However, again from my own experience, and from my conversations with Pee Dee members, segregation within the white school continued. Segregation continued through the tracking system of the school. The A-section was reserved for the local better-off white students, while the Indian students, along with many children from the mill village and rural white poor, were placed in the lower sections. Many Pee Dee children were placed in the special education section. Yet, the playground during recess was fully integrated.

Most of my informants expressed that they were the brunt of jokes during their early school years. Some state that, though they were told that they could only be put

down as "white" in order to enter the white school, they were informally called names such as, red bone, high yellow, even "nigger" by white students. As one female informant recounted:

> I remember that we were made fun of because we were poor and we didn't have nice clothes to wear. Many of the Indian children had only rags to wear to school. The school put us down as "white", but some -times were called names, like "nigger". We thought of ourselves as Indians. I know that some of my friends had brothers and sisters that could not enter the white school. They were told that they had to go to the black school. Most didn't go to the black school. Most found a way to get out to the Brayboy school. But, if they were high school age, they just dropped out. I know that we were treated different by the white teachers. We were always put in the lower-sections.

The statement that some Pee Dees were classified as "too dark" to enter the white school was further elaborated and collaborated by another middle-age Pee Dee male informant:

> My parents moved to [Southtown] in 1964. Both my mother and father got jobs in the cotton mill. I was able to get into the white school. They put me down as white. My parents wanted to protect us, so we went along with it! But, my two brothers didn't get in. They said that they had to go to the black school. My youngest brother was in the fourth grade. So, my parents had Mr. Brayboy come by with his bus and take him to the Indian school. But, my older brother was in the tenth grade. Mr. Brayboy's school only went to the seventh grade. He refused to go to the black school, so he dropped out!

From the late 1940s until the mills closed in the mid 1970s, many Pee Dees, whose families had worked and lived in the area of Carolina Community, moved in the mill village in Southtown in order to work in the more lucrative cotton mills. This movement is worthy of a separate study. Historically, it adds another overlooked area of inquiry in southern historiography. But, for the present study, it further elaborates on the local Pee Dee border crossings in relation to the southern racial segregation system.

Most of the historical investigations of the southern cotton mill industry are grounded in the dichotomy between black and white. Historically, blacks were tied to the fields and poor "whites" to the mills (see Billings, 1987). Yet, my fieldwork with the Pee Dees brought forth a more complex portrait of, at least, the cotton mills in the surrounding area.

Many Pee Dee families fetched employment in the local cotton mill. The Chief's family is just one example. The Chief and I took a tour of the now dilapidated mill village. The Chief's family lived on the last back street of the mill village. "Most of us lived on the back streets, away from the white town and from the white mill workers." The Chief told me that his father decided to leave the business of sharecropping in the Carolina Community so that he could provide a better living and in hopes that his children would have a better chance at getting a good education in the all-white school. He stated that his mother felt ambivalent about leaving Carolina Community. "She protected us as much as she could. She didn't go out and socialize with white people. She wanted us to keep our Indian identity." But, the Chief and his siblings had to enter the white school, as others did, as "white".

The Chief recounted that his father and other Pee Dees working in the mill did not talk about their Indian identity around the white workers. "Many families even tried to change the spelling of their last names so that they would not be identified as being colored."

The Chief spoke in angry tones as he recounted his experiences in the white

school. He gives the impression that his realization of being "tracked" through the school system came after he finished his formal schooling:

> When my family first moved to [Southtown], my brothers and sisters and I were very afraid. The only white people we really knew were the white farmers out in Carolina Community. I remember going up town with my brothers and sisters. The white people in the stores would stare at us. They would ask us what our last names were. When we told them, they would look at us funny and act better than we were.
>
> I was petrified when I entered the first grade! I had dark skin and my hair looked different. But, we were told that we were white people! I know that I was not white! I just didn't understand. My mother and father said that we had to keep quiet about our race.
>
> The Indian children were all put in the lower sections. Many of us were in the B-section. The whites that came from good families were all in the A-section. Many Indian children were in the lowest section, the special education section. The Indian children mostly hung out together. White kids would pick at us a lot. But, they soon became afraid of us! We were tough people! We didn't take any crap from white kids calling us names. I was sent to the principal's office many times for punching some white kid for calling me names! After a few years, I began to make white friends and we began to hang out together. As time went on, we were able to blend in and get along well. I'm very bitter about what happened to me in high school. I was very good in sports. I was one of the best players on the football team. I was a good student too! I blame a lot on my football coach. I was never encouraged to take college prep courses. Now looking back, none of the Pee Dees were in college prep courses. I asked the coach about maybe getting a scholarship to play college football. He said that I was not prepared to go to college! He said that I should take just general education. I really resent that now looking back. Now, we don't have any college graduates among the Pee Dee.

As the Chief and I were finishing up our conversation, another member of the council spoke up, saying that he had something to add to what the Chief was talking about. David has been with the tribal leadership since the reorganization of the tribe in 1976. David entered the local white school in 1970, the same year that the Brayboy school officially closed because of desegregation laws. David had attended the Brayboy

school for the full seven years. Here, David provides a familiar narrative among Pee Dees in relation to their experiences in the local white high school.

David recounted that while attending the Brayboy school, "we all identified as being Indians." When they integrated with the all-white school their identity as Indian was denied through such practices as follows:

> We are tired of being tokens for whites and blacks! I ran track and was on the football team, and to the rest of the boys, white and black, I was their token. It was an education, but education with lots of pain! Teachers would tell all the whites to stand up for roll call, then all the blacks. When I didn't stand up either time, they would say, "Well, why didn't you stand up!" I would say, "You did not ask Indians to stand up!" And the teachers would say, "You are supposed to stand up with the whites!" "But, I'm not white!" that's what I would tell them.
>
> All the forms always had blanks for "white" and "black", but never anything for Indians. You can look at me at me and tell I'm not black! But, these forms were just another way of the system forcing me to be white! The form included "black", "white", and "other". I refused to check "white" or "black"! I'm not an "other"! I always turned the form in blank. I guess I didn't exist, if you can believe that teacher! It is the same problem for all of us! A teacher told me one time that I was not recognized as an Indian in South Carolina, and if I wanted to be counted, I had to check the "white" blank!

White Responses

During the research, I did not go about talking with white people in the community about my research. First of all, doing so could have jeopardized the project. It is a small community and I felt a responsibility, not only to the study, but to my informants as well, to keep my focus on the Pee Dee. Furthermore, to collect as much information as I could on the Pee Dee case under the time constraints of the study kept me from spending much time on talking to whites, as well as blacks. Berry's study

provided me with much of the white viewpoint, as well as black. Also, my earlier experiences growing up in Southtown could provide some insight on white perspectives concerning the existence and racial classification of the Pee Dee. As other scholars have pointed out (Willis,1981; Blu, 1980), by elaborating on the cultural complexity of one group, other groups come to appear as anemic.

From my early experience, I remember, as Berry's study points out, that the local Pee Dees were socially constructed as people who really wanted to pass as white. The circulating stereotypes, which support Berry's study, constructed the Pee Dees as "Brass-Ankles", "Red Bones", "High Yellows", as well as "niggers". Rarely do I remember Pee Dees as being constructed as "part white and part Indian". Many whites thought of them as black and white mixed. The claim that the local Pee Dees, as well as the nearby Lumbees, were part Indian or simply Indian was highly problematic for whites because of the Western stereotypes of what counted as a "real Indian" that informed the white imagination. Thus, I remember such statements by whites as, "They can't be Indians! When have you ever seen an Indian with kinky hair!" "Indians are suppose to be red in color, not dark!" "When have you seen an Indian with blue eyes?" Other stereotypes were based on cultural aspects: "They don't speak Indian language! They don't have a tribe! They don't dress in feathers and dance!" And probably the most silencing of stereotypes: "They just want to be white anyway!"

Such cultural borders were always open for questioning by curious white children. The most effective informal strategy to keep the ideological borders in place, between

both black and Indian life-worlds, was through myths of the dangerousness of the "Other". One did not ask the "other" about topics of race because of the possible violent reaction. Many whites feared the unknown of the local black "root worker", who could cast spells ending in death for the victim. I remember many stories of whites who had died under the spell of the black root worker, certainly a leftover from African slave culture. To ask a Pee Dee if they were Indian, since they wanted earnestly to be white anyway, one was endangered of being "cut" brutally by the knife that all Pee Dee men carried—the dreaded "hawk bill", a pocket knife that curves at the end of the blade and has the appearance of a hawk's bill. Certainly, local Pee Dees could monopolize upon such white fears. Stories of violent "cuttings" (which mainly take place in local bars) are legendary in the local community. Many Pee Dees, as Blu (1980) found among the Lumbee, pride themselves on the "meanness" of their people. Such circulating local folklore work culturally to show the pride and independence of the Pee Dees. Ironically, they also worked to secure the ideological boundaries: "They want to be white! Don't ever call them Indians or they'll cut your head off!"

However, there were several points in the research that I came across white opinions regarding the racial classification of the Pee Dee. There are many whites now who do recognize the Pee Dee as Indians. At one Pee Dee Indian celebration at the center I had the chance to speak to a white female who had taught Pee Dee adults in an adult education program in the county. She is now retired. She stated:

> Most people who were curious about my work did not believe there were Indians in the county! When you tell them you taught Pee Dee Indians at an

> adult education center, they want to know three things: do they look like "real" Indians? Do they live on a reservation? And do they dance? They are Indians, if you ask me, because they think of themselves as Indians! Mr. Brayboy at the Carolina Community school always told them so! The whites around here refuse to believe it, or just turn a deaf ear to the fact that Indians do live in South Carolina!

One afternoon, I ran into a direct confrontation with a local white business owner that provides a flavor of the local "whitewash". Every Friday I was paid by check for the genealogical work I was carrying out for the tribe. The Chief had directed me to the small business in order to cash the check. Several times the white owner wanted to know whose signature was on the check. I could not make out the name. "I need to know who signs the check. I'll cash it this time, but get me the name on the check," he stated in an angry voice. "You're working for those people over there are you?" "Yes, I'm doing some historical research for the tribe." He chuckled at my statement. "Whatever they are, they're gettin' a lot of government money ain't they?" "I don't know!" was my reply. I left quickly to avoid any further questions. The following week I returned to the store with their name. Admittedly, I was curious about what his reaction would be. I told him that the signature was Tony's, the tribe's medicine man and who signs the grant checks for the staff at the Pee Dee center. The owner began to laugh out loud, "Tony! Shit! He ain't no goddamned Indian! He's as white as you and I are! He walks around with all that long hair and Indian stuff on! Shit! The government starts handing out money and everybody becomes an Indian!" I didn't confront him. Later I told the Chief about the incident and he laughed, "He's just being an asshole!" He told me to get my check cashed at the local bank.

A few weeks later, I was eating my lunch at a local diner on the outskirts of town. I casually asked the waitress if she knew about the Pee Dee Indians in town: "Indians? I don't know any! Well, yes, I did go to school with some Indians, but they were white, not like "Indians". I think most of them want to be white anyway!"

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have explored the ex/centric discourses of the identity politics of the Pee Dee. As I hope this research, and my writing strategies, reflect, these discourses of identity are not fully articulated, but emerging and fluid. The tacking back and forth between the present, past and future allow for the evocation of the multiplex nature of Pee Dee identity and culture. My informants express wrenching dilemmas of identity as they reinvent the meanings of their experiences living within the borderlands of the South. Unitary history, racial categorizations, dominant attempts to name, order, to simplify, to draw ideological boundaries; all have rendered the Pee Dee as ex/centric in the construction of dominant hegemony.

However, within their politics of identity, the Pee Dee have appropriated this ex/centric positioning, with all of its contradictions, ambiguities and paradox; they do not abandon this ex/centricity, but sustain it. These larger historical, cultural, and political economic forces have, for a better metaphor, imploded into the life-worlds of the Pee Dee. Drawing from the fragmented, and fragmenting, meaning produced by such larger dominant forces, the Pee Dee are presently struggling to refigure and redimensionalize

the border zones in which they experience their everyday lives—a present-becoming-future. The ex/centric narratives of my Pee Dee informants become the "weapons" to fight and refigure dominant borders. Ironically, for social analysis, these discourses point social analysts toward the complex methodological problem of grasping our subject when "putting culture in motion" (Rosaldo, 1989: 91) rather than relying on "classic norms analysis". Classic norms analysis is based on the assumption of the social as an already accomplished fact. Rosaldo calls for a "processual analysis" precisely because:

> Human subjects perceive their practices differently than objectivist social analysts because they are differently positioned. The latter see things from on high, after the fact, with the wisdom of hindsight. They view the past all at once, in its timeless entirety. For the former, on the other hand, timing is of the essence. They orient to their lives as if from mainstream because precisely what will happen next, and when it will happen cannot be predicted. The future, by its very nature, is uncertain.

In light of this chapter, I argue that a reoriented interactionism is well fitted, theoretically and methodologically, to enter into and provide an understanding of these cultural borderlands, which are characterized more by the improvisational and strategic rather than the normative and taken-for-granted. A reoriented interactionism can point us towards a grounded exploration of marginalized, but pervasive, historical and cultural complexities by bringing to the "center" of analysis the multiple and contradictory improvisations that silenced ethnic groups engage in for the purpose of rewriting history and redimensionalizing their identities, collectively and personally.

Ironically, a reoriented interactionism, with the intent of providing a cultural

critique of normative perspectives, need not abandon some of its cherished assumptions: that reality is in process, the need to take the native's point of view, and providing a grounded analysis. On the contrary, traditional (especially the Chicago school) interactionism has produced memorable ethnographies of the marginal that have provided cultural critiques of dominant perspectives. What a reoriented interactionism must do, however, is allow the flowering of the latent tendency it has always possessed: to give a grounded analysis that is fully tolerant of ambiguity, contradictions and complexity. It must also reorient itself to questions of power and domination and become cognizant of the larger forces of history and political economy, as they implode into the life-worlds of subjects. There larger forces can be "seen/felt/heard" in the discourses that subjects speak.

However, unlike traditional grounded theory, such idioms, while acting as condensation points for the articulation of various discourses which are informed by seemingly fragmented historical time periods and diverse social structures, are not singular in meaning and unitary. In short, they do not allow the social analyst to reduce "complex data" to simplified and unified concepts. On the contrary, their meanings are not singular, but shifting and contradictory. Furthermore, they are not free of power and politics. A reoriented social analysis will not force simplification upon such idioms/concepts, but explore the ambiguities, wrenching dilemmas, contradictions and paradoxes, as well as contests over meaning, which are associated with such idioms. For such idioms have meaning beyond the theoretical interests of the social analyst. For the

ethnographic subjects, such everyday idioms are the political weapons used to push against dominant cultural forms. They are located in historical time; and for the subjects, timing is the essence of their struggles.

Many times in this chapter, my Pee Dee informants have expressed the paradox of their personal and collective identity in terms of invisibility. As we have seen, this politically charged idiom acts as the condensation point around which to articulate discourses of marginality. Such marginality/invisibility has its origin within the diverse larger historical forces of political economy, cultural hegemony, race, state practices, even western historical discourses. Invisibility, then, has its basis in historical realities and the dominant cultural construction of such realities.

By way of appropriation, however, the Pee Dee refigure this invisibility as a complex political signifier. It is deployed, at times, as a negative indicator of being marginalized and silenced. At other times, it is deployed in a positive fashion: as an indicator of the dormant survival of a people. Invisibility becomes the unspoken and unwritten difference from which to launch a politics of identity that sustains paradox, complexity and contradiction. And, by way of sustaining and speaking this difference, a popular, as well as academic, deconstruction can begin of seemingly unified dominant cultural and historical assumptions. Invisibility becomes a political banner for an emerging imagined community in the borderlands.

In the next chapter, the above conceptual issues are further elaborated, evoked, and made complex, by introducing the second major idiom among the Pee Dee:

Visibility. The movement by the Pee Dee to find forms of visibility is not transparent, nor its meaning singular. Visibility is fraught with contradictions and paradox because of the complexities deriving from invisibility. The next chapter attempts to evoke the ironies and wrenching dilemmas faced by my informants as they go in search of a visible past, even as they construct an imagined community with the past through the reinvention of tribal traditions. The next chapter also evokes the interpretive, methodological, and ethical problems the social analyst faces when observing their own "participation" in writing culture within the borderlands. I introduce a "second observer" in the field: a Native American independent researcher who has carried out research in the Southeast on nonrecognized Native American groups for several years, and who shares his insights on the paradox of identity for such groups and his interpretive methods for rewriting culture.

CHAPTER IV

VISIBILITY: THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF HISTORIES

Introduction

A collaborated effort between the Chief of the Pee Dee and myself began a little over a month in the field to search for the early history of the Tribe. This chapter explores the paradox of that effort. It came to be one of the most problematic experiences in the field, for myself, as well as for the Chief. The paradox of the experience produced a dilemma for myself, the researcher, and, by the very fragmenting nature of the experience, in time, provided a moment of epiphany that kept me from interpreting what was going on around me from an essentialist/positivist standpoint. That standpoint was always tempting. I finally realized that it came out of deep seated western conceptions of "real Indians" and it came most profoundly from the ever present pressures of BIA requirements for federal recognition.

To be federally "recognized" is to be re-cognized from dominating assumptions. The bureaucratic regulations of the BIA are simply the codified discourse of larger western stereotypes of what counts as "Indianness" or "tribal". The Pee Dee leadership find such pressures tempting too. At the borders, however, accommodation can be resistance and vice versa. The fact that a modern Pee Dee puts on a stereotypical headdress and dances a generic Native American dance does not necessarily mean total domination by the Western mind. Critical ethnography within the borderlands attunes to the multiple meanings and paradox that such practices reflect and reproduce. It is the

everyday interactional constructions at the borders that provide for this multiplicity and ethnography provides the evocation of such constructions "woven together into a morass of irresolvable paradoxes" (Sider, 1993: 258).

Dominant Requests

The Pee Dee Leadership are well aware of the daunting task of finding an undocumented historical past. The BIA requests that unrecognized Native American groups document a continuous history of the tribe and community cohesion, including continuous cultural tradition and political leadership. These dominant requests weigh heavily on the minds of the Pee Dee Leadership.

The Chief presented me with a copy of the BIA requirements from his desk. He wanted me to look over it. "It is hard for some of us to understand," stated the Chief in a soft voice. The Chief and I were preparing for a trip to the historical Archives in Columbia, South Carolina, as well as field trips in the local area to investigate landmarks around the Carolina Community.

I sat almost a full day going over the BIA requirements. The more I studied it, the more I came to see that the Pee Dee's cultural politics of identity did not match up with the underlying assumptions of BIA regulations.

I thought it ironic, as Sider (1993) points out, that the Western forces that created the invisibility of the Pee Dee, while paradoxically "inventing" tribes, Chiefs, as well as the naming and separation of tribal groups, was now requesting historical

continuity. Having invented the dichotomous categories of native cultures as either pure or vanishing, that same dominant force is now asking for what never really existed.

On the following day, I called a well-known scholar of South Carolina history at the Archives. I told him that I was helping the Pee Dee document their history and asked if he could provide me with any leads on the early history of the group. "Ah! Yes! The Pee Dee! Well, we do have some good secondary sources that mention the Pee Dee. But, I don't think that you will find much in the archive, though you are welcome to come and look! The Pee Dee, you see, they vanished after about 1755."

