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ABSTRACT

Case studies of three nontraditional female college graduates from an Appalachian community in eastern Kentucky examined whether and how education changed these women's literacy habits. Also addressed were the literate practices they used in job, home, and community settings; the effects of their education on their children; and whether college-enhanced literacy helped them achieve their hopes after graduation. The researcher interviewed eight women over a 2-month period and chose three women to participate in case studies over 3 months. Another interview with participants and families plus observation of job literacy provided data on literacy use since college. In addition, case study participants provided archival material from work and home. Findings indicate that college influenced postcollege literacy by building confidence in literate skills missing from previous schooling, by exposing these women to technology and other life skills, and by moving them "from a passive to an active role...to see themselves as an instrument of knowledge and influence." In addition, these women affected their children's education, though not as predicted, and achieved the hopes that first motivated their attending college. Though academic literacy comprised a small portion of literate practices in job, home, and community settings, results suggest that a college education, building on pre-existing literacy, transformed these women's lives and disproved the common adage that "whistlin' women and crowin' hens always come to no good ends." Nine appendices present research materials. (Contains 159 references.) (Author/TD)

WHISTLIN' AND CROWIN' WOMEN OF APPALACHIA: LITERACY DEVELOPMENT SINCE COLLEGE

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate School

in Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy

Katherine K. Sohn

Indiana University of Pennsylvania

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Indiana University of Pennsylvania
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Title: Whistlin' And Crowin' Women Of Appalachia: Literacy Development Since College

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Case studies of three nontraditional female college graduates from an Appalachian community in eastern Kentucky examine questions of whether and how education changes these women's literacy habits; what sort of literate practices they use in job, home, and community settings; what effects education has had on their children; and whether college-enhanced literacy helped them achieve their hopes after graduation.

Within literacy research contexts, the researcher interviewed eight women over a two-month period and chose three women to participate in case studies over three months. Another interview with participants and families plus observation of job literacy completed the data gathering about literacy use since college. In addition, case study participants provided archival material from work and home.

Findings indicate that college influences postcollege literacy by building confidence in literate skills missing from previous schooling, by exposing these women to technology and other life skills, and by moving them "from a passive to an active role . . . to see themselves as an instrument of knowledge and influence" (Neilsen, 1990, p. 132). In addition, these women affected their children's education, though not as predicted, and achieved the hopes which motivated their attending college in the first place.

Though academic literacy comprises a small portion of literate practices in job, home, and community settings, results suggest that a college education, building on pre-existing literacy, transformed these women's lives and disproved the common adage that "whistlin' women and crowin' hens always come to no good ends."

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When I left the IUP campus, I thought I would be traveling to the University of Kentucky library two and a half hours away for resources. Because the Pikeville College library offered me access to the First Search Engine which delivered numerous interlibrary loans, I had no further to drive than the three minutes it takes me to get from my house to the library. I am grateful to director Lee Robbins, but especially to Georgia Napier, Mary Harmon, Lois Belcher, Val Fitzgerald, and the staff for their assistance. Kate Black, University of Kentucky Reference Librarian, supplemented sources not available on First Search. To Lori Owlsley, computer expert with the Pikeville College School of Osteopathic Medicine, I am grateful for some of the figures and tables which illuminate the dissertation. Finally, to Carolyn Miller, I appreciate your printing the dissertation copies for my committee.

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CHAPTER 1

BEGINNINGS: PURPOSE, FRAMEWORK, OVERVIEW

"Whistlin' women and crowin' hens come to no good ends."

Men whistle; roosters crow. Women keep their mouths shut. For years, mothers, fearing their daughters might come to "no good ends," have hushed them up with these few words. During my fifteen years of teaching developmental English and composition in Appalachia, I have observed this cultural script among many students but especially nontraditional women. As these married and single mothers and disabled coal miners' wives courageously step out of their comfort zones into intimidating academic hallways, unfamiliar with academic writing demands after years of being away from schooling, they begin quietly, then more loudly, to "find their voices and use [them] to gain control over their lives" (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarule, 1997, p. 4). Did these women achieve their dreams for a better life? Did the attainment of academic literacy supplement, shape, and enhance their lives? What sort of "ends" in terms of their literacy did these whistlin' and crowin' women come to after they left my classroom and graduated from college?

To satisfy my curiosity about how teaching affects nontraditional students' lives, I decided to conduct interviews with eight former female students from whom I would choose three to develop in-depth case studies. This qualitative research might inform me about how literacy assisted them in articulating goals, how college contributed to their self-development, and how their hopes have played out since graduation.

Personal Standpoint

My interest in studying these women is based on a lifelong interest in women whose potential may be constrained by internal and external obstacles. When they were enrolled in my classes, I was impressed by their discovery of writing as a means of personal expression and their ability to overcome odds. They reminded me of my mother, Teresa Kelleher, who, unable to finish

college before her eight children were born, went back later for continuing education classes until her illness prevented it.

Though she had plenty of rules for her three daughters, Mother encouraged us to whistle and crow. Having completed only one year of business school before she married, Mother regularly preached: "Don't marry too young!" "Get an education!" "Make something of your life!" More than words, Mother taught by example. She marched against atrocities in El Salvador and protested presidential policies that antagonized the poor. She challenged the invitation-only social club at our high school which discriminated against African Americans and other students. During the racially charged days of the Civil Rights movement in North Carolina, though she was raised in the segregationist South, she welcomed our African American friends to the house, a move which cost my parents socially in the neighborhood. With other parents, she and my dad sponsored the first integrated dance for our senior high school class at a local hotel since the Bishop forbade dances on school property. Her example affected all eight children as my brother relates: "Mother had a world-changing sense of justice. . . . She raised us to appreciate the station of women by reflecting on current events, reading female authors. . . . She trained her sons thoroughly in what is traditionally 'women's work'" (F. Kelleher, eulogy, June 14, 1999).

I credit my mother for the values she passed along to me: The ability to think for myself but to act with compassion for others; to engage in dialogue, especially in close relationships; to achieve my fullest human potential, to share those gifts with others, and to assist them in achieving their potential; and to fight against the inequities that keep women and others from realizing their fullest capacity.

Those values led me to the major highlights in my life: Joining Peace Corps/India after college; organizing rural community groups in central North Carolina; getting a masters in counseling and eighteen years later a masters in English; conducting career exploration,

assertiveness and management training, and human sexuality workshops for women; and pursuing this doctorate.

My daughter, Laura, carries on the example set by Mother. Laura was her own person from birth, and she regularly speaks out in defense and support of women. Though an art history major, she took numerous women's literature and studies classes in her college years. For her senior art project, she dramatized Appalachian women's lives combining written script with printmaking.

My mother turned the silence of her childhood into something positive, making her views heard through her children who have passed the torch on to her grandchildren. Before her June 1999 death, Mother provided numerous insights into the data of this study as a wife, mother, and nontraditional student herself. Perhaps because of her Kentucky coal country roots, she empathized with these women (J. Kelleher, personal communication, Sept. 3, 1999). Though she did not live to call me Dr. Sohn, her spirit continues to drive me to successful completion of the doctorate of which she was so proud.

Purpose of the Study

With my strong interest in women, especially in their literacy, I set out in my interviews with eight former students to answer four questions which would guide my research for the next year. The answers might illustrate literacy development since college. Below I outline those questions and others suggested by them.

1. Whether and how did a college education change these women's literacy habits?

I made several suppositions about answers to this question. One might be that the women in this study did as much reading and writing before college as they did in college, so that their only trophy was the diploma. When I thought of this question, I also wondered about the connections of pre-college literacy to the effect of college. Would poor reading and writing skills from high school negatively affect their performance in college and hence their post-college literacy? If they had

failed in pre-college, might college not reinforce feelings of insecurity and inferiority which these women felt upon entering (Belenky et al.)? What literacy habits would they develop to compensate for poorly formed ones?

Assuming these women graduated with enhanced literacy, did the college merely reproduce the status quo for women, preparing them for low-paying, traditional female jobs which made no significant changes in their lives, a common feminist criticism of education (Pascall & Cox, 1993)? Are we perpetuating a system that privileges a few, maintains the status quo, and silences women's voices instead of challenging that system and empowering women to express themselves openly?

If these women see themselves as literate persons, do they credit the college or recognize their non-college literacies? Does literacy help them define themselves with dignity? How does literacy assist these women's definition of themselves personally and professionally? If education changed their literacy habits, then how has it changed in the intervening years? Answering these questions would illustrate effects of college on literacy development.

2. What sort of literate practices do these women utilize on the job, at home, and in the community? Assuming that college affected their literacy, I theorize that observing their present-day acts of reading and writing (and in fact other literacies) in all aspects of their lives would illustrate literacy practices. What purposes and contexts, practices and processes do these women have for using literacy in these settings? Has college made them more confident in using literacy? What differences would I observe between academic and practical literacy in these case studies? How would the two intersect? Since required reading and writing are not always enjoyable, might not women's joy in reading and learning increase after college (Belenky et al.)? Would I find that the participants used literacy for personal growth, job advancement, or social empowerment? Could their literacy be measured for frequency, duration, and quantity? How does literacy relate to their lifelong goals? Observing literacy in non-school settings could address these issues and assist us in "devising educational responses" (Barton & Hamilton, 1998, p. 283).

3. What effects did these women's education have on their children? For purposes of this study, I identified nontraditional women who were also mothers to determine the consequences of modeling on their children. My rationale for this choice was based on beliefs articulated in Belenky et al. that mothering "has as its center the teaching of the next generation," that it shapes women's ways of thinking, and that it impacts their children (p. 13). I was curious about the motivation of these women's parents who had not attended college but wanted their daughters to go. Assuming that education improves lives, I wanted to find out if these women in turn would urge their children to attend college at the traditional age. If they did so, would the children have less anxiety and fewer struggles than their mothers did? Would entering their chosen professions sooner increase their chances of financial success and job satisfaction? Would there be a difference between daughters and sons in terms of college attendance? If there were no or minimal effects on their children to attend college, what might the reasons be? Were there other relatives and friends influenced by these women returning to college? Though the women may have found personal value in getting their education, scrutinizing its effect on their children might instruct us about intergenerational dimensions of literacy.

4. Did college-enhanced literacy help the women in this study achieve the hopes they expressed when they came to college? Because I have periodically seen former students working in minimum-wage retail jobs, would I find these women so employed? Since I know that the promises of acquired literacy can be mythical and benefits do not accrue to all (Gee, 1996) and since "ethnicity and class origin have more to do with benefits of literacy" (Street as cited in Horsman, 1990, p. 11) than any other factors, I wondered whether these working-class women's dreams for themselves and their families were realized. Would I find women who "after years of sacrifice, may find bitter disappointment instead of new opportunities when they have completed their degree . . . [which was] gathering dust" (Wilson & Christian, 1986, p. 11)? Even if they did not find jobs in their fields, would these women value their education on other grounds? Would they find

that without a living wage, there would be "no alternative to welfare" ("Letcher Co.")? Would they be disillusioned with the college or praiseworthy of the gifts they received there? How would their literacy development help them?

These questions guided me through the months of research.

Definitions

For purposes of this research, I define literacy broadly and narrowly. Narrowly, academic literacy generally refers to "the knowledge of letters and their use in reading and writing" (Erickson, 1988, p. 205). According to Brandt (1990), "people become literate by coming to terms with the unique demands of alphabetic writing" in the neutral and decontextual setting of the schools (p. 13).

Broadly, practical or vernacular literacy (Barton & Hamilton) is the use of symbol systems or texts to make meaning within the context of our culture. Witte (1992) defines text as any organized set of symbols or signs "regardless of whether [it] manifests itself in day-to-day human relations, religious rituals, hockey games, paintings, grocery lists, rock and roll songs, novels, motion pictures, scholarly articles . . . even though some parts . . . do not readily submit to linguistic description or analysis" (p. 269). In that case, junk mail, letters and cards, poems, diaries, songs, official letters, bills, forms, scrap books, recipes, address books, local newspapers, catalogs, ads, instructions for new products we buy, records, calendars, appointments, group minutes, newsletters, and notices qualify. Watching TV, scanning the computer, helping children with homework, and researching family history would also be considered literacy. Basically, any symbol that helps us make meaning would qualify. (Chapter three expands these definitions.)

Development refers to expansion, growth, evolution, unfolding, or maturity—it is both a process and an achieved state. Much has been written about stages of adult development; earlier theorists suggested set stages, but now they propose more fluid ones since our development evolves throughout life and transforms us in the process (Neilsen, 1989). Literacy development in

this study refers to the growth and expansion of literate abilities after college in the domains of home, community, and job.

Conceptual Frameworks

Whistling and crowing are noisy sounds not typically associated with mountain women. Therefore, studies of voice and self-expression frame the study, most notably, Belenky et al.'s Women's Ways of Knowing. Since reading and writing assist women in making noise, the concept of accumulating literacies (Brandt, 1995) provides another frame: Women come to college with the ability to read and write on a certain level, and they build on it with academic and other literacies. The accumulation can occur as "layers of earlier forms of literacy [that] exist simultaneously within the society and within the experiences of individuals" or vertically as reading and writing documents in the work place and at home (Brandt, p. 652). This accumulation "provides an increasingly intricate set of incentives, sources, and barriers for learning to read and write, the negotiation of which becomes a large part of the effort of becoming (and staying) literate" (p. 665). Influences overlap among families, neighborhoods, institutions, and written documents during our lives. In my study, accumulations may become obvious as I look at pre-college, college, and post-college literate activities in home, church, and school.

Another framework is Neilsen's theory of literacy development as a lifelong process which these women use to define themselves as they pursue job advancement and improvements for themselves and their families. Literacy develops as people age. In fact, literacy as social practice "demonstrates the changing demands that people experience at different stages of their lives and offers convincing evidence of the need for lifelong learning systems which people can access at critical points when they need to respond to new demands" (Barton & Hamilton, p. 282).

Finally, this study fits into the category of "little narratives of literacy" versus the grand narratives of the academy (Daniell, 1999). In Daniell's view, little narratives begin with the social setting of the literacy, examine particular peoples without the necessity of generalizing to

larger groups, and let us know how complex literacy is. She goes on to say that these studies show that

> the modernist promise of literacy—economic security, upward mobility, political freedom, intellectual achievement, middle-class values, personal fulfillment—is inequitably fulfilled. But they also show that some people use literacy to make their lives more meaningful , no matter what their economic and political circumstances are. (p. 404)

The participants in this study have hopefully used literacy to "make their lives more meaningful." Examining race, gender, and class, little narratives like my own offer a more flexible definition of literacy that proposes no quick solution to problems that literacy by itself cannot solve anyway.

Chapter Overviews

To help readers follow this study, I submit the following review of the chapters.

Chapter one provides the focus of the research, situates the research questions, delineates the researcher's personal interest, suggests the significance of the study, and invites the audience to read further.

Next, chapter two characterizes the physical and cultural context of the Appalachian region, a place which has been historically misrepresented. I examine the importance of land, language, religion, family, gender, education, speech, and outside perceptions to the self-image of the women in this study. This section sets the stage for the research.

After observing the context of the region, chapter three provides the context of the study within related literature—what others have said about literacy, the effects of college on nontraditional students, and women's voices. Here readers will see the contrast of practical and academic literacy, how college enlarges the vistas of women in all aspects of their lives, and how women's voices can be silenced or enriched by such experiences.

The research design in chapter four depicts the methodology used to bring this study to fruition. The chapter reviews research goals, the site, and the benefits of qualitative research for case studies. Next, it depicts how I chose the participants and collected data from them: Two interviews, participant observation, and family interviews. Because dialect is such a part of these

women's identity, I include a selection on my dilemmas with transcription protocol. I then discuss how I analyze the data and address the crucial issue of validity. Finally, I add a section that shows how triangulation guards against bias and gives readers different views of the research. Ethical issues permeate the paper, but this chapter concludes with a review of those concerns.

After outlining my methodology, I summarize in chapter five the interviews with the original eight women. This and chapter 6 are the content and findings of the field work; if the reader is in a hurry, she should turn to those pages. A descriptive chart outlining the key points of the eight women's stories eases the confusion of keeping them straight. Based on the sequencing of interview questions, this chapter is divided into three sections: Pre-college, college, and post-college literacy. Within the categories, I examine these women's Appalachian roots, family literacy, first generation college status, reasons for coming to college, support or non-support from families, academic and personal adjustments to college, performance in my class, and changes from freshmen to senior year. Observing post-college literacy, I examine their evaluation of the college, the effect of college on their children (developed further in the conclusion), their employment since college, what literacy they use on the job, their home and community literacy, job advancement, and the use of technology.

From the eight women, I chose three for the case studies which I present in chapter six. Again, the convenient divisions of pre-college, college, and post-college help to organize the data. Within the post-college category, I include observations about literacy in the domains of home, community, and occupation. The interview with family members provides another literacy view as well.

In chapter seven, I conclude with a review of research goals, using quotes from the participants. I look at education's effect on literacy development in community, home, and job setting; education's effect on their children, and whether they achieved their hopes and dreams. The chapter continues with a connection of my data to the review of literature and then a list of

recommendations for teachers and universities. Finally I, suggest some questions for further research which evolved from interviewing these whistlin' and crowin' women.

Significance of the Study

Since Appalachian women are often idealized as Earth Mothers piecing quilts and playing dulcimers or stereotyped as ignorant degenerates who reproduce constantly, this study hopefully assists in deconstructing that image. Since I feel passionately that not enough people know about Appalachian women, this study addresses the need for a sensitive and respectful treatment of these rural women and their literate lives. My study supplements the excellent work of researchers which permeates this dissertation--Kahn (1972), Wolfram & Christian (1976), Wicks (1983), Christian & Wilson (1985), Fiene (1991), Anglin (1992), Puckett (1992), Rotkis & McDaniel (1993), Egan (1993), Bingham & White (1994), Giesen (1995), Seitz (1995), Donehower (1997), Merrifield, Bingham, & Hemphill (1997), and Maggard (1999). They and others have energetically represented Appalachian women and literacy issues for the public, though they have not specifically addressed literacy development among female college graduates. Listening to these "women's accounts of their lives" should illustrate more than large surveys of college's effects on graduates. I might also help to attract other silent women by creating programs "that will meet their needs and enable them to challenge the status quo" (Horsman).

This dissertation may also fill a need for connecting academic and practical literacy; the literature seems to favor one or the other and does not treat them as integral parts of a person's ability to negotiate the increasingly technological world in which we live (Brandt, 1995). Looking at literacy in the context of these women's lives concretizes literacy in theory (Neilsen) and accounts for "the rhetoric of life beyond the classroom," the interaction between reading, writing, and self (D. McAndrew, classnotes, 1997).

During the IUP graduate program, I encountered many texts with an urban orientation. Though instructive, especially Lives on the Boundary (Rose, 1989) and Bootstraps: An Academic

of Color (Villanueva, 1993), their examples may limit teachers in rural classrooms who teach a different population. This dissertation, building on studies like Ways with Words which taught us so much about small town literacy ways and No Place But Here, Keizer's (1996) illustration of literacy in a rural Vermont high school, may provide additional information about rural literacy.

Additionally, women in the general public wondering about going back to college may find inspiration in the lives of these ordinary Appalachian women. These women's stories might be every bit as moving as Sharon Jean Hamilton's (1995) My Name's Not Susie or Muriel Murch's (1995) Journey in the Middle of the Road, two other tales of literacy transformation.

I hope that in writing this dissertation I am an advocate for these women whose love of place, generosity, hospitality, strength, and enduring devotion to their families have given me and my family countless riches during the twenty-something years we have lived in central Appalachia. For what follows, I am truly grateful.

CHAPTER 2

CONTEXT: APPALACHIA

This section delineates the Appalachian region's physical and cultural qualities. Having lived in the region since 1975, I present below vignettes or snapshots of my impressions as an outsider who has adjusted to the culture. This enviable position enables me to provide an outsider/insider view, one that a field worker coming from the outside could not provide. My purpose is to provide impressions of what it is like to live in this area. As I draw this picture, please understand that, like any area, Appalachia is not monolithic. The images below are not meant to be generalized to the entire region.

This chapter provides context, "the stage on which the [women in this study] act out their lives. To represent who they are and what their literacy means, I believe that it is necessary to see them at home and at work . . . to see the contexts that shape their view of the world" (Neilsen, p. 2).

The Land

- $44 million dollars to complete three miles of four-lane highway
- Perpetual view of mountains at eye level and above
- Mists rising in the mountains

The land and attachment to place are among the values of these women. They grew up in the mountainous terrain of eastern Kentucky and live in hollows between mountains, off winding, narrow roads. If they travel thirty-five miles to work, their trip will take seventy minutes, longer if they get behind a coal truck. In many places, there are no shoulders or guard rails on the road. Though these mountains have isolated the area, McNeil (1989) cautions that they are not nearly as isolated as commonly depicted, certainly not more so than other remote or unexplored areas.

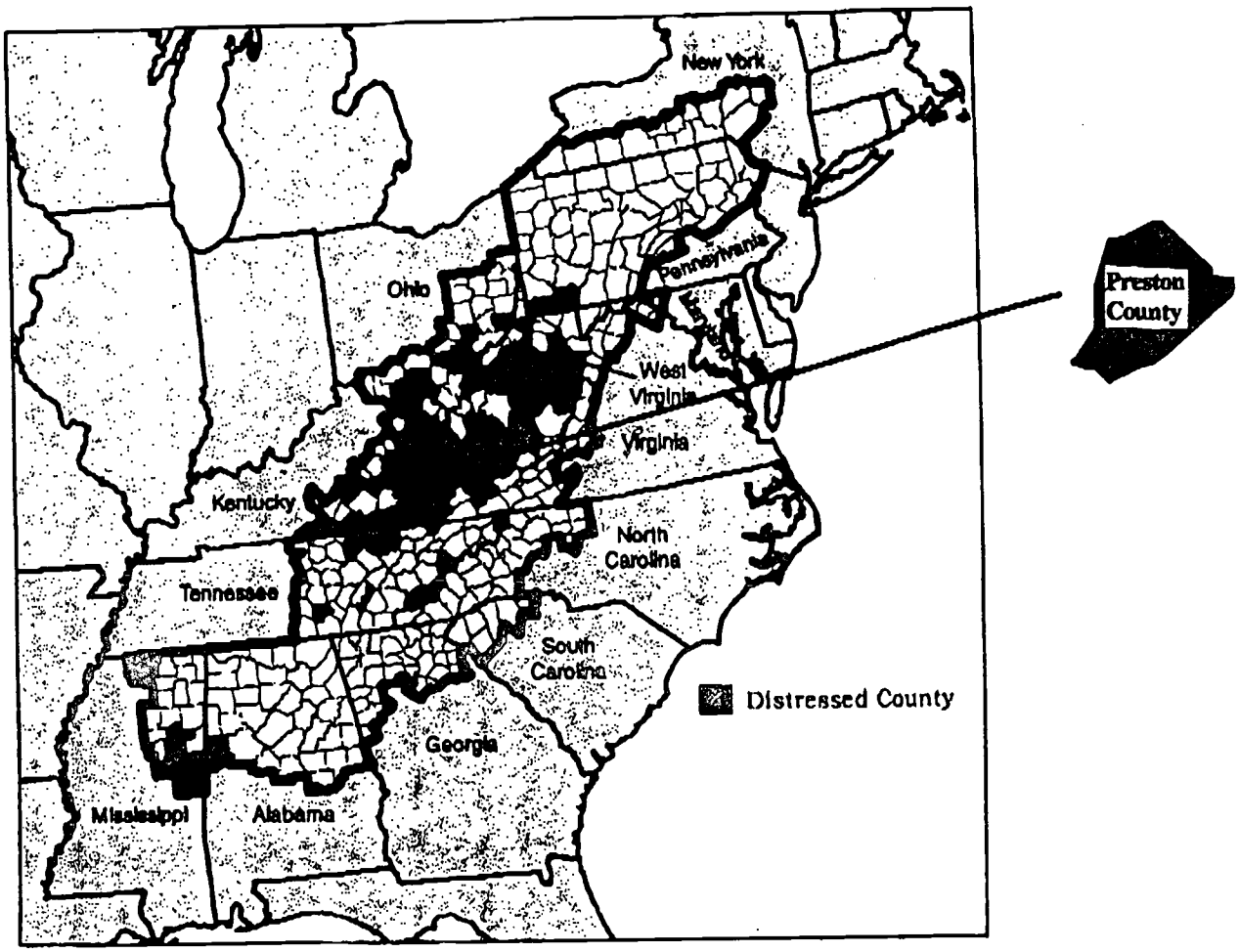
To open up the area to improved transportation and development, road crews have had to cut through rock, taking years and millions of dollars, as illustrated in the Pound Gap cut bulleted above. Because of frequent flooding, particularly in the town of Preston, two similar projects were

developed. Fishtrap Dam was opened in 1970 and built by the Army Corps of Engineers. The Cut-Through Project re-routed the Big Sandy River, the train tracks running through town, and the highway to create more flat land badly needed in these steep mountains. That $80 million dollar project "moved eight million cubic yards of earth during a 14-year period to curtail persistent flooding and create 400 acres of usable land" (Hefling, 1999, 3A).

Though mountains pose some barriers, they provide benefits as well. While some people travel miles to New England or other areas to see the changing leaves in the fall, here, at all seasons of the year, these women can look out their kitchen windows or walk out the back door to see nature's display. After a rain or early in the morning, mist rises from the mountains like smoke.

Like an old grandmother, these Appalachian mountains, the oldest known mountain range in the United States (approximately 300 million years old), comfort her children. Though cultural regionalists "recognize a distinctive 'upland' culture subregion dominated by the foothills and mountains of Appalachia based on its unique 'cultural' landscape and individuals' cultural 'self-consciousness'" (McCauley, 1995, p. 3), the map (see Figure 1 below) reflects the political boundaries of the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) which identifies the range from Coharie County, New York, to Kemper County in Mississippi (p. 3). The most publicized area of Appalachia is the central portion which usually includes parts of Kentucky, Virginia, North Carolina, and West Virginia.

Distressed Counties of Appalachia, FY 1998



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics unemployment data, 1995; U.S. Census Bureau poverty data, 1990; and U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis income data, 1996.

Figure 1. Map of the Appalachian region

Demographics

Preston County, Kentucky, the county in which this study takes place, is one of 49 ARC counties in Kentucky. The largest geographic land area in the state, the county sits at the edge of the state surrounded by West Virginia and Virginia at its borders. The county seat of Preston has 6500 residents but serves a county population of approximately 75,000 people with financial, medical, legal, judicial, and retail services. During the 1970 coal boom, the county was "the fastest growing county in eastern Kentucky [with a] 33 percent increase in population" (Rennick, 1992, p. 722).

Although the county offers an excellent place to raise children, our tourism director tells us what it is not:

> Preston County is remote from shopping malls [the size of] dinosaurs, and three storied clover leaves and highways that look like plastic computer designs of the hanging Gardens of Babylon and from almost all the chic and lifelong mortgaged addresses of the country. . . . Our area is deprived of . . . art museums, legitimate theater, libraries for special collections and research, orchestras and chamber music ensembles. (Brown, 1999)

Choosing to live here, a person would trade those amenities for a rural lifestyle which includes exclusively pot-luck suppers, church services, and other people related activities.

Recreation

What people do for fun in the mountains defines the area as well. Though family gatherings may be their preferred method of socialization, mountain people entertain themselves in many other ways as well. One activity which the study participants speak about is their husbands' and sons' "four-wheeling" on the old coal and railroad beds

surrounding the area. Another case study participant talks about getting away to area lakes and rivers to go fishing. Still another talks about hiking in the surrounding mountains.

For many, either watching or participating in sports programs in elementary and high school is a form of entertainment. In the fall, family and neighbors attend local high school football games long after their children have attended the school. Adult and children softball and baseball leagues

entertain people in spring and summer. Golfing is possible on one public course. Public swimming pools dot the county for children in the summer. The Breaks Interstate Park, "the largest canyon east of the Mississippi River," provides white water rafting for the month of October, and hiking, camping, fishing, swimming, and other outdoor activities as well (Preston County Tourism). The local YMCA has a membership of 3000 drawing from the entire county. They have exercise programs, basketball teams, and a skate park for young people.

Area attractions include Dils Cemetery, the first interracial cemetery in Kentucky, which also has McCoy relatives buried from the famous Hatfield-McCoy feud which took place here. The Augusta Dils York Mansion houses a small museum. Thirty miles away, a local outdoor summer theater offers four plays throughout the summer. Recently, Preston has opened a ten-theater cinema which features most first-run movies.

Shopping at the Super Wal-Mart, Lowes, Food City, or any other stores becomes an outing since the shopper will likely run into neighbors and friends. Etiquette requires taking time to talk with them over the grocery "buggy." Occasionally county residents will go out of town to Lexington, KY, or Huntington, WV, to shop at a real mall.

Conversation is a lost art in most places because of passive activities such as the theater, concerts, and the like. In this area, neighbors stop to chat. On the street, we greet one another whether we remember names or not; to do otherwise is to appear snobbish.

Despite all of the activities, Jean, a case study participant, worries that there isn't enough for young people to do. If their parents don't care, then "you can tell by their kids." She invites all the neighborhood children in the hollow to her house, so that they have some place to be. Even now that her children are older, she still has children from four years old on up visiting her home (April 29, 1999). Sarah describes the area: "We are commercially growing. We've got super centers now even though I don't like them. We're supposed to get a civic center. We're slowly

progressing, but we're not as far as the big cities. I don't want us to ever be like the BIG cities. But maybe a medium-sized one would be nice" (Sarah, May 3, 1999).

Coal and Other Employment

- Coal miners with black faces
- Wide coal seams in mountains
- Coal trucks spewing coal & breaking windshields
- Long, serpentine coal trains

Before coal mining, hardwood forests were the county's major resource with "millions of board feet of timber shipped down nearly every major stream to the Big Sandy River and ultimately to the Ohio River markets" (Rennick, p. 722). Once the first railroads came to the county in 1910 (Swigart, 1992, p. 722), coal mining has been the major industry. These mountains contain low sulfur bituminous coal which has made Preston County, "the largest underground bituminous coal-producing county in the United States" (Preston County Chamber). Another kind of mining, contour surface mining, is also done. This method removes the soil and rock overlying a coal seam to reach the coal by "creat[ing] a bench or shelf on the hillside, bordered by a high wall." Miners are required to return the hillside to its "approximate original profile" after the mining (Rennick, p. 857).

Until recently, coal mining and related businesses have been the livelihood of the people for generations. With increased mechanization and decreasing coal resources, the industry does not employ the numbers it used to. In addition to increased unemployment, miners can contract lung disease by inhaling coal dust, or they can have mining-related accidents. Several husbands of the eight women in this study were on disability for one of those reasons.

Other major employers include the county school board, two hospitals, the cookie factory, large retail outlets, banks, county government, and the college (Chamber of Commerce, personal communication, August 25, 1999). Commercial farming is not feasible with the mountainous terrain.

The current county-wide unemployment rate as of June, 1999, was 9.3% compared to 4.6% for the state of Kentucky. In March, 1999, the figure was 6.8%; the increase from March to June is

accredited to more mines closing (Workforce). In the surrounding counties, the rate is higher. Though the town of Preston has generally been more prosperous, the county is still listed as a distressed county for ARC (see Figure 1 above) (Damron-Porter, 1999).

The area is hopeful that Clinton's recent visit to Appalachia to declare new rural enterprise and empowerment zones of economic development might at least bring national attention to the region's potential as opposed to its poverty and create jobs for men and women in Appalachia.

Family Orientation

- People who don't have keys to their houses (and don't need them)
- Long conversations on porch swings
- Close-knit families
- Weekly Sunday family dinners
- Hospitality

Since all of the women in this study have deep roots here, I asked them how they would define Appalachia to an outsider. Their answers focused on the characteristics listed above.

Jean mentioned closely knit families, among whom she includes her neighbors: "If they need something done, and you see them out working, and you know they haven't been feeling good, you'll go over and do it for them." If there is a death in the hollow, everyone brings food either to the church or to the home whether he/she is related to the deceased or not. For Jean, "It's hard to leave the area. It's like a security blanket, really. You know everybody and get along so well" (April 29, 1999). She lives in the same hollow where she grew up, and her daughter, Shannon, and her husband, Luther, live behind her in a trailer.

Lucy, another participant, elaborates on that security by describing how families may generally live within five miles of one another: "You've got brothers, sisters, mother, father, aunts, uncles, and grandparents because when property was bought up, they bought it up in big lots. As the children left home, each child got a piece of that property, so they're all close to each other." For her, the comfort zone of the mountains contrasts with other places she has visited, and she dislikes "wide-open spaces." She acknowledges that some people like her mother feel hemmed in

by the mountains: "You get up in the morning and you look out your front door, and you've got a mountain in front of you. You look out the back door, and you've got a mountain behind you. Look on the other two sides of the house, and there's a mountain" (April 22, 1999). For Lucy the mountains mean security; for her mother, claustrophobia.

For the third case study participant, Sarah, living in this region means being sheltered from violent crimes; statistics support her. She goes on to say, "We've not had the drive-by shootings here at all. We are secluded from a lot of big-city violence." She feels that the closeness of the area is changing (which Lucy also acknowledges). Formerly, she knew every neighbor in the hollow where she grew up; when she visits her mother there now, she knows just a handful. In the community where she lives, all of the neighbors work, so they do not have time for more than being courteous. She likes having her personal space which allows her and her son to avoid outside influences and live by their own "rules and boundaries." She says that "if they [neighbors] need something, like tools, they know they can come and borrow them—just give them the building key and let them borrow what they want, and they put it back and bring the key" (May 3, 1999). This kind of trust still implies closeness not necessarily possible in larger communities.

Family activities and events govern the personal and social lives of the women in this study. Family members who move away for jobs come home regularly, and at death they are buried in the family plot. Their closeness makes them wary of outsiders because of unscrupulous businesses which have denuded their forests, taken advantage of their mineral rights, and ridiculed them.

Lucy speaks of the "riff-raff" that is moving into the area "now that the roads are better." Family like her aunt and uncle who move away from here may sell their property on the hollow to people who "make rental properties. Four years ago, the police surrounded the place. They took the walls down because there were drugs in the walls, down in the vents where they [the renters] were selling cocaine and stuff." These days, the hollow that she used to roam for hours with her

brothers and sisters is too dangerous for her two children to roam; "I stay right with them at all times" (April 22, 1999).

Despite these changes, family takes the center position and "mountain people are more truly themselves when within the family circle" (Jones, 1994, p. 75), a "united front to the outside world" (Fiene, 1988, p. 38).

Religious Values

- Prayers before ball games
- Cemeteries on the hillside behind houses
- Covered dish suppers on the church ground

Religion defines the region as well as or perhaps better than any other factor. No meeting, ball game or civic occasion goes by without dedicating the event to God's honor and glory. Generally every hollow has a church. The women in this study were generally raised as Old Regular Baptists, Free Will Baptists, or Penecostals, none of them mainline churches. Since the majority were directly influenced by Old Regulars and similarities among those religions exist, I describe basic principles of that religion to depict how it affected these women's literacy and lives. My neighbor, Connie Wagner, supplements outside sources.

Old Regulars, "one of the most traditional of Baptist subdenominations," meet once a month on Saturday and Sunday. Worshipers can travel to any other Old Regular church for the other three weekends, and often a church is half filled up with visitors. Other characteristics of this church include special annual services such as the foot washing and association meetings; an unhurried and flexible service schedule that may last for hours; an exhortative style of preaching; no evangelization; no Sunday school; separation of men and women in the congregation; and lack of involvement with other denominations (Dorgan,1989).

A major literacy event in these churches is lined singing, "a hymnody method in which a song leader (one of the elders) chants the hymn one couplet at a time, with each chanting then being followed by the congregation's rendition of that couplet" (Dorgan, p. 6). The technique

originated in England in the 1600s and continued "when congregations often could not read and had no songbooks when they could" (p. 6). The practice has carried over to the present. Though there is "no recognized Old Regular hymnal," individual churches might publish "their own anthology of sacred songs [which may] contain both original pieces written by members of a fellowship and older established hymns" adjusted for their use (p. 17). Church songbooks without musical notes were regularly given away by local merchants in the 1940s and 1950s (C. Wagner, personal communication, 1999).

In fact, writing hymns is an acceptable outlet for women unable to make their voices heard through preaching. Wicks (1983) interviews one such woman, Dorothy, an Old Regular Baptist elder's wife from eastern Kentucky. Dorothy writes poetry and songs as an outlet for her strong religious feelings and because of her "love of words" which she credits to her schooling and daily reading (pp. 22-23). Some mothers of the women in my study wrote poems and songs. Women also bring food to the monthly service since it may last anywhere from 10 a.m. until 3 p.m., and the association meetings may be longer. Since churches at the time did not have tables, members brought a quilt and ate their meal literally on the ground, hence the term "supper on the ground" (C. Wagner, personal communication, 1999).

The reason behind not allowing women to preach is founded on Biblical teachings based on Paul's exhortation in 1 Corinthians: 34-35, "Let your women keep silence in the church," and 1 Timothy 2: 11-12, "Let the women learn in silence with all subjection; but I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over a man, but to be in silence." In addition to writing hymns as noted above, women in some churches are able to speak of religious experiences, teach their children and other women, but never to preach (Jones, 1999, p. 30). Women cannot wear make-up or cut their hair; they must never dress in slacks or shorts. Basically then, women's role is limited in the church.

In addition to the lined singing, the women in this study witnessed literacy in the form of yearly minutes of the association to which each church belongs. Recorded information in those minutes includes articles of faith, lists of member churches, meeting times, officers, business meeting minutes, organization's history, election of elders, and visiting ministers (St. Clair's Bottom Primitive Baptist Association, 1999). (Considering how simple most of these churches are, it is interesting to note how sophisticated they must be to set up a website.) The minutes also reflect flowery memorials for other members and relatives who have passed away during the year (C. Wagner, personal communication, 1999).

Generally Old Regular ministers resist seminary training because, "He whom God calls to preach . . . God also equips to preach. No man-instituted schooling is necessary to prepare an individual to do what God has inspired him to do" (Dorgan, p. 25). Since responding to the ministry "is a gift you give to God, it does not then become the financial obligation of those to whom you preach. You support yourself just like everyone else" (McCauley, p. 81). So, unlike mainstream ministers, these men earn no salary from the church and more frequently than not hold outside jobs in the community.

Their preaching relies on an oral and exhortative style rather than a written one, meaning that memory is more crucial than reliance on the printed word. Hence, being literate was not necessary for men, though most now are literate (Dorgan).

The women in my study do not attend the church they were raised in, but "[they] are religious in the sense that most of [their] values and the meaning [they] find in life spring from the Bible. To understand mountaineers, one must understand [their] religion" (Jones 1994, p. 39). According to some churches, going to college to further their education was not part of women's cultural role to stay home and raise their children. Ideas taught in college were suspect. Mary speaks of how difficult her new ideas were for her mother, though now that her dad has died, her mother has become more positive—"my dad was from the old school" (February 2, 1999). These

research participants either did not go to church or went to a church like Jones' (1999) female Berea College students which fit their more liberalized values if they could find one. The mother of one of my participants points to the difficulty of finding such a church that supports the independence of women. Knowing all that she knows about the Bible, she tugs with her minister, arguing about Biblical references to woman's equality. His response is, "I'm the pastor!" (Naomi, April 30, 1999). Although he is unlikely to change, she will continue to learn as much as she can and to reason with him further about the Bible.

Speech and Dialect

- Junior is drinking a sody pop.
- She's a' fixin' to go to Lexington.
- If you don't care, I'd like a cup of tea (meaning "If it's no trouble for you, I would like some tea").
- Grethel is running the roads today.

Another distinguishing feature of our region is its language and dialect. Contributing to the culture are ethnic groups who settled the area including Germans, Scotch-Irish, Melungeons, Cherokees, Hungarians, and French Huguenots (Sohn, 1988). African American speech did not affect Appalachian English because there were "almost no contacts with Africans during the early period," though there are some commonalities (Montgomery, 1989).

In the 1970s, Labov (1972), a sociolinguist concerned about prejudice and inequality against minorities, investigated African American speech which many thought was sloppy, incorrectly spoken Standard English. With the tape recorder (technology which many previous linguists did not have access to) and less officious-looking researchers, he concluded that Black English Vernacular (BEV) was in fact not poorly spoken English, but a language system with its own rules. His research inspired Wolfram & Christian to study West Virginia speakers among whom researchers discovered rule-governed speech which "differs from the standard in grammar, phonology, lexicon, and intonation" (p. 8) and which made the same observation as Labov, that their speech was rule-governed. They used the term Appalachian English (AE) which is "one of the surviving

nonstandard regional dialects of English in the United States" generally associated with West Virginia and eastern Kentucky. Generally, strong dialects result from "physical and social" isolation and act as solidarity from which a group draws their identity (Luhman, 1990, p. 331-2).

Many features distinguish AE from Standard American English; I highlight a few. AE speakers might replace a schwa-type vowel with the high front vowel, /ee/ or /y/. My daughter's name, Laura, was frequently pronounced Laury, and soda for sody. Older speakers frequently use the h' and a' prefix, carryovers from older forms of English used for rhythm and emphasis (Wolfram & Christian, p. 57; Williams, 1992, p. 8). Referring to only one store, people might say, I'm going to K-Marts. They also put an s on powder and gravel. Some features are nonstandard across the country like he done it or She seen it (Sohn, 1988, p. 6).

The short bulleted item above illustrates how local language is not a set of nonstandard alternatives, but a different speech code, a different way of talking (Montgomery, personal communication, Sept. 9, 1999). When we first moved here, a neighbor came to visit, and I asked her if she wanted a cup of tea. She said, "I don't care to," which I interpreted to mean that she did not want any. I have since come to realize that she meant, "If it's no trouble to you." And since I didn't fix her any, she probably wondered about the weird ways of outsiders.

In addition to linguistic features of grammar and phonology, dialect has musicality. Cratis Williams points to that feature especially among older speakers. Another aspect is the use of similes, colloquialisms, and "the anecdotal approach to the simplest exchange," in her Appalachian neighbors' speech which Palencia (1998) missed when she moved to the Midwest (p. 206). The musical and metaphorical nature of Appalachian sayings has always interested me. For ten years I have been collecting sayings from my composition students during the unit I do on Appalachian dialect. "Running the roads" (above) means that a person is loafing and so has time to travel the roads from place to place. My students have taught me that a braggart can "blow up an onion sack with holes"; gossipy people can "swap a passel of words." Stubborn people who think their ways

are the best might think "every crow thinks her crow is the blackest." My personal favorite describing someone lacking in intelligence is "dumber than a coal bucket."

While linguists and others can see the worth of dialects and accents, most Americans judge the people of a region who speak that way as uneducated. The Appalachian region has historically suffered in that manner. To illustrate attitudes toward speakers of Appalachian English (AE) at a nearby Kentucky university, Luhman used matched guise research with four bidialectal actors, speaking with and without an AE accent. Luhman told respondents that these students were seniors with high academic scores. Still, he noticed the following:

1. Urbanization affects dialect change;

2. Standard speakers are more respected than loved; respondents felt more solidarity with speakers of lower status and less solidarity with higher status speakers;
3. Book learning is unequal to common sense;

4. Even university graduates with traces of AE faced stereotypes of low intelligence, lack of ambition, and poor education.

His last finding is one I have observed many times. Students who do well academically but even after four years still speak "like they came from the head of the hollow" are still judged to be unintelligent no matter how high their GPA is.

Native speech creates conflicts for several noted Appalachian authors, notably, children's writer, Georgia Ella Lyon (1998): "I thought, if I am going to write, the first thing I have to do is go somewhere and acquire a culture. During that process I would learn to sound like I was from somewhere else. I didn't know that was like cutting your throat to remedy hunger" (p. 169). She learned that "you can't be a voice box for your own feelings and experiences, much less for those of your place, if you've accepted that your first speech was wrong. For if you abandon or ridicule your voiceplace, you forfeit a deep spiritual connection" (p. 174). Going through a process of self-examination helped Lyon and others to realize the value of their speech. Consider the many who do not and continue to have feelings of inferiority.

- Granny in Beverly Hillbillies
- Daisy Mae in Li'l Abner
- Percy Talbott in The Spitfire Grill

A hillbilly accent contributes to the negative picture of Appalachian women as poor, barefoot and pregnant or noble and long-suffering. Other paradoxes include the noble woman versus the ignorant; the female as victim or as survivor; the eternal paradox of the pure virgin to contrast with the untamed whore. Writers from the region usually provide a more balanced and realistic view than non-native writers, according to Miller (1996) but similar characteristics emerge:

> They [women] have an affinity with nature and the cyclic patterns of life; they love their land, homes, and families; they nurture and sustain community and culture; they find solace in the everyday tasks and pleasures of life; they survive against desperate conditions and hardships although they are often powerless against the forces that victimize them. (p. 3)

Miller's descriptions fit the participants in this study except for their feeling powerless against men, at least at this point in their lives.

The media also encourages stereotypes of women. They portray women "as enigmatic but talented people who make beautiful quilts, spin wool into thread, weave it into coverlets, and play dulcimers in their spare time . . . quiet caretakers of an idealized mountain way of life" (Maggard, p. 229). Another romantic image is Madonna-like women watching over the Appalachian coal fields, a picture which does them more harm than good, keeping them in their places and "discouraging many from taking the region or its students seriously" (Anglin, p. 105). Alternately, they may be portrayed like Ellie Mae in The Beverly Hillbillies as "voluptuous, vacuous, barefoot, and likely to be, if not already, pregnant. They tempt, confuse, and distract their menfolk, but they do not lead, instruct or direct the events that shape their lives" (p. 229).

The reality of the stereotype lies somewhere in between. Maggard contrasts the stereotypes with a portrait of persistent nurses at the local hospital who fought for 10 years to get union rights. Kahn (1972) in Hillbilly Women depicts the courage of women she met in her community organization efforts who "blocked the giant bulldozers which still come to strip the land,

destroy their mountains, and pollute their rivers. They have sheltered union organizers from company thugs. They have nursed starving children back to health" (p. xx).

Women provide much of the strength and endurance of mountain culture, particularly older women (McNeil). The reality is that these women are like Jean says, "no better or worse" than anyone else (April 29, 1999); Lucy says "we're basically like everyone else. We're not outstanding, but we're not really stupid" (April 22, 1999). As the review of literature in the next chapter shows, Appalachian women are not the only ones to overcome obstacle and seek an education.

Education

- One-room school houses
- Common sense vs. education
- Gettin' above your raisin'

One of the persisting realities which limit this region is the poor ratings of Kentucky as a state and this area as a region in terms of education. From the time of one-room schools until the present consolidated schools, Kentucky has generally ranked near the bottom among the 50 states.

Before consolidation, one-room school houses were numerous and "by, 1930, close to two hundred could be found in the county. Many . . . lasted well into the 1960s" (Maddox & Maddox, 1998, pp. 65-66). The grandparents and parents of the women in my study who attended school most likely went to these schools if they didn't have to drop out to work in the mines or take care of family. In Preston and surrounding counties, these schools were built by coal companies to educate miners' children. One of my older informants reports attending a one-room school house when she was a toddler accompanying her cousins to school (Judith, January 25, 1999).

Statistically, the data for this five-county region illustrates that 51 to 80% of persons aged 55 to 75, the ages of the participants' parents, have less than a ninth-grade education. In the age group of the participants in this study, 25 to 44 years, those in that category have considerably better percentages of 9% to 16% (Kentucky State Data Center, 1990b).

Schools in town were generally considered better than those in the county. Earlier in this century, some county students commuted by train to classes at Preston High School (begun in 1915) before county high schools were organized. Until recently that town/country division continued because the professionals who settled in town demanded more for their children than did parents in the county. By the time the women in this study attended school, the schools went from one-room schools to consolidated high schools which drew from several elementary schools in their creeks and hollows. None of them had high regard for their education in terms of its preparation for college. Those students who could not compete generally got frustrated and left school; two in fact dropped out, one in 8th, another in 10th grade.

Bingham and White elaborate: "When schools devalue your language, fail to teach your history, disparage your music and culture, and encourage a competition you reject, resistance may seem a healthy alternative" (p. 284). In fact, public schools are seen as a place that "perpetuated demeaning stereotypes about working-class Appalachian people," especially when schools became consolidated (Seitz, p. 119-120). The most visible case in this study was Lucy whose "generational teachers" made fun of the clothes she wore to school. The middle of seven children, she was obese and poor. She observed that the teachers had their pets who were usually middle-class students (Lucy, February 11, 1999).

Not every school was bad; all had some good teachers, but they were limited by funding resources. Since the 1990 Kentucky Education Resource Act (KERA), a reform set up to respond to Kentucky's failing schools, the funds are more equitably divided among all districts in the state, so that a school in Louisville supposedly does not get any more funds than does a small high school at Feds Creek. Though there are many improvements, the women in my study continue to be concerned about the education their children are getting. KERA has still not gotten rid of "generational teachers" who favor middle-class children. Lucy states, "It just doesn't seem like they [the children] are getting the quality that places away from here get. There's not enough time

maybe for the teachers because they have large classrooms of children" (April 22, 1999). Recently published CTBS scores show that the lowest scores came from schools in eastern Kentucky "which bear some of the highest poverty rates" (Cornett, 1999, p. 2A). Ninth-graders were "outscored by 63% of students in the national sample" (Harp, 1999, p. A7). Kentucky battles the lack of education continuously.

More women than men finish high school, women generally going further in school than their husbands. Within their age group 25-44 years old, they as a sex have a 43% rate of finishing high school as opposed to 37% for the men (Kentucky State Data Center, 1990b). One reason for the lower male percentage could be that in many cases, their husbands' jobs were more crucial than their husbands' education. According to the coal miners' wives in Giesen's study, "It was school or food on the table, and what choice was there?" (p. 26). In fact, Puckett declares that in the eastern Kentucky community she studied, the culture believes "literate practices are God-given attributes of women's 'nature' . . . provid[ing] contexts in which a woman can negotiate her social, religious, and cultural identity" (p. 137). Men are supposed to do the shooting while the girls do the spelling (a paraphrase of quote from Daniel Boone) (p. 139). Educated males and females who have a college degree are subjected to gossip from community people, so they have to be careful not to convey the message that they think they are superior. She concludes:

> Ash Creek women walk a literate tightrope, called upon to assert an identity that affirms 'good' reading and writing skills but constrained by cultural norms and social practices in the directions and forms their writing can successfully assume to maintain social propriety and their family name. (p. 143)

Later in their lives some women may choose education through the community or small college route as the women in this study did. They want job training or skills improvement in order to make a living wage for their families (Seitz). Cultural and family role expectations of "mother-protector" and caretaker in male dominated family persisted while they were in college, but the women in Egan's (1993) study demonstrated choice, control, and perseverance to choose school over family. After graduation, they felt a sense of confidence, influenced directly by their

teachers. According to the Kentucky State Data Center (1990b), the number of women between the ages of 25-44 in this county who finish a bachelors degree is five percent of the population or about 600 women. The percentage for the whole state, according to the Institute for Women's Policy Research (1999), increases to 15.8% of women earning degrees compared to 21.7% nationwide. Kentucky ranks 49th in the percentage of women 25 or older who have attended at least four years of college. In fact, the pathway to lower enrollments is set with the number of women ending their education before graduating from high school (Institute, p. 24). Perusing these statistics, readers can marvel at the extraordinary feat it was for the women in my study to make the choice to attend college and to graduate.

In response to the question of whether women should get an education, Shannon, the daughter of one of my respondents, observes: "I think it's great that they're bringing more women into society now, and I think that women should be more independent. I think they should have the right, regardless of [whether] they work or not, to have the opportunity to go and reach a goal, reach for what they want" (April 15, 1999). Naomi, Sarah's mother, suggested that every woman should have the chance for an education so that she doesn't have to depend on a man (April 30, 1999). Perhaps these women will become instrumental in changing the educational system for the better.

Outside Perceptions

How to tell you're a redneck:

- You go to a family reunion to pick up dates
- Your truck has nicer curtains than your trailer.
- Your two-year-old has better teeth than you do.

(Shelby, 1999, p. 155)

Stereotypes can be positive, creating solidarity for groups, a sense of expressing links to one's own kind of people. They help us define who we are and where we came from but can be disruptive as well as unifying. The damage occurs when one group evaluates another as better or worse or evaluates their ways of living as superior to another (Fishman, 1997). Negative

stereotypes like the ones bulleted above highlight what the dominant group of outsiders continue to believe about Appalachia, and they are most damaging. After hearing for so long how ignorant they are, people begin to internalize the stereotypes.

Appalachia has been labeled the "Other America" from the time missionaries and local color writers painted a picture of ignorant and/or quaint natives (Shapiro, 1978; McNeil). Lyndon Johnson sat on the porch of a Martin County coal miner to illustrate the plight of Appalachians and drum up support for the War on Poverty. Later, Michael Harrington in 1962 wrote The Other America to call attention to the region's ignorance and poverty. In a recent speech, Kentucky State Senator Benny Rae Bailey (1998) states, "They couldn't stand for us not to be like them, so they made fun of our music, our religion, our language, and got us to believe we were wrong."

What is most upsetting is how missionaries of all kinds, but especially religious, tried to convert the area since they "held to the national ideal of the time, that of a homogeneous Christian nation, [so] they sought to establish the values of their own religions" (Wicks, 1983, p. 42). Because the region did not conform to their values, the missionaries considered the region "unchurched." Jones (1999) calls these missionaries "agents of uplift" and remarks about how ironical their position was:

> Never have so many missionaries been sent to save so many Christians. . . . They [these missionaries] had little tolerance for difference in something as important as the spiritual realm, and most of them spent scant time studying the historical and religious background of those they sought to save. (pp. 4-5)

To raise money for their efforts, these missionaries presented worst-case scenarios which in turn perpetuated many stereotypes. (In fact, this still goes on with groups such as the Christian Appalachian Project which sends letters regularly to the Northeast and beyond to secure funds for poor Appalachians.) Many, like Kentucky author Sidney Saylor Farr (1998), grew up near mission schools and said: "I was ashamed of my mountain past in [their presence], ashamed of our poverty and lifestyles so different from theirs. I worked hard to talk like them and grew obsessed with being worthy" (p. 117). Most missionaries were women from the Northeast for whom there were not

many opportunities, so they exercised their religious and cultural talents legitimately in the mission field. Though their intentions for the most part were pure, they were fired by "an ethnocentric conviction that bringing 'advanced' . . . civilization to social and cultural premoderns was humane and enlightened despite its physical, social, and cultural costs to the indigenous population" (Whisnant, 1983, p. 257). They never had any doubt that their way was superior.

In addition to outside missionaries defining the region, the media continues to capitalize on the supposed ignorance and isolation of Appalachian people. The most recent example is The Kentucky Cycle, the six and one half-hour play written by Robert Schenkkan (1993) which appeared briefly on Broadway. Covering two hundred years of Kentucky history, the play features the standpoint of three families, "two white and one black. The play narrates the endless cycles of violence and betrayal among them as they struggle over the possession of a small parcel of mountain land" (as cited in Billings, 1999, p. 7).

For those from our region, the play evoked many responses leading to the recent book, Confronting Appalachian Stereotypes. Among the many authors uneasy about Schenkkan's portrait is Donesky (1999): "For the past one hundred years the rest of American has projected unwanted parts of itself, as well as a yearning for innocence, onto Appalachia. By scapegoating Appalachians as greedy, savage children wantonly destroying their environment, the rest of American can feel grown-up, responsible, and civilized" (p. 297).

In our region, African Americans comprise .003 % of the total population, so Caucasians dominate. Because of class differences, Appalachians are often referred to as an invisible minority whose discrimination "is not as visible as for minority people of color, but just as insidious and as costly to society" (Purcell-Gates, 1997, p. 2). That discrimination irks Norman (1999):

> America *needs* hillbillies. . . . Mountain people are the last group in America it is acceptable to ridicule. No one would stand for it for a minute if you took any other group—Native Americans, Africa-Americans, Hispanics, women—and held it up as an example of everything that is low and brutal and mean. But somehow it's O.K. to do that with hillbillies. (as cited in Billings, p. 9)

Whether persons are discriminated on the basis of color or class, stereotypes have a debilitating effect. As Shelby explains: "To stereotype is to dehumanize; to make ridiculous; to ignore history, politics, economics, and culture. To deny full humanity. . . . [Doing this], they also serve to dismiss legitimate complaints about discrimination and to deflect potentially disturbing questions about who has money and power, who doesn't, and why" (p. 158). In other words, people can poke fun, feel superior to another group, and never have to deal with political or cultural reasons for poverty and ignorance that they might have a hand in changing.

Summary

Defining a region is a difficult task. While it has differences which make it unique, Appalachia shares some qualities with the rest of rural America where the highest concentration of poor live with low-paying or no jobs. Residents stay because of family, church, and community ties, and fear of urban problems (Flynt, 1996). Examining these issues in rural Vermont, Keizer comments that as teachers, we need to be concerned with the world our students enter upon graduation, for "what right have we to wake people from a flawed but possible dream when we are doing nothing to create a better reality?" (p. 157). He believes that the value of a rural area is its "distinct and endangered habitat for nurturing of healthy and diverse human beings" (p. 167).

Maybe, like Shapiro, we can come to an altered definition of our nation as "pluralist and regional rather than nationalist" (p. xix) so that differences can be tolerated rather than obliterated. As this dissertation unfolds, I hope that like Appalachian mystery writer, Sharon McCrumb (1998), I can "educate the general public about the character of the region" (p. 186) so that negative stereotypes can desist.

CHAPTER 3

CONTEXT: RELEVANT LITERATURE

With the physical and cultural context of the study set, in this section I illustrate the context of my research in current literature. Having read literature reviews that obfuscate rather than clarify, I hope that mine conveys meaning clearly, so that it can be read by the women in my study as well as by other scholars. Hopefully I retain my voice as I quote scholars who support my viewpoint. This section reviews literature in the areas of academic and practical literacy, effects of college on nontraditional women, and the importance of women's voices.

Literacy Studies

Consequences of Academic Literacy

As the section on education in Appalachia in chapter two illustrates, the topic has concerned this region for many years. Education equates to academic literacy, generally defined as the ability to read and write in Standard American English (SAE). "Education pays!" is prominently displayed on billboards and bumper stickers throughout the commonwealth of Kentucky and reflects the thinking that improved academic literacy can help to bring progress to the region. From Plato to the present, theorists have debated the merits of literacy; below I encapsulate definitions and illustrate the consequential troubles they have stirred up.

Since the beginning, academic literacy has been debated as a "healthy alternative" to orality. Though Plato admonished us against writing since it would destroy memory, others believed that the development of alphabetic literacy promised advancement to civilization. From the beginning the dichotomy has been unequal: Orality is second best to literacy. Oral cultures (usually rural) are "incapable of abstract thought, irrational, child-like . . . and inferior," and though Levi-Strauss (as cited in Gee) found that primitives were not idiots, he maintained the dichotomy by proposing two different ways of knowing (p. 47). With limited technology, vision, and biases,

researchers such as Havelock, Ong, Farrell, Goody, and others promoted the Great Divide, the oral/literate continuum, with academic literacy through schooling as the way to higher cognitive abilities for oral cultures. Literacy so defined "shifts a culture's perception of the world from holistic to analytic" and implies a steadfast continuum from "modes of speech, composition, behavior, and thought of oral cultures . . . against those of literate cultures" (Daniell, 1986, pp. 182-183). Situated in the individual rather than in society, literate abilities include "logical, analytical, critical, and rational thinking, general and abstract uses of language, skeptical and questioning attitudes" among other powers (Gee, p. 26). Society's way of transmitting literacy occurs through formal schooling.

Schooling then becomes the gatekeeper of academic literacy. Teachers become the "depositors" of knowledge to "students [who] patiently receive, memorize, and repeat" (Freire, 1988, p. 58). Those who cannot "receive, memorize, and repeat" in the way teachers expect are characterized as having "restricted" literacy and often come from lower socioeconomic groups. Those who grew up in middle-class homes usually attain literacy taught in the schools (Gee). Students from rural areas have been particularly prone to characterization as unable to manage decontextualized literacy; hence they, supposedly, cannot advance themselves to the extent that urban areas can. This concept creates a grossly unequal relationship that ignores the literacy students bring to the classroom and creates "cultural and class hierarchies through the powerful concept of 'literacy'" (Donehower, p. 10).

Students with limited literacy are generally labeled as verbally deprived or cognitively deficient (Daniell, 1986) and blamed for their academic failure. Their language marks their economic class "since it is not so easily shed as a suit of clothes or a rusted and aging automobile. . . . It symbolizes our social experience in an intimate way and locates us within significant social groups from which we draw our identities" (Luhman, p. 332). Demeaning speech demeans students' cultures especially since linguists have illustrated that all nonstandard systems are rule-governed and legitimate. Teachers should not equate the rules of written language to spoken

language (Labov; Wolfram & Christian; Heath, 1983; Edwards & Giles, 1984; Milroy & Milroy, 1991; Trudgill, 1995; & Byrnes, Kiger, & Manning, 1996).

Linguists have studied teacher attitudes toward students speaking a nonstandard dialect, hoping to make teachers aware of how language discrimination maintains an unequal balance and distribution of power (Edwards & Giles). Even with linguistic improvement, some teachers rarely change attitudes about students. What happens then is that students start to internalize self-hate, try to speak the dominant discourse, and downgrade themselves in the process. In the meantime, they limit their school achievement, become more powerless, take on low expectations, and learn to be helpless (Edward & Giles). Horsman's study of literacy supports this point: "Student's own language comes to seem incorrect which can easily lead to students seeing themselves as inferior . . . and goes a long way toward explaining how school has been a place of silencing and becoming "stupid" for working-class children from many communities" (p. 13).

The outcome of enforcing narrow concepts of academic literacy is that large numbers of students begin to fail, and then society becomes alarmed and focuses on the educational system as if it were solely to blame unrelated to other societal, economic, and political problems. Though we know that "more and better literacy cannot single-handedly forestall the economic crisis facing eastern Kentucky and places like it," literacy crisis alarmists cry out that schooling is the sure way to resolve those problems (Mortensen, 1994, p. 100). In doing so, they deflect attention away from an adequate and comprehensive solution.

The most insidious effect of pure academic literacy is the reinforcement of status quo, the middle-class. The so-called literacy crisis is based not on whether students can read or write better or worse,

> but whether literacy can still draw lines of social distinction, mark status, and rank students in a meritocratic order. . . . [The literacy crisis] engages deep-seated cultural anxieties and attempts to resolve them magically, by regulating the production and use of literacy and by drawing lines between standard English and popular vernaculars, "masters" and "servants." (Trimbur, 1991, p. 280).

The irony of this form of literacy is that we promote it as the way out of poverty when in fact it may reinforce poverty. Getting this doctorate has convinced me of the transformative power of literacy, but I also realize that "the skills and concepts that accompany literacy acquisition do not stem from literacy but are aspects of a specific ideology. . . . Ethnicity and class origin have more to do with benefits of literacy" than we think (Street as cited in Horsman, p. 11). Success in school depends on social class "origins [which] are more powerful in determining success" than academic or other factors (Knox, Lindsay, & Kolb, 1993, p. 13).

Academic literacy, it appears, creates an illusion of power, but the women in my study felt left out of its promises during their pre-college schooling. The academic literacy of college, on the other hand, seemed more achievable. At the age they returned to college, most of them had powerful motivation, mostly financial, to get a college diploma and hopefully better jobs and better lives for themselves and their families.

Practical Literacy

The problem with academic literacy is that learning to read and write is removed from social situations and meaning. Literacy which ignores social context--culture, politics, class, gender, and race—is now thought of as naïve because of research from the late 1970s to the 1990s which contradicts the strong text definition of literacy and blurs the solid lines of the oral/literate divide. This broader definition encompasses the literacy of the families with whom the research participants lived.

The first important and classical study to challenge the narrow definition of academic literacy was Scribner & Cole's (1981) research of the African Vai tribe. They conclude that there is no greater cognitive ability as a result of schooling, refuting the reported benefits of acquiring academic literacy. In fact, "different cognitive abilities reflect different social needs" (Villanueva, 1993, p. 12). In the rural communities she studies, Heath finds written and oral forms coexisting when, for example, Trackton residents read the newspaper aloud to each other. Noticing these literacy events

"may move us away from the tendencies to classify communities as being at one point along the hypothetical continuum [oral/literate] which has no societal reality" (p. 371). Erickson confirms that schooling does not necessarily result in higher order thinking and that non-literates are equally capable of such thinking. He challenges the beliefs that all school-based tasks are necessarily higher order thinking and believes that non-literates possess the same skills but not the cultural knowledge necessary to do well in school.

Cultural knowledge concerns Purcell-Gates in her emergent literacy study as she looks at the world through the eyes of a non-literate urban Appalachian mother and son. She discovers that they "were not any more deficient than you or I would be in a culture other than our own. They simply did not possess the cultural knowledge needed to participate in a literate society or to learn from a literacy curriculum that presupposed such knowledge" (p. 186). That cultural knowledge is learned more often in families than in schools, according to Knox et al. who argue that even the brightest working-class person is "at a disadvantage with their lack of broad cultural knowledge" (p. 16).

Building on the ground-breaking work of Scribner & Cole and Heath are researchers in the 1990s who examine persons with limited literacy. Their findings hopefully enlighten those of us in the academic world who, despite our reading, may tend to still believe in the banking concept of teaching. Horsman, Donehower, Merrifield et al., and Barton & Hamilton situate literacy in the context of local communities rather than in educational settings. Based on interviews and naturalistic research methods, they enlarge the definition of literacy to craft, power, skill, expression of religious and moral beliefs, cultural practice, or critical reflection and thought. Additionally, they connect literacy to different domains of people's lives: It is purposeful, historically situated, and embedded in broader social and cultural practices. Below, I summarize the strengths of each study.

Twenty-three rural women in a Nova Scotia literacy program where Horsman works are motivated to come to the program believing that literacy may or may not help them get jobs, but

knowing that without it, there is no chance at all. In fact, literacy gives them skills to resist being demeaned by literacy workers and others. Like the women in my study, her informants want education but fear losing common sense which makes them feel competent. For these women, the main value of the literacy program is interacting socially with the literacy workers and other women which makes them feel less isolated and lonely. Horsman challenges literacy professionals (Donehower's term) to recognize the importance of involving these adults in designing their own learning programs, building on the literate skills each woman brings to the program. True success in literacy programs will come "if programs and individual program workers see the participants . . . as strong, competent adults, rather than 'illiterates' who are other/childlike/silent" (Horsman, p. 227).

In the second study, informants in a small Appalachian town share their literacy perceptions with Donehower. From them she discovers that they want to know about "correct" English, but they want appreciation for other forms of talking and writing. Her informants use literacy for entertainment, historical documentation, social interaction, meaning making, and spiritual development. She hopes finally that if literacy instructors are sensitive to local literacies, then students should not feel that "literacy means a choice between their cultural identity and their social, economic, intellectual, and moral future" (p. 198).

Another region-based study is Merrifield et al. case studies of six Appalachian and six Californian "non-literate" subjects recommended by social service agencies. Their results challenge the traditional stereotypes we have of "illiterate" people by displaying people who manage life reasonably well, have high self-esteem, and depend on a network of friends when they need writing, legal, and other literate skills. To handle their jobs, they memorize vocabulary relevant to work, make educated guesses, and rely on friends. In addition, these participants value education and literacy, work with their children, work hard at their jobs, solve problems on a regular basis, serve their communities, and show pride and self-respect. Like Horsman above, the authors challenge literacy workers on all levels to "find a way of capitalizing on their [low literate persons']

strengths, enabling them to further develop their skills, and opening up to them more employment opportunities" (Merrifield et al., p. 214). We do more by acknowledging their abilities than by demeaning them for their lack of academic literacy.

A massive literacy study of working-class neighborhoods in Lancaster, England, expands the traditional literacy definition by observing text in all possible formations, including signs on roadways (Barton & Hamilton). Over a period of five years, research teams creatively study literacy in context rather than in educational settings. They conduct twelve case studies, door-to-door surveys of 65 households, observations of literacy in the city (collection of documents), and case studies of community groups using qualitative methods. They find that "literacy practices change, and new ones are frequently acquired through processes of informal learning and sense making" (p. 7). And most of that occurs outside the academic classroom.

My own literacy research combines academic and practical literacy. In two doctoral classes, Research Methodology and Psycholinguistics, I conducted research based on student literacy narratives which I had collected in an earlier semester. These studies illustrated for me most graphically how practical literacy works and became conference presentations later on.

In one class, I analyzed the content of the narratives (1998b). I began the study envisioning an impoverished literacy history based on ineffective writing samples from first-semester freshmen, some of whom came from impoverished backgrounds. The results upset those ethnocentric assumptions by revealing a rich pre-school literacy including Bible reading and analysis and the strong influence of grandparents. The same narratives offered more material for a study on music and language acquisition (Sohn, 1998a). Though there was no question on the literacy narrative writing prompt about music, eight of 24 students mentioned the effect of listening to music and singing on literacy development. Music at home and in the church was reinforced with print literacy. Students said that sitting next to their grandparents in church with the hymnal helped them recognize words which they noticed when they saw the word again. Though elementary

teachers have used music to teach language, college instructors often leave it out. The study suggested possible ways to change that and recover the joys that had been conveyed when students wrote about their pre-school literacy.

Attending to post-college literacy among female nontraditional graduates will supplement and build upon studies mentioned above. Observing how academic literacy is or is not played out in post-college reading and writing should connect academic and practical literacy.

Studies on College's Effects on Nontraditional Women Graduates

The twelve studies below examine nontraditional female graduates' perceptions of their college years and beyond in relation to personal and professional development studies, working-class studies, literacy development studies, and other research on this important topic. Overall, these studies teach us that

> higher education may be particularly significant for adult women as a means of challenging their limiting self-perceptions of themselves as learners, confronting the limitations of previously held beliefs about women's roles, obtaining power and status in the workplace and community, and enabling them to link their own experiences of gender subordination with the collective experiences of other women. (Hayes and Flannery, 1997, p. 76)

From previous research we learn that "nontraditional" or "reentry" refers to students 24 years and older, men and women who decide not to enter college directly from high school. The term may refer to night and weekend programs that they attend to get their college credits (Olski, 1992) or to people who come to college after a long period of time (Chamberlain, 1991). Over the past twenty years, the nontraditional population has more than doubled with fifty percent of the total college enrollment growth from 1980 to 1988 being women ages 25 years and older (Rodriguez, 1996; Padula,1994). With the rise of the feminist movement in the 1970s, "special programs blossomed in colleges and universities, continuing education, and training programs" (Cassara, 1991, p. 1) and with it research about how college affected the graduates.

Personal and Professional Development Studies

Many researchers look at graduates in terms of personal development and job satisfaction. Olski interviews fourteen female graduates ages 50 to 60 enrolled in the Extended Degree Program at the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay, two to six years after they completed their degrees. Though they were older, college helped them achieve their dreams for employment, so that thoughts of retirement were far away despite their ages. When asked about planned learning activities for the future, these women mention reading and writing, but Olski does not look at their literacy development.

Interestingly, Olski's work is among Hayes & Flannery's study of sixteen dissertations researching adult women's narratives about their journeys into higher education. The dissertations point to the multifaceted ways of women learning which correspond to "the different demands of each context" and depict "a positive image of women as active participants in their learning, seeking out and shaping opportunities for personal growth, rather than as passive recipients of subject matter or skills" (p. 71). This study stops short of dealing with post-college literacy development.

Though she also does not look at literacy per se, Padula considers reentry women from a personal development or counseling point of view, reviewing sources from 1980-1990. She notes nontraditional students' characteristics: Broader life experience, higher grade-point average than traditional students, higher educational goals, mostly white and middle-class, problems with self-concept and self perception, underrating their abilities. Reasons for returning vary from wanting a new career which will make them self-supporting, to having more free time as their children grow up, to getting away from family difficulties, to wanting to improve themselves (p. 2-3). Though her studies focused on a population different than my own, she points to the need of all women to feel accepted. As my mother attested, taking college courses opened up all kinds of vistas to women like her who had chosen to stay home to raise children. It affirmed her intellect as no children could do, and raised her confidence and self-esteem. Even women of higher incomes "expressed the

need to be accepted as a 'person,' as opposed to being oppressed or patronized. Privilege does not ensure freedom from oppression . . . and achievement does not guarantee self-esteem" (Belenky et al., p. 196).

Working-Class Studies

For others, including all the women in my study, returning to college means acquiring skills to make a living. Studies of working-class women coming back to school from Egan, Pascall & Cox), Hammons-Bryner (1995), Rodriguez, Lunneborg (1994) instruct us in the unimaginable sacrifices they make and obstacles these returning women overcome. Frequently as faculty, we are not fully aware of the extent of those sacrifices until we conduct or read studies like these.

Rodriguez dramatizes the story of Marnie, a re-entry community college student who overcomes drug and spouse abuse to attend college. Marnie's non-supportive husband "would rip up my books, put them in the toilet, keep me up all night fighting so I would be too tired to concentrate in class the next day" (p. 5) On the other hand, her college-educated mother paid for her to take her first computer class. Marnie moves from believing that she is stupid and ugly (her husband's words) to hearing that she is really smart from personnel at the college where she now teaches computers. She credits her family, but mostly the quality of attention she receives at the community college, for her success. Rodriguez points to the role colleges can play in maximizing the talents of working-class women, but she does not evaluate post-college literacy development.

Except for the place, ethnicity, and intention of the research, the ethnographic study by Sue Hammons-Bryner could easily have been my own. She interviews first generation and nontraditional African American women who majored in social work in the rural college where she teaches. By showing how influential grandmothers and older brothers are on their grandchildren and sisters who attend college, she refutes the argument that single parented, "absent-father" homes are weak. Like my participants, none of these women had "a teacher or parent who was inspiring, as often occurs for middle-class students" (p. 11), but had family members who operated

as their inspiration. Hammons-Bryner believes that her story (like mine) is "a story of women who grow up in rural poverty, are poorly educated in classrooms where they suffer from denigrating remarks about their success potential, yet who dream, do more than wish, become change agents, and fulfill goals" (p. 12). Particularly insightful is her observation that experiences of a traumatic relationship with fathers or husbands seem to "spark and strengthen [these women's] determination to get a college degree and professional status. To them, education is the main avenue for escaping dependence on men, a situation that they viewed as unpleasant and undesirable" (p. 14). Naomi, the mother of one case study participant had the same motivation for making sure her daughter went to college.

The obstacles that women overcome is also the subject of another study of working-class women returning to school in Great Britain. Lunneborg (1994) interviews female graduates of Open University (OU) which, since 1971, "has provided off-site education to more than two million students who, for reasons of financial necessity, class expectations, or lack of opportunity, have been left outside the traditional university system (Lyall, 1999, 4A, p. 29). From her participants, Lunneborg observes the common obstacles mentioned by other studies such as Barkhymer & Dorsett (1991) such as finances, spouses, children, jobs, and other conflicts. As Hammons-Bryner and I discovered among our participants, these women depict public school experiences as "long-ago humiliations, limited expectations and thwarted dreams" (p. x). Though she observes increased self-esteem, she does not consider literacy development.

British working-class women are also the subjects of Pascall and Cox's study on the effect of college on women. In 1980, they identified 43 women attending college. Again in 1991, these researchers traced twenty-five of the original group to elicit information about "attitudes and feelings upon leaving school; experiences of marriage; motherhood; work and housework; the decision to return to education and the expectations and experience of education itself" (p. 21). Like women in my study, these women feel strongly that college enabled them to achieve personal and social

change that they surely would not have been able to do otherwise. Their findings question the presumption of many feminists that education reproduces the conditions that keep women working in low-paying work, dependent, and oppressed. Still the authors do not deal specifically with literacy development.

Closer to my study in ethnicity of participants is Egan's (1993) study of twelve Appalachian women in social work, pre-med., and counseling programs. Like most of my participants, these women are first generation college students who grew up in rural areas in poor families; seven of twelve were mothers. Egan uses two frameworks for her study:

> 1, Belenky et al.'s concept of the self as knower and the validation that comes from increased confidence and knowledge;
>
> 2. The sociological and community organization literature that looks at cultural influences in gender roles.

Women develop their knowing self in small increments that build up to competency for larger tasks. Their role models for returning to college included fathers and grandfathers who endorsed these women's competence and use of their minds. Like Rogriguez's (1996) narrative of Marnie, Egan finds that her participants' sense of competence was also influenced directly by college educators, so that empowering students may well be worthwhile beyond its immediate educational benefits. She does not pursue their post-college experience nor does she deal with literacy.

Literacy Development Among College Graduates

Though Neilsen's Literacy and Living does not specifically focus on nontraditional students, the participants in her study are all college graduates who have taken the long route of evening and weekend classes and of college interrupted by life experiences. Like my study, she uses case study methodology to examine the literate lives of two women and one man in the small town of Hubbards, Nova Scotia. As a resident of the area, she develops trust with participants before the project starts. Using participant observation, she enters their lives to picture their individual ways of knowing. From their observations about how family, relationships, and self-perceptions shape their

reading and writing, she looks at the fundamental notion that "every act, gesture, symbol, and word, has meaning in a context important to the people involved" (p. 7). More closely than any other author, Neilsen observes an important tenet of my study: "The recognition of adulthood as a development process assumes that literacy, as an inseparable part of the person, must also grow and develop as the adult ages and takes on new challenges in the world" (p. 9). That growth and development "accumulate" throughout life (Brandt, 1995).

As one of the case study participants, Lucy, exhibits, literacy is a two-edged sword (Hamilton). In addition to its benefits, it sometimes has negative side effects such as divorce and tensions between family members. Literacy transformed Hamilton from a person labeled as disobedient, uneducable, and socially maladjusted to a literate person equipped with "knowledge and confidence to decide how I would live my life as the kind of person I wanted to be" (p. xiv). As a college professor teaching nontraditional students, she hopes to help them reconstruct their lives with a more positive attitude about all kinds of learners and with the skills of reading and writing to re-define themselves in relation to the world in which they live (Hamilton).

Other Research

Other research done on college's effects on graduates has largely focused on traditional students and on issues of personality development. In fact, Pascarella & Terenzini (1991) suggest at the end of their massive book, How College Affects Students: Findings And Insights From Twenty Years Of Research, that a major future direction on the impact of college should be "that growing proportion of students whom we have typically classified as nontraditional, although they are rapidly becoming the majority participants in the American postsecondary system" (p. 632). Such a study would have to acknowledge the group's diversity so that no over-generalized effects would be reported. In another study of college's effects, Knox et al. find in their 1972 high school graduates that "the primary impact of education is to define people's legitimate identities and to allocate them to positions in society" (p. 173). While the women in my study have situated

themselves within the culture, my findings and his converge in the observation that college graduates tend to gain self-esteem because a college degree is so highly valued in our society. While these studies mention categories that might be applicable to the college graduates in this study, they fall short because their sample is traditional students, and they do not look at literacy per se. Studies of the effects of college on post-college development in nontraditional female college graduates point to the need for this study. Most of the twelve studies below confirmed better job opportunities, improved self-esteem, increased independence among the women, but none of them explore literacy development among Appalachian women. My guess is that facility with literacy assisted these women in achieving the goals described below, but the studies do not specifically speak to literacy development.

Research on Women's Voice

Since whistlin' and crowin' women are the focus of my research, I next investigate literature as it relates to women making their voices heard. Although I agree with Villanueva that issues of literacy in Appalachia relate to class as well as gender and that men and women entering the college classroom may both feel silenced by lack of cultural knowledge of academic conventions, I believe that these women are twice silenced by culture and gender. The chapter on Appalachian context has illustrated some reasons for silence among these women. Below I outline the broader literature about women and unexpressed voices.

In a groundbreaking study on how women compose, Flynn (1997) examines feminist theory which emphasizes that male and female differences in developmental and interpersonal processes result in an imbalance in the social order, in the dominance of men over women. This imbalance creates women whose voices are "suppressed, silenced, marginalized, written out of what counts for authoritative knowledge. Difference is erased in a desire to universalize. Men become the standard against which women are judged" (p. 551). Flynn hopes that teachers of writing will consider the ways women compose so that voices are not suppressed.

However, one danger of proposing a woman's way of composing (or knowing) is the possibility of "essentializing," or supposing that "women . . . would all write in a certain way and that this writing would always be different from all men's writing." At the same time, we need to acknowledge that this does not "exclude the possibility that there might be significant, socially inherited and constructed contrasts between many women's and men's ways of thinking, their experiences, and their language" (Bridwell-Bowles, 1997, p. 48). Looking at class and other differences completes the picture.

Because of past inequities, feminist researchers have an obligation to represent gender, especially in studies of nontraditional women (Sullivan, 1992). If we ignore the connections between gender and the status of women, we "once again leave [their] experiences suppressed" (p. 53). However, if women can share their perceptions then the "experiences we are studying can tell us more about the specific educational needs of returning students . . . than if we assume from the outset that gender roles are irrelevant to [their] situation and status" (p. 53). Though I know that Appalachian men suffer nearly as much as women in terms of life circumstances, it would be naïve to ignore the gender issues of Appalachian women. They do not have the same job opportunities that men have; there are more cultural expectations about their roles as wives and mothers.

The way women come to knowledge is the subject of Belenky et al.'s examination of women's psychological, intellectual, and ethical developmental processes. In fact, the book is about the "'roar which lies on the other side of silence' when ordinary women find their voice and use it to gain control over their lives" (p. 4). Using Perry's scheme of intellectual and ethical development, the authors look at the five epistemological categories for women which illustrate the continuum from silence to voice:

1. Silence: Women experience themselves as mindless and voiceless;
2. Received knowledge: Women receive but do not create knowledge;
3. Subjective knowledge: Women intuit knowledge personally;

4. Procedural knowledge: Women learn and apply objective procedures for obtaining and communicating knowledge;

5. Constructed knowledge: Women view knowledge as contextual, experience themselves as creators of knowledge, and value multiple strategies for learning. (p. 15)

In the last stage, women learn to "integrate knowledge they feel intuitively with knowledge they have learned from others" (Flynn, p. 554.). The women in their study continually use the voice metaphor to "depict their intellectual and ethical development, and [to show] that the development of a sense of voice, mind, and self were intricately intertwined" (p. 18). Although I do not examine each stage in my research, I have observed the phenomena, mainly the increase in confidence as a result of "learn[ing] and apply[ing] objective procedures for obtaining and communicating knowledge" (p. 15).

Belenkey et al.'s (1997) position, that women view "themselves as creators of knowledge" relates to Sommers' (1997) concern that students learn to express themselves so they can "claim their stories as primary source material and transform their experiences into evidence" and their voices into authority (p. 349). In the classic "Between the Drafts," she describes what must happen to anyone looking for her voice: "Against all the voices I embody—the voices heard, read, whispered to me from offstage—I must bring a voice of my own. I must enter the dialogue on my own authority, knowing that, though other voices have enabled mine, I can no longer subordinate mine to theirs" (p. 348).

Women may remain silent because of the noise of the dominant discourse teaching "what it means to be a woman" (Jonsberg, 1995, p. 227). To break out of silence, women need to create "a personal text of who we are and what we know" and share it with one another. Describing the effect of a writing program for Hispanic teens, she examines the results of giving permission to these young women to speak, for "when there is encouragement to wrestle through complexity, conflict, and the many shapes of fear, the voices and the selves emerge" (p. 228). A poem written by one participant addressing fear as an adversary illustrates the transformational nature of that

permission: "I'm the woman who will beak the chain that you [fear] hold on to so tightly/I'm the one who keeps my head up and looks at you and says, 'Get out of my way'" (p. 226).

Geissenger, Lazzari, Porter, & Tungate (1993), social workers, conducted a study to determine the needs of rural women in terms of isolation. They found that the stereotype of rural settings equating to isolation are not true. Women who adjust to isolation are "women who are able to hear their own inner voices [and] are better able to articulate their outer voice to achieve levels of autonomy, connection, and interdependence" (p. 295) wherever they are.

Though speaking directly about Caribbean women writers and students of color she teaches, Adisa (1998) relates voice to knowing in a way that might also apply to Appalachian women. Women can find their voices "if only we would stop listening to others and start to remember the memories that will guide us to our knowing. . . [and] affirm[ing] that we know much more about ourselves than any critic could ever elucidate" (p. 114). As a teacher empowering her students, she hopes to help them "to hear themselves speak, and to speak without clenching their teeth" (p. 114).

Anna Julia Cooper, an African American woman speaking in 1892, gives us the most compelling reason for women to speak:

> 'Tis woman's strongest vindication for speaking that *the world needs to hear her voice.* It would be subversive of every human interest that the cry of one-half the human family be stifled. . . . To help shape, mold, and direct the thought of her age, [woman] is merely completing the circle of the world's vision. (As cited in Royster, 1995, p. 390).

Summary

Reflecting on voice, I submitted the following response in November 1997, to the assigned reading of chapters in Phelps and Emig's (1995) Feminine principles and women's experience in American composition and rhetoric. At the time I had not yet decided on my research topic.

> So I am moved; at one point I thought, I could write about southern women and how they are silenced by those who make fun of brains, beauty, accent in any woman who speaks in a southern way. I thought of my mother whose voice was silent in her family of 13, and how amazing that she isn't crazier than she is. But I also

realized what strength being silenced can give a person. My mother became determined that her boys would do the chores she always had to do for her brothers; her girls would go to college since she had not—her girls would also not get married too young and would not have as many children as she had (eight).
I became determined in college to show that southern women are not idiots; it still galls me that professionals who want to get ahead go to a school in Memphis where a speech professional tones down southern accents. I guess that's why I identify with my students who are made fun of because of their dialect and accent. It infuriates me that decisions are made that quickly about something so superficial.

The primary motivation for this study is to point out to others the strength of Appalachian women who have been underrepresented positively in the literature. I hope in this research to "create the conditions and circumstances whereby voices, stories, and discourses too long silent in the academy can be heard" (Sullivan, p. 58). I believe that literacy, both reading and writing, offer women "the greatest force for empowering, validating, and affirming [themselves] and [their] self-worth" (Harrienger, 1995, p. 151).

Though the women in the studies above have some similarities to the whistlin' and crowin' women of Appalachia, no study has looked specifically at literacy development among specific students taught by one teacher who returned years later to determine how their literacy developed since graduation. My hope is that this research will illustrate the contrasts between academic and practical literacy for nontraditional, female students, showing how the two forms interact and build on one another, accumulating throughout life. My research will supplement the "little narratives" which Daniell (1999) says must replace the grand narratives of the past. It will hopefully add mine and these women's voices to the body of knowledge about literacy development and practices after schooling.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH DESIGN: GOALS, METHODS, ETHICS

Research Goals

Thoroughly grounded in the physical, cultural, and scholarly setting, I next describe the research design I chose to suit the goals of my study. Specifically, I wanted to determine

- whether and how education changed these women's literacy habits;
- what sort of literate practices they used on the job, at home, in the community;
- what effects their education had on their children;
- whether their college-enhanced literacy helped them achieve the hopes they had when they came to college.

Below, I outline the steps I took to structure answers to the research questions in order to determine to what "ends" these whistlin' and crowin' women who entered my class as freshmen came.

Research Site

Though this study does not take place in the classroom, the women in it graduated from Preston College, a four-year liberal arts college, a site not described in Chapter 2. The college sits on the hill in the middle of Preston, with 99 steps (and recently, an elevator) leading from the town to the college. Founded by religious missionaries, the college has served the Appalachian region with a Christian emphasis in higher education for over a hundred years. Although private, 90% of its students live within a 100-mile radius of the college, and 96% are on some sort of financial aid (PC Financial Aid Office, phone communication, August 30, 1999). The small enrollment (under 800) allows for small class size and individual attention from a teaching-oriented faculty. Students are educated in a college dedicated to a "broad liberal arts foundation . . . geared to regional and national needs" and which encourages them to take the values of "integrity, compassion, honesty,

and commitment" into their communities upon graduation (Preston College Mission Statement), to be leaders seeking responsible solutions to problems and challenges of Appalachia.

Research Methodology

When I enrolled in the IUP doctoral program, I was paralyzed with fear thinking about statistical research. Two courses alleviated that fear, Research Methodology and Qualitative Research. Professors McAndrew and Bencich introduced me to humanistic and naturalistic research methods which suited my nature. Though quantitative research has its purposes, it cannot study individuals as well as qualitative. Isolating variables and calculating averages that represent larger groups often reduce people to numbers and hide personal stories in statistics (M. Sohn, personal communication, March, 1999).

To be able to examine these women's personal stories about literacy development, I wanted to take the standpoint of a classroom teacher so that I could actively observe, question, learn, and become a better teacher with the knowledge my former students would share (Bissex, 1996). Using this knowledge, I can inform my current teaching practice. Qualitative methods fit teacher research since it enlarges the vision of what counts as knowledge, who can have it, and how it is generated, challenged, and evaluated (Fleischer, 1994). Ethically, teacher researchers seek to guarantee trustworthiness by using member-checking, peer debriefing, reflexive journals, and other means of guarding against deception, harm, violations of privacy and confidentiality (Erlandson, Harris, Skipper, & Allen, 1993). Like all researchers, teachers have to watch for problems of representing participants ethically, separating teacher and observer roles, slanting research to favor the victim, smoothing over unpleasant details, and looking beyond the issue being researched (Kirsch & Mortensen, 1996; Fleisher, 1994; Newkirk, 1992; Connelly & Clandinin, 1990).

Though I am using ethnographic techniques, Bishop (1999) would argue that this is not an ethnographic study. I am not entering the culture as a full participant in the study: I observe and interview, but I do not participate except in those roles. Additionally, I "cannot claim to study the

culture from the culture's point of view" because of my role as their former teacher and someone born outside the culture (p. 36). Rather than an ethnographer, I am a teacher-researcher using qualitative techniques.

Participants

To begin this qualitative project, I had to choose participants from the many nontraditional students I had taught at Preston College since 1988. The idea of selecting eight and narrowing that number down to three came from several sources. Montgomery feared that interviewing only three women (my original proposal) might not be an adequate number if some participants dropped out (personal communication, May 15, 1998). Okawa (1995) uses eight English teachers of color, identifying four for her final case studies. Using Graves' (1984) methods, Newkirk (1995) studies writing conferences by beginning with eight volunteers and finally selecting two students who provided a significant contrast from the group. Neilsen interviews three in her study of literacy in Nova Scotia. Using eight women in my initial study gave me a healthier pool to draw from for my research.

Since qualitative research relies on "purposeful rather than representative sampling" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 102), my sample is of typical rather than atypical cases. Like Okawa, "I make no claims for inclusiveness or representativeness of the participant population" (p. 59). The particulars of these women are more important than the generalities.

Once I received proposal and Human Subject Review Board approval in mid-November, 1998, I began the process of identifying women for my study. They had to satisfy the following criteria established in the proposal defense:

- To have been born and raised in Appalachia;
- To have been a student in my classes between 1989 and 1994;
- To have graduated by the time of this study;
- to be married or divorced with children.

Looking through old class files and yearbooks, I wrote down names keeping these criteria in mind. Seeing a name would bring back memories about papers they had written, quirks in personalities, and other attributes. From these activities, I came up with a list of approximately 30 women.

My next step was to involve the registrar and alumni offices in checking to make sure these women had graduated and to get current addresses and phone numbers in order to reach them. I eliminated names for whom there was no current information, those who were not Appalachian, and those who had not yet graduated. Seventeen women remained at the end of this process.

During January, I ranked the women on the list, but out of nervousness, hesitated calling. Having ideas written on a page is quite different from implementing them. Ethical and personal questions popped into my mind. For example, I knew that research about women "should aim to validate and improve women's lives, not simply observe and describe them" (Kirsch & Mortensen, p. xxi). What would be the benefits, interests, and consequences for the participants in my study? What possible right had I to invade their private worlds to learn about their literacy after college? These and other thoughts crept in until my neighbor, Connie Wagner, pointed out, "Wouldn't you be flattered if one of your IUP professors called you up and asked you to be part of a study?" That cinched it for me. My conviction from the beginning has been that they had a story to tell, and I might be the one to focus attention on their words and impressions. Looking at my dissertation journal, I noted the following: "Doing the study is a compliment to the women. I have to remember that they are partners in my study" (p. 38). So I began calling and scheduling interviews.

From the original 17 women, the eight who finally agreed to participate ranged in age from early 30s to mid-40s. They graduated between May, 1993, and May, 1997, in education, art, nursing, and psychology/human services. The largest representation, five out of the eight, turned out to be education majors, a totally unintentional choice, but one that reflects the overwhelming choice of most nontraditional women when they enter our college since its semester scheduling

leaves family time after school and in the summers (A. Nichols, personal communication, June, 1999).

Methods of Data Collection

With the participants chosen, I began the data collection for my study. I decided to

- interview eight women,
- decide on the three women among the eight who would be ideal case study participants,
- shadow those three on their jobs,
- interview a family member to determine broader effects of education,
- schedule a final interview with the three women to tie up loose ends and complete the picture of literacy development since college.

Below, I develop each of these methodologies for collecting data.

Interviews

Combined with case study, the interview format is recommended as one of the most effective techniques for studies involving women, allowing participants to answer open-ended questions to express their "ideas, thoughts, and memories in their own words rather than in the words of the researcher" (Reinharz ,1992, p. 19).

From January 20 until February 11, 1999, I interviewed eight former students. A ninth interview was discarded because the woman did not fulfill the sampling criteria. A tenth interview with Pam had been scheduled because I mistakenly thought one of the original eight women was backing out. Fortunately Pam did not show up, and the original woman did, so the problem was solved.

Each session began with thanking the women for helping me and engaging in small talk, a key to effective communication in this region. Next, I asked if they minded being tape recorded and reviewed the purpose of the research. After I explained how their contribution and voluntary participation were crucial to my study, I had them sign the voluntary consent form and turned on the

tape recorder. Throughout January and February, I became a more proficient interviewer in terms of operating the tape recorder, wrestling with the microphone, and effectively questioning the participants.

At the beginning, I was uneasy and occasionally shared too much of myself in the interview. For example, Polly began talking about her difficulty with her daughter, and I countered with a tale of difficulties with my daughter, Laura. Although my personal stance is crucial to understanding my interest in this study, the story belongs to the women. I learned to speak less and encouraged them to speak more.

In the interview, I asked questions in three broad categories progressing from pre-college, college, to post-college literacy. Those questions led to others during the interview (see Appendix A for questions for eight women).

Interview Settings

Because the place of the interviews was crucial for communication purposes, I let these women pick the site (Belenky et al.). Four interviews took place in my office, four in their job settings. I traveled no more than a half hour to their places of work which included two public schools, the local hospital, and a private counseling center. I found the two school settings difficult because of interruptions from workers, public address system announcements, and poor room acoustics. The interview at the hospital took place in a busy nursing lounge. In spite of these interruptions, we managed to converse, and these women contributed a great deal to my research.

Transcription Protocol

After I finished the first few interviews, I tried for two hours to transcribe twenty minutes of the first tape (with a transcribing machine). Imagining that I would NEVER finish this dissertation before the year 2020, I called Tina Collins who does editing work for my husband to ask if she would transcribe one tape. She finished the first sixty-minute tape in 1½ hours and said that she would enjoy typing the others, lifting a great weight from my shoulders. Not only a good typist,

Collins is an Appalachian poet and essayist. Coming from a working-class family, she was valedictorian at Preston High School and graduated with a B. S. in English from Preston College.

After Collins sent the transcripts to me electronically and returned the tapes, I replayed each tape and verified the data, clarifying any inaudible remarks, and adding non-verbal information. Though she was a traditional student, Collins shared her observations about each woman with me as she completed the transcriptions, and she was one of many I consulted when I made my final selection for the case studies.

The primary issue of transcription was how to record dialect and nonstandard language. A college graduate herself, Collins felt that most Appalachian women, especially college graduates, would be self-conscious about their dialect. In fact, one of my participants changed the content of the cleaned-up copy of the transcription to make herself sound better. When I told her that I had only expected her to clear up the "inaudibles," she explained why she had made so many changes, saying, "My grammar's not that good, especially when I am talking" (April 29, 1999). Her self-consciousness was touching and illustrated how important speaking properly was to her self-image.

To help me make my decision about what to do about transcriptions, I consulted several sources. Wendy Bishop, writing about ethnography, suggests that "unless dialect or pronunciation or timing is an element being examined by the researcher, there is no reason not to default in an interview transcript to an informal, but lightly edited presentation of speech" (p. 107). The goal is to "maintain the flavor of the spoken voices" (Rankin in Bishop, p. 106). One of many of Roberts' (1997) suggestions about transcription is "where appropriate, [to] use standard orthography even when the speaker is using nonstandard varieties to avoid stigmatisation and to evoke the naturalness of their speech" (p. 170). Another source defends his choice to regularize language in an ethnographic study of an Appalachian Tennessee family in The Kidwells: A Family Odyssey:

> The mountain dialect is a colorful language. . . . It can be more expressive, more descriptive at times than most Americans could imagine. But it does not render well into print. In far too many instances the writer's attempt to use the vernacular misfires in one of two directions. Either it confuses and slows down the reader or it reduces the mountain

characters to little more than ignorant, comic fools. I had no desire to do either. (Walls, 1983, p. xiii)

From a sociolinguistic point of view, all language systems are rule-governed and legitimate, but readers still make prejudicial judgments and discriminate on the basis of linguistics. I want my audience to hear these women as intelligent beings who have something to whistle and crow about; I do not want someone judging them as "ignorant, comic fools."

Accepting the advice of these authors, Collins and I decided to regularize all nonstandard verbs and to leave in idioms and colloquialisms. To preserve the dignity of these women, we changed some of their nonstandard language (she doesn't for she don't; it wasn't anything for it wasn't nothing). I did not violate the intention of their utterances and hopefully have represented them "in a dignified and appropriate . . . manner" (Bishop, p. 143).

Case Studies

My choice to do case studies for this literacy studies is not original. Many literacy studies I read (Taylor & Dorsey-Gaines, 1988; Neilsen; Voss, 1996; Purcell-Gates; Merrifield et al.; and Barton & Hamilton) favor the case study method, looking for the particular features of individual literacy. Graves supports case study because it portrays the uniqueness of the person being profiled and "data gathered in such depth usually point the way to discovering new variables not seen in the larger data gathering process" (p. 106). The results from these studies convinced me that this technique would be the most effective for my research.

In the initial interviews, I listened for information about literacy development for all eight women, but I had another ear listening for who among the eight would be the most effective case study participants. After the interview was finished, I explained to each of the eight women what the rest of the study would involve (shadowing, another participant interview, and a family member interview). I then asked each of them to fill out an information sheet where they were to indicate their availability for further interviews. Two of the eight checked that they would be unavailable. From the rest, I used the following criteria for choosing the final three women:

- Time out of school since graduation (from six to four years);
- School achievement (women who were minimal, average, and outstanding students);
- Career achievement (women who are unemployed, employed).

After I carefully reviewed all eight interview transcripts, I consulted my dissertation director, close friends and colleagues in determining which three I would pick. From the beginning, I had chosen Lucy because of her moving story and Jean because of her spunk and her insatiable desire for more education. Polly and Sarah tied for third. After numerous e-mails and phone conversations, I chose Sarah. Calling each of the three to ask if they were interested in being part of the case study, I was happy when they agreed. I then called the remaining five women to thank them for their time--how I regretted not being able to do case studies on all eight!

Participant Observation

Based on Dr. Gian Pagnucci, Assistant Professor at IUP and proposal committee member's recommendation, I decided after the first interview that I would observe or shadow the case study participants on their jobs next instead of scheduling another interview immediately after the first one. Observing these women in their work and home settings allowed me to "see the world as [my] subjects see it, to live in their time frames, to capture the phenomenon on its own terms, and to grasp the culture in its own natural, ongoing environment" (Lincoln & Guba, p. 273). Proceeding this way allowed me to check out incomplete information from the shadowing experience in the final interview and affirm literacy practices which I observed and of which they may not have been aware.

For a portion of their day on the job (and in one case in her home) from March 30 to April 6, 1999, I shadowed these women. I observed Lucy and her toddler for three hours in her home, Sarah for three hours at the private counseling agency where she is a foster care specialist, and Jean for four hours in the Medical Intensive Care Unit at our local hospital. This observation rewarded me on many counts: I observed how hard these women work to perform well on their

jobs; I saw caring and empathy exhibited for clients they serve; and I noticed the connection of accurate and dependable reading and writing to serving their clients adequately. In Lucy's home, I observed how literacy assisted her in the challenge of raising her children.

Family Interviews

My next plan was to interview at least one adult relative of the three women to ask what literacy development they had observed in the participant's life since college. I had many reasons to involve family members in the study:

- As noted in chapter 2, Appalachian families are close, many living in the hollows they grew up in as children with parents, aunts and uncles, and so on;
- Many mothers and sisters of these women helped care for their young children while these women attended school;
- Most of the eight women in my study had mothers who encouraged them to come to college, supporting Egan's (1993) observations of the crucial role that male and female relatives had in encouraging Appalachian women to come to school even if the relatives (females in particular) themselves were in traditional roles;
- Relatives can establish "a multigenerational perspective of the data" (Taylor & Dorsey-Gaines, p. 226).

Since relatives may have had a crucial role in the participants' return to college, I thought their opinions would add another perspective to the question of literacy development.

Because I sensed in conversations with my participants that their family members were reticent to talk to me alone, I decided to provide them with a preliminary list of questions delivered ahead of the interview. I also encouraged the participant to be there with her family member to alleviate possible discomfort of meeting me by myself. Samples of questions which I asked these family members include the effect of and reaction to their relative returning to college, the changes they observed in personality and literacy, and their personal feelings about education for women (see Appendix B for list of questions).

These interviews took place between April 15 and 30, 1999. One participant's

family never participated because of a family crisis. Since I have learned after 24 years how people do not want to disappoint their questioner by saying no directly, I decided not to pursue the issue after many phone calls because I did not want to embarrass the participant any further (see table 1 for time spent with participants).

Table 1: Researcher's Time Spent With Participants

	Length of first interview	Amount of time shadowing	Time with family member	Length of final interview
Lucy	1 hour	3 hours	0	1 hour
Jean	45 minutes	4 hours	40 minutes	45 minutes
Sarah	1 hour	3 hours	2.5 hours	45 minutes
Five other participants	4 hours	0	0	0

Methods of Analysis

During the project, I looked at emerging data, refining research questions in the process. Based on previous research on student literacy narratives, "Gettin' Above Their Raisin's: Content Analysis of Literacy Narratives" (Sohn, 1998b), I knew that this stage would be challenging and fun. Looking for patterns, making discoveries, and coding the material, I have used constant comparative method and chunking to analyze my data (see Appendix C for coded excerpts of transcriptions).

After each participant returned her approved transcript, I began looking for patterns and linkages among the interviews. Reading over the transcripts several times, I was able to refine material and relate it to my research question. I focused on the "behavior, issues, and contexts with regard to the particular case" (Stake, 1995, p. 78). Coding helped me manage the data which I

then patchworked into text using cut and paste from the computer. My data was never so complicated that I needed outside software.

The most difficult portion of this step was knowing how much data to include, a dilemma Wolcott (1990) considers: "Faced with the dilemma of having more to pack than a suitcase can possibly hold, the novice traveler has three possibilities: rearrange so as to get more in, remove nonessentials, or find a larger suitcase" (p. 62). I worked to focus on essentials to tell the story; more details might minimize the importance of those presented. (See Table 2 below for coding categories.)

Validity Issues

Though qualitative researchers are not searching for objective truth, they are concerned with trustworthiness or validity. Maxwell (1996) refers to validity as "the correctness or credibility of a description, conclusion, explanation, interpretation, or other sort of account" (p. 87). Validity depends on "the relationship of your conclusions to the real world" (p. 86). I must show that my "findings . . . are worth paying attention to, worth taking account of" (Lincoln & Guba, p. 290). Below I look at ways that I respond to validity issues so that I will be able to answer the following questions by the end of the study: Does my study do what it says it's going to do? Does it assess literacy development? At the end of the study, will I have an accurate picture of literacy development?

Description

To ensure accurate description of what these women said, I have accurately recorded each interview with audio tapes and have read over each transcription, listening to the tape twice. Transcriptions have been verified by participants for accuracy. When I did the shadowing, I took field notes which the participant checked for accuracy. Each completed case study was also approved by the participants. With their feedback, I came to conclusions which I assume are reasonably truthful.

Table 2: Dissertation Codes for Eight Transcripts

Pre-college

famed	family education
famir	family literacy reading
famlw	family literacy writing
faminf	family influence
famsup	family support
famnsup	family nonsupport
famsize	family size
famch	family change

Fambkgrd	family background
precolj	pre-college job
hslit	high school literacy
Approots	Appalachian roots or connection
precolr	pre-college literacy, reading
precolw	pre-college literacy, writing
stig	Stigmatism
OP	Outsider's perceptions

College

infl	influence on others
PCr	Personal change: reading
PCw	Personal change: writing
PCp	Personal change: personal
Pcad	personal change: adjustment
1stcol	first person in family to attend college
n1stcol	not first person in family to attend college
XCEP	Exception to rule
RR	Reasons for returning to college
RP	Reasons for postponing college
OP	Outside perceptions
suc	Success
LS	Learning Style

colr	college reading
chhs	Children: high school
chj	Children : job
chs	Children: schooling
PP	Personal Perceptions
colw	college writing
chlr,w	Children literacy reading, writing
litob	literacy observation
tech	Technology
noc	no college
load	Course load
major	college major
imp	Improvement

Post-college

postcolj,r,w	post-college job, reading, and writing
wsh	Wishes
obs	Observation
what if	what if?
evalc	evaluation of college
chgefam	family change
chgepos/neg	Positive or negative change
spsedis	Spouse disability
chrr	Childrearing

spselitrw	spouse literacy, reading & writing
postcollead	Post-college leadership
chul	church literacy
nj	no job
litobs	literacy observation
rel	religion
Appdef	definition of region
chcol	children college
JAD	Job advancement

Interpretation

For this study to be valid, I have to "understand the perspective of the people studied and the meanings they attach to their words and actions" (Maxwell, p. 90). Here I have to make sure that I am not imposing my biases or meaning. Below I look at possible issues that might interfere with accurate interpretation of the data.

Roles of the Researcher

As a researcher, I play various roles.

My first role is that of a southerner. Born and raised in Greensboro, North Carolina, I have felt prejudice from some who equate a Southern accent either with stupidity or cuteness, neither of which is complimentary. I identify with Appalachians and others marginalized by outsiders for accent and dialect, but being defensive on their behalf might lead me to inaccurate conclusions.

Secondly, I assume the role of a student. As a nontraditional doctoral student, I have struggled with uncertainty and unfamiliarity with academic discourse. I can identify with the fears, adjustments, and successes these women endured by coming to college at a nontraditional age. Although I believe my experience might be held up to illustrate how lifelong the literacy learning process is, I also realize that our experiences are different because of class and education. Therefore, I must let go of supposed similarities if it means I am not listening to the uniqueness of their experience.

The third role I play is that of a teacher who has taught since 1984 (since1988 at Preston College) and who has come to appreciate the literacy women bring to the classroom. As I point out below in the participant-researcher relationship section, this role can interfere with effective communication if I am still perceived in that role (especially by family members as so noted).

Finally, I fulfill the roles of woman, wife, and mother, so I can empathize with these women as they struggle to keep their families together while they work toward improving themselves. Sharing our experiences, we can develop a common standpoint (Seitz).

Biases: Insider-Outsider Dilemma

As most qualitative researchers do, I come to this study with the insider-outsider dilemma. Several literacy studies (among others) have confronted the quandary. Donehower in her study of Appalachian literacy, was actually related to some townspeople, so her entry was easier than had she been a complete outsider, but she notes that "my education, my dialect, and the fact that I was researching a doctoral dissertation all served to distance me from those I interviewed" (iii). Seitz delineates the advantages of being an outsider in her study of Appalachian women in community organizations: "I was . . . not restricted by ties of kinship and place in an uncertain economic environment, and outside the commitments of collective associations" (p. 19).

Having lived in this area since 1975 and having taught for 15 years, I am perhaps more sensitive to the area than an outsider who comes in for the duration of a study since my family has entered into community life, contributing time and talent to it, and learning to appreciate its strengths. Like Barton & Hamilton, my "geographical origins and educational background" are different than my adopted neighbors. My neighbor, an Appalachian native, believes that I have lived here long enough to develop trust, but that I will always be a "transplant" since I was not born and raised in this culture. As an outsider, I do not have the same "cultural authenticity and editorial control" that someone from the region would (Lynch, 1994, p. 19). However, I do believe that outsiders can sometimes mirror strengths to insiders that inspire pride. Like Seitz and Donehower, I have participants check on content and my interpretation for reliability. Like Chiseri-Strater & Sunstein (1997), I try to strike a balance of "an outsider 'stepping in' and an insider 'stepping out' of the culture you study" in order to make the ordinary seem extraordinary (pp. 6, 8).

In addition to member checking, I had the good fortune to have my neighbor, Connie Wagner, balance me on the insider-outsider issue. Her many roles—proofreader, peer debriefer, naïve observer, outsider's perspective [in the professional sense]—made the dissertation more trustworthy. Besides being born and raised in a family that has resided in the county for many

years, she also has a masters in English education, so that she was helpful with grammar and syntax as she proofed each chapter. Wagner's main contribution was her genuine interest in this entire project from its inception. We discussed it during daily walks and trips to yoga class. Before I even wrote a word, she always gave me her perspective as I shared treasures from the interviews. She also added information on customs in Appalachia, especially about religion (which consumed a whole evening's discussion sitting on her front porch). With each draft I gave her, her enthusiasm increased, and she awaited my dissertation director's responses to chapters as anxiously as I did. Wagner contributed immeasureable gifts to the research. Her insights permeate the paper.

As previously stated, Michael Montgomery also provided a scholarly review of the material in Chapter 2.

Participant-Researcher Relationship

Another factor related to validity is the participant-researcher relationship. My first relationship with these participants was as teacher. Now, as their former teacher and researcher, I am still in a position of authority, though I tried to create a more egalitarian role. Despite their maturity and their not being graded in the interviews, the women may have felt some urge to please. This desire, prevalent in the culture even outside the research situation, is based on the belief that getting along with another person is more important than pushing one's viewpoint (Jones, 1994). Although I conducted the interviews in a relaxed setting, I think that the interview might be characterized as asymmetrical-trust (Lincoln & Guba).

Outside Influences

What I thought might be a distraction, the small town celebrity of my husband as a cookbook author, TV food show personality, and author of a food column in our local paper, never entered the conversation (except when I was leaving the counseling service. Both social workers had him as their psychology teacher); I did not have to worry about this issue.

Triangulation

One of the main ways to guard against bias is to collect information from a variety of different sources (although Maxwell cautions us to recognize the bias in all of our data gathering systems). Observing the case study participants in action contributed complementary data for the information they provided in the interview. Talking to a family member provided another screen for the information. Consulting my neighbor, Connie (see above) for a female Appalachian perspective and linguist Michael Montgomery for the scholarly aspects of the Appalachian chapter also operated as triangulation.

Audit Trail

Knowing how crucial backing up research information is, I have kept a paper trail. In January, 1998, while I was still taking courses, I began a dissertation ideas document in which I recorded interviews with IUP faculty to determine comprehensives committee members, notes from meetings with more experienced IUP students and graduates, observations about possible dissertation topics, summary of relevant articles, and lists of books for comprehensives based on recommendations of faculty and students. During my last semester of course work, on March 3, 1998, I recorded this dream:

> Today I woke up at 5:40 a.m. dreaming about a dissertation. There were utterances to record and data to be analyzed. The details are sketchy, but it has to be a landmark in my life that I haven't even decided a topic, and yet I am dreaming about a dissertation. I was too excited, too awake to go back to sleep (and knock on wood, maybe I am getting better and don't need the sleep!), so I am writing this. To think of actually doing it, to think of myself as a researcher is heady. So far from being a burden now, I am looking at the opportunity. (Dissertation journal, p. 14)

After the IRB approval on November 13, 1998, I changed the file name from "dissertation ideas" to "dissertation journal." There I have feelings, details, observations, article summaries, summaries of conversations with my mother and neighbors about my dissertation, and observations about the women in particular. Presently it is 53 pages long; since I began writing the dissertation on June 4, 1999, I have not made any entries.

In addition to the journal, I have kept copies of every e-mail that my dissertation director and I have sent to each other as she helped me mold this dissertation into something manageable and readable because their content reflected brainstorming and analysis. I have also kept e-mails from anyone who corresponded with me about this process. For example, when I was having trouble with transcribing, I e-mailed Nan Sitler, an IUP graduate of the Rhetoric and Linguistics program two years ahead of me. Lists and notes to myself made as the dissertation progresses fill another folder.

For each participant, I have a notebook that includes an information sheet, a copy of their coded interview transcript plus the one they approved, old essays if I could find them, any information about them from other sources (one newspaper article, a copy of a magazine they subscribe to). For case study participants, there is an additional transcript plus my field notes of the shadowing. The list of questions I used for the last interview is also included. I then have one file each on the two family members whom I interviewed with their approved transcriptions. At the completion of the study, I will provide access