

This is the author's final, peer-reviewed manuscript as accepted for publication. The publisher-formatted version may be available through the publisher's web site or your institution's library.

Understanding the lived experience of a Sioux Indian male adolescent: toward the pedagogy of hermeneutical phenomenology in education

Jeong-Hee Kim

### How to cite this manuscript

If you make reference to this version of the manuscript, use the following information:

Kim, J. (2012). Understanding the lived experience of a Sioux Indian male adolescent: Toward the pedagogy of hermeneutical phenomenology in education. Retrieved from <http://krex.ksu.edu>

### Published Version Information

**Citation:** Kim, J. (2012). Understanding the lived experience of a Sioux Indian male adolescent: Toward the pedagogy of hermeneutical phenomenology in education. *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, 44(6), 630-648.

**Copyright:** © 2012 Philosophy of Education Society of Australasia  
Published by Blackwell Publishing

**Digital Object Identifier (DOI):** doi:10.1111/j.1469-5812.2010.00733.x

**Publisher's Link:** <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1469-5812.2010.00733.x/pdf>

This item was retrieved from the K-State Research Exchange (K-REx), the institutional repository of Kansas State University. K-REx is available at <http://krex.ksu.edu>

# **Understanding the Lived Experience of a Sioux Indian Male Adolescent: Toward the Pedagogy of Hermeneutical Phenomenology in Education**

Jeong-Hee Kim, Kansas State University

## **Abstract**

Currently, there is a resurgence of interests in phenomenology in education. This article sheds light on the importance of hermeneutical phenomenology in teaching and learning based on the lived experience of a Sioux Indian adolescent boy, elicited from an ethnographic case study conducted at an alternative high school in the U.S. Employing narrative inquiry, this article seeks phenomenological ways of understanding students' lived experiences and explores the meaning of the pedagogical practice of hermeneutical phenomenology in education. I delve into how hermeneutical understanding of the phenomena of students' lived experience can catapult both students and teachers into the personal growth and development in a reciprocal way. It is my hope that such an understanding will facilitate an educational aim that focuses on the ontology of being and becoming while students' existence is brought to the center of teaching and learning.

## Introduction

Phenomenology, practiced and identified as a manner or style of thinking, existed as a movement before arriving at complete awareness of itself as a philosophy (Merleau-Ponty, 1958/2007). The phenomenological movement arose in Germany before World War I and occupied a unique place in twentieth century philosophy. Founded by Edmund Husserl whose dictum was “to return to the things themselves,” phenomenology was then regarded as the only way of elevating philosophy to the status of a rigorous science (Gadamer, 1976/2008). It was further developed by Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty, Gadamer, Sartre and others. Phenomenology is a disclosure of the world, a philosophy which puts essences back into existence (Merleau-Ponty, 1958/2007), and the science of phenomena (Heidegger, 1962/2008). Heidegger, who studied under Husserl’s guidance, pursued the question of being (and time) by undertaking a phenomenology of human understanding. According to Heidegger, “phenomenology is our way of access to what is to be the theme of ontology, and it is our way of giving it demonstrative precision. *Only as phenomenology, is ontology possible*” (Heidegger, 1962/2008, p. 60, italics in the original). So, for Heidegger, ontology and phenomenology are philosophical disciplines that are not separable from each other. Hence, the phenomenologist’s main task is to reveal the mystery of the world and of human experiences with attention, wonder, awareness, and intention to seize the meaning of the world and to let the meaning come into being (Merleau-Ponty, 1958/2007).

Phenomenology had a significant impact in the history of modern Western philosophy (Peters, 2009), but it was neglected and remained vague in the educational field in the United States partly due to the prevalent positivism in education (Pinar & Reynolds, 1992).

David Jardine, a contemporary curriculum theorist, once declared that “phenomenology got out

of hand and climbed down below the severed head when Husserl wasn't looking" (Jardine, 1992, p. 129). For the last two decades, indeed, phenomenology gave way to the epistemology of deconstruction, poststructuralism, and postmodernism because of its binary distinction between experience and its conceptualization through language, which was denied by poststructuralists such as Derrida (Pinar & Reynolds, 1992). Currently, however, there is a resurgence of interest in phenomenology as a philosophy and a research movement in education in response to the complex and complicated phenomena of the world we live in (Dall'Alba, 2009). Dall'Alba contends that it is important to understand the current 21<sup>st</sup> century's dynamic, ambiguous, and complicated phenomena. Dall'Alba further explicates how phenomenology can offer deeper insights into what it means to live and what it means to be educated in such a complex society.

Then, studying a student's lived experience from a phenomenological perspective plays an important role in better understanding and educating the students. Phenomenology in education brings out the meaning of the lived experience to the core and provides educators with an opportunity to question the meaning in the way it restores an original sense of being. Phenomenology as a way of living and researching with/about/on students enables educators to reflect more deeply on the way how students make sense of their lived experiences, focusing on their feelings, perceptions, interpretations, and meanings that they hold toward their lived experiences. Lived experience is the "breathing of meaning" (van Manen 1990, p. 36), as it assigns "meaning to the phenomena of lived life through meditations, conversations, daydreams, inspirations and other interpretive acts" (p. 37). Therefore, a phenomenological study of the lived experience of students, particularly that of those who have not been successful in schools, can provide valuable insights into how students perceive various aspects of classroom situations and events, and how they respond to, understand, and make sense of those situations and events

including peripheral experiences that happened or happen in students' personal lives outside the school (Barone, 2000).

This article is a phenomenological study of the lived experience of Matto<sup>1</sup>, a Sioux Indian male adolescent, elicited from an ethnographic case study conducted at an alternative high school in the United States. Matto's story is reconstructed using the method of narrative analysis incorporating literary elements (Coulter & Smith, 2009). Based on Matto's story, this article seeks phenomenological ways of understanding students' lived experiences and explores the meaning of the pedagogical practice of hermeneutical phenomenology in education. I interrogate how hermeneutical understanding of the phenomena of students' lived experience can catapult both students and teachers into the personal growth and development in a reciprocal way. It is my hope that such an understanding will facilitate an educational aim that focuses on the ontology of being and becoming while students' existence is brought to the center of teaching and learning.

In what follows, I describe research site and methods, elaborate on narrative inquiry as a way of writing for hermeneutical phenomenology, present Matto's story, and provide possible implications of Matto's story for the pedagogical practice of hermeneutical phenomenology.

### **Research Site**

Borderlands Alternative High School (pseudonym) is a public alternative school in the South West in the U.S., which serves students from 9<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade. This school is different from regular public schools as it accepts students only by referrals from principals of regular schools. That is, students who have behavioral issues are referred to Borderlands. Enrollment at Borderlands has increased every year since the school opened in 1999. 152 students enrolled at Borderlands during the 1999-2000 school year, 291 students during 2000-

---

<sup>1</sup> Matto is a nickname of the informant of this study.

2001, and 350 students during the 2001-2002 school year. Borderlands received a total of 281 students as disciplinary referrals during the 2001-2002 school year. A more specific list for disciplinary referrals included: 19 for misbehavior on a school bus, 35 for defiance, 29 for disorderly conduct, 17 for possession of drugs including marijuana and an additional 50 for tobacco smoking, 12 for harassment, 41 for speech offences, and 51 for unexcused absences. The remainder included violating dress codes and more serious incidents of assault, gang activity, theft, trespassing, vandalism, etc.

In terms of student ethnicity, during the 2001-2002 school year, 73% of the student population was White Non-Hispanic, 18% Hispanic origin, 3% Black, Non-Hispanic, 4% American Indian, Eskimo, and 2% Asian and Pacific Islander. Borderlands has seen a slight increase in the percentage of students from minority backgrounds over the past three years. Initially, 13% of the student population came from minority backgrounds, but now 27% come from these same backgrounds. Most of the students at Borderlands are from low-income families and are living with a single parent. The dropout rate is high at Borderlands: Out of 350 students (105 females and 245 males) enrolled during the 2001-2002 school year, only 157 (45%) remained by the end of the school year.

### **Research Methods**

Data that I used for this article were an integral part of the ethnographic case study conducted from August through December in 2003, Monday through Thursday, six hours each day for the fieldwork. During this period, I immersed myself into the school setting and paid close attention to its activities and the phenomena that were taking place in the case (Stake, 2005). An ethnographic study requires the researcher to both observe and participate in the field of study. In this sense, ethnography became a “privilege” (Tsolidis, 2008) as it allowed me to do

the fieldwork as a participant observer in extended time and space while continuously examining implicit assumptions that I as a researcher might take for granted.

Data were collected by means of classroom observation, participant observation, interviews, informal talks, and school documents. While Matto, a senior student, was the focus of my observation, I took part in Matto's classroom activities, interacted with his peer students and faculty, helped these students with their schoolwork, and invited them to discuss their experiences while having lunch. Being a participant observer helped me to be quickly accepted by teachers and students and to establish mutual trust, friendship, and respect. Also, being a participant observer allowed me to have a "conversation as research" approach (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2008) in which informal meetings and conversations about school experiences and daily life with students and school staff took place during break time, lunch hours, and in class. This approach helped me to build informal relationships with each of them. Informal talks with the principal, security guard, teachers (Mrs. Emm and Mr. Gee) and school nurse provided valuable information about administrative views on students at the alternative school. Through this approach, a level of familiarity and comfort was developed among members of the school and encouraged them to talk freely. Detailed summaries of the conversations were recorded in the field notes at the end of each day. Interactions between the teacher and students, what they taught and learned in class, how they reacted to each other, what was happening in classroom, what they said and what they did were documented in my field notes.

Matto, the focus of this article, was selected as a participant of the study upon his English teacher, Mrs. Emm's recommendation. Mrs. Emm recommended Matto because he was one of the "problem" kids but his behavior was slowly changing in a positive way. Personal interviews with Matto were conducted three times and each interview took between 40 minutes to an hour.

These interviews were not structured; rather, most of the time, it was Matto's free talking about his personal and school life. Interviews were tape-recorded and transcribed by me. Several other ethnographic techniques were employed in this study, including the collection and analysis of personal and school documents. They ranged from official documents such as brochures, pamphlets, school policy documents, and curriculum materials, students' homework, class handouts, students' portfolios, and the school website.

For classroom observation, I observed the classes that Matto attended, mainly Mrs. Emm's English and Economics classes and Mr. Gee's math class. I observed other classes occasionally in order to get a better sense of the school community. I was not only in classrooms but also in faculty meetings, monthly assembly, school events such as the Halloween party serving food to students, and Christmas community service plans.

### **Narrative Inquiry**

Based on the collected data using the research methods described above, I *crafted* (Coulter & Smith, 2009) Matto's story as a way of organizing the data in the way it would make sense to the reader. Before I discuss this process, I will first provide a brief overview on narrative inquiry.

Interest in narrative has grown steadily in the last two decades, particularly in the power of the story form to shape our conceptions of reality and legitimacy (Bruner, 2002). Narrative inquiry emerged as a result of the ascendance of literary theory in the intellectual world (Polkinghorne, 1988; Ricoeur, 1984, 1985, 1988), and influenced social science fields including anthropology, psychology, psychiatry, social work, and education (Clifford & Marcus, 1986; Geertz, 1988; van Manen, 1988, 1990). Narrative inquiry seeks to understand the differences and complexity of people's actions through their stories. It explores the nuances of meaning and the



complexity of different human experiences that are maintained in stories. Clandinin and Connelly (2000), who advanced narrative inquiry in the field of education, define narrative inquiry as a way of understanding experience. Considering the continuity and wholeness of an individual's life experience as their research problem, Clandinin and Connelly believe that education and educational studies are forms of experience that happen narratively. For them, narrative is the best way of representing and understanding lived experience. Then, it is clear that narrative inquiry espouses phenomenology and it fits well into the phenomenological tradition that focuses on people's lived experiences and particularly on the experiences of those who are marginalized in the mainstream education (Levering, 2006).

Polkinghorn (1995) posits that there are two primary kinds of analysis in narrative inquiry: *analysis of narratives* and *narrative analysis*. In *analysis of narratives*, researchers collect stories as data and analyze them with strategic processes in which categories are classified by emerging themes. In *narrative analysis*, on the other hand, researchers synthesize the data elements into a coherent story rather than separating them into different categories. Barone (2007) calls it *narrative construction* in which collected data are reconstructed into a storied form. That is, in the process of *narrative analysis*, or *narrative construction*, the researcher extracts the essence from the fullness of lived experiences that are presented in the data themselves and reconstructs a story or stories, making a range of disconnected research data elements coherent in a way that it appeals to the reader's understanding and imagination (Kerby, 1991; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2008; Polkinghorne, 1995; Spence, 1986). Coulter and Smith (2009) call this process *reworking*, *rendering*, or *crafting* (p. 587) in the "construction zone" (p. 577), which should be distinguished from fictionalizing. *Narrative analysis* or *narrative construction* uses different literary forms such as autobiography, biography, poetry, literary non-fiction, or

drama, rendering narrative inquiry to be an integral part of arts-based research (Author, 2006, 2009; Leavy, 2009). The significance of stories that are constructed through the method of *narrative analysis* resides in their epiphanic power that can serve the educational community as such exemplary stories in particular settings prove capable of illuminating other settings (Dunne, 2005).

In this article, the method of *narrative analysis* or *narrative construction* is employed as a phenomenological writing to portray Matto's lived experience. In Matto's story, Richard Connell's short story *The Most Dangerous Game* (1947) is used as a literary conceit in reconstructing Matto's lived experience.

### Matto's Story<sup>2</sup>

"Matto, you read next." Mrs. Emm said.

"Where?" Matto asked, slowly awakening from his daydream.

"*'We should...'* the first line on page 33."

Six students were sitting in the classroom, looking at the handout that was distributed by Mrs. Emm. The handout was a copy of a short story *The Most Dangerous Game* written by Richard Connell. They were reading it together in English literature class.

"OK," Matto found the line and began to read aloud.

*'We should have, have, some good hunting up the Amazon. Great sport, hunting.'*  
*'The best sport in the world,' agreed Rainsford. 'For the hunter,' amended*  
*Whitney. 'Not for the jaguar.'*  
*'Don't talk rot, Whitney,' said Rainsford. 'You're a big-game hunter, not a...'*

"Phil-o-so-pher," Mrs. Emm helped.

---

<sup>2</sup> Passages in italics are excerpts from *The Most Dangerous Game*.

“Phil...o...sopher.” Matto repeated. He mumbled over a few words that he was not familiar with. Other than that, he was a pretty good reader considering that he had failed the 9<sup>th</sup> grade English two years ago.

*‘Who cares how a jaguar feels?,’* Matto continued to read.

*‘Perhaps the jaguar does,’* observed Whitney.

*‘Bah! They’ve no understanding.’*

*‘Even so, I rather think they understand one thing--fear. The fear of pain and the fear of death.’*

*‘Nonsense,’* laughed Rainsford. *‘This hot weather is making you soft, Whitney. Be a realist. The world is made up of two classes--the hunters and the hunted.’*

“Stop there, Matto. Good job! Jane, you read next,” Mrs. Emm looked at Jane.

Matto was glad that the teacher stopped him there. The world of two classes—the hunters and the hunted...The line he just read brought back a stream of memories of the fear of death that he experienced six years ago. Matto’s daydreaming—his almost daily ritual in class—leads him back into the past.

Matto was only 11 when he had faced the fear of death for the first time. As a part of the Sioux culture into which he was born, he was expected to go through a rite of passage into manhood. Right after his eleventh birthday his Grandpa told Matto that it was time. He was to be taken to the forest to stay for a week and survive on his own. He had never forgotten that day when his Grandpa hiked with him to the thick forest at the top of a mountain outside Albuquerque, New Mexico.

“Do you know how to use a knife?” Grandpa asked.

“Yeah.”

“You’re gonna need this,” Grandpa handed him a knife.

“Do you know how to use matches?” Grandpa asked again.

“Yeah.”

“You’re gonna need these too. Use the matches carefully. You will need them for a week.” Grandpa handed him a box of matches and a blanket.

Grandpa shook Matto’s hand, kissed him on his forehead, and said, “You’re a big boy now. You are ready. Good luck, Matto.” Then, he promptly turned around and walked slowly back down to the village without ever looking back. Matto watched him until his Grandpa became just a speck and finally disappeared from the view.

Left all alone in the wilderness, Matto felt like crying. His mind was suddenly filled with a primordial fear. Looking around, all he could see were the tall trunks of trees reaching skyward and huge rocks scattered here and there with shapes like frightening animals. The forest had an eerie silence, too, except for occasional cries from startled birds. The late afternoon sun began to cover the forest with darkening shadows from the surrounding trees, giving Matto unusual chills for a hot summer.

Matto wished he had somebody to talk to. He was well taught to be a survivor by his elders and buddies, but the fear of being alone in the unknown wilderness where wild, cunning beasts might be hunting for their fresh dinner was quite intimidating and overwhelming. He felt like a small rabbit that would soon to be hunted by a fox. He had thought that the rite of passage would be like going to a haunted house for fun. He used to scorn his peers who were scared to death about having to go through the rite of passage. But now he was being a coward.

Matto slowly began to find his courage and gather himself together. He had to, first, find a safe place to spend the night before it got dark. With a little bit of effort, he discovered a huge, flat rock which jutted out, whose top could be used for sleeping and underneath which could be a shelter that would give him some protection from the possible rainy weather and wild animals. He also picked up some pieces of wood nearby to build a small fire to keep him warm. These

activities kept his mind busy and his fear was slowly leaving him. Sitting on the rock's ledge looking out over the fire into the darkness, he felt a sense of safety and even a sense of comfort. 'I can do this,' he thought to himself. 'Yes, I can overcome this fear and loneliness.' He was regaining his usual audacity.

His thoughts turned to his Grandpa who named him 'Matto.' 'Matto' meant 'bear' in the Sioux tribe, and his Grandpa wanted him to be a man who would never be daunted by anything. Matto grinned as he remembered his Grandpa one day calling him a grizzly bear. Grandpa was proud of Matto's knowledge about nature, his physical strength which was unusual for such a young age, and his abilities to run fast like the deer of the forest.

Matto sat in front of the fire with his blanket around him and watched the flames from the fire flickering into the night for a long time. He finally lied down on the rock. Totally absorbed in the silence of the night, he started watching the sky. There were so many stars in the sky as if they were about to pour down at him. Matto's eyes were searching for the familiar big dipper, the lion and others that he had learned from his Grandpa. Stars were a good company to Matto. They seemed to be singing a lullaby for him. While he was thinking about food for the next day, sleep took him over without any warning.

Matto was awakened by the early morning sun shining on his face. He could hear the birds singing and felt the excitement of a new day. He was happy that the fear of death was gone and that he had survived his first night alone. His courage had returned. Suddenly he started feeling very hungry. It was time to hunt for food. He picked up the knife his Grandpa gave him and searched for a good stick to make a spear. He learned this from his Grandpa a long time ago. He found a little stream not far from where he was. Catching fish with the spear he made was not

difficult. The fun part was barbequing them on fire. Matto had not had such a delicious meal in ages.

He spent the whole day exploring the forest. He got to know his surroundings pretty well. Day by day, he gained more confidence, wisdom, and strength. He had learned to survive on his own. He was not afraid of death any more. He had to brace himself for possible dangers. In the wilderness, he learned, there were only two kinds: the hunter and the hunted. He also realized that the society he lived in had no difference from the wilderness. Only the hunters would survive in the society too. He finally understood why his Grandpa had left him alone in the wilderness. His Grandpa wanted Matto to grow up strong enough to be a “hunter,” not a “hunted.”

Six days later, Grandpa came back to the mountain to pick up Matto. Grandpa said, “Good job!” and gave him a big hug. Then, Matto and his Grandpa exchanged a big smile. When they got home, they were greeted by Matto’s mom and dad who took Matto to MacDonald’s to celebrate his safe return. Going to MacDonald’s was a big deal to Matto’s family who were suffering from poverty. Life didn’t treat them very well. Mom was an hourly-paid employee at a Native Indian jewelry factory and a heavy drinker who spent a lot of time and money on drinking while dad was gone somewhere to make money. Matto and his older brother had to take care of themselves most of the time. At 12, Matto found himself to be a gang member. Realizing that life is a ‘survival game,’ as he played in the wilderness, he joined a gang called ‘West Wind.’ To him, it was one way of becoming a hunter. Some people had a lot of money and power that made them “legitimate” hunters, but not Matto. West Wind provided him with a feeling of power and strength that was necessary to become a hunter. It became his “mental” home even though he had to sleep on the street occasionally. It was a sense of belonging that gave him power and

made him feel at home. His boss, to whom he felt very close, gave him money and clothes that his parents couldn't afford.

Being a gang member seemed to be a good choice for Matto. Even cops were scared of the gang. If something happened to one of the group members, the entire gang would retaliate against it. When Matto got into fights with teachers in his 7<sup>th</sup> grade and got suspended for that, his boss and buddies set a fire on the principal's car and let it burn to ashes.

*'Life is for the strong, to be lived by the strong, and, if need be, taken by the strong. The weak of the world were put here to give the strong pleasure. I am strong. Why should I not use my gift? If I wish to hunt, why should I not? I hunt the scum of the earth--lascars, blacks, Chinese, whites, mongrels--.'*

Matto was awakened from his daydream for a second time when he heard the words 'the scum of the earth.' Jane, who always wore thick make-up, was reading out loud quite enthusiastically the part of the book.

"Stop there, Jane. Good job. Who wants to read next?" Mrs. Emm asked.

Nobody raised hands. First of all, most of them were not confident in reading, and second of all, it was too early to be engaged in class, anyway. It was only thirty minutes after 8 in the morning. Some girls were yawning.

"Alright, then, I'll read it." Mrs. Emm continued reading. She was an easy-going teacher and understood her students pretty well. She knew that some of them were tired from working at night for a living and some of them were simply stoned.

*'But they are men,' said Rainsford hotly.*

*'Precisely,' said the general. 'That is why I use them. It gives me pleasure...'*

'What! He hunts men and it gives him pleasure? That's no hunting, that's murder, man,' Matto thought to himself. He thought the story was becoming quite interesting. He was reminded of some of his buddies who were sent to jail for murder. Who is "the scum of the earth"? Some

people would say he and his buddies are. People in power would never be considered the scum of the earth. But whoever “the scum of the earth” is, it’s true that life is for the strong. Matto loved his gang life that made him feel strong. It was dangerous but gave him pleasure. There was always a possibility of being killed or going to jail. But it really never worried him. Fear was a feeling that he got rid of in the mountain. He got involved in stealing cars, beating people up for no reason, shooting guns, selling or doing drugs. He lived the life of “the scum of the earth” as some “upper-class” people would assume, but in his sense, legal or illegal, he was a hunter who would survive. Maybe it is the only way of being a hunter for those “street people” like Matto who have nothing but guts to fight.

The gang was Matto’s life for two years or so. When and how did he get out of the gang? He was fourteen at that time. One night, he found himself in jail. He must have overdosed on drugs and almost killed himself. He spent the next two weeks in jail among other drug abusers. Next to Matto’s cell, there was a middle-aged guy who had terribly bad teeth. That guy was constantly tapping on the wall, driving Matto crazy. One moment, he was screaming, and the next moment, he was laughing out loud. And then, there was this teenager who seemed to be Matto’s age. He was chasing something that was not there, running around, running into the wall, hitting and punching the wall. The jail was absolutely a mad house. Matto couldn’t believe what was happening around him. What horrified him most was a resonant, unavoidable feeling inside him that he could be one of these people in a few years. It frightened him.

That experience was a turning point in Matto’s life. He didn’t want to be like them. Nor did he want to spend his life in jail. Then, he needed to do something to put his life back together. His first decision was to get out of the gang following his dad’s advice. Matto and his father decided to leave Albuquerque and move to Arizona. It was two days after his 15<sup>th</sup>



birthday. They lived in a family shelter in Apache Junction for a while. The gang, however, did not easily let Matto go. They found him at the shelter. Matto saw Diablo, one of the gang members coming up to him. Matto didn't run away. He said to Diablo, "Whaz up, man?"

"I wanna talk to you." Diablo said coldly and signaled to Matto to follow him.

They walked to the desert where nobody was around but about 50 gang members. Before Matto recognized some old faces, they started beating him up for an hour. When Matto was about to pass out, he vaguely heard his old boss asking, "Do you really wanna get out?" Matto barely said, "Yes." Then, he got the last blow, which put him out of consciousness. That was the end of his gang life.

Matto's new life as an Arizonan began. Matto and his dad moved from one motel to another until his dad found a job in construction. In the meantime, his father enrolled him at a school in Apache Junction as an 8<sup>th</sup> grader. Going back to school was not easy for Matto. Helping with his dad's construction work on the side, getting into fights at school, and frequent truancies meant Matto had a hard time in school and he eventually failed the 8<sup>th</sup> grade. But he wanted to go back to school badly because he wanted to join a football team. So, with extra schoolwork and determination during that summer, he passed the 8<sup>th</sup> grade and the principal gave him permission to move up to the 9<sup>th</sup> grade in the following fall.

The beginning of 9<sup>th</sup> grade went well. Everybody at school liked him. He joined the football team that fall. He was quite talented in throwing and catching football. He was as fast as a grizzly bear. Running 10 yards dodging through bull-headed opponents was quite a thrill to him. He even received a 'Best Yardage' trophy. He began dreaming of being a professional football player. He was proud of himself for being so athletic. If he could ever make a professional team in the future, it would be the best thing that could happen in his life.

It seemed, however, achieving a dream in a situation like his would be like hitting a jackpot. There were hidden roadblocks here and there. In the second semester of his 9<sup>th</sup> grade, he got into another fight. One of his classmates blamed Matto for stealing his skateboard. Skateboarding was Matto's another favorite sport but he wouldn't steal things like that (or would he?). When the student accused him of stealing it in front of other classmates, what could he do? Admit it? No. Instead, he defended himself and ended up knocking the guy down with his fist.

To Matto's misfortune, the assistant principal happened to be walking by and saw Matto sitting on the guy's stomach and punching him in his nose. The assistant principal yelled at Matto:

"Stop it, Matto, right now!"

"Shit!" Matto realized that it was too late to run. He slowly got up rubbing his right fist with his left hand.

"Go to the office, right now!" The assistant principal yelled again.

"Let me calm down first." Matto was breathing hard.

"Go to the office right now!" The assistant principal said it again pushing Matto in the shoulder.

At that physical touch by the assistant principal, Matto's fist responded first before his mind. Instinctively, he was about to give a blow to the assistant principal when two campus policemen jumped onto him and handcuffed him. That was the end of his time in the regular school system and the start of his school life at an alternative school, here at Borderlands.

Mrs. Emm stopped reading to the class. "What are you doing, Jose? You're not paying attention. Read the next part, please." Jose was drawing something on a piece of paper.

"Where?" Jose asked happily when the teacher finally picked him to read.

“OK, page 43, second paragraph. Start from ‘*We’ll visit my training school.*’”

Jose found it and started reading.

*“We’ll visit my training school,” smiled the general. “It’s in the cellar. I have about a dozen pupils down there now. They’re from the Spanish bark San Lucar that had the bad luck to go on the rocks out there. A very inferior lot, I regret to say. Poor specimens are more accustomed to the deck than to the jungle.”*

That’s exactly what Matto thought of Borderlands when he was sent here: ‘a very inferior lot.’ Students here at Borderlands happened to have nothing but bad luck, which placed them in this inferior lot of an alternative school. Wasn’t life a matter of luck, anyway? Why was Matto born poor? Why was he born half-Spanish and half-Indian? Why was he born a child of a father who was a drug dealer and a sometimes construction worker, and that of a mother who was a low-paid laborer at an Indian jewelry factory? If he were born to a White, wealthy family, would his life have run the same? Maybe, or maybe not. But he might have had a chance, at least. His family was so poor. He had to fight over food with his brother all the time. His parents, especially his mom, were always drunk. Plus, they were always arguing and fighting with each other. Had it not been for his boss of the gang who basically took care of him in his early teens, he would have been a “street rat” by now. It was not his choice to be born into such a dysfunctional family. The environment in which he had lived made him who he was and what he was. He was just one of the “poor specimens” who got accustomed to a poor environment. From this environment, he was offered no more than a survival kit: a box of matches, a knife, and a blanket. So, to Matto, his life was always a matter of ‘sink or swim.’ It was always a struggle and he felt that the odds were not much in his favor.

Matto was confused when teachers said, ‘Go to school and graduate.’ OK, and then what? Can education make a difference in his life? Can schooling make Matto’s hands softer than his parents’? Would his clothes be better than his parents’ as a result of schooling? Can a

high school diploma free Matto from the poverty he inherited from his parents?

When Matto was transferred to this alternative high school, one of the 9<sup>th</sup> grade teachers told students that they—kids who were poor—could make a difference in their lives as long as they stayed in school, behaved, and got good grades. However, Matto was skeptical about these promises because it seemed that education was not more than a provision of food and clothing, in other words, not more than a means of survival. To Matto, education functioned as a survival kit, which would only serve to keep him at the bottom rung of the society. Somehow, Matto felt that Mr. Zaroff, the general, in this story *The Most Dangerous Game* represented the system that controlled everything and Matto identified himself as one of the sailors who were unfortunately trapped in the system and played by it. If Matto tried to beat the system, the “hunting dogs” would be eventually released by the system and turn him into their prey.

Matto’s whole life so far has been like a swamp which he couldn’t get out of. Problems, troubles, miseries, and misfortunes follow one another like a giant leech relentlessly sucking his blood. One of his most recent problems was that his ex-girlfriend had called him to say she was pregnant with his baby. But he didn’t think so. He had to go through a paternity test and several tedious court cases to prove his innocence. It was a pain in the neck.

When Matto first got to Borderlands, he was like an angry wild animal that couldn’t be tamed. Within a week, sure enough, he got pissed off at Mr. Vee, who was the then-principal of Borderlands.

“Mr. Vee, you need to send me back to a regular high school next semester. I want to join their football team,” Matto said to the principal, casually but firmly, while his tongue touching his silver mouth ring, which was hanging in the center of his lower lip.

“No, you can’t. You have an attitude problem. You can’t go back until you fix that problem,” said the principal in a firm voice.

“No, I don’t have an attitude problem, sir.”

“Yes, you do. You need to calm down,” said the principal trying to put his arm over Matto’s left shoulder as a gesture of caring.

“No, no teacher will tell me what to do. Take your hands off from me. I’ll bust you in your face.”

“What, you wanna be suspended again?”

“Mr. Principal, you’re giving me more reason to bust you in your face.”

“Just calm down, Matto.”

“No, fuck you! You calm down!”

Fortunately, Mr. Vee could penetrate Matto’s anger. He knew that Matto’s anger had nothing to do with school, but was deeply rooted in Matto’s life. Mr. Vee knew that just kicking him out of school wouldn’t work. At the principal’s signal, the school security guard came in and took Matto to his office. A call had already been made to Matto’s father, who came to school an hour later and picked Matto up.

Not surprisingly, his first semester here at Borderlands wasn’t successful as usual. He was already suspended twice for doing drugs, and he failed Sophomore English again. As far as he was concerned, his English teacher, Mrs. Emm was too demanding. She was always telling him to do this and that, and he didn’t like the push. He did not want anybody to tell him what to do. But Mrs. Emm was persistent.

“You have a lot of things to make up,” said Mrs. Emm. She was concerned about Matto’s failing grade.

“I don’t care. Just leave me alone. Let me do what I gotta do.” Matto was obviously annoyed by the teacher.

“If you don’t do this, I’ll fail you.” Mrs. Emm’s voice was quite assertive.

But Matto gave her a brief, nonchalant look and said,

“Oh well, then, fail me.”

Within the first year at the alternative school, Matto managed to become a “thorn” to all the teachers and he got frequent suspensions and failings. Some teachers avoided talking to him because they didn’t want Matto to bear a grudge against them. As long as Matto was there in class, whether he was reading a newspaper or doodling, that was OK. Teachers finally learned to leave him alone.

As teachers stopped “bugging” him, Matto actually started feeling comfortable at school, which was a big change. He started realizing that the school was a shelter for him to get away from the misery of his personal life he had to face before and after school. The school was actually doing something for him.

And then last spring, an encounter with his math teacher, Mr. Gee, made Matto change his problematic “attitude” eventually (maybe “dramatically” would be a better word for his attitude change). Mr. Gee seemed to have a good grasp of what he was teaching and was different from other teachers. He respected students as adults and most students respected him too. Matto didn’t like him at first because he looked overconfident and arrogant. In fact, he was a veteran teacher with 15 years of teaching experience and was tired of a mega-size impersonal high school system where the teacher-student relationship tended to remain on the surface. He volunteered to teach here on this small campus, which had a total of about 250 students. Mr. Gee

liked the fact that he could afford to pay special attention to each student including Matto. One day, Mr. Gee and Matto had an extensive talk about Matto's math grade.

"You wanna go back to a regular high school?" Mr. Gee respectfully asked.

"Yeah, I wanna join their football team," Matto answered.

"Then, here's what you have to do. Your current grade is a low D. If you fail Math, you know you can't go back, right? I'll help you as much as possible but you must help me and yourself, too."

Mr. Gee's big eyes kept staring at Matto, as if they were asking for 'yes' from Matto. Mr. Gee's thin lips were pressing each other indicating how serious he was. No joke was allowed between them. Mr. Gee had something that Matto couldn't go against. Was it his power of control? Was it his authority? Was it his kindness? No, none of the above. It was his confidence in Matto. Mr. Gee showed something more than sympathy toward Matto's life. He seemed to perceive Matto not as a troublemaker, but as a human being who happened to be going through a lot of challenges in his life. Unlike other teachers, Mr. Gee understood Matto's life experience as something valuable rather than as a sign of deficiency or a problem. He respected Matto as a young adult who has important life skills that many of us do not have but should have, and those important skills that schools cannot or do not teach. Mr. Gee's respect for Matto as someone who owns such invaluable knowledge, the kind of "street" knowledge that is typically devalued by school, had an impact on Matto. Matto was afforded an understanding from Matto's perspective. This kind of understanding was a new concept that Matto was not used to, but helped him slowly open up to Mr. Gee. Matto began to feel valued and thus began to reciprocate Mr. Gee's respect for the first time.

During class time, Mr. Gee tutored each student based on their level. The individual tutoring was possible because there were only 6 students in his class. That's what Mr. Gee liked about this school. A small class size. Each individual could get the personal attention that they needed. Moreover, as a veteran teacher, Mr. Gee had a special ability to make math concepts easy to understand. Matto, instead of daydreaming in class, joined these students who spent quality time with Mr. Gee. Fortunately, math was not as difficult as English for Matto.

Gradual increase of his test score encouraged Matto. To receive a teacher's attention, not due to his behavior but due to his interest in learning, gave Matto some nice feeling. It brought him a breeze of happiness. Friendship between Mr. Gee and Matto started building up. When they ran into each other on campus, they exchanged high fives.

“What's up, Matto?”

“Not much, Mr. Gee.”

“Keep the sunny side up!”

Now that he made an ally with Mr. Gee, it became easier for Matto to talk to other teachers without anger and arguments. Teachers began to see Matto making an effort to turn his life around. They liked to talk about him at the teacher's lounge. Favoritism is sometimes contagious among teachers. Because Mr. Gee praised Matto for his change, other teachers also began to be in favor of him. Nothing would make teachers happier than seeing a student turning around.

As he was somewhat getting close to teachers, Matto realized that it was quite advantageous to be on the teachers' favorite side. He didn't necessarily want to be a teacher's pet, but just by being on their good side rather than bad side, he felt less pushed and more respected than before. That “border-crossing” was an eye-opener for him. Ironically, it made him



see what other kids were doing to teachers. They were flatly mean to teachers. ‘Was I that mean?...I guess...’ Matto questioned himself, and then shrugged his shoulders. He could see that teachers were taking a lot of “crap” from students such as disrespect, talking back, spitting, yelling, and cussing. Notwithstanding, teachers were bringing snacks, candies, pizzas, or doughnuts for their students.

The “border-crossing” offered Matto a viewpoint through which he came to see schooling differently. Matto started understanding teachers better and even felt sorry for them for having to put up with students who had behavioral problems. Matto could laugh at himself for having been such a “jerk” to teachers.

*“I congratulate you,” The general sucked in his breath and smiled. “You have won the game. Splendid! One of us is to furnish a repast for the hounds. The other will sleep in this very excellent bed. On guard, Rainsford.”*

Somebody read the end of the story. Matto was glad that it was a happy ending. ‘What a story,’ Matto thought. He only wished his own story to have a happy ending like this. Then, the school bell rang. The first period ended...

### **Understanding Matto’s Story through Hermeneutical Phenomenology**

Matto’s story ends here for the purpose of this particular article; it does not project Matto’s whole life story. Connelly and Clandinin (2006) remind us that “events under study are in temporal transition” (p. 479). Therefore, Matto’s lived experience that is storied in this article should be understood as in temporal transition and as in process. Narrative inquiry utilizes stories that provide models of phenomena and the world. To tell a story is to issue an invitation to the reader to see the phenomena as embodied in the story (Bruner, 2002). In this article, Matto’s story is presented as a way of phenomenological writing. Van Manen (1990) posits that a common rhetorical device in phenomenological writing is the use of an anecdote or a story. He

explains that story is important because it allows the human science research text to acquire a narrative quality that is the common characteristic of a story. This narrative text combines the power of reflective discourse and the power of literary language, which invites the reader to assume a reflective stance through the meanings embedded in the lived experience of the protagonist. In so doing, the narrative text strives to offer “a degree of interpretive space” (Barone, 2001, p. 150) to allow readers to make sense of the study in their own ways through their own interpretations (Coulter & Smith, 2009).

Matto’s story was crafted as a result of my ethnographic work. Doing ethnography was a privilege, indeed (Tsolidis, 2008). Matto allowed me to “gaze” his school life in an extended time and space, taking a risk of becoming an object of my gaze, “an attitude of curiosity or observation” (Merleau-Ponty, 1958/2007, p. 263). He shared his lived experience with me in spite of the potential risk that I may exploit his vulnerability by “colonizing” him as a research object (Wise & Fine, 2000). Acknowledging my privilege to have access to Matto’s temporal life and space, I sought ways in which I could honor, rather than valorize, his lived experience and recognize the validity of the personal such as his feelings, hopes, desires, and moral dispositions, while paying attention to social conditions, such as the existential conditions, the environment, surrounding factors and forces including people which helped to shape Matto’s personal context (Connelly & Clandinin, 2006).

For me, one way to honor Matto’s lived experience was to engage in phenomenology as a way of thinking, being, and researching. The aim of phenomenology, according to van Manen (1990), is to “transform lived experience into a textual expression of its essence in such a way that the effect of the text is a reflexive re-living and a reflective appropriation of something meaningful” (p. 36). Van Manen further states that researching from a phenomenological

perspective is to question the way we experience the world, to know the world in which we live as human beings, and, more specifically, to understand what it means to be a human being. In this sense, phenomenology is ontological rather than epistemological as the lived experience is transitional, organic, constantly evolving.

According to Heidegger (1962/2008), however, phenomenology is not only descriptive but also hermeneutical and interpretive because there are many hidden aspects in phenomena which need to be uncovered and interpreted. In this sense, phenomenology is the form of interpretive inquiry rendering a hermeneutical phenomenology. Hermeneutical phenomenology offers “insight not just by exhibiting what is already self-evident in awareness, but by drawing out, eliciting, evoking, uncovering what lies hidden or buried in and around whatever manifests itself openly in the world” (Carman, 2008, p. xviii). This act of digging up, uncovering, and interpreting is called “hermeneutical excavation and elucidation” (Carman, 2008, p. xviii), which makes it possible for one’s lived experience to be brought to the forefront, which, otherwise, would be buried underneath the metanarratives that reflect the mainstream ideologies, prejudices, and assumptions. Indeed, every student has his or her own complex story to tell, worthy of digging up, uncovering, and interpreting. It is here that the value of hermeneutical phenomenology lies.

After reading Matto’s story, then, some may wonder: So what? Why does Matto’s story matter? Why should we pay attention to Matto’s story that is so particular, unique, local, and temporal? Further, what does Matto’s story have to do with hermeneutical phenomenology?

Personal stories, no matter how unique and individual, are inevitably social in character (Chase, 2003; Connelly & Clandinin, 2006) and have the potential to shed light on the larger society (Barone, 2007; Author, 2010). In other words, personal stories are social in the sense that

they reflect broad social, cultural, ideological, and historical conditions in which they are told and heard. Thus, a story becomes metaphor as it can stand for the world beyond the particulars to which it directly refers (Bruner, 2002). It is the power of metaphor or epiphanic power that gives the story its loft beyond the particular, its “metaphoric loft” (Bruner, 2002, p. 25), which requires “hermeneutical excavation or elucidation” in order to shed light on broader social and educational settings.

Reading Matto’s story from hermeneutical phenomenology offers an encounter with a student who appears to have failed regular schools and ended up being in an alternative school causing more trouble until he finally comes to terms with himself and others. As we dig deeper into his story while engaging in hermeneutical excavation or elucidation, we meet a young adult who experienced the fear of death through a rite of passage into manhood, who experienced being a gang member as an opportunity to obtain a sense of power at least for a while, and whose life relentlessly lent itself to a matter of sink or swim. We further discover how Matto’s lived experience taught him literacy skills to “read the world” (Freire & Macedo, 1987), which made him realize, for example, how life was for the strong, and how he and his peers could be considered by the system the “scum of the earth,” sent to an “inferior lot” that could further exacerbate their disenfranchised status. Moreover, it was his realization about himself and his relation to others, e.g., teachers, which made him possible to experience the “border-crossing” from his “at-risk” status to a “turn-around” student.

However, his “turn-around” would not have been possible without Mr. Gee’s pedagogical understanding. It was not that Mr. Gee understood Matto “better” than other teachers. Gadamer (1975/2006) says that understanding is not, in fact, understanding better. He says, “It is enough to say that we understand in a *different way, if we understand at all*” (p. 296, italics in the

original). Clearly, Mr. Gee's understanding of Matto was not necessarily better but different. He did not show blind sympathy to Matto, nor did he want to subjugate Matto to his own standards. Mr. Gee understood Matto from Matto's perspective, transposing himself to Matto's situation without losing his responsibility. According to Gadamer, to be able to understand, we must place ourselves in the other situation while suspending our own claim to truth, and this is a legitimate hermeneutical requirement. That is, from hermeneutical phenomenology, understanding constitutes transposing ourselves into a situation without subordinating another person to our own standards. Mr. Gee's understanding met this hermeneutical requirement while demonstrating "the skill of being critically distant while remaining involved, attentive, and caring" (Davey, 2006, p. xvi). This, I would say, is an integral to the pedagogy of hermeneutical phenomenology.

Overall, Matto's story can be viewed as a "metaphoric loft" of the process of a young adult's personal growth and development, gradually transforming himself from a detached self to the one who is willing to engage himself in order to achieve his dream of being a football player at a regular high school. In the process of his growth, it seems that Matto's "dissonances and conflicts of life appear as the necessary growth points through which the individual must pass on his way to maturity and harmony (Dilthey, quoted in Swales, 1978, p. 3)." In the process of understanding Matto, however, we might experience what MacIntyre calls, an "epistemological crisis" (1977, p. 453), as our certain expectations or assumptions about Matto (a former gang member or an "at-risk" student, for example) are disrupted by unexpected outcomes which collide with our existing beliefs. As we excavate and elucidate Matto's lived experience, we realize that our preconceived, taken-for-granted ideas are challenged. We begin to pay attention to Mr. Gee's pedagogical practice and understand and value Matto's life challenges and conflicts

as the “necessary growth points” or his strengths rather than deficiencies. This understanding of Matto through hermeneutical phenomenology helps us to acquire a horizon, which means to “look beyond what is close at hand—not in order to look away from it, but to see it better within a larger whole and in truer proportion” (Gadamer, 1975/2006, p. 304). In this sense, hermeneutical understanding of the phenomena of students’ lived experience can catapult both students and teachers into the personal growth and development in a reciprocal way.

### **Conclusion: Toward the Pedagogy of Hermeneutical Phenomenology**

In this article, I inquired into the lived experience of a Sioux Indian male adolescent through hermeneutical phenomenology. This inquiry is, first of all, an effort to join the recent resurgence of interest in phenomenology in education as I described at the beginning of this paper. I hope that this effort would provoke educators to engage in phenomenology and hermeneutical phenomenology in particular, as it has the potential to contribute to rethinking our understanding of the increasingly complex and ambiguous educational phenomena that need our attention and interpretation.

Further, I argue that we educators should engage in the pedagogy of hermeneutical phenomenology that puts an emphasis on interpretation, attending more carefully to the way we understand our students. In hermeneutical phenomenology, understanding is essentially a way of being that belongs to human existence. It requires a philosophical disposition that orients oneself toward the other (Davey, 2006). This existential understanding is also always oriented toward the unity of the past, the present, and the future of our students (Heidegger, 1962/2008); it is a projection of meaning, the projection of one’s own possibilities, and a projection of one’s own self into the world, on the basis of what he/she has experienced (Gallagher, 1992). It is, therefore, my hope that through the pedagogy of hermeneutical phenomenology, we will develop

an edifying relationship with students, transcending our own taken-for-granted ideas and transforming our educational practice to find more humanizing ways of educating them. In this process, we, along with students, can become humble philosophers whose educational aim resides in the ontology of being and becoming.

Acknowledgement:

I am truly grateful to Matto in Arizona, who shared his lived experience with me so candidly and so enthusiastically.

#### References

- Barone, T. (2000). *Aesthetics, politics, and educational inquiry: Essays and examples*. New York: Peter Lang.
- Barone, T. (2001). *Touching Eternity: The enduring outcomes of teaching*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Barone, T. (2007). A return to the gold standard?: Questioning the future of narrative construction as educational research. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 13(4), 454-470.
- Bruner, J. (2002). *Making stories: Law, literature, life*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.
- Carman, T. (2008). Foreword. In Heidegger, *Being and time* (pp. xiii-xxi). New York, NY: Harper & Row.
- Chase, S. (2003). Learning to listen: Narrative principles in a qualitative research methods course. In R. Josselson, A. Lieblich, & D. McAdams (Eds.), *Up close and personal: The teaching and learning of narrative research*. Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association.

- Clandinin, D. J., & Connelly, M. (2000). *Narrative inquiry: Experience and story in qualitative research* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Clifford, J., & Marcus, G. E. (1986). *Writing Culture: The poetics and politics of ethnography*. Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press.
- Connell, R. (1947). The most dangerous game in *Adventures in American Literature* (3rd ed., pp. 19-30).
- Connelly, F. M., & Clandinin, D. J. (2006). Narrative inquiry. In J. L. Green, G. Camilli, & P. Elmore (Eds.), *Handbook of complementary methods in education research* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed., pp. 477-487). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Coulter, C., & Smith, M. L. (2009). The construction zone: Literary elements in narrative research. *Educational Researcher*, 38(8), 577-590.
- Dall'Alba, G. (2009). Phenomenology and education: An introduction. *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, 41(1), 7-9.
- Davey, N. (2006). *Unquiet understanding: Gadamer's philosophical hermeneutics*. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Dunne, J. (2005). An intricate fabric: Understanding the rationality of practice. *Pedagogy, Culture and Society*, 13(3), 367-389.
- Freire, P. & Macedo, D. (1987). *Literacy: Reading the word and the world*. South Hadley, MA: Bergin and Garvey
- Gadamer, H.-G. (1976/2008). *Philosophical hermeneutics* (D. E. Linge, Trans.). Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Gadamer, H.-G. (1975/2006). *Truth and Method*. (J. Weinsheimer & D. G. Marshall, Trans.). New York: Continuum.



- Gallagher, S. (1992). *Hermeneutics and education*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.
- Geertz, C. (1988). *Works and lives: The anthropologist as author*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Heidegger, M. (1962/2008). *Being and time*. New York, NY: Harper & Row.
- Jardine, D. (1992). *Speaking with a boneless tongue*. Bragg Creek, Alberta, Canada: Makyo Press.
- Kerby, A. T. (1991). *Narrative and the self*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Kvale, S., & Brinkmann, S. (2008). *InterViews: Learning the craft of qualitative research interviewing* (2 ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.
- Leavy, P. (2009). *Method meets art: Arts-based research practice*. New York: The Guilford Press.
- Levering, B. (2006). Epistemological issues in phenomenological research: How authoritative are people's accounts of their own perceptions? *Journal of Philosophy of Education*, 40(4), 451-462.
- MacIntyre, A. (1977). Epistemological crises, dramatic narrative and the philosophy of science. *Monist*, 60(4), 453-472.
- Merleau-Ponty, M. (1958/2007). *Phenomenology of perception*. New York: Routledge.
- Peters, M. A. (2009). Editorial: Heidegger, phenomenology, education. *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, 41(1), 1-6.
- Pinar, W. F., & Reynolds, W. M. (Eds.). (1992). *Understanding curriculum as phenomenological and deconstructed text*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Polkinghorne, D. E. (1988). *Narrative knowing and the human sciences*. Albany, New York:

- State University of New York Press.
- Polkinghorne, D. E. (1995). Narrative configuration as qualitative analysis. In J. A. Hatch & R. Wisniewski (Eds.), *Life history and narrative* (pp. 5-25). London: Falmer Press.
- Ricoeur, P. (1984). *Time and Narrative* (Vol. I). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Ricoeur, P. (1985). *Time and Narrative* (Vol. II). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Ricoeur, P. (1988). *Time and Narrative* (Vol. III). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Spence, D. P. (1986). Narrative smoothing and clinical wisdom. In T. R. Sarbin (Ed.), *Narrative psychology: The storied nature of human conduct* (pp. 211-232). New York: Praeger.
- Stake, R. (2005). Qualitative case studies. In N. Denzin & Y. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (3 ed., pp. 443-466). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.
- Swales, M. (1978). *The German bildungsroman from Wieland to Hesse*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Tsolidis, G. (2008). The (im)possibility of poststructuralist ethnography -- researching identities in borrowed spaces. *Ethnography and Education*, 3(3), 271-281.
- van Manen, M. (1988). *Tales from the field: On writing ethnography*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- van Manen, M. (1990). *Researching lived experience: Human science for an action sensitive pedagogy*. Albany, New York: The State University of New York Press.
- Wise, L. & M. Fine. (2000). *Speed bumps: A student-friendly guide to qualitative research*. New York: Teachers College Press.