In Sider's work on the Lumbee (1993: 2540258), he cites a letter written by the BIA to the Hatteras Tuscarora, a faction of the Lumbee, that serves the purpose here of giving a flavor of the Dominant requests:

> We feel that it is important that we make a distinction between the terms "individual" and "group" as defined in Part 83.1 of the regulations. A group is a number of people having some unifying relationship. A large number of unconnected people does not necessarily constitute a group....For acknowledgment purposes a tribe must be a formal group and not a collection of individuals. A tribe must be distinct from non-Indians as well other Indian groups in its area. The group must be able to trace a tribal history and not just the history of particular individuals....Please provide a comprehensive description of the current community....Include information and any documentation you might have to demonstrate how the group maintains its social cohesion or unity. Are there for example, periodic (annual, semi-annual or quarterly) events which bring members together? If so, please describe them. Perhaps your group's cohesiveness resides in kinship ties and social events such as weddings, funerals, church, etc....[G]ive a general overview of the history of the governing system...from the first contiguous contact with non-Indians to the present....

These dominant requests reflect, and partly constitute, the paradox of invisibility and visibility that groups in the Southeast, such as the Pee Dee, must work within and

against. The historical ruptures and breaks that necessarily characterize marginal ethnic groups caught up in the spread of modernity are denied recognition, as dominant assumptions of what constitutes Native American culture, as inventions of the Western historical imagination, are reified as the unwavering conditions for acknowledgment by the dominant society. As Sider (1993: 284) eloquently puts it:

> From such continuing pressures, manifest in continuing, imposed ruptures..., vulnerable ethnic peoples are constantly forced to learn and relearn how to situate themselves historically across, rather than impossibly against, the breaks that power imposes. Often this seems to be accomplished by encapsulating histories within intensely local social forms (such as families or church associations) and simultaneously by developing diffuse historical visions of internally unantagonistic ethnic collectives (we Lumbee, we Indians, we Blacks). But what matters most are not the solutions to the tensions that continuing ruptures create, but rather the point that people's senses of the possible, of the relation between hopes and accommodations, are necessarily formed within and against continuing ruptures, breaks and imposed denials of relevant and meaningful pasts. The legal or legislative denial of precedent, in sum, is a significant part of what it means to be a Native American in the United States—and a significant part of how this meaning is taught to, and opposed by, Native Americans....The whole Federal Acknowledgment Program is, in important ways, another expression of the deniability of Native American histories, for native peoples are required to coordinate (and to document) their past experiences with the conceptions and perceptions of Indian "tribal" histories that are held by the dominant society. This acknowledgment process, on the surface about entitlement and acceptance, is also both subtly and pervasively demeaning.

At the weekly council meeting, the Chief talked about the BIA requirements: "We need to get going on getting our Federal Recognition petition together. We are going out and finding out about our history." Anna spoke up, as she handed me a folder of documents:

> We can teach you about the government. You see, they send us all of this technical stuff and don't send the instructions on how to fill it out! But they

want us to put together a large paper by January. They do it just to slow us down!

Anna talked on about the resentment felt toward the government regarding recognition: "It's all one sided! White people don't have to ask the government to recognize them before they can be white! But, we have to do all this to get the government to recognize us as Indians. Otherwise, we don't exist!" There were mumblings of agreement around the table.

Trip to Pee Dee Town

While reading some secondary materials on the history of Southeastern Native Americans, I came across a copy of an old map which showed one of the Pee Dee "old towns" that existed along the Great Pee Dee River. By comparing the map with a modern version, the old Pee Dee "town" was located at or near the very site of the contemporary Pee Dee township.

I showed the maps to the Chief. He was unaware of this connection. Present-day Pee Dee township is a very small community located on the West bank of the Great Pee Dee River. The Chief wanted to take a trip down to the township, which was approximately forty-five miles from Southtown. "I want to look around, see the land in that area, and ask some questions", said the Chief. The Chief is always hopeful that land can be found that still belongs to the Pee Dee. We would leave for Pee Dee town that afternoon.

I arrived back at the center a little early from my lunch break. The Chief and

Tony were in the Chief's office discussing something with another person. The door was closed. I sat quietly in the adjoining secretary's office. Suddenly the voices grew stronger and slightly argumentative. The Chief was raising his voice at the other person, as Tony laughed. I didn't know what the argument was about.

The loud argument subsided, yet the conversations continued for another fifteen minutes. When they emerged from the office, I recognized the man, but he did not acknowledge me. He had always had a reputation of being very able with the hawkbill knife. Rumor has it that his stomach is decorated with a web of overlapping scars from his many cuttings, "like a plate of spaghetti!" people would say.

The man happens to be the Chief's brother-in-law. He has straight jet-black hair that he combs back with hair cream, tight to his head. He is very Native American in appearance. He also has a large abdomen or "beer gut". After the man left, the Chief and Tony came walking back toward me, after escorting the man to the front door. They were both shaking their heads and mumbling to each other, smiling at me as they came up. "Damn, he's hardheaded," said Tony. The Chief spoke with a moan of defeat, "He ain't never going to change." He sank quickly and heavily into his desk chair. He called for me to come into his office.

I came and sat in front of the Chief's desk. "You know who that was?" asked the Chief. I replied that I did. "Hell, look at how dark my wife is! Look how dark his whole family is! And he still says that he is a white man!" Tony looked at me, laughing, "Can you believe that?" The Chief became serious in tone:

> He's a good example of our problem! The whitewash is that powerful! He sees that we have reunited the tribe! His brother now identifies as a Lumbee and lives over yonder in Pembroke. His sisters are members of the tribe! But he insists (pounding his fist on his desk) that he's white and will always be white! I've tried many times to get him to see. I've talked to him about our history. But, he just don't see it! But, it's fear, I think. There are many living around here who don't and won't see that they are Pee Dees. But, you can't push him too far. He's liable to cut your ass! (laughter)

We left Southtown in the early afternoon. The Chief's old truck rattled, as we went along the older rural roads that run along side miles of swamp timberland and cotton fields. The Chief shouted over the load drone of the truck's engine: "See all this land here? We are traveling right beside the Little Pee Dee River swamp basin. All of this area use to be our land! All of it! Now, the timber companies own most of it!" I could hear and feel the Chief's resentment. As the Chief spoke, I was drawn into the emotional community that he constructed, as he continued to talk about the "old tribe" in terms of "we", "us". "We hunted all over this area. Can you imagine what this land was like back then? They took all of this away from us. Now it belongs to the timber companies."

My Pee Dee informants are always turning to discussions among themselves about the old tribe, bringing it emotionally and imaginatively near. I came to interpret this constant tacking back and forth between present and past, as well as future, in discourse as a way to articulate "union", "community"; a condensation point to provide a framework on the ambiguities, contradictions, and paradoxes found in both the past, present, as well as future.

Yet, larger historical ruptures, and the accompanying paradoxes of invisibility/ visibility, the borderland of marginality, is always fracturing that identity space. My

informants' identities are never wholly centered in local forms (though the next chapter explores one such historical moment) nor in their constructions of imagined community. For the present Pee Dee, caught up in the cultural politics of identity and recognition, are constructed in, and are constructing themselves out of, the paradoxical discourses at the borders of cultures and histories. The everyday pressures of Invisibility and of finding pathways to be visible keep the Pee Dee's identities from final closure, as they put themselves "at risk" in the ongoing struggles over meaning.

About half way to Pee Dee Township, the Chief turned his head back over his left shoulder. "Hey, see that patch of woods back over yonder? There used to be an old Indian church that stood in those woods! We'll stop back there on the way back."

We turned left on a four lane highway leading out of the city of Florence. We were only a little more than sixty miles from Myrtle Beach, a growing tourist attraction along the coast. "Boy, it sure would be nice if we could keep on going to the beach!" shouted the Chief. I agreed.

We approached the long bridge over the Great Pee Dee River. The Great Pee Dee is a very broad river. It is known for its heavily silt-laden water. It appears to one as a great rushing mud puddle. The River takes its name after the people who once lived upon its banks and tributaries.

Just as one approaches the end of the bridge a sign reads, "Welcome to Pee Dee Township". Yet there is little in the township to feel welcomed to. There is no main street or other signs of a small town. One only sees a few houses on both sides of the four

lane and a few more half hidden along the banks of the river. There is a craft shop on the left side of the highway. Yet, in the center of the four lane, which splits wide at this point, stands a very conspicuous structure.

Bathed in various pastel colors and covered in multi-colored light bulbs, "Jimmy Carter's Fireworks" refuses to be overlooked. It is not owned by the peanut farmer of presidential fame. The owner is a local man with the same name who capitalizes nicely from many northern tourists on their way to Myrtle Beach. Jimmy Carter's business is a mixture of filling station, large fireworks stand, gift shop, and an animal zoo in the back yard of the building. Other than this eye catcher/eye sore, Pee Dee township is a cozy bedroom community nestled on the high banks of the Great Pee Dee.

We did not stop at Carter's, but went up the four lane a piece, turning around onto the opposite side of the road. We came back to the gift shop. The Chief entered the door first. A middle-aged lady greeted us. The Chief introduced himself as the Chief of the Pee Dee tribe and proceeded to ask about the local history.

The lady spoke, looking across the four lane toward the West bank of the river: "All down along that side of the river there is a black community. They don't pay taxes on the land down there. It used to be a plantation. After the Civil War, the government gave them that land to live on." The Chief's eyes were searching. He seemed to find information interesting as the lady talked on, but he was looking for something else. "What about the Indians that used to live here?" asked the Chief, anxious to move on. "Well, I know there was a lot of Indian people here at one time. You can find their

artifacts all over this area. But, the land has changed many hands. The lumber company owns most of it now," said the lady. She told us to go up the highway about a mile to talk to a man she called "Mr. Angler". "He knows more than anybody in this area about the history of Pee Dee town." We thanked her and went to Mr. Angler's house. We drove about a mile on the highway and turned right up a long and winding dirt road. The Chief stepped from his truck and went to the side door.

I walked up behind the Chief, as Mr. Angler came to the door. He was elderly, yet healthy in appearance. The Chief introduced himself and me by name, but he did not say that he was the Chief of the Pee Dee. "How can I help you two?" asked Mr. Angler with a distinctive southern accent. "We heard that you know something about the history of this area. The lady at the gift shop told us to see you," said the Chief. "Well, I know a little. What are you looking for?" "We are doing research on the Pee Dee Indians that lived in this area. Do you know anything about the Pee Dee?" asked the Chief. "Well, this was an Indian settlement at one time. But, there's no Indians living here now! See how the fields go up toward the banks of the river over yonder? Well, there are artifacts all over the hill area. You can find them all over this area!" "Who owns most of the land around here now?", asked the Chief. "Besides the farmers, the lumber company has it." The Chief did not linger with the conversation. We left with little information.

Before leaving Pee Dee town, we stopped at Jimmy Carter's for lunch. We sat and talked for a few minutes before ordering. Suddenly the Chief drew my attention to one of the waitresses. "I bet she is Indian," said the Chief. He called her over to our

table. She was Native American in appearance. "Can I ask you a question?" asked the Chief in a low voice. "Yes," she replied. "Are you Native American?" "Yes, I am," she replied in a frank manner. The waitress had a familiar surname among the Pee Dee. "Are there other Native Americans living in this area?" asked the Chief. "Quite a few!" she said, with a puzzled look expected from such questions. "Have you ever heard of the Pee Dee Indian Association?" asked the Chief. "Yes, I have." "Well, I'm the Chief of the Pee Dee," said the Chief with pride. She was surprised. The Chief invited her to come to the office and submit her family genealogy to see if she qualified for membership. She said that she had thought about it and that she would in the near future.

We left Carter's and Pee Dee township, heading back to Southtown. "See, Pee Dees do live around here," the Chief said, "and the whites just overlook it!"

"There is a historian in Cheraw who wrote a recent dissertation on the Pee Dee River," I interrupted, changing the subject, "have you heard of it?"

"I've read part of it," the Chief replied quickly, "and I told the lady that wrote it that she didn't say much of anything about the people that the river was named after. You read it and you think that we never existed!"

We approached the wooded area that the Chief earlier pointed out as being the site of an "Indian church". He did not forget about it. We turned right off the road and immediately turned to the left up a short dirt road.

"It used to sit right there in between those trees," he said, "but it ain't here now!" We got out of the truck and walked to the end of the dirt road and on into the woods. The

air was beginning to cool on this early December afternoon. We walked a short distance into the woods, pulling vines away from our path as we went. The Chief stepped much faster than I did through the brush. He pulled some distance away. He suddenly stooped and motioned for me to come look. "Here it is!" he shouted. "Its been torn down but the floor is still here."

I walked up next to the Chief. The rotting floor was covered in Cadzu, a kind of vine that grows wild in the South and can be seen covering abandoned houses and buildings in the countryside, even entire areas of woodland. The Chief pulled away at the vines, uncovering rotting board planks that had fallen to the sides of the flooring. The Chief expressed satisfaction. "I knew it was here!"

Darkness was falling. It was getting late in the afternoon and the sun was setting. Birds were coming in to roost. "There's an old graveyard back there in the woods," said the Chief in an excited voice.

We pushed further into the woods. As if from out of nowhere, a large granite grave-marker appeared in the darkening distance. The Chief walked up to it first. "Oxendine!" he shouted, which is a very prominent name among the Native people in the region. The man was born in 1834.

"How do we know if it is a Native American graveyard or not?" I asked straightforwardly.

"Well, if all the other graves have Indian surnames, you will know!" The Chief

continued to search, walking away from me to the right. I continued to pull the brush away in front of me.

The grave-markers began to appear, some of them broken in half, others fallen over and blackened from the wear of years. Many of the graves were falling in. The increasing darkness made the writing on the markers hard to read. The Chief began to call out local Native surnames. "Here's a Locklear, Hunt, Chavis, Grooms, and a Bullard!" The markers I uncovered showed the same names. I wrote down in my notes the names and birth and death dates. I would look for them in my genealogical research.

It was this type of physical evidence, as I would fully realize later, that would provide materials for interpretations of community unity and continuity. These markers would become a part of the "traces" that move the Pee Dee toward visibility. I would come tentatively to learn the process of re-reading (writing culture) in visible form from these diffuse and pervasive histories of isolation and invisibility.

We were soon on our way back to Southtown. I asked the Chief about the possibility of surviving church records or other more "documentary" evidence. The Chief turned toward me with a wide grin and said convincingly, "You just saw the evidence!"

The Dilemma and Politics of the Archive

Rarely was there a lull during the time in the field. Everyday events, dilemmas, choices of strategy, funding problems, and the ever-present discussions of histories and culture constantly constructed a sense of excitement and urgency. The tension between

larger constraints and fluid agency was always present in my contacts with the Pee Dee, and shaped the "rush of associations" that I increasingly came to find problematic.

I spent several weeks in the local county library going over hundreds of feet of the Federal Census on micro-film. The demands of the BIA for some transparent view into the past on some original (mythical) "tribe", unitary, bounded, and seemingly untouched, shouting continuously across the centuries that here we are, the Pee Dee!" presented a sharp contrast with the marginalized and silent histories that the census reflected and contained.

The census data on the Pee Dee was complex and did not contain a transparent, literal reading; as if it were a transparent and objective set of "facts" for the historian's taking.

One salient aspect of the census data is the seeming ambiguity on the part of the census takers concerning the "racial classification" of people with Pee Dee surnames. Whole families with the same surname, for example, Chavis, are differently classified as white, black and mulatto. Most convincingly, the census takers showed ambiguity when classifying members of single households. For example, the male head of household may be classified as mulatto, the wife as black, two children as mulatto and two children as black. It is all probable that the census taker would determine racial classification by observation alone in terms of skin color. This is particularly telling in one example when the census taker classified a family with Pee Dee surname as being all black. A circle is drawn around the classifications and a line drawn through them. The second

classifications are written in the margins and construct the family as a mixture of mulatto and black. Most interesting, the early census takers classified families with Pee Dee surnames as mulatto instead of white. As emerging historical studies show (in particular, see Forbes, 1988), the racial classification, mulatto, was applied to people of Native American decent, especially in South Carolina. As the historical research by Forbes (ibid) shows, the attempt by the dominant society to simplify and fix the racial identity of mixed groups of people of color, through the application of exclusive racial categories, has worked to silence and marginalize (to make invisible) the complex and broad blending of Native Americans, African Americans, and whites, especially in the Southeastern United States. The evidence uncovered by Forbes (ibid) shows a much more complex process of cultural and biological blending of peoples in the Southeast, especially between Native and African Americans, and furthers the point of view of "race" as a social construction. The emerging literature on the long historical relationship between Native and African Americans suggest that it is still a history largely unwritten and extremely timely and needed for the emerging recognition efforts of Native American groups in the Southeast. This silent history may explain much about why there are very few recognized Native American groups in the Southeast today. As Forbes (ibid: 271) concludes:

> The ancestry of modern-day Americans, whether of "black" or "Indian" appearance, is often (or usually) quite complex indeed. It is sad that many such persons have been forced by racism into arbitrary categories which tend to render their ethnic heritage simple rather than complex. It is now one of

> the principle tasks of scholarship to replace the shallow one-dimensional images of non-whites with more accurate multidimensional portraits.

While the census data shows much ambiguity on the part of census takers in terms of racial classification, there does exist the possibility of a reading that indicates community cohesiveness and group awareness. Just a preliminary excursion into the census data shows patterns of concentration of Pee Dees in certain communities. The census data is broken down by townships in the county under study. While Pee Dee surnames can be found scattered throughout the county, the majority tend to be grouped together in two township areas. Both are located in the historical borderlands between South and North Carolina, the very idea that was historically marginalized and struggled over between the two states. One historical concentration of Pee Dee families is found in the Cheraw township area, which is characterized by the so-called "Sand Hills", an isolated area of rising hills and sandy soil, hostile to the planting of cotton and other crops. A visit to the Sand Hills areas would convince one of the possibility of finding isolation and, thus, sanctuary from the encroachment of others. The other community area is the Carolina Community, which is characterized by dense woodlands and swamp areas. I found these concentrations to be stable and growing. The great majority of these Pee Dee families were occupationally located in farm labor.

It was my hope to establish a sense of community belonging and shared identity through marriage records, which hopefully would show the maiden name of wives. However, this hope was dashed on giving a call to the historical archives in Columbia. The head historian there informed me that marriage records were not kept in South

Carolina until the turn of the twentieth century. However, I was able to use other suggestive data for this purpose.

I found alternative information in the county's courthouse Book of Wills. The data was useful in making preliminary generalizations about kinship ties among the Pee Dee. I searched through the Wills of those with Pee Dee surnames which had been classified as Mulatto in the census. In particular, I searched for properties left to daughters who had married. I wanted to see if a pattern existed of Pee Dee daughters whose marriage surnames were also Pee Dee.

With a preliminary going through the Book of Wills, a pattern did emerge. Daughters of Pee Dee families were marrying into the Pee Dee families. The 1790 Will of one Aquilla Quick can serve as an example.

The Quick surname is one of the dominant surnames among the Pee Dee. Atypical of the Pee Dee, Aquilla Quick had acquired a sizable landholding from her deceased husband, Thomas Quick. In describing her land boundaries near the Carolina Community, she mentions the names of the farming families adjacent to her fields. She mentions several names. All are Pee Dee surnames. Most interestingly, however, are Aquilla's mention of her five daughters. All five of her daughters have Pee Dee surnames by marriage, Bullard, Grooms, Roller, Locklear and Chavis. The overwhelmingly families with such surnames in the Census for the County are classified as Mulatto. Though my archival research in the County was highly preliminary, I found

the same pattern for most Pee Dee families that mentioned the married names of their daughters, from the earliest Wills to the present.

I searched further for comparable data. I found supportive evidence in the county courthouse's documents pertaining to public property sales after the death of the owner. I went through a dozen of such documents for owners that had a Pee Dee surname. All of the cases were from various times during the nineteenth century. On the day of the public sales, the county representative took notes on what was sold and to whom. All of the deceased owners were small-scale farmers. I found it highly suggestive that the majority of buyers at these public sales also had Pee Dee surnames.

I spent several weeks away from the everyday happenings among the present Pee Dee leadership while going through the census data and courthouse records. However, during this time, the Chief and I made a trip to the State Archives in Columbia, which is several hours from Southtown. The day spent in the State Archives turned out to be one of the most frustrating and disappointing times in the field.

On entering the Archives, one is directed to a small room which is surrounded with bookcases. The Archive, while a large building, reminds one of a small school library. On this particular day, there were not many people in the room. Several researchers were sitting at the long tables taking notes on their laptop computers. The longer I stayed in the room, the more I noticed that the main topic being discussed quietly among the folks and with the Archive's historians was the Civil War.

The Chief and I stepped up to the information desk. I asked the historian on duty

if he could direct us to any historical documentation concerning the Pee Dee Indians of South Carolina. "Well, all that we have you will find in that section along the wall there on the left," directed the historian. "The Pee Dee," continued the historian, as he lead us to the section of books, "were a small tribe. After 1775, most of the small tribe disbanded. The only material you will find on the Pee Dee will be found in this section of secondary materials right here." I felt a bit uncomfortable with the conversation, as the present Chief of the Pee Dee stood in between the two of us. He had not introduced himself as the Chief of the Pee Dee to the historian. Most of the books on the shelf were not unfamiliar, either to me or to the Chief and other members of the Leadership. We could find the same secondary materials in the local county library. The Chief was hoping to find much more. Could there have been treaties? The historian said that there existed no treaties with the smaller tribe, such as the Pee Dee, "because they simply disbanded or died out."

I could tell the Chief was unhappy with the information provided. We looked through a few of the books. But, the Chief knew his material already. Charles, the tribe's historian, has kept the Chief informed of written materials concerning the Pee Dee. He has read most of it. I had too. We spent about an hour looking through books. The Chief was turning the pages of a book on the Civil War when he turned to me and said, "Let's get the hell out of here!"

The mood was somber on our drive back to Southtown. I could tell that the Chief was disappointed about the lack of information at the Archives. I tried to change the

mood by talking about some of the promising materials found in the census and other documentary data. "I think that an extensive research of this material could be promising in showing community cohesion," I said to the Chief. He did not show much of a response. "Does any of that material say anywhere that we are Indians?" asked the Chief in a cynical tone.

"Well, no. But, we can, if we gather enough information, make interpretations that support the idea of community awareness and belonging," I said.

"It might be helpful. We'll see! But, the government wants to see "Indian" by the names. I don't know! We will go over it later." The conversation did not lift the Chief's mood.

It was certainly one of the low points for my own research. Yet, I knew that the documentary evidence held out potential for an interpretation of community belonging and awareness. Admittedly, my excursion in the census and other documentation was highly limited and preliminary. An extensive research of these materials is well beyond the scope of this thesis. However, when an extensive project is possibly carried out in the future, that research will hopefully be informed by the type of analytical focus that pervades this work. For, if I found out anything, if I learned any lesson, during my time in the field with the Pee Dee it is that the archive is highly political and the meanings/ interpretations of such empirical "data" are highly struggled over and have little meaning outside present attempts and struggles on the part of local Native American groups to gain local and federal recognition. I came to the conclusion that these fragments of

historical "data" were open to much interpretation and articulation in the present (as prefigurations), yet historically lead nowhere: nowhere in terms of returning to an original "tribe", ironically an invention of the western historical imagination.

Continuity and the Re-Invention of Traditions

As the fieldwork continued, I became increasingly aware of a strong line of tension that existed between, as Sider (1993: 246) points out, what the dominant society glorifies and commemorates in Native American culture and what has been silenced and denied. The struggle over the meanings of histories, and the paradoxes and contradictions that they produce, inform, and are worked out within, the ethnographic everyday through cultural production and hesitation in thinking through strategies.

This is not more apparent than in the ongoing tentative relationship between "traditions" and historical "continuity". This tense relationship is enmeshed in the antagonism between past and present, between invisibility and visibility. An ethnographic description and analysis of this tense relationship reveals the complex and wrenching dilemmas that face dominated groups in seeking recognition from the dominant society. It will, or should, provide evocations of the everyday coming to terms with power, as it informs which histories are taken up, while others are denied or left dormant. It should also be attuned to how dominated people are knowledgeable of and sensitive to the dominant society's imposed cultural images, while, at the same time, appropriating those very same images for the purpose of cultural resistance and partial autonomy. These tensions and ironies must be given in close, concrete detail if we are to

share in what it is like to struggle for a Native American "peoplehood" in this region of the United States, if not the entire country. For it is about emergence: the paradoxical pathways of crafting a Native American peoplehood in the "specific context where both culture and history are both imposed from above and claimed from below," (Sider, 1993: 16).

I utilize Sider's view on the relationship between tradition and continuity in order to engage the following ethnographic descriptions. Sider provides a description that invokes the long historical experience of the Pee Dee, as well as the Native American experience generally in this region of the Southeast, as he makes a distinction between tradition and continuity:

> A special instance of this antagonism between past and present, which often takes shape not in dramatic political struggles and incipient confrontations but, rather, in the ordinary moments of daily life, is the antagonism between continuity and tradition. For an Indian sharecropper, for example, to sit down at the end of the day on the porch of a battered and worn frame house at the edge of a hot, dusty field—the same, or a very similar house that his or her parents, grandparents, or even great-grandparents live in—to sit there, as they did, tired and worn from a day's labor in the fields, watching the children play in the swept-dirt yard: all this is not "tradition" but continuity, which can be the antithesis of the creativity, the expressive flamboyance, and particularly the autonomy of the ceremonies and celebrations that become known as traditional.

For Sider, the taking up of traditions, the re-invention of traditions, is not only about making connections with a real or imagined past, but are also "relations that often turn out to express claims for autonomy or partial autonomy in the midst of poverty and powerlessness." Furthermore, traditions need not always be antagonistic in relation to continuity. They can merge with continuity, even if in exaggerated form.

Nearly six months had transpired in the field before I was introduced to the Carolina Community area. Most of the first six months had been spent in the mundane everyday world of the Band office, carrying out whatever jobs and errands asked of me by the Chief and the two secretaries. I had spent most of that time observing, taking notes of, and recording the practices and stories of the Pee Dee leadership, as well as time spent in the local county library going through census data. At this time, I was facing, as well as feeling, the dilemma of the creative and complex reinvention of a Native American tribe in the present set against a remote and nearly undocumented past. Certainly, the past expected by the dominant society, codified as it is in the formal requests of the BIA, did not lead to the present complex cultural production of the contemporary Pee Dee. It simply does not exist. Yet, ironically, the present Pee Dee are not what they were twenty years ago. They are reinvented in the present discourses of Native American identity. Even in this present phase of their history, they are crafting themselves as different from the recent past as impoverished sharecroppers. Their parody of dominant images of Native Americans does more than simply dominate them; it invites an intensity of community belonging and experience, as well as a critical discourse to distance themselves from the recent past of oppression and poverty in the South.

For the outsider, the use of stereotypical Native American costumes and symbols on the part of the Pee Dee could appear superficial and imitative. At one of the local Pow-wows put on several times during the year, one would see male and female Pee

Dees, both adults and children, dressed in generic Native American costumes; at a local parade, one would see male Pee Dees riding on horseback together down the parade route dressed in breast plates, with colorful feathers and knives worn on their sides, while a float representing the Pee Dee Association would be filled with women and children of the tribe, dressed in buckskin dresses and pants, beaded headbands, and feathers. For the social analyst, such accommodations to dominant images of "Western Indians" on the part of Native American groups such as the Pee Dee, which have no real relationship historically with their local culture, could be interpreted as superficial and as an acquiescence to domination. For by taking up dominant historical understandings of what it is to be "Indian", are not other possible and relevant histories being denied and silenced? Are our concepts of accommodation and resistance so exclusionary as binary oppositions that they fail to address social complexities that more express both at work in practice rather than an "either/or" dichotomy? For the outside observer, even for myself at the beginning of my fieldwork, such displays of generic "Indian culture", for the most part myths created by the Western historical imagination, resonates with our images of people as cultural dupes, totally dominated at their own expense.

However, ethnography, informed by a postmodern framework, leads us to question such essentialist and exclusionary assumptions by attuning the ethnographer to how ethnographic actors appropriate practices and symbols from the dominant culture and rearticulate their meanings. The question becomes, then, what do these appropriations mean to the actors themselves in their ongoing practice? Ethnography is

Dees, both adults and children, dressed in generic Native American costumes; at a local parade, one would see male Pee Dees riding on horseback together down the parade route dressed in breast plates, with colorful feathers and knives worn on their sides, while a float representing the Pee Dee Association would be filled with women and children of the tribe, dressed in buckskin dresses and pants, beaded headbands, and feathers. For the social ana'yst, such accommodations to dominant images of "Western Indians" on the part of Native American groups such as the Pee Dee, which have no real relationship historically with their local culture, could be interpreted as superficial and as an acquiescence to domination. For by taking up dominant historical understandings of what it is to be "Indian", are not other possible and relevant histories being denied and silenced? Are our concepts of accommodation and resistance so exclusionary as binary oppositions that they fail to address social complexities that more express both at work in practice rather than an "either/or" dichotomy? For the outside observer, even for myself at the beginning of my fieldwork, such displays of generic "Indian culture", for the most part myths created by the Western historical imagination, resonates with our images of people as cultural dupes, totally dominated at their own expense.

However, ethnography, informed by a postmodern framework, leads us to question such essentialist and exclusionary assumptions by attuning the ethnographer to how ethnographic actors appropriate practices and symbols from the dominant culture and rearticulate their meanings. The question becomes, then, what do these appropriations mean to the actors themselves in their ongoing practice? Ethnography is

the pathway through which to make the connections between appropriated cultural artifacts, symbols and practices and their strategic role in inventive cultural production and identity politics. Ethnography is the method by which to gauge how much fragmented and generic cultural artifacts take on social effectivity within context-dependent social interactions, both within and between groups. It is only through ethnographic descriptions of the local and everyday usage of such free-floating and generic features that we develop a sensitivity to the creative and spontaneous aspects of multiplex cultural production and the part they play in the fashioning of a politics of identity and the refiguring of cultural borders.

The topic of the problem with sterereotypical images of Native Americans is discussed among the Pee Dee leadership. Earlier, the Board had addressed the problem with their participation in the local Thanksgiving parade. Yet, they participated anyway because of the local non-recognition on the part of whites and non-members of the tribe's existence. The cultural and political strategy is not just to imitate, but to parody stereotypical Native American images to exaggerate their presence and identity where only non-recognition or silent recognition had existed before. Through these exaggerated cultural forms, the Pee Dee resist their historical racial non-classification or forced classification in the southern racial system. Such appropriations are understandable when we see how hegemonic stereotypical images of Native Americans are in the United Sates. After all, we do not see national baseball teams called "The Southern Sharecroppers". The Pee Dee know that the local people of the community recognize these images and

that to claim these images sends a strong message of difference and visibility. However, the cultural strategy is not complete in its social effectivity: while many local whites now believe in and are supportive of the Pee Dees' claim of a Native American identity, many see such appropriations as a sign that the Pee Dee are "faking it". Yet, the Pee Dee leadership continue with the cultural strategy, even if contradictory, as a way of showing difference and as a powerful method for bringing about a sense of "we-ness" and belonging.

At the same time, however, the Pee Dee leadership are highly cognizant of the fact that such undimensional images exclude them as being recognized as Native Americans, thus hampering their recognition efforts. This is exemplified in an angry statement made by Tony, the tribe's shaman, during a board meeting one evening:

> The government does not want to recognize us! The BIA people are telling us what it is to be and live as an Indian! Hell, they're dividing the American Indians between themselves! Are the tribes out West on reservations? They don't believe that we are "real Indians" here in the East! A lot of them believe that what the government did to them made them the "real Indians" and what the government did to us denies us the right to claim tribal status! Look here! This is what happened! The government had to chase those western groups all over that wide country to get them to stop fighting and settle down. "Now, you wear your feathers and dance, beat your drums, and live here on this reservation and we will recognize you!" But here in the East, they killed most of us off with their diseases, and we all scattered up and down these swamplands and they handle us by just saying we disappeared? (laughter) Now they say to us that we don't exist! We just disappeared! Hell, they wish we would just Disappear and go away! (laughter) Now they say, "Where is your landbase, language, customs—you know, your feathers and drums?" You see! They got us in a catch 22, and now they're dividing Native Americans!

The Pee Dee Leadership, however, has reinvented generic Native American

"traditions" and symbols in order to inculcate an emerging identity formation among the tribe's members; both older members, as well as newcomers to the Pee Dee roll. It is in the 'back regions', for a better term, away from public view, that the reinvention of Native American traditions takes on a different inflection and intensity; providing an articulated space within which to formulate an "emotional community" with the past, present and future.

The central reinvented tradition is that of "Chief" and "tribal council". Both the Chief and council members are elected by tribal members. Elections take place every four years. This "traditional" form of governance has been in place within the Pee Dee organization for the past twelve years. The larger Lumbee tribe of Robeson County, North Carolina, chartered this "traditional" form of governance during the time of this research. The Pee Dee leadership, in a competitive and boastful spirit, claim to be the "most traditional tribe in the region".

During the time of the fieldwork, the Pee Dee leadership formed a "junior council", made up of Pee Dee high school students. As the Chief stated at a council meeting: "Our young people are our future leaders. They need to learn our traditional way of making decisions now!" Every week, representatives of the junior council come to the tribal council's meetings and observe the tribe's decision-making process. They also report on the junior council's ongoing cultural activities.

The junior council, under the supervision of the adult council members and Chief, do cultural work with both the teenage youth and children of the tribe. "Traditional

dance" classes are now conducted by the junior council for the young people and children. Jewelry-making and bead work classes are also conducted. Also, the junior council organize weekend camping trips for the children.

The Chief invited me to come along with him for a one night stay during one of the camping trips. The following early Saturday afternoon, the Chief pulled up in front of my house in his old pickup truck. Charles and Tony would also be going along for the night. As I approached the truck, Tony stepped out of the door, "I'll ride in the back. It's a nice day!" I sat in the cab with the Chief and Charles. We headed out of town toward the Little Pee Dee River. The camping area is located on the banks of the river, which is popularly known in the area as the "bluff". We drove along the side of miles and miles of plowed cotton fields, separated by occasional patches of dense woods. Old and abandoned sharecropper homes dotted the fields—"The ruins of an older and bygone South!" I thought to myself. We eventually turned down a dirt path. It seemed like we had been driving for miles along the dusty road before reaching the banks of the river.

As we drove up to the camp site, I noticed a line of cars parked on both sides of the dirt road. The Chief continued on until we came into the clearing of the camp site. A broad circle of tents had been erected around a large campfire site. Tall gum trees with dangling Spanish moss provided a canopy of shade from the bright sunlight. The children, about twenty in all, lined the bank of the river. They were dressed in buckskin costumes and feathered headbands. Many of the parents had come this afternoon to assist the children in fishing for their dinner. The children, along with the parents and members

of the junior council, were sitting or standing quietly next to the bank of the river with cane poles in their hands.

As soon as we got out of the truck, a young boy turned and shouted, "The Chief is here momma, the Chief is here!" Some of the other children motioned to the boy to be quiet because of the fishing. The Chief seemed to be in a very festive mood. After we had unloaded our camping gear, the Chief shoved a cane pole in my face, "If you want to eat tonight, you better start fishing!" His command was accompanied by a wide grin. I soon learned the seriousness of the command. We simply approached the bank and quietly placed worms on our hook and proceeded to fish. I took notice of a large tub already filled with fish. I quietly asked a Pee Dee member to my right what type of fish we would have for dinner: "We've got a mess of Brim and Robins," as we turned back to his serious attention to the cork in the water. Meanwhile, Tony was erecting a teepee made of buckskin just outside the circle of tents. The three of us would sleep here tonight.

The quiet activity of fishing continued for another couple of hours. Everyone, including myself, had a chance to land a couple of fish. In case of a shortage of fish, Tony provided an ample supply of deer burgers. A few parents had stayed on to help prepare dinner. The fish were cleaned and then placed in a batter of yellow corn meal and then fried in a large skillet over an open fire. Tony prepared a large amount of deer burgers also. "Many of the children don't like to pick through these fish for bones," stated Tony. As night fell, we all sat around a large fire enjoying the feast. The logs

popped occasionally, sending embers into the branches of the moss-laden trees. The fire projected ghostly images in the surrounding woods. After dinner, the parents left for home. The Chief, Charles and Tony went inside the teepee and, in a short period of time, emerged dressed in traditional clothing. The Chief was dressed in a colorful headdress and buckskin.

The junior council, dressed in traditional costumes, played a tape of traditional Native American drumming and singing and began to dance a traditional Native American dance for the children. The children, as well as myself, were mesmerized by this cultural display. Afterwards, the Chief sat in front of us and began to talk about the future of the tribe. He talked long about plans to build a Pee Dee Indian center and school. He talked about the need for the children to strive in school and to be proud of their Pee Dee identity. We talked about the tribe's efforts toward federal recognition.

After the Chief finished his talk, he introduced Tony. Tony talked to the children about Native American religious beliefs and shamanism. He talked about how Native American beliefs shared many aspects with Christianity, yet how Christianity had been used against Native Americans. Tony demonstrated several healing practices of shamanism. He ended by the burning of sweet grass and a prayer in Native American language. Tony then introduced Charles to the children.

Charles began by talking to the children about the early history of the Pee Dee and other Native American groups in the region. "Your ancestors used to camp and hunt and fish up and down this very river. The river is named after the Pee Dee tribe." Charles

went on to discuss the dispersal of the local tribe as white settlers encroached on the land of the Pee Dee. He told stories of how Pee Dees hid their identity as Native Americans during the segregation period, as well as how many Pee Dees gave up their Native American identity because they were made to feel ashamed of their heritage.

Suddenly, Charles surprised me by describing the recent history of the tribe in this century. He told stories about his family as sharecroppers in the Carolina Community. He talked about their hog raising and quilt making and how the men would go hunting for game. He told them stories about their school and, especially, their teacher and community leader, James K. Brayboy. "Mr. Brayboy taught for over thirty years. He taught the Pee Dee people about our history and he always told us to be proud of who we were. He tried to keep the school open when the government told him he had to close it!"

As I lay in the tent that night, I began to think about what the day's events meant. I could not help making a large comparison with my earlier reading of Kondo's (1990: 76-115) ethnographic study of an ethics retreat in Japan. The purpose of the retreat was to inculcate an "integrated framework" through which people perceive reality and, thus, come to shape their actions. The strengthening of identity takes place through the exposure to the extraordinary: the cultural exaggerations of ritual:

> The ethics center and the wider culture are separated by a cleavage between "the ritual and the mundane", the extraordinary and the ordinary. The precise manner of demarcation differs significantly across and within cultures, as well as over time, but minimally one could point to some degree of normalization and exegesis as signposts of the extraordinary.

This general comparison points to the way in which ritual forms work on the mundane in

order to strengthen cultural identity and community ties. However, such reinvented cultural practices have their specific and concrete usage among the Pee Dee: the appropriation and reinvention of generic Native American symbols and practices, most of which inform the dominant imagination, work as a catalyst through which to articulate a largely fragmented, hidden, and most importantly, non-recognized history/histories. Certainly, such cultural practices are strategic in crafting highly specific local forms of non-ambiguous imagined communities. Yet, as the case of the Pee Dee shows, such appropriated cultural forms are not intended for mere escape from existential meaninglessness and ambiguity, leading to complete accommodation to the dominant culture. Ethnography allows us to look beyond the "form" to the content as well. For the outsider, what appears to be superficial cultural imitation and accommodation, when ethnographically explored from the "inside", turns out to possess elements of resistance. The Pee Dee leadership utilize such cultural forms to make visible what has largely been invisible, both for the tribe, as well as the dominant culture. As a catalyst, such exaggerated cultural forms provide a visible "framework" for the articulation of broader (border) meanings derived from the pervasive non-recognized histories of Native Americans in the southeast region.

For such groups as the Pee Dee, then, incorporating generic Native American cultural forms is not for the purpose of escape from the ambiguous and contradictory, but to provide cultural distance and radically specific cultural contexts for the articulation of new meanings and a politics of identity aimed at refiguring and broadening the borders of

what it means to be a Native American. As cultural actors, as creators of culture, my Pee Dee informants are aware of the ambiguous and contradictory nature of such cultural forms, as well as their multiple meanings in usage in various specific contexts. Paradox, ambiguity, and contradiction are sustained in the ongoing struggle over meaning. In the context of public display, such as parades, Pow-Wows, etc., the Pee Dee leadership are aware of the paradox and contradiction of promoting stereotypical images of "Indians", while also aware of the context-dependent necessity to exaggerate their social and cultural "difference" from the surrounding white and black community, historically within which the Pee Dee lived upon the borders of this socially constructed binary opposition; in the context of their "back region" cultural reinventions, such generic cultural forms allow for socialization processes among tribal members themselves and promote the social construction of imagined community, while giving a framework for the articulation of a broader definition of Native American identity; in other contexts, which will be born out later in this chapter, certain generic forms work to refigure and resonate with "traditions" that are part of the ongoing (though not recognized) cultural continuity of the tribe; and finally, in other contexts, which will be the main focus of a later chapter, such generic features provide the comparative materials by which my Pee Dee informants engage in argumentation when confronted by direct questioning of their identity from outsiders. In this context, my informants struggle to subvert racial categories in attempts to articulate a vision of Native Americanness as a multiethnic and multicultural consciousness.

Several reinvented traditions do articulate with previous and ongoing cultural practices of the Pee Dee. For example, there are classes in quilt-making, which my informants say is a continuous practice with the past (several beautiful antique quilts are displayed in the band office). Turning gourds into dipping spoons and bird feeders is another cultural practice that is claimed to be a continuous part of Pee Dee culture. The Pee Dee deer-hunting club, made up of male members of the tribe, is a most important cultural practice, as I was to learn, that articulates with the continuity of the tribe. Yet before turning to a description of this practice, I introduce another researcher in the field. My conversations with Larry provide insight on how such disparate cultural continuities are important in making visible the marginalized and hidden histories of Native American groups in the Southeast.

Dialogues with a Second Observer/Interpreter

As I pulled into the driveway of the Pee Dee center one morning, I noticed a brand new pickup truck in the parking lot. As I entered the band office, I was introduced to Larry by the Chief. "Larry is going to talk to you about some of the work he had been doing with other groups in the area," said the Chief.

Larry asked right away if I would be willing to spend the day with him on a trip into the "sandhills" area? I was delighted to have the chance to speak with someone who was doing "nuts and bolts" research on non-recognized Native American groups in the region.

Larry and I climbed into his large pickup. On the front seat of the cab, I noticed a

35mm camera and a large map that had been color-coded. Larry describes himself as an "independent researcher". Larry is a large, heavyset man in this early thirties. On this particular day, he sported a large brimmed felt hat and dark sun glasses. A photograph that is inserted in his truck's visor shows Larry standing next to a dead wild boar, with a large lance in his hands. "I hunt wild boar in North Carolina. I use a lance instead of a gun. Then, when they're right on top of you, you shove the lance into them!"

"Not me!" I replied.

"Well I carry a pistol on my side just in case I have trouble, Larry said.

While driving to the Sandhills area, Larry told me that he was a member of a Native American group in Maryland where he grew up. His mother is Native American and his father is of Irish decent. Larry earned his B.A. and M.A. degrees in anthropology at the University of North Carolina.

Since graduating from the university, Larry has made his living as a contracted, independent researcher for several Native American groups in the Carolinas. He is currently carrying out research for a Native American group near the coast of South Carolina. Recently, Larry's research on a small Native American group in North Carolina was central in helping the group obtain state recognition. He showed me an academic journal in which he published his findings. Larry stated that, "though academic researchers do temporary research on groups in the region, only three carry out such research full-time in the area and their findings have been utilized by academic researchers." Larry has been conducting intense archival and field research for various

groups for the past five years. Larry said "that when he comes across historical or genealogical information pertinent to the Pee Dee, he gives the information to the Chief."

Larry was very interested in how the research was going for me. When I told him of my frustrations with finding archival evidence, he laughed and stated: "You're not alone! It's all slim pickings!" We talked about my dissertation topic and the scant academic literature dealing with Native Americans in the region. Larry had read most of the literature. I asked him if I could record our conversation as we drove along the highway and he agreed.

M.S.: We have been talking about the problems or dilemmas associated with methodology when researching Native American groups in the region, especially for recognition purposes.

Larry: I plan to write a methodology paper concerning this type of research. You see, the government expects a straightforward, factual account of the continuous history for such groups from early contact or no later than the early 1800s. Now, that's a big problem because that is not the history for groups in the southeast! We can say that these people just vanished. But it is much more complex than that. That hidden history has not been written and the usual methods for studying it just don't work out! The BIA people know this and they are already considering relaxing some of the regulations.

M.S.: So, what type of approach do you use?

Larry: Well, first you have to go through all that frustration and admit that conventional ways of just looking for continuous historical "fact" will lead you to a dead end. The documentary evidence is very fragmented or not there at all. Some of your people will identify as Indian and others will not, or some will give different tribal names that they feel attached to historically. Some of your people stay in their historical communities, while many others are on the move. The history in this area has always been that of blending and movement. A good example of that is the Lumbees. While you have nearly forty thousand Lumbees living in their home county of Robeson [N.C.], you have a large community of Lumbees living in Detroit and another in Baltimore! Now, what will the BIA make of that? So, if you start out

with the BIA regulations as something literal in your mind, then, yes! You have all the evidence before you that these people just vanished!

M.S.: So, what is the alternative? You helped one group to achieve state recognition.

Larry: Well, one day I want to write a history of the area without the requirements in mind. It's going to take new concepts to make interpretations of this complex history. But for now we have to come at the regulations in a roundabout way; we have to accommodate. First of all, forget the "facts"! You have to join the materials in a way that presents a convincing picture for the judges of the evidence. You have to somehow take the fragments that you have and make it fit the images that these judges have of what counts as being a "tribe" or Native American community. You have to persuade them with your best evidence. You see, they know it's not all literal! It's just, "convince me! Show me your best evidence!"

M.S.: So, are you saying that it is not the facts so much as your ability to use the materials in order to connect with the connotations associated with dominant notions of "Indian community and culture?"

Larry: Yes. That's it. You don't fight them, you accommodate them. But, the funny part of it is that every time they take the evidence as "good evidence", I think they accommodate us too! It makes them question their position a little and hopefully will get them to relax their requirements in the future. You see, it's all political! It's not just plain "history" and "facts", it's a tug of war over two interpretations of history; two different paths. It's a political game with some people having a lot to lose or gain!

M.S.: Well, I have experienced all the problems that you talk about. But, at the same time, I have perceived hidden patterns of group association, such as marriage patterns, land ownership, population patterns, etc.?

Larry: Listen! This is what you need to do for your people. You need to locate their grouping in a geographical area—relocate their community. Next, locate churches and, even better, a school. If you have this type of organization in the community, it really makes for strong evidence for the BIA, and more so for state recognition. Genealogical evidence can show close kinship ties within the community. If you have all of this, you're well on your way. What I do from there is look for cultural traditions. You take any fragments you can find! You don't overlook anything that can be interpreted as a cultural continuity of the tribe. For

example, did they or do they continue to raise hogs in the community? This is a cultural practice that most groups in the region engaged in. Did they or do they continue to practice any types of traditional medicine? Quilt-making? Are there any societies or clubs like women's clubs or hunting clubs? Something I really look for are signs of cultural practice involved in burials. For example, for my group on the coast, I have found graves that still have seashells on them. This was a traditional practice for coastal groups. I've found that practice continuing up into the early part of this century. You don't find that practiced here in this area. But what you can look for are homemade slabs of clay decorated with colored marbles and graves marked with a simple slab of wood. I also use photographs. I take pictures of everything! You know, "a picture is worth a thousand words!" Pictures are strong evidence for the argument you make. The rule is: don't overlook anything and don't take anything for granted!

We were nearing the South Carolina township of Cheraw, which is located approximately eighteen miles northeast of Southtown. Cheraw township is named after the historical tribe that lived in the area. We spent the day in the isolated areas of the sandhills. In this area of dense woodlands and rolling hills, one could imagine how mixed groups of Native Americans, as well as runaway slaves, could find sanctuary.

Larry and I located several "Indian" churches and graveyards. We found an abandoned graveyard. "This is the site of an old historical Indian community called Chavis township," said Larry, as he continued to take pictures of the grave markers. The name, Chavis, is a predominant Native American surname in the region. The small community existed in the early 1800's. Almost all of the grave markers were inscribed with the surname. Larry called me over in order to show me a "cultural trace", as he calls it. It was a simple homemade slab of clay with the inscriptions arranged out of multicolored glass marbles.

One of the most impressive sites we located on that day was a large, modern

Methodist church which stood on the top of a slopping hill. One could see for miles across the densely wooded hills in all directions. There were well over a hundred graves in the churchyard. We spent a good hour walking silently among the graves. Larry stretched out on his stomach and took photographs of the grave markers. All of the surnames were common among the Pee Dee. Some of the earliest graves were either simple wood posts with no inscriptions or the homemade slabs of clay inscribed with colored marbles. Many of the recent graves had either new or old photographs of the deceased, which were laminated and placed within the stone. "Look here at this old Indian man! You can't tell me he's not an Indian. This picture is worth a thousand words!" said Larry, as he took several photographs of the picture.

We stood silently together for a while, looking over the rolling hills. I could tell that Larry was deep in thought. Still gazing over the hills, he spoke softly: "You know, these people have been silent for so long. They've been silent about their identity because historically they did it just to survive. It's real funny, you know. I mean, all these Indian people have survived together, and they still all come to this church every Sunday and still live up here together. But, I bet you that they don't identity as "Indian", even among themselves. Or, if they do, they would never tell you or me! That silence has gone on so long, that to say it is not needed anymore. But they still belong together! They recognize themselves in how they live—it goes without saying, I guess."

Hunting and the Re-Invention of Sharing

It was the week before Christmas. The Pee Dee center closed on this day for two weeks for the holidays. The Pee Dee hunting club had killed several deer since hunting season had opened. Deer sausage and burgers had been carefully wrapped and stored in the old coke cooler at the center.

The Chief and several male tribal members drove a large pickup truck to Columbia, the state capital, the day before in order to gather various government goods for the Christmas distribution to members of the tribe. That afternoon, they arrived back at the center with the truck loaded down with boxes of goods. The boxes contained various canned goods, as well as practical goods, such as shampoo, toothpaste, etc. Candy and fruit were also part of the packages for the children. We stayed late at the center in order to unload the boxes for the next day's distribution.

The distribution of deer meat and other goods has become a yearly tradition, and has been going on for the past ten years. Yet, I was to learn that the tradition is much older. The hunting club is made up of twelve Pee Dee males, including the Chief. Though not official members, several females did participate in the hunting, which took place in the Pee Dee River swamp area.

Though I did not participate, I accompanied the group several times during the season. The members met before dawn at the center. They all dressed in camouflage clothing and used high-powered rifles. The Chief and I sat for what seemed like hours in

his tree stand. On one particular hunting trip, a Pee Dee member brought down a deer. The members gathered around the deer and a prayer was given for the spirit of the animal.

I arrived early at the center for the distribution day. This would be the first time that I would actually get to enter the Carolina Community and meet some of the tribal members that live there. The Chief asked me if I had brought along my camera. "I want you to take some pictures today," said the Chief. He was in a very festive mood this morning. "You'll get to see the conditions that many of our people live in today. They really look forward to this every year."

There were five of us going out to distribute the Christmas goods today. The Chief ordered everyone breakfast from the town's diner. Afterward, we began to fill the boxes with the wrapped deer meat. We loaded two pickup trucks with the goods. Before we left the center, the Chief asked everyone to stand with him next to one of the trucks for a picture. "We always document this day for our archives," said the Chief, as I felt the weight of his large arm around my shoulders.

Just when we were about to leave, Mr. Jacobs, a middle-aged Pee Dee member who is known for his sense of humor, pulled up to the center. "You boys ain't gone yet?" said Mr. Jacobs with a big belly laugh. He told the Chief that he was going hunting that afternoon near the "old hunting club lodge". As we left the center, I asked the Chief about the lodge. "The old lodge was built back in the fifties. The Pee Dee men—my father was one of them—that worked in the cotton mill put the hunting-club back together. They always had the club when they lived and picked cotton in Carolina

Community. We continued raising hogs and hunting even though we lived in the cotton mill village. At this time of year, they would still share the meat with each other in the mill village, and they'd take it out to Carolina Community to share it with kin still living there. I got an old picture of the men at home.

We split up in two groups. One of the trucks headed for Carolina Community. The Chief, myself, and another Pee Dee member headed first for the old mill village, which is located within the town limits of Southtown.

Our first stop was an old mill house located on the back streets of the mill village, just a few houses down from the Chief's home. As the Chief got out of the truck, he motioned for me to bring out my camera. "I want some pictures here." The old plank-board house was very dilapidated and worn. The Chief had a box of goods in his hands. When we walked up on the porch, I noticed that there were large holes in it. Old soiled clothing was piled up in one corner of the porch.

A young boy came to the door. He was timid about our presence. Several more children gathered round the door, starring at the large box with wondering eyes.

"Your mom at home?" asked the Chief.

"Momma! Momma! The Chief's here!" shouted a little girl. One of the young boys disappeared into a side bedroom. "She says ya'll come on in!" We entered the house. I noticed the furniture was very old, soiled, and ragged. Pictures of family members hung upon darkened, yellow walls. Old soiled curtains draped over darkened

windows. I immediately recognized the darkened windows as being the result of using dirty kerosene heaters in the winter. The children's mother was still in bed.

"I got your Christmas box for you and the kids!" shouted the Chief. "We got several deer this year, so you got some deer sausage too."

"Oh! Thanks!" shouted the mother, "I was expecting you! Merry Christmas to you Chief!"

The Chief put the box in the kitchen. "Hey! You kids come on the porch and let's take a picture!" The children gathered up close to the Chief, as he extended his long arms in order to bring them in closer.

As we drove out of the driveway, the Chief, with a self-conscious smile, said to me: "Seeing that kind of poverty upsets you, I bet. You never get used to it. But, you're going to see more of it today! They're what the tribe is all about! They live all out there in the country. Their poverty is hidden and just overlooked. We have to speak for them!"

We delivered several more boxes to impoverished Pee Dee families that live in the mill village. As we were driving past the old abandoned cotton mill, I thought of it as symbolizing yet another ruin of southern history. Yet, many of the cotton mill families still live here, nestled in the worn-down mill homes that encircle the old southern shrine to paternal capitalism.

We headed out of Southtown toward the Carolina Community area. We drove for miles along the open cotton fields. They were now picked clean. Many had already been

tilled. The Chief began to point out old sharecropper homes. "See all these homes in the fields? Pee Dees live in all of them." We noticed the other delivery truck parked in front of one of the homes in the fields.

We entered into a pine forest. We crossed several small bridges, which carried us over swamplands and dark water streams. Without any visible signs, the Chief shouted, "We just entered Carolina Community!" He pointed over to the left side of the road. "See that white church back there off the road? That's the Pee Dee Indian Baptist Church." He began to point out old farm homes that were half hidden in the pines and well off from the paved country road. "Now, all the people that live in this area are Pee Dee Indian people." The Chief was very excited about being there.

We drove deeper and deeper into the pine forest. The area was very isolated. We came to a stop sign. We turned left onto another paved road. Immediately, we crossed a small bridge over the Little Pee Dee River. The Chief turned my attention to the left side of the road, "There is the Pee Dee Indian Methodist church. You see that old building up yonder on that hill behind the church? That's the old Brayboy school."

I noted a large graveyard on one side of the church which faced the river. The area was heavily wooded with pines. The Brayboy school was a simple plank-board building with a half enclosed porch. We turned up the dirt path that leads up to the old school site. The road was very eroded from rain. "People are living here now. Right?" I asked the Chief.

"There's been a family of [surname] living here since the school closed back in 1970. They went to school here," stated the Chief.

I noticed clothing hanging on a line, and several abandoned cars in the high weeds just outside the sandy yard. A very young boy was being chased by two large dogs, as he shot at them with a play pistol. "I noticed a "beware of dog" sign back there on a tree, Chief! You think we ought to heed the warning?"

"You worry too much!" said the Chief jokingly, as he got out of the truck.

We pulled two boxes out of the back of the truck. "Go tell everybody inside that we got their Christmas packages for this year!" said the Chief to the little boy. The two dogs had taken attention to me, and were sniffing at my leg.

A large-framed middle-aged woman came out on the porch to greet us. "Hey Chief, what ya'll got there?" said the lady in a thundering voice.

"We got some food and other goods. We got you some deer meat this year!" said the Chief.

The lady introduced herself as Sadie. She appeared very Native American in physical features. She was dressed only in a simple, soiled night gown. I noticed that she wore several pieces of turquoise jewelry. Sadie was chewing on a very greasy piece of fried pork skin.

"Have the people been killing hogs?" the Chief asked.

"We all had a big hog killin' two weeks ago!" said Sadie with a deep southern drawl.

By this time, Sadie's oldest daughter had joined us on the porch. She was also dressed in a soiled night gown. Both appeared worn in the face from living such a harsh existence in blatant rural poverty. I could not help thinking of that rare southern ethnography, "Let Us Now Praise Famous Men".

The conversation quickly turned into a dialogue about the community and the Brayboy school.

Chief: Sadie, how many people live here with you?

Sadie: Well? We got a couple of generations livin' here! [laughter] There's fourteen of us in all. I've got my five young'ns and their six young'ns. My daddy and granddaddy and myself? That's a lot of mouths to fill! [laughter]

M.S.: How can you have enough room for everybody?

Sadie: Well, we do like a lot of other families around here! They's always moving around from kin to kin. Like a clock! [laughter] Some other kin come and stay with us a while; some of our kids go stay with other kin for a while. Always comin' and goin'! [laughter]

Chief: Are you still working the field?

Sadie: Me, my daughter here, my eldest son, my daddy a little; we'd just finished pick'en cotton not long ago! We still work for the McDonalds. [A white owner of a large cotton farm in the area].

M.S.: Do you sharecrop?

Sadie: Naw! We stopped sharecroppin' a long time ago! Ain't no better now! [laughter] We work for pay.

Chief: Is it still mostly Indian help on the farms?

Sadie: Hit's all Indian help! Always was! [laughter]

Chief: Now, Sadie, your family are Pee Dee Indians, right?

Sadie: That's right! That's what my granddaddy and grandmomma, my daddy and momma told me! We all come from around the Great Pee Dee River. Our ancestors all come down that Little Pee Dee River over yonder. We'd been pickin' cotton ever since! [laughter] We got some Lumbees and Cherokees in the family now. But, we are in the Pee Dee tribe.

M.S.: So, do most of the families around here say they are Pee Dees?

Sadie: Most do! Like I say, there's a few that say they is Lumbees and Cherokees. But this is a Pee Dee community! Most of the people around here—they's members of the tribe.

Chief: Most of your family went to school here at the Brayboy school, Sadie?

Sadie: My grandparents, my parents, me and my brothers and sisters, my eldest daughter and son; we'd all went to this school. Hell! We loved it so much, we'd still here! [laughter] [Sadie and her daughter began to rattle off a whole genealogical history of different families who attended the Brayboy school]. Ya'll see! There ain't but a few names in this community, but a hell of a lot of people! [laughter] We'd just one big happy family! Everybody kin to everybody else! [laughter]

Chief: Sadie, did Mr. Brayboy teach about the Indian people?

Sadie: He sure did! If it weren't for Mr. Brayboy, we'd not have the Indian pride we got! He was a fine man! He'd go out into them cotton fields and tell our parents we'd needed to be in school! We got to go to the seventh grade right here in this two-room school. He won a big prize for the work he did. He fought the state people for a long time, cause he said he ain't gonna close the school! He didn't want to integrate with the white school. But they made him close it.

M.S.: Did you go on to the white school after you finished the seventh grade?

Sadie: None in my family did! We had to pick cotton! Mr. Brayboy would always work around us. If you had to pick that day, he had no problem with it! A few of the kids went on to the white high school. But, they'd get picked at a lot. Most of them just went on to work in the fields.

The Chief told Sadie that we needed to move on to other homes in the community. We picked up the two boxes of goods and entered the side door that leads to the old school

kitchen. The kitchen is one large room with a long rustic table in the middle. There were several family members standing about the table talking. The room was very cluttered and dimly lit. The several men in the room seemed shy at our presence. A teenage boy and girl came out of one of the rooms just off the kitchen. The teenage boy had his arm around the neck of the young girl. Both were laughing and tugging at each other. The boy had a large hunting knife hanging from his belt.

We left right away. We stopped at the Pee Dee Methodist church at the bottom of the sandy hill. We took a short stroll through the graveyard. Again, many of the older grave markers were either simple slabs of wood without inscriptions or slabs of clay decorated in brightly colored marbles. Some of the clay slabs had simple inscriptions imprinted by hand. They dated from the 1840s up to the 1880s. Many of the more recent grave markers had the laminated photographs placed within the stone. All the surnames were those common among the Pee Dee. The Chief pointed out several graves of his own family. Both of this grandparents are buried there.

We continued through the day, going from house to house giving out Christmas goods. It was hard to believe that such rural poverty still existed. For example, we visited one Pee Dee family living in a large wood-framed house. The back side of the house had fallen in. The rest of the house was almost a complete shambles. There is no insulation from the cold. Many of the windows are broken or missing. The Pee Dee family say that they have two families that live in the house. Like the family at the old

Brayboy school, the two families accommodate the crowded conditions by having members stay off and on with other relatives for short periods of time.

Most of the homes we visited were old sharecropper houses in which several generations of families had lived. Some homes have been provided "rent-free" in return for labor on the still large cotton farms in the area. Home ownership is very rare among the Pee Dee in Carolina Community.

The Chief stated that most of the members, though they qualify for social assistance, do not receive it. "Most of our people do not read or write. They feel intimidated about the information needed to get social assistance. Most of them are too proud to go on social assistance. They still rely on each other for survival."

Later in the day, the Chief said that we had two more families to visit. He explained that we had reached the limits of the Carolina Community. "Our people live beyond the community, scattered all over this pine forest." Some of the homes we had visited stood out in the middle of cotton fields, with maybe one or two trees for shade from the intense heat of the Summer. Other homes were well off the road, hidden among the pine trees.

All of the families we visited had several members who had attended the Brayboy school. Most expressed a deep nostalgia for the school. It became hard for me to focus on anything but the sheer shock of their poverty as a reminder of the criminal economy that had determined the fate of generations. Yet there was always a glimmer of hope in their eyes whenever the name of "Mr. Brayboy" was mentioned. The Chief tried to

sustain that glimmer of hope by always promising his people that good days were ahead for the tribe. "We are going to have all the things taken from us. We're going to have our own school again for these kids." The Chief left every family with this sense of hope. "I want to continue where Mr. Brayboy left off."

We stopped in the middle of the road. The Chief was gazing at a small house situated next to a field to the left. There were several new cars in the driveway. He hit the gas pedal and drove quickly away, "They're driving cars like that? They don't need any gifts!" the Chief said in an angry tone. He had heard that someone in the family was selling drugs. "We're going to give these last two boxes to a family that really needs it!"

We drove further out into the countryside where few people live. We turned to the right on a long dirt road that leads to a small sharecropper house that sat next to a cotton field. "This family has about eight kids," stated the Chief.

As we approached the sandy yard of the house, I noticed that several windows were missing in the front. The porch was falling in on one side. There were two small children playing in the yard. Again, several dogs began to bark as we approached. The dogs gathered around our feet as we came out of the truck. The Chief never showed any fear of the dogs that we encountered during the day. He always tried to take their attention away from me.

Suddenly, several children began pushing their way through the old wooden door of the house. "How ya'll gettin' along this year!" shouted the Chief. The mother was the last to emerge from the doorway. "Hey, Chief," she said in a shy way. "We got two

boxes for you this year. We got a lot of deer meat!" said the Chief, as we lifted the two boxes to two teenage boys on the porch.

The mother's face was very worn and she looked much older than her age. She wore soiled clothing and had two different types of shoes on her feet—a tennis shoe and a bedroom slipper. The teenage boys took the boxes in the house and the children followed.

We entered the house. I could see that several more windows were missing in the kitchen in the back of the house. There was a bedroom to the left as I entered the house. A tall iron-rod bed was located in the middle of the bare room. A small boy was sleeping in the middle of the bed. The room was heated by an old kerosene heater. The almost sweet fumes of the heater collided with the musty smell of the house. The living room was very simple and bare, except for an old large couch and an old black and white T.V.

The Chief was in the kitchen. Everyone was gathered around him. They listened quietly as he repeated his message of hope for the tribe. The woman expressed worry about her husband's health, who was away working in the fields. "We'd got a bad winter comin', Chief!" expressed the woman with a sense of desperation. That sense is beyond description. The Chief simply told her to call the tribal office if she needed help. It was all he could say.

The Chief gathered the family on the porch for a picture. It seemed like an eternity for me to snap the picture. Through the lens, I gazed as one privileged and separated by the same power that produced the unspeakable poverty just on the other side

of the lens. Slight smiles came across the shy faces. On all sides of those faint smiles were the signs of the criminal economy. Yet they resist their total colonization whenever they discourse about their "Indian way of life" in the community; their memories of community and plans for continuance.

On the way back to Southtown, the Chief shared a story about the last family we visited.

> Can you imagine what those kids go through at school? They only got rags to wear. Did you notice the windows gone? You know it gets cold in there in the Winter. I don't think I saw a wood pile out behind the house. That family used to live on a farm over in Carolina Community. They worked for a big white farmer over yonder. But, the farmer threw the family off his farm. Last year, when that group of Natives from Maryland came down for our distribution, we had a T.V. crew from North Carolina with us. We were handing out goods to that family just like today. The T.V. crew were rolling their cameras. Well, that old white farmer came down there to their house. He told all of us to get the hell off his land! He said, "Take a picture of the pile of beer cans behind the house!" I told him that if he had to live like that he would be drinking too! He said that he was going to get some of his help and throw us off his land. We had the cameras running. I told him, "I'm not scared of you, you old son-of-a-bitch! You bring anybody you want down here, cause I ain't going nowhere! This man invited me to his house! He pays his rent! I got a right to be here!" He stood there while we continued. He knew I would cut his ass! But, when we left, he threw the family off his land.

When we arrived back at the center, we exchanged Christmas gifts among the staff. The Chief said that he and Vergie, and a Chief from a coastal group, would be leaving for Washington, D.C. in a few weeks for the first national meeting of non-federally recognized tribes.

Conclusion

This chapter has provided ethnographic descriptions of the ongoing paradox

between visibility/invisibility. They work to provide evocations of the contradictory and complex interwoven nature of the two. Dominant history is not easily rejected so that a non-problematic "hidden" ethnic history can reemerge.

Recent research has explored the complex processes of "re-inventing" ethnic identity primarily through analyses of emerging ethnic fiction-writing and autobiography (see Fischer, 1986; Anzaldua, 1987; Singh et al., 1996). This type of work focuses on "countermemory" as a way to (re)collect a personal and collective identity made visible by the dominant culture, specifically Western historiography. Countermemory is certainly important to the re-invention of Pee Dee identity (which is central to the next chapter). However, ethnography provides a possible evocation of just how such counter-discourses, in complex fashion, come to constitute social practices and provide contests over meaning in social encounters. Thus, through ethnography, the narrative/imaginative constructions of countermemory are not abstracted from ongoing everyday interactions and practices. Interactionism, not by smoothing over ambiguity, but by making it central to analysis, provides grounding of ethnic countermemories in ongoing social movement; it provides evocations of their complex, as well as contradictory, social effectivity in constituting—both in refiguring and prefiguring—border realities.

Also, importantly, interactionist ethnography can provide evocations of how dominant historical ruptures and erasers, as well as dominant restricted cultural images of marginal ethnic groups, constrain, enter into, and shape the multiplex cultural reinventive efforts of so-called "people without history".

My post-interactionist ethnography of ethnic (re) collections from the ruins and fragments of dominant, hegemonic history, and the dominant historical imaginary, is strategically situated in the "unfinished" context of articulating those fragments, not to fashion something "new", but to formulate "something more". Ironically, this "writing up" plays a part in the invention of that "something more". Through ongoing articulations of their everyday idioms of "visibility/invisibility", with their wrenching dilemmas and paradoxes, my Pee Dee informants craft themselves as "Native Americans". Yet (as the last two substantive chapters will further elaborate), that Native Americanness is not essentialized and bounded, though elements of essentialized imagery play a part in my informants' identity politics, but the result of bordercrossings: blending, blurring, sustaining paradox, non-unitary, multiplex and multicultural—not "either/or" but "something more".

The next chapter provides evocations of the life and work of a Pee Dee cultural leader: James K. Brayboy. Furthermore, the chapter provides native descriptions of life in the Carolina Community. What emerges is a portrait of a Native American leader and his relentless efforts to better the educational attainments of Pee Dee children, and to provide and sustain a Native American identity and sense of pride among community members.

Like many Native American groups in North America, the Pee Dee construct their identity around the life and efforts of a central cultural icon. For the neighboring Lumbee, much of their cultural identity is centered around the legendary outlaw and his

gang: Henry Berry Lowry (see Lewis, 1979). Such cultural leaders, generally from their armed resistance to assimilation, come to symbolize a people's autonomy and self-determination. The life of James K. Brayboy, however, rubs quietly against the grain of such heroic figures found in other North American Native groups, which, ironically, resonate with the myths of the "white man's Indian". Yet his name is a constant reminder among the Pee Dee about who they are. By merely mentioning his name, there is always a quickness to the ear and attention. What is perhaps most memorable was the widening of the eyes with admiration and hope whenever the leader's name was spoken.

However, the life and times of James K. Brayboy has gone largely undocumented, even though he struggled for thirty-five years as principal, teacher, custodian, and bus driver of his small two-room school in order to provide an education and instill Native American pride for impoverished Pee Dee children laboring in the fields. Mr. Brayboy, as he is affectionately called, literally walked into a cotton field and demanded that a certain young boy be allowed to attend his school. Through his mentoring of this young boy, even driving him back and forth to the university in later years, he produced a future President of Pembroke State University in Pembroke, North Carolina. Most notable, and a strong point of pride among the Pee Dee, Mr. Brayboy fought vehemently against the state's demand that he close the school in 1970 in order to comply with desegregation laws. Through this resistance on the part of Mr. Brayboy, the present Pee Dee symbolize as their moment of visible recognition of their identity and autonomy. Another moment of visibility came in 1969 when Mr. Brayboy won teacher-of-the-year in South Carolina,

and won second place as teacher-of-the-year in the United States. For a few fleeting weeks, the people of Carolina Community gained recognition (visibility) of their plight, their leader, and their identity.

In the next chapter, two individuals who knew James K. Brayboy intimately are allowed to narrate the story of this remarkable person and provide evocations of school and community life. However, the (re)collections are not intended to provoke an essentialized, "factual" past, but to articulate that space in the present in which my Pee Dee informants dwell: a dwelling space of cultural countermemory articulated and re-articulated in their ongoing travel across the borders.

CHAPTER V

JAMES K. BRAYBOY: PORTRAIT OF A PEE DEE LEADER

Introduction

> Tradition is not a yoke around our neck, if we know its name. Tradition is not the deadly past wrapped around us like coffin. Tradition, for the Indian family...is simply remembering who you are, and it is that story we must reclaim once more.
>
> (Green, 1995: 553)

> We try to put on different names, give ourselves a kind of identity. We struggle through various ways of looking at an identity. Indian people have been forced to confront lots of different faces in the mirror.

After returning from the Christmas holiday, I conversed with the Chief about my interest in interviewing tribal members who knew James K. Brayboy intimately. I wanted to interview members, however, outside the leadership circle. The leadership had already provided me with their stories of James K. Brayboy and his school. I felt the need to obtain material that would allow me to make comparisons with the stories provided by the leadership. Other members of the tribe in Carolina Community had provided some comparative materials. Yet, I wanted a more comprehensive portrait of the leader, as well as his school and community life.

The matter was brought before the council at the weekly meeting. After a short deliberation, the council provided me with the names of two people that they felt knew

the most about Mr. Brayboy: Mr. Brayboy's sister-in-law, Hanna, and one of Mr. Brayboy's students and current resident of Carolina Community, Boone.

I had contacted Mr. Brayboy's daughter, who resides in Charlotte, North Carolina. Unfortunately, she had recently entered the hospital for a cancer operation and declined to be interviewed during the time of my research. However, she was very interested in my research. She felt that her father's life and contributions had not received the attention that he deserved. I asked her permission to retain Mr. Brayboy's real name in my writing. She responded: "I would not want it any other way! Why bother if people don't know who he is?" We talked about a possible future work devoted to his life.

I contacted both Hanna and Boone and arranged meeting times for recorded interviews about the leader. Before the interviews, I tried earnestly to obtain any school records that might exist. The search proved futile. On calling the State Board of Education, I was told that if any records existed they would be located in the county's Board of Education files. The local head of the educational board told me that the school records were, most likely, kept in the local white high school. The school had burned down many years earlier. She said that the records were destroyed during the fire. I had hoped that the records would lead to documentation of the school as having been an "Indian school".

The following two interviews were conducted during the second week of January, 1995. My interview with Hanna lasted approximately an hour and a half; the interview with Boone lasted approximately two hours. For the sake of space, the two interviews

have been edited. I have retained the most important points surrounding the leader, the school, and aspects of community life. I allow the two interviewees to speak in their own "voice". From a postmodernist perspective "obtaining validity in reporting depends on minimizing the authorial voice and remaining faithful to the phenomena reported" (Fontana, 1994: 210). As Crapanzano (1986: 76) puts it: "...all too often, the ethnographer forgets the native."

Hanna

I interviewed Mr. Brayboy's sister-in-law, Hanna, on January 12, 1995. Though Hanna identifies herself as "white", she is, as she claims, an "honorary" member of the tribe. She has volunteered her time for years in helping members of the tribe, both in Carolina Community and Southtown. She worked for most of her adult life as a sewing-machine operator in a local garment industry. Now, at seventy-two years of age, she is retired. However, Hanna remains very active in her volunteer work for the tribe.

Hanna resides in a retirement apartment complex on the outskirts of Southtown. When I arrived at Hanna's apartment, she had just returned from taking an elderly member of the tribe for a doctor's appointment. We sat at her kitchen table for the recorded interview. Hanna is very energetic for her age, and she was excitedly responsive during the interview. Before I started the interview, I pulled out a school picture of Mr. Brayboy and the school's children. The picture helped in arousing her memories of her brother-in-law and the school.

"I knew James Brayboy very well! He was married to my sister! One Summer,

she was very sick. I came to their house to help her out. I ended up staying for two years! I lived back and forth between their house and my home in Elrod [Robeson County, North Carolina]."

"Mr. Brayboy was born and raised on the other side of Pembroke [Robeson County, N.C.]. He was in the first graduation class from Pembroke State University. It was called the Normal School back then [at the time, the Normal School was exclusively a two-year school for the Lumbee]. You could only get two years of school at the Normal back then. Mr. Brayboy got his final degree three years before he retired from teaching! My brother told him, he said, "K., if you go on and get that degree, you can make more money! You can get it in Summer school!" So, that's what he did! We always called him "K."

"T. Brayboy was his daddy, and Mary, his mother. There were fourteen children; nine were boys! I knew the family very well. "K." came from a farming family. I met K. the first time at a filling-station a few blocks from my home. An Indian man built the station. At the station, K. was talking to another Indian man, Mr. Oxendine, he called to K., "I'll let you have an acre of my tobacco, so that will help you make some money so you will not be in debt when school starts." K. and Mr. Oxendine were teaching school at the time. This was back in the middle of the 1920s."

"You know, when he married my sister, that was interracial! Because of a law against interracial marriage at that time in North Carolina, they had to leave North Carolina! [laughter] All that just because he married a white woman! [laughter] It was

about this same time, in the middle 1930s, that two women—they say were white women—that taught at the Normal School had married Indian men. People in Pembroke spoke up for them; some gave their written testimony that the two women were part Indian. They got away with it."

"But, they had a trial for K. and Lillian, my sister! They had to leave North Carolina. They wouldn't even let K. finish his school year out! He was teaching at McDonald then, a little town nearby."

"All this happened around 1933-34. My daddy died in 1934 and K. and Lillian were married before he died. Our father didn't agree with the marriage. He swore that they would never come to his house while he was alive! [laughter] But, Lilly was his pet! I said, "Daddy, don't you know you ain't going to tell Lilly that she can't come here and she ain't comin' unless her husband come with her?" [laughter] So, K. and Lilly come up one night! Daddy had gone to bed. I walked in there and said, "Daddy, you want to see Lilly and K.?" He said, "Well, I ain't goin' get up!" I said, "Well, they can come in here and talk to you!" [laughter] So, that broke the ice, and they came to the house like the rest of the family. But, they had the trial! He had to leave North Carolina. They didn't have that law here in South Carolina. He said that he wasn't bitter. He said, "They won't let me live over there, but I'm proud to be an Indian!" He said, "I know we don't have the advantages that I hope one day we will have." That was probably the greatest reason he wanted to teach at the school in Carolina Community."

"K. and Lilly moved to Carolina Community. That was in 1934. He had taken

the offer to teach at the little two-room school in Carolina Community. When they started out, Lilly and K. lived in two rooms in someone else's house in Carolina Community. They lived about a mile from the school house. The people down there, they killed their hogs; they killed them and shared the meat in the community. I remember one time, when they were killing hogs on their farms, Lillian and K. had just rented their first house down there. It was just a simple farm house. The people in the community would come by the school and give K. more meat than he could ever eat! [laughter] The funny thing is, if Lilly was at someone's home, they would say, "Will you take this meat to Mr. Brayboy!" [laughter] Lilly said, "That kind of bothered me, 'cause I knew that I would be the one cooking it!" [laugher]

"When K. started out at the school, he found out that the first teacher of the school didn't teach the books that they should have. I think that the first teacher was a local white farmer. The school opened early in the 1920s. K. was the first Indian teacher at the school and he was the last! He taught here until the school closed in 1970. The children would say, "Mr. Brayboy, we didn't have those books!" I know that K. had the opportunity to make more money in other schools and I know that Lilly many times wished that he would leave the Carolina Community school. But, he never did! He taught for about thirty-seven years at the school."

"K. argued with the state people until they finally gave him a school bus. He told them he would drive the bus for free! He started driving all over the area to get students to come to his school. He would drive right up into the cotton fields and tell the parents

that their children needed to be in school. Now, people needed the kids to work! The more hands you had in the fields, the more money you made! [laughter] But, K. was stubborn too." [laughter] He would keep at a kid's parents until they would let the children go. He worked around the children's work schedule. He ended up with an eighty mile bus route; he picked them up at home or in the fields and brought them back home!"

"K. would get up before dawn and drive the bus to the school and start a fire in the potbelly stove. He would then get back on the bus and drive his forty-mile route, picking up a bus load of pupils. He would get back to the school by eight. K. would tell the cook, Liz, what to cook for the day. At first, K. taught all seven grades in just one room. Later, he got help from a woman teacher. He taught fourth through seventh grade in one room; the woman would teach first through third grades. He was the principal, teacher, bus driver and custodian! After a few years, the community helped him build a kitchen onto the two-room school. The kids called the cook, Aunt Liz. She was kin to a lot of the children! [laughter] She didn't read or write. K. would help her make the menu out. At the end of the day, he would drive all the kids home. They all came from sharecropper families. They all lived in Carolina Community area."

"But, K. never finished work. People only know him for his teaching in a two-room school. He was adopted by the Pee Dee people as their leader! They said, "They won't let him live over yonder in North Carolina. He's ours now!" [laughter] He would fill out tax papers for the children's parents. They couldn't read or write. Many times, he

would work out problems between the sharecroppers and the white farm-owners. The white farmers had a lot of respect for Mr. Brayboy! They always called him "Mr. Brayboy"! He would always ask the kids if their parents needed help. He would get clothes from the state and he would get food-stuff from the state and hand it out to the families that needed it."

"Now, K. would teach the kids about Indian identity. That is one thing that I know for sure! He said that his third-graders were very proud of the Indian history he taught them. He always tried to inspire the children about their Indian identity and culture. And he always held up English Jones to the children."

English Jones became the President of Pembroke State University [Pembroke, North Carolina]. When K. found him, English was picking cotton in the field with his daddy, Pete. English dropped out of school to pick cotton. He was ten years old when K. found him. K. pulled his bus up to the cotton field. He walked out to English and told him he needed to be in school! Now, English weren't no cotton picker! [laughter] He was like me! K. told Peter, "Your son here really needs to be in school!" Pete said, "Well, take him and do what you can with him!" K. worked hard with English. He always made sure he did his work."

"Well, English saw the advantage, and he took advantage of it! English started college at Pembroke State. But he still lived in Carolina Community. K. would drive him to Pembroke every Sunday and would come back and pick him up on Fridays. I think

English became sort of a son to K. He went on to become a doctor. English was the star in K.'s crown! He always held him up to the children."

"I took a lady from the education board of the state out there to meet K. one day. This was in the early 1960s. I took her out to the school. I saw that lady sit down and cry because of the poverty of the children. They only had rags to wear. She asked K. how the Christmas season went for the kids at school. K. said, "Well, they draw straws for Christmas gifts. But some of them never get anything for Christmas!" K. told her that if the school charged more than a dime for lunch, they would not need a lunch room. He said, "Because I know that, for most of them, this is the only meal they get in a day!" The lady asked K. if twenty dollars a month from the state would help. He said, "It sure would be a blessing!" From what I know, he received the twenty dollars every month to provide lunch for the children."

"Now, during segregation, the Pee Dee children were segregated. After they finished the seventh grade at Carolina Community, they were allowed to go on at the white high school. But, few ever did! Most of them were pushed to go on and work with their families in the fields. Many of them felt intimidated about going to the white school. They knew that they didn't fit in. If they were too dark, they would have to go to the black school. But few ever did."

"Now, when the state started forcing the kids to go on to school, many started going to the white school. Now, these Indian children from Carolina Community, when they started going to the white school, they would say, you know, that they were Indian

people. Now, Lilly's and K.'s daughter, Dorathy, she went to school in Carolina Community. The white teacher said to her, "We only have white people going to school here!" Dorathy said, "Well, I'm coming to school there and I'm an Indian!"

"But, they put her down as white! Dorathy had so much of her father in her that she could fit in anywhere. But, many of the children could never adjust. K. said that he felt that many would not adjust. He worried for them all the time. He knew they would be mistreated. He said that he knew what racism was. When he was a young boy growing up in Pembroke, he remembered when he would be told to stand at the back of the line at the local drug store. They ran him out of the state because of his race!"

"That is why we fought and fought to keep the school open. He felt that the Pee Dee children had a better chance if they could go those first seven years to his school. I think K. felt that he had that time with them to make them strong; to give them something positive. He fought and fought. But they made him close the school in 1970. The children were not allowed to be Indian at the white school. K. knew all of this! He continued to do his best for his people until he died."

"K. went on to be an assistant principal at the high school in Dillon County. He worked there for two years before he died. When he died, people from all over came to his funeral. He and Lilly were buried right there at the Pee Dee Methodist Church. Like I said, people came from everywhere! The cars were circled three times around that church! All of his students, from many years past, came to the funeral. They really loved him."

"Now, sometimes K. would get frustrated. That was when he would get silent. He would grab his books and his pen—he was most happy then! He was strong with his students, but he never did their work for them. I remember one time, I had to hand in a report for school. I asked him if he would help me write it. He asked me, "When do you have to have it in?" I said, "Tomorrow!" He said, "You better start writing then!" [laughter]

"It was a great year in 1969, 'cause K. won teacher-of-the-year in South Carolina! When they told us that day that K. had won teacher-of-the-year in the state, I knew his work and the community would get some attention. Just a few weeks later, K. was voted the second best teacher in the Country!"

"We were so happy to see K. in the spotlight. He went to Washington, D.C.—he told the story of his school and the Pee Dee people to the Federal people there. He caught the imagination of people 'cause there were not many two-room schools left in the country by that time. People around here in [Southtown], they didn't know much about K. before this. They just knew him as "that Indian man that drives around in that school bus!" [laughter] Well, K. became sort of a hero around here for a while—you know, small town like this, everybody talked about K. and the school for a while."

"But, the recognition didn't last long! But, the Pee Dees will always remember him for what he did for them! The next year, in 1970, they made K. close the school! The school and the children was his life! He died a couple of years later."

Boone

I interviewed Boone in January 14, 1995. Boone grew up on a sharecropping farm in Carolina Community. He was a student at the Brayboy school from 1961 to 1968. After finishing the seven grades offered at the Brayboy school, Boone transferred to the local "white high school", and received his high school degree in 1973. Boone played a leadership role in the re-establishment of the Pee Dee tribe in 1976.

Boone is now forty-years old. He says that his wife is white. They have four grown children of their own, as well as four informally-adopted children that they raised for other families in Carolina Community. Boone explained that raising troubled youths in the community through informal adoption is not uncommon in Carolina Community. "If they have been thrown out of the house 'cause their parents couldn't handle them, I would take them in and give them a home. I raised four kids like that and they're just like my own!"

Boone now lives on the outskirts of the Carolina Community. He lives with his wife in a double-wide trailer. He owns a small convenience store. Boone crafts himself as being more fortunate than most members of the community. Boone greeted me in his driveway. He was very receptive to being interviewed, giving the impression that he was very knowledgeable about his community and the experiences of his people.

When we entered his trailer, I noticed several colorful Native American paintings on the wall, with many photographs of family members arranged around the Native

American portraits. He also had several colorful birds for pets, which sang incessantly throughout the interview.

Below, Boone (re)collects a narrative about life in a sharecropping community, James K. Brayboy and his school, problems when entering the local "white" high school, and his role in the re-establishment of the Pee Dee tribe.

"I was born over yonder, in Carolina Community. I live now just on the border of the community. I started school in Carolina Community back in 1961. I was six years old then. I was born here in Carolina Community in 1955."

"My daddy was a sharecropper on a farm in Carolina Community. We worked on Jr. McColl's place. Mr. McColl had a big cotton farm back then. My granddaddy was a sharecropper. He was blind, Jack! But these people around here, they say he was a great farmer! He could still plow a field, Jack, with mules just as good as anybody else could!" [laughter]

"I had to pick cotton when I was just a little kid. Man, I stayed in the damn field more than I did in the school! [laughter] There was fifteen of us. It was hard-livin' for all of us, Jack! My daddy could hardly write his name. Later, he went to adult-education. Mr. Brayboy taught adult-education at his school at night."

"We worked hard in the fields! There was a lot of people pickin' cotton was Indian people. There weren't no whites and there weren't no blacks! Everyone was Indian people! The kids that was in the school, you know, they was, most of the time, in the fields workin'! I know we was!" [laughter]

"We'd have to get up at four in the mornin' and get ready for work. A foreman—a white man—would come and we'd have to get in the back of his truck. Sometimes, we'd just come back home for dinner and then go back to the fields! We worked from sunup to sundown, and then some! That ain't no lie, Jack! We'd have to work right up till midnight sometimes!"

"I can remember, you know, being just a little baby and sittin' at the end of the road while momma and daddy picked cotton! The older kids would be out there pickin' too! All day long they'd pick cotton, Jack! People say I was too young to remember that! But, I do! [laughter] We stayed in the field all day, Jack! When everything was done, we went to school. But, everybody had to work, even the kids!"

"Back then, you weren't paid by the hour, you was paid by the pound. You was paid by the "hundred pound". I remember, you know, when we got on up some size—eleven years old, we'd get our butts torched all the time, 'cause we couldn't pick a hundred pounds of cotton! My brothers and sisters could do it sometimes, but I couldn't pick a hundred pounds of cotton! My brothers and sisters could to it sometimes, but I couldn't do it! I'd get my butt whipped, Jack! I'd cry 'cause I couldn't do it! My daddy would say, "I expect a hundred pounds out of you today!" And if you didn't have it at weigh-up time later that night, Jack, you was in a bind! That was bottom line! That was reality! Bottom line! Bottom line!"

"Now, people would say my daddy abused me! But, that was reality, Jack! You didn't put that cotton in the sack, Jack, you didn't eat! I loved my daddy, and he loved

us! But, he knew we had to survive! Bottom line! When we had to pick cotton, the Indian people around here, we had a sayin', "Hog-nose to the ground!" We was a tough, hardworkin' people!"

"In the off-season, we'd go to school. During pickin' season, we'd go to school when we could. Mr. Brayboy always worked around our schedule. But, in the off-season, you'd be hoein' cotton, pullin' weeds. We had to clean around the house-mop, cut firewood, and pump water. We didn't have runnin' water. We had an outside toilet. When I think about it now, it was like livin' back in the pioneer days! It was a hard way to live, Jack! We always had a flower garden. My mother loved flowers. My momma made quilts with other women in the community. We'd help her tend the vegetable garden. The garden helped us survive through the year."

"We raised hogs. We also had chickens and goats. We drank goat milk and made goat cheese. People in the community pulled together, you know. During the week, if you ran out of somethin' you could go to your friends and kin. Everybody pulled together. That's how our tribe survived all these years, Jack! If somethin' happens to one of our members, we all know about it right way, and we pitch in to help. Hell, Jack! We've had one of our members die that lived up in New York city and we'd all knew about it right away! Our people livin' over yonder around [Southtown]. There ain't nothin' happens, Jack, that someone don't call out here an let us know! The Chief and council? They don't make a move without lettin' us know about it! They don't make decisions without us puttin' a word in! That's how close we are! Bottom line!"

"We had community hog-killin's. As a matter of fact, people here still do that! People have been killin' hogs now for about two months! It's part of our tradition! It still goes on! See, in these days, it's cheaper to go to the stockyard and buy your hogs. But, people down here? They still love to raise their hogs! Every year, we have our annual hog-killin' in the community. We share the meat with each other! The hog-killin' helped to keep our people alive all these years! It brings people together, you know. People go around to each other's house and talk about what's been goin' on."

"We still go huntin' in the community. The men of this community always had their huntin' for deer and rabbits and ducks. We would go early in the mornin', before the sun came up. We'd all meet at somebody's house for breakfast. We wouldn't come back until night time, Jack! [laughter] We had these game sacks, you know. We'd get these burlap sacks from the big farmer and we'd come back that night with them strapped to us! We'd fillin' with rabbits! They'd be so heavy, Jack! [laughter] We'd have community dinners, at the Pee Dee Methodist church. We'd have rabbit stew and deer stew. Huntin' also kept us alive. Still does for a lot of our people!"

"All the big farmers were white! I didn't know that they made anything else but white big-farmers, Jack! [laughter] Basically, like anything else, you had some sharecroppers that were "suck-ups"! Then, you had others that weren't goin' to take too much of the garbage from the white farmers!"

"We sharecropped for the Allens for two or three years. I was about fifteen, I guess. My father came to the white high school to get me 'cause our house burnt down!

We lost everything we had, Jack! Because Mr. Allen's shack burnt down, he made us leave his farm! So, we went to work for Tom Kennedy. We worked Tom's cotton farm for a while. We moved over yonder, into that big, old white house you saw comin' here. Well, I won't ever forget it, Jack! This is some years later. We boys had moved on and we was gettin' out of the farmin' business. I just went into the army. I was on my way home 'cause daddy had a heart attack. There was just three of the girls still at home. Tom Kennedy told my daddy that he didn't have no more help in the home, so he'd have to leave his place! He had to find another place to live! The second day that my daddy was home from the hospital and he had this dropped on him? I might be wrong, Jack! But, I still have a lot of resentment toward Tom for doin' that ! He just moved another family there to work. [Boone reflected in silence for a moment, upset by the memory]. This happened to a lot of people here. If somebody got hurt or somethin', and you didn't have nobody to work, you was history on that farm, Jack!"

"I remember the first time I met Mr. Brayboy. He come several times to daddy in the field and told him that we needed to be in school! But, he never pushed it! He always let us make up our school work when we had to work in the fields."

"Mr. Brayboy became the leader of our people. He was the stronghold in our community! Like on Christmas, he would put on Christmas plays at the school for the families. He'd go around and hand out candy and gifts to the children. He would get clothes from the state and give them out to the families at Christmas. He would try, you know, to help the families that didn't have anything."

"We took his bus to school. He was the bus driver! He was the teacher, principal, superintendent, and custodian, Jack! He did it all! [laughter] And, my grandmother, Lizzy, she was the cook! Many of the kids called her, "Aunt Liz". We had just two rooms. Later they built a kitchen on the school. The school is still there over yonder! My uncle and his family still live there! We had two room partitioned off. We had this long blackboard that separated the classrooms. You had first through third grades in one room, and fourth through seventh grades in the other. Sometimes. if kids didn't show up at the bus stop, Mr. Brayboy would go to their houses, or he'd go right out into the fields lookin' for them! You didn't get away from Mr. Brayboy, Jack!" [laughter]

"Now, Mr. Brayboy, he was strict about learnin' who you were. He wanted to teach us about bein' an Indian! I think he worried a lot about the kids that did go on to the white high school. He wanted us to remember who we were and be tough when we had to go on. I learned what that was all about, Jack!"

"You see, Mr. Brayboy, he had been caught between a rock and a hard place too in his life! He married a white woman! They run him out of North Carolina, Jack! He knew about the prejudice that we'd be faced with when we left his school. Things at our school was nice. Mr. Brayboy always made us feel good and proud of ourselves. But, at the white school, things was different! You always felt uneasy! That is one of the reasons Mr. Brayboy would always have a big party-day at the school when the seventh-graders would be about to go to the white high school. He told them to remember and not forget who they were! He said, "I'm a firm believer that you be what you are and don't

deny it to anybody!" He said, "You gonna run across a lot of prejudice! I've dealt with it all my life! You're goin'' have to be strong!"

"Now, at the white high school, they were prejudiced! They were unjust! They were unjust from the day you got there! When I first started at the school, they would just stare at me! When I went to the white school in 1968, they're was just a few black students there. They treated you different, Jack! They just treated you different!"

"Sometimes, you know, we would go to the white school on Mr. Brayboy's bus. They'd be havin' a concert or play or somethin' like that at the white school. Mr. Brayboy would tell us to be strong if somebody said somethin' about us bein' there. He told us we had a right to go! When we'd get there, the people would look at us and point and laugh! That was the first time I had that happen to me! People in the community, they always stay here, close to where they belong. If people here go traveling about far from home, not even far from this area, white people used to think they was black! People would tell them they had to leave their stores and restaurants! That ain't no lie, Jack! So, we'd never go too far from home. I think Mr. Brayboy wanted us to get a dose of reality! He wanted us to be ready for the prejudice at the white school."

"When we went on to the white high school, we were all put in the lowest section there was—they called it "8-7"! That was the lowest section in the eighth grade you could go, Jack! It was known as the "dummy" section. You was put there 'cause they thought you had no skills! But, we weren't stupid. A lot of the kids from Carolina Community made a liar out of them! They didn't give you a chance!"

"The teachers, they treated you different. All of them was white! I had confrontations with them. They tried to change our Indian identity! But, like I told them, "You can change that paper, but can't change my race!" I said, "You can do what you want to do, but I'm proud of what I am! Are you?"

"We had a lot of confrontations with them. Mr. Brayboy taught us to be strong! They would call you by somebody else's name! They'd give you a white last name, Jack! Like it was a big joke to them! I would spell out my last name to them! The teacher would say, "I can spell!" I would say, "Well, you must not be able to 'cause that's not my name!" I was sent to the principal's office many times for it. The principal said I was bein' disrespectful to the teacher! I said, "If somebody called you by another last name, would you answer?"

"I was one of the founders of the re-united tribe of the Pee Dee back in 1976. We started out here in Carolina Community. We started puttin' the tribe back together two years before, in 1974. Mr. Brayboy had died and the community was goin' down. People weren't sharecroppin' any more at that time. People was out of work, livin' on whatever they could get. The people was sufferin' and nobody cared. So, a group of us got together and wanted us to get a formal tribe back together. [Vergie] had come back home. She had a lot of knowledge about what we needed to do. She's a strong woman, Jack!"

"[Vergie] got in contact with some government people down in Columbia. The first Pee Dee center was right there where my store is now. We had a trailer there. We

worked day and night, Jack! We got out and worked all over the country gettin' our roll together. We got over a thousand people to sign up on the roll! We had a distribution center there at the Methodist church. We was gettin' clothes and food from the state and we'd hand it out to tribal members. But, we'd had some problems!"

"There was a lot of conflict. The politicians was gettin' a little nervous. They sent this German lady down here to work with us! She was a "WASP" is?" I said, "I know that a "WASP" is! A White-Anglo-Sassy-Protestant!" [laughter] We didn't set horses too good, Jack! [laughter] We kept givin' her shit until she quit!" [laughter]

"We had to fight and fight! Finally, in 1976, the state chartered us as the Pee Dee Indian Association! Ain't they keen, Jack? [laughter] They call us an "association"? They ain't gonna put "tribe" down there! We always took it for granted that we was a tribe—the Pee Dee tribe! We always knew we was Indians! Now, here it is, 1995! We have a sayin', "They won't look at us in the face!" [Boone smiled at me silently for a moment] Do you see the truth here? It's right here, Jack, in your face!!"

"It's gonna be hard to get federal recognition. A little girl from over yonder in North Carolina was up at the White House not long ago. She asked the President, "Why can't the Lumbee Indians get recognized as a Native American tribe?" He said that he was goin' to work on it. But, the bill was killed! In the paper it said, "No Hope for the Bill!" But, the politicians knew what they was doin'! That old Jesse Helms—he's been around too long! [laughter] Anything that ain't gonna benefit him and his influential

friends ain't gonna go, Jack! We're a lot smaller tribe than the Lumbee! Hell! The Lumbee, they got, at least, state recognition! We got a long way to go, Jack!"

"Mr. Brayboy had a big influence on my life! If it had been somebody else—and I'm not throwing off on some white teachers—it would have been a whole lot different! You know, the state closed that school, but they shouldn't have done it! For a long time, Mr. Brayboy fought to keep the school open. He didn't really want to integrate! He won second runnerup for national teacher-of-the-year in 1969!"

"But, you know, if it had been a white teacher—and I'm not bein' prejudice—you would've heard a lot more about bein' the teacher-of-the-year! But, he just got a few mentions and that's it! He wasn't even interviewed on the local T.V.! I don't think his story ran but one week in the newspaper! But, he didn't get the recognition that he deserved! Mr. Brayboy deserved a lot more! Bottom line!"

"I always went back to the school to see him after I started high school. Mr. Brayboy was our hero! He always helped us and talked to us when we was havin' problems in the white school."

"Now, this is just my opinion, but I think he felt like if he closed the school that the Indian kids would not have a chance for a good education, or get a start at an education! He knew we could learn as Indian people here! A lot of parents said, "I'm not goin' to let my kid go to that white school and let my kid be humiliated and be talked about!" He knew the kids couldn't learn in the lowest section in the school! After they

forced him to close the school, many Pee Dee children dropped out of school 'cause of the prejudice! They didn't want us there, and we didn't want to be there, Jack!"

"We know that Mr. Brayboy had better chances to make more money at another school. But, he stayed here with us his whole life! I think he really missed our school; we really miss him!"

"I want to say one more thing before you cut that machine off, Jack! We Pee Dees have suffered a lot. We are still suffering. We have lived like the white man and we have suffered just like the black man. But, we are Indian people, Jack! We want people to know that."

Conclusion

The above countermemories by Hanna and Boone have much to tell us beyond their descriptions of their leader and community life. For their usage in the ongoing articulations of present struggles, their multiplex and paradoxical articulation of meanings, blur the boundaries between past, present, and future. They also blur the boundaries between such essentialist categories as "domination", "assimilation", "resistance", and "ethnic purity".

For example, by reading such complex discourses through the lens of bounded and unitary categories such as, "domination" or "assimilation", one could interpret the everyday cultural activities and material life of the Pee Dee in Carolina Community as a total dominated position in and a total assimilation to, the southern sharecropping system. By starting from the essentialized assumptions of this type of categorical reading, the

following empirical conclusions can be drawn: the distinctive cultural meanings and activities that the Pee Dee claim as reflecting Native American culture and experience was widely shared by both white and black sharecropping communities. Even the efforts on the part of their school teacher were assimilating to the dominant value of individualism through "education". Working within this type of dichotomous vain, the conclusion can be drawn that the Pee Dee are, for the most part, assimilated within the dominant culture and society.

However, by utilizing a postmodern framework in conjunction with a post-interactionist ethnographic methodology, we can begin to deconstruct such binary oppositions through the examination and evocation of the blurring of such boundaries that empirically occur in everyday encounters and interactions, and in the stories marginalized people tell.

From a critical postmodernist perspective, such categories as "assimilation", "accommodation", "resistance", "domination", etc., can emerge simultaneously within ongoing social movement; and, more specifically, the salience of any one of them is located in radically specific contexts, situations, and interactional encounters. Thus, the imperative need for ethnographic investigation. Furthermore, such "blurring" concepts as "masking", "cultural blending and borrowing", and "accommodation", moves us from unitary meanings to questions of multiplex cultural production, the role of ambiguity, contradiction, and paradox in terms of articulating meanings, and the processual and "unfinished" qualities of socially constructed realities.

In emerging postmodern anthropological theory, open-ended terms as "a past-present-becoming future", or "bordercrossings" have been coined to convey this sense of complex cultural production. In traditional symbolic interactionism, the social world is imagined as a pre-existing empirical reality to which social actors attach coherent meanings; definitions of the situation are generally viewed as coterminous with group intentions and interests. There is a general sense that unified subjects socially construct, through interaction, a unified meaning-system, thus the underlying theoretical assumption that cultures, even "subcultures", are bounded entities with a coherent "world-view" or "ideology". This is certainly simplistic in characterization of symbolic interactionism, and the level of cultural coherency in any one group varies and is relatively dependent on the specificities of context and situation. Thus, a postmodern framework cannot, should not, be employed in every study of social encounters. To do so would go against the grain of the major postmodern critique of "metanarratives". It still remains an issue of social context and the questions that a researcher is asking.

However, within such cases as that of the Pee Dee, as well as many others, such complex, paradoxical, and contradictory cultural articulations of meaning and practices are not as easily articulated by traditional concepts of the subject and culture. Perhaps it is for this reason that subject areas characterized by ambiguity, indecisiveness, contradiction, etc., have been marginalized in favor of more "doable" and more traditionally conceptualized forms of research.

In relation to my ethnography of the Pee Dee, I deploy the term, for a better

metaphor, "post-symbolic interaction". The term, "post", is not used to convey the notion that we are "beyond" symbolization. On the contrary, the term is used to advance the further radical implications and possibilities of symbolic interactionist thought: that social realities are socially constructed out of language use/discourse; the "post" implications: that social and individual subjectivities are not stable, empirical givens, but the product of contending/contested and "unfinished" representations. It is the "unfinished" quality of social reality, as the case of the Pee Dee provides example, that locates the need for a post-interactionist ethnography. Here too is located the critical stance or "critique" that a post-symbolic interactionism can offer: ironically, "before" the empirical, statistically informed social sciences and the rational, linear pen of the historian, informed by traditional "Western" conceptions of the subject and culture, "shut down" that unfinished, contending quality: before the "judges of the evidence" make their final say and bring about a simplified closure on such multiplex realities.

Thus, I attempt to stay with and move along as my Pee Dee informants continue to put their "culture in motion". The narratives provided by Hanna and Boone, as well as others, point to the myriad ways in which they have continued as a Native American people. Certainly, like poor whites and blacks, the Pee Dee, and other Native American groups in the region, have lived their lives within the constraints of southern political-economy. Yet, through appropriation, accommodation, masking, and hesitation, those constraints have been "refigured" as signification of their "invisibility/visibility" and are

not located, or completely bracketed, in the past. Such historical memories are both dwelling spaces of belonging, as well as "prefigurations" of an inventive future.

In the next, and last, substantive chapter, I use several ethnographic examples in order to highlight the possibilities of a post-symbolic interactionism, as my Pee Dee informants engage in contested social encounters. Caught up in battles over representation/meanings, my informants sustain paradox, complexity, ambiguity, and contradiction, and call out for a multicultural understanding of their peoplehood and their multiplex cultural process toward an inventive future.

CHAPTER VI

CONTINUING AT THE BORDERS

Introduction

> ADRIAN: Mr. President, I'm here today as a Lumbee Indian of North Carolina, yet under the law I'm not an Indian. What are you going to do to resolve this problem?
> CLINTON: Why is that? I don't understand it....I didn't know that there were Native American tribes that hadn't been formally recognized.
> ADRIAN: Yes, there's lots.
>
> (ABC News Special)

During the last months in the field, from January to June of 1995, I spent most of my time involved in the practical matters of helping the leadership prepare their petition for federal recognition. I made several calls to the BIA office in Washington, D.C. in order to get an extension on the deadline. We worked long hours putting genealogical and historical information within the required format. The BIA office informed me that a letter of intent to file for federal recognition had to be submitted before the petition would be considered.

However, though we continued to put together information for recognition purposes, during the month of March, after the Chief and Vergie had returned from their meeting of non-federally recognized tribes in Washington, D.C., there was a sense of hesitation on the part of the leadership. During this time, several council meetings had been held. The Chief of the federally-recognized Catawba tribe of South Carolina, as well as several Chiefs from other non-recognized tribes in the state, attended several

meetings at the Pee Dee center. These meetings were closed and I was only allowed to attend the last meeting when an important strategic decision had been reached.

The Chief knew that, by making this decision, the realization of federal recognition would be delayed for many years, if not decades. But, he also knew that being denied federal recognition in the short-run would dash any hopes for federal recognition in the future. The tribal leadership and members seemed satisfied with the reasonableness of the decision. We continued on with putting the genealogical and historical data together in a workable format. The information would be submitted for state recognition when the time came.

This decision reflects, at one level, the ongoing historical "shifting", "hesitation", and "changing course" nature of Native American cultures that allow for flexibility and, thus, survival. Not a static, but a continually "moving" people, placing themselves at "risk" in their ongoing identity politics and continual reinvention. It is a continual balancing act within shifting power relations. With so much denied, and with so much demanded, their politics of identity is founded on a risk to be open to possibility, and a tolerance toward contradiction and ambiguity. This openness to struggle over meanings, to remain open to an "unfinished" personal and collective identity, is highlighted in the following contested dialogues or post-symbolic interactions.

Trip to Washington, D.C.

> In Indian cultures, there is a tradition of name-changing and shape-shifting, and it's an important tradition to look to for all of us because it enables us to be empowered; it enables us to be in control....There

> are distinctions, certainly, about the way people are treated, and the authority they have, but I want to reclaim the power to move through categories, so I do not have to stay fixed in any one place. Some categories become so restrictive, we have to be able to move out of them.
>
> (Green, 1995: 550)

During the second week in January, the Chief, Vergie, and a Chief from one of the coastal tribes, left for a two-day meeting of non-federally recognized Native Americans in Washington, D.C. They returned that Friday, and a council meeting was held the next morning in order to give an overview of the results of the meeting.

The Chief stated that the meeting was held in order to bring about a national organization of non-federally recognized tribes. Several hundred participants, representing groups from all over the country, showed up for the meeting. The participants voted in a name for the organization, The National Organization of Native Americans. The Chief and Vergie were very excited to announce that, finally, a national social movement of non-recognized tribes was underway. The council members cheered and applauded the good news. The Chief told the council: "So, we're going to have a united voice! They [the government] were surprised that so many of us showed up!"

The Chief described some of the dialogue between the participants and government officials during the meeting:

> An old man, about seventy years old—he was real funny, but he got his point across. He stood up during the meeting and faced the government panel and said, "You're telling me that maybe I'm not an Indian! I know who I am! I don't need the federal government tellin' me who I am! Hell, many years ago, I should have run home to my mother and said, [holding his face in his hands] Look mom! I'm not an Indian!"

The council members laughed hysterically. The Chief added: "You need to laugh! We laughed a lot, because what you hear in Washington sure can make you cry!" The Chief continued:

> This man on the government panel said that our future was in education. He gave his speech on education, right? Well, before we could walk off the stage, I stood up and asked him: "Where does this education you're up there talkin' about come from?" He said, "It starts at home!" [loud laughter] I told him, "Well, what you are sayin' is, because we are not recognized as Indians, once our children finish high school, that will be their future; that will be the end of their education, 'cause our children are too poor to go on to college! Tell me, is that what you're sayin'?" He said he didn't have an answer right now for the question! I had him on that one!

The Chief, as well as Vergie, expressed their frustration with the dialogues they had with the government panel. Yet, they were very hopeful and satisfied with the sense of unity and common goals that came out of the newly organized social movement. They said that there would be an ongoing development of communication between the numerous groups that make up the organization. He related that there would soon be a national newsletter and committee development. The organization planned to meet on an annual basis.

The Chief described another arena of confrontation. This time, it involved contested meanings over cultural representations of Native Americans:

> Well, while we were up there, Vergie and myself and several others went over to see a big Native American display at the Smithsonian. We were walkin' through there and we walked into a section on the eastern woodland Indians. That's what we were, eastern woodland Indians. Well, we saw a scalp displayed there. We were following through with a group of grade-school children, and there was this white guide talkin' to us and the children. Well, you know how Vergie is! She stepped forward and said to the guide, "Excuse me! But, I'm an Indian from that region, and I don't like that scalp lying

there! It gives the wrong impression to people! White people are infatuated by this kind of stuff, you know!" The guide asked us to have a few words with the children. So, I stepped in front of the group. I told them: "Well, I'm a Pee Dee Indian from the area of South Carolina where some of these artifacts come from. I just wanted to say that we were not the first to scalp people. White people were!" I asked them if they had any questions to ask me. You know what they asked me? "Do you still live in teepees? Do you still wear feathers?" [laughter] I couldn't believe it! I told them that I lived in a house just like them; I go to work just like their parents and use a computer; I told them we still go huntin' and say prayers for the animals, but we hunt with rifles, not bows and arrows; I said my son likes computer games just like them! I told them that we didn't live like that anymore, just like they don't ride around on horses anymore! I told them that we were modern Indians! I couldn't believe it! I told the guide that I felt like the museum stuff contributes to that type of image for whites!

Vergie said that those that attended the meeting were upset because President Clinton did not come to speak to the group. She said that he had been invited. One of his representatives came instead. The council meeting ended with a moving letter written to the President. One of the secretaries dictated the letter as Vergie spoke. I provide here only part of the letter:

> Dear Mr. President, we were very sorry that you did not come to the national meeting of non-federally recognized Native American tribes. We had hoped that you would be there to hear our situation....You say that you want to create a beautiful umbrella so that all people of this great country can come together and be as one. Well, Mr. President, we, the people of the Pee Dee tribe, have always lived between three worlds: black, white, and red. Mr. President, we are tired of standing in the rain.

First Advisory-Board Meeting

> I will not look at my mother, with her blue eyes, her white skin, and deny her. My father is only one part of me. He must be claimed, too. And I gravitate toward that part of him, and his world, and my grandmother, who gave me a name and space. But I will not deny any one part of that world to force Indian people, native people, any people to live on a margin, where they

> cannot define their own existence as a whole, whatever parts may be there, somewhere in the past.
>
> (Green, 1995: 550)

In the month of April, the first Advisory-Board meeting was held at the town hall in Southtown. Several prominent citizens of the county had volunteered their time to be members of the advisory board. The members of the board that showed up for the meeting were two white bankers, a state representative from the district, a local black representative from the local chapter of the NAACP, the two black professors from a local state university, and a white female who is the chairperson of the county Board of Education. There are several more members of the board that did not attend this first meeting.

I went early to the town hall in order to assist the council in setting up the meeting. The meeting was held in the courtroom. The council members sat behind a long table in the front of the courtroom. Many tribal members came to the meeting, as well as local whites. The Chief and council had not formally addressed their recognition efforts and social needs to several of the newly appointed board members. During the meeting, it quickly became apparent that many of the board members had very little knowledge of the Pee Dee.

While the meeting began with the purpose of addressing social and economic needs, the meeting soon turned into an arena of contested dialogue. What transpired was a popular form of contestation over the underlying assumptions of Western notions of identity, history, and culture:

[White Banker]: Do you have a record of how many Pee Dees actually live in the county?

[Council Member]: We have over twenty-five hundred on the roll. We simply don't know how many of our people are in the county. A lot of the problem has to do with the census and other records. You see, we had to go either as black or white! In the hospital, if an Indian doesn't say anything, they automatically put you down as white! It's hard as hell gettin' those records changed!

[State Representative]: Well, what you need then is a needs-assessment done?

[Vergie]: You know very well that needs-assessment just leads to more needs assessment! All one has to do is open one's eyes and look around this area! You can see the need! We need action and money!

[The topic quickly turns to the issue of Pee Dee identity]

[Chairperson, Education Board]:
Since this is my first time here, I really don't know what is the Pee Dee Indian Association. I don't know much about your history. Are you a tribe or an association?

[Chief]: Well, the association was chartered back in 1976!

[Vergie]: Well, the government does not recognize us as a tribe! They call us an "association"! You see, we can't name ourselves! It is the government that determines if we are Indians!

[Chairperson]: So, you're saying you're a tribe, right?

[Chief]: Yes! And a really old one at that! [laughter] You see we have always been organized as a tribe! People just didn't know about us as a tribe! We have a sayin' among ourselves: we were, what you might call "white-washed"! [The Chief looks my way and smiles]. We have always had our Indian churches, and we had the Pee Dee name handed down through our families. We even had our own Indian school! So, while we have these few council members up here, we got all those living out there that worked in the cotton fields just like

blacks and worked with whites in the cotton mill right here in [Southtown]! No one thought of us as Indians! But, we knew! Now, let me tell you somethin'. We have our identity! We are a tribe! But, if I came in here and just sat among you, you probably would not think of me as an Indian! But, if I were to go out and put on my headdress and come in here whooping it up and beating on a drum, you would say I was an Indian! [laughter] That's the problem with Hollywood stereotypes of us! But, I know I'm an Indian 'cause of how I've been treated and others have been treated.

[The Chief looks over at one of the female council members]

[Chief]: Tell them about your experience of not bein' recognized as an Indian!

[Council Member]: Well, when my first child was born, they put my baby down on the birth certificate as white! Once that happens, you can't put down "Indian" on official records. Your child can't receive any school grants for Native Americans! Now, when my second child was born, I was ready for them! They put her down as white! But, I refused to sign! I told them that if they didn't change it to Indian, I would never sign it! So, they did!

[Chief]: This is one of the big problems for us! Before, you could only go as white or black! Most Indians went as white just to survive! But, they will still be put down white, unless you resist! It affects our children, if you resist! It affects our children all their lives! It makes it impossible to get certain benefits!

[The dialogue becomes more intense over the "problem" with Pee Dee identity]

[As the dialogue continued, a white banker sitting next to me leans over and whispers in my ear: "Looking at the Chief, I can't really tell that he is an Indian! Can you?" I did not answer and right away the banker puts the point-blank question to the Chief].

[Banker]: Well, [Chief], it is like this! I have people come in all the time for loans. I recognize when a black person comes in! I recognize when a white person comes in! But, and I have to

be honest, if you were to come in, it would be hard for me to tell, you know? What I'm sayin' is, most never tell me that they are Indians!

[Chief]: Well, sir, I would say that what you just said shows me that you are plainly "whitewashed"! [loud laughter] No body ever treated me like I was white! [The Chief through humor, constructs border-meanings]. Well, back in the sixties, when we grew our hair long, mine did not grow down, but out! [loud laughter] I have that kind of textured hair! [loud laughter]

[The black representative of the local NAACP stands up, facing the Chief, and, in humor, rubs his hand through his hair].

[Chief]: Yea! You know what I'm talkin' about! [loud laughter]

[Banker]: I still don't get the point!

[Chief]: That's because, like a lot of white people around here, and I got to be honest [laughter], you see everything in black and white! You got to see that there's a whole other race of people sittin' in here! We got a whole lot of physical features among our people! We got a little of all of ya'll in us, [laughter] but we're not you! We're Indian people!

[Black Professor]: So, you are saying that people of mixed heritage will be accepted in the tribe?

[Chief]: Both black and white!

[Black Professor]: O.K., O.K.

[Vergie]: Well, look round this room! Look at all the blue eyes!

[Council Member]: Yea, I'm part Irish!

[Chief]: The thing is, we have always mixed with others! That's a part of our tradition that goes all the way back to the old tribe! But, that don't deny us nothin'! It's our names and our families, and our experiences together as a people that makes the difference! You know you are an Indian by the way you've

been treated! We share a common problem, we Pee Dees.
And that problem is bein' invisible!

Upon These Ruins

Look west long enough, the moon will grow
inside you.
Coyote hears her song he'll
teach you now.
Mirrors follow trails of blood and lightning.
Mother needs the strength of one like you.
Let blood
dry, but seize the lightning. Hold it like your
mother
rock the trees. In your fear, watch the road,
breath deeply.
Indians know how to wait.

(Roberta H. Whiteman, from
"Lines for Marking Time")

It was only a few weeks before I would be leaving the field. As promised, I turned over the taped conversations to the council so that they could become part of the tribe's archive. I also finished up a written report from my fieldwork and one of the secretaries locked it up in the tribe's files.

The genealogical and historical information that I had gathered was only a beginning. Recognition research generally takes years to complete. It usually takes a team of researchers. Even at the beginning of the research, the Chief worried, understandably, about bringing in researchers that the council did not know. On his desk at the band office, the Chief had a long list of competent historians offering their services that had been faxed to him from the BIA office in Washington, D.C. He told

me that he didn't like the "smell of it". For the time being, Larry would take over where I began.

During the last week of May, the Chief received a phone call from Charles. Charles' grandmother had recently passed away. He asked the Chief to be a pallbearer at the funeral. Charles asked if I was there. He asked me to also be a pallbearer, I agreed.

It was already very humid and hot by midmorning on the following Sunday. The Chief came by my house and picked me up. We drove a short distance to the funeral home in Southtown.

We entered the driveway of the funeral home. There were several Pee Dee men sitting on the bench outside in the yard. The turn out was small; mostly family members and friends from the tribe. The only other whites attending were the couple that owned and ran the funeral home. When we entered the door, I saw Charles standing over his grandmother's casket. I walked up and put my arm around him. Charles told me that when members of the tribe now pass away, the tribe's name is inscribed on the stone.

I walked to the back of the room. An older gentleman of the tribe began to talk to me about his fishing trip to the coast. As I looked around, I thought about how anyone could not see that the people gathered here were Native Americans.

I was also surprised by the fact that no Native American cultural symbols were displayed in the room or on the casket. A local Native American preacher from the tribe gave a simple and emotional Christian service. Afterwards, we placed the casket in the funeral car and headed out to the graveyard on the outskirts of Southtown.

We arrived first, following the funeral car. A green funeral tent had been placed over the grave. I stood with the pallbearers, as we lined up in front of the grave site. The Chief stood quietly next to me, as family members began to fill the seats under the tent. Other members of the tribe stood in a crowd a few yards away. Again, the preacher gave a short Christian service.

Suddenly, the tribal mother came forward and stood facing the Chief from under the tent. The Chief stepped forward and, bending low, stood under the tent facing her. She handed him a brightly colored feather. The Chief turned and stepped back into the open air. Standing erect, he lifted up his long arms toward the face of the sun and, holding the feather in both hands, suspended it between heaven and earth, visible to all:

> The uncountable distance that sweeps through our hands, the first prayers in the morning. It is this that I believe in. Sun over the horizon, a sweating yellow force, our continuance.
>
> (Green, 1995: 554)

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSIONS

Theoretical Contributions

This dissertation has argued for, as well as attempted to enact, theoretical discourses that provide for both social analysis and cultural critique. An underlying theoretical assumption of this dissertation is that the two orientations need not be diametrically opposed: committed forms of social research need not abandon "objective" interrogations of its subject matter and theoretical categories nor should social analyses have to be constructed as being more "scientific" by vacating from the analysis critical evocations of inequality, domination, and power. In relation to the present case-study, academic struggles over meanings concerning such reified and "objective" categories as "culture", "history", and "identity", have an indirect bearing on the lives of marginalized people, who must struggle both within and against their hegemonic construction. Such removed and "objective" academic theoretical discourses come to inform the policies of powerful institutions (for example, the BIA), thus becoming directly implicated with, and constitutive of, issues of inequality and power (Said, 1978; Foucault, 1977). Furthermore, such hegemonic meanings widely circulate and come to inform and resonate with popular cultural representations, as well as everyday commonsense forms of knowledge (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985).

The contribution of theoretical synthesis articulated and enacted in this dissertation between critical forms of postmodern cultural studies and symbolic

interactionism is not located in the pitting of its theoretical discourse against any particular theoretical framework, but in a tense and critical relationship with ongoing debates over the underlying "modernist" assumptions of such theoretical categories as "history", "culture", and "identity" in Western academic discourse. Furthermore, the theoretical discourse of this dissertation, by focusing on such underlying theoretical assumptions, attempts to provide critique aimed not only at more traditional perspectives, such as, for example, forms of assimilation theory (Park and Burgess, 1924; Gordon, 1964), but also critical perspectives which articulate their critique via the same underlying assumptions of unified, linear history, homogeneous culture, and whole and bounded subject, as well as dichotomized and essentialist notions of the relationship between domination and resistance (for example, Scott, 1985; Lamphere, 1987).

Informed by emerging critical postmodern theory, this case-study has sought to deconstruct ready-made stereotypes of the homogeneous "American Indian" and fixed notions of cultural purity and continuity. The cultural practices and identity politics of my informants and friends among the Pee Dee give "voice" to postmodern assumptions of cultural hybridity, identity-in-process, the refiguring and reterritorialization of cultural borders, and the sustaining of contradictions and paradox in the articulation of an inventive, syncretic present—a hybrid space of past-present-future. Furthermore, this study has attempted, in some measure, to show "how" such general postmodern postulates are constructed, practiced, and lived in the everyday. In the case of the Pee Dees, as well as other marginalized groups, there is actually a "stake" in the more

rarefied and removed theoretical discourse presented in this dissertation. For the traditional definitions of culture and identity have historically played a hegemonic role in the "disappearance" and, ironically, now, the denial of reemergence.

This study provides for an evocation of a "postmodern" world that is, indeed, different from the glitzy, celebrated fragmentation of Baudrillard's (1983) fast-track virtual world and the continual, without end, dissemination of any identity as constructed in the work of Derrida (1982, 1978).

Ironically, as the theory to end all forms of essentialism, totalism, and binary thinking, postmodernism is at times universalistic and essentialist in perspective as it has erected the binary opposition between identity-as-essence and identity-as-conjuncture (Lavie and Swedenburg, 1996: 13). Postmodern theory has tended to celebrate the latter as progressive, while constructing all movements towards the former as negative, leading to inequality and exclusionism. Both constructions of identity, as practice, have been greatly neglected of ethnographic treatment by postmodernists.

The theorectical contribution of this dissertation is also located in its interactionist exploration of the tension between identity-as-essence and identity-as-conjuncture. Instead of constructing the two forms of identity as binary oppositions, new ethnographic studies (such as the one at present) are called for in order to examine the borderzones between the two (for example, see the edited volume by Lavie and Swedenburg, 1996; also Deleuze and Guattari, 1987; Malkki, 1992). The present study has shown how identity-as-conjuncture is both a source of survival through identity-

shifting and contradiction, as well as a source of renewal and reinvention. However, this study has also shown how identity-as-conjuncture has been a source of pain, powerlessness, and rootlessness. Most central to the present study, and most ironic, is the fact that much of the hybridized, borderland history, identity, and practices of my Pee Dee informants is nostalgically and presently socially constructed an authentic imagined community: identity-as-essence and identity-as-conjuncture, when ethnographically explored, come to be two sides of the same coin—inventive multiplex cultural production. The present cultural study theoretically contributes an ethnographic/interactionist sense of the borderzone interplay of essence and conjuncture, most particularly to specify how postmodern forms of identity and culture are differently located in time and articulated in experience; this study also, most generally, points to the possibility that all cultural forms, even those which are hegemonic, are hybrid creations; the question raised by this study deals with who wins when it comes to identity-as-essence: Whose essence? For what purposes? Who has the power to write an essence into being, while denying it to others, or giving one that can be used for domination? Who decides when hybrid cultural forms become authentic or not? The present study is a much-needed ethnographic/interactionist attempt to ground the "post: in the very lives that are "traversed" by such abstract questions in the borderlands.

Methodological Contributions

It is hoped that the use of a flexible ethnographic methodology for this study has contributed to a fuller and more sympathetic understanding of such complex people as

the Pee Dee. As pointed out earlier, ethnographic methodology has lagged far behind in use when reviewing social science research on Native Americans in the South in particular, and the Southern United States in general.

Secondly, this study has attempted to realize the possibility of a "postmodern" ethnography. On a general level, this study has attempted to address issues of authorial control by producing an ethnographic text which is both polyphonic and dialogic. The text allows more space for informants to speak in their own voice more often and at greater length than is generally found in traditional forms of ethnography. Though the text utilizes analytical monologue, dialogue, both between informants and the researcher, as well as between informants, is highly relied upon in the study. Furthermore, a move towards "observation of participation" was attempted in this study by making more salient the "I/eye" of the researcher. "I" am also a datum in respect to the study.

The above strategies in postmodern methods have been utilized in order to:

1. improve the overall validity of the study (by giving more room to speak for themselves);

2. advance a sociology of the particular, which moves analysis away from holism and essentialism and towards context, contingency, hegemonic processes, emergence, syncretism, etc., as well as allowing for cultural critique of collective stereotypes. Certainly, however, generalizations and essentialist imagery are present in this study—as they are in all social science writings;

3. advance a deconstructive method which, perhaps, allows researchers to explore new questions, new perspectives, and over-looked areas of social inquiry (e.g., emerging forms of cultural hybridity, problematic social and personal identities, and border zones as transitional sites in terms of identity formation and the refiguring

> of cultural meanings—culture as inventive process, not as an accomplished fact). This is not to argue that other methods have no place in the study of such social phenomena, but that the above methodological procedures are highly amenable for the task of understanding such border zones.

Finally, this study has attempted to explore the borders between the reified binary opposition between "insider" and "outsider". Social scientists generally agree that which position the researcher is in will have an impact on the outcome of the study. Generally, the "outsider" has been interpreted as being more "objective" in stance than the "insider", who may have too many personal biases towards the "data". Every "insider" is also an "outsider" simply in terms of the research role. In the present study, I was both an insider and an outsider in terms of my symbolic membership in the community. I had to continually contrast and negotiate the identity that I formally knew of my informants as an insider—my childhood and teenage friends, with their reemerging articulation of a Native American identity and history which constructed me into a position as "outsider". At least, I hope that my own experience as a "southerner", as well as a researcher, will make more complex the social scientific construction of the "insider" and "outsider" as discrete research roles in the field.

Substantive Contributions

The present study represents the first academic exploration of the contemporary life of the Native Americans known as the Pee Dee. It is hoped that the dissertation contributes a complex and concrete portrait of a very complex and subtle people. One aspect of the problem of "invisibility" as expressed by the leadership of the Pee Dee is

the lack of any organized written documentation of their experiences, circumstances, and social movement as a people. This thesis is a first attempt at providing such documentation.

Until now, most of the rich historical memory of the Pee Dee has remained an oral tradition. As with the African American oral tradition, the Native American tradition of the region under study finds its context among family and community ties, especially the rural Native American church. This dissertation ethnography hopefully contributes a written discourse that remains true to the oral tradition and perspectives of the Pee Dee themselves. Such written forms are rare for Native Americans in the region of study. Those that do exist primarily draw their data from existing "secondary" sources. For example, the larger Lumbee group in North Carolina, who had had state recognition as a Native American group historically, have a much richer documented historical record, as least since contact. For the Pee Dee, however, such documentation is virtually non-existent. The present ethnography is the first on Native Americans in the region which relies primarily on the words, thus "world-view", of the participants of the study. Hopefully, the hardship and pain endured, the complexity and creativity of responses, and, importantly, the healing power of humor, that my friends and informants expressed has been preserved in this writing, and, in the end, will be of service to ongoing struggles for formal recognition.

Limitations of the Study

There are several limitations of the study that need to be addressed. Because of

time constraints, as well as the desire/need for maintaining good relationships within the studied community, other groups in the community have largely been neglected. The study does not focus at all on local African American relationships with, and opinions about, the Pee Dee, or vice-versa. While the voices of whites in the community have been heard in this study, there is a lack of any in-depth focus on the white community. Again, the early fieldwork by Brewton Berry (1963) provides insight into both black and white relationships with, and opinions about, the Native American people of the region.

Issues specifically related to gender have not been addressed in this dissertation. However, the voices of female tribal members, as well as non-members, are very much a part of the telling of the Pee Dee story.

The research also lacks documented evidence. Again, there is little historical documentation of the Pee Dee after their interpreted "disappearance" during the 1750s. Statistical evidence is all but non-existent. However, this important limitation of the study has been, to some extent, addressed by making the limitation of documentary and statistical evidence a part of the focus of the study. A part of the critique that informs the study is the binary opposition between literate and oral forms of knowledge, e.g., how literate forms of knowledge come to be hegemonic over oral forms when it comes to "evidence" of tribal existence.

One of the most telling limitations of this study is my standpoint as a white, male researcher. This certainly limited the research in regards to a multiplicity of questions surrounding issues of gender and race among the Pee Dee. This limitation is further

made complex by the role of the Chief. For example, the Chief, as key informant, many times avoided the complex relationship of Pee Dees to African Americans. Because of my white standpoint, I did not pursue this sensitive topic out of fear that I might offend the Chief. The relationship between Pee Dees and African Americans, or the possibility that many African Americans in the region are Pee Dees, is complex and is reflected in the ambiguous attitude of Pee Dees toward this relationship and possibility. Again, this relationship, as other aspects of Pee Dee identity, is emergent and unfinished. However, my white, male standpoint limited the scope of the investigation in terms of race and gender.

Finally, this study is limited in terms of the methodology utilized. Ethnographic research is limited by its micro, everyday focus on specific case-studies; it cannot, nor is it expected to, "tell all" about a research site. This study does not provide an exhaustive historiography nor political-economy of the region that would allow a fuller picture of the forces that have shaped the lives and social contexts of the Native American people in question.

Further Research

This dissertation, perhaps, raises more questions than it answers. It is hoped that the present study will spark further theoretical debate and empirical research that suspend quick judgment of such "people without history", the Pee Dee being one example, and allow for new analyses, historical, cultural, and structural, of emergence

and social interaction. Such work is now underway, yet much more is needed in order to rewrite "cultures" as emergences instead of essences that either "survive" or "die out". Specifically, for Pee Dee, the limitations pointed out above need to be addressed by further research. In-depth historical research is called for, which takes a perspective developed in this thesis that focuses on cultural production, emergence, and social interaction. This type of focus would also benefit a more in-depth study of political-economy. Most pressing, however is the need for a more extensive oral history of Native American life in the Pee Dee region. Most work in the region to date relies on secondary materials, specifically work on the Lumbee case. Native American groups which reside in the adjacent counties in South Carolina, such as the Pee Dee, are generally subsumed under the Lumbee name. However, the local history of such groups, specifically because they reside in a different state, have not had the same historical experience nor have they historically been viewed as even existing as Native Americans. It is for this lack of documentation and recognition that a larger and more in-depth oral history project would be of great value.

Further research is called for in the relationship between African Americans and Pee Dees. Much more documentation is needed of African American attitudes toward groups such as the Pee Dee, as well as the Lumbee. Also, more pressing, is a documentation of those who identify as African American who are also aware of Native American ancestry. Pee Dee, as well as Lumbee, attitudes towards African American heritage is in need of further research, as well as further appreciation on the part of the

larger society (for example, the BIA). A major determinant of the silenced relationship between Native Americans and African Americans in the United States falls squarely in the lap of racist attitudes towards African Americans, as well as purist notions of biological and cultural origins.

Finally, it is hoped that the present research on border zones as sites of cultural translation and production and identity transformations will inspire the ethnographic imagination towards better understanding of other "border realities". From the study of deviant subcultures to the as-yet-understood ramifications of the blurred boundaries between the "real" and the "virtual", the increasing blurring of space and time as we enter the borderlands of digital, imagined communities, this study calls for more serious attention to those "messy" gray areas of transition and translation. By focusing more on culture-in-process we may come to better understand the politics and poetics of the socially constructed nature of boundaries and "society" as accomplished fact.

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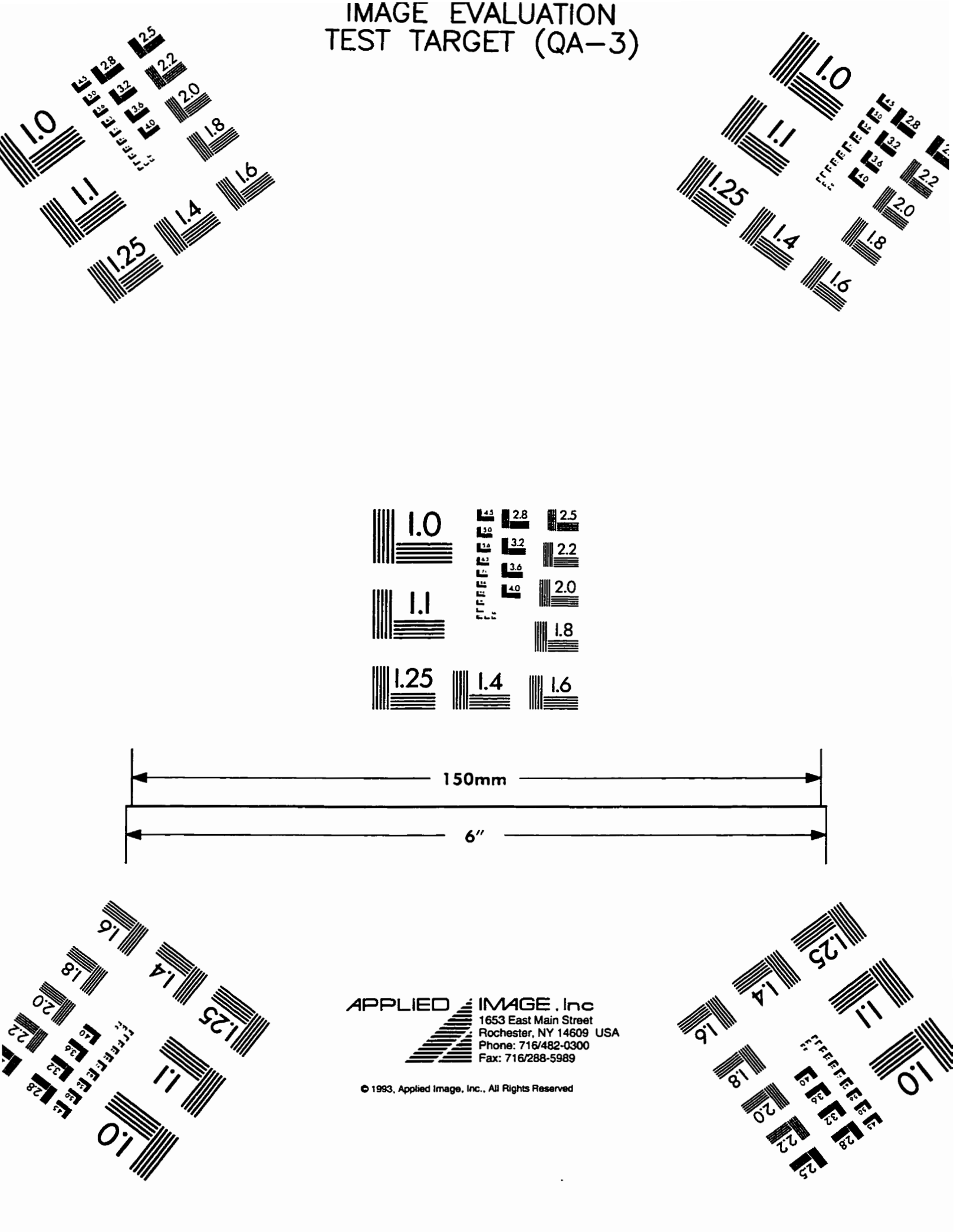
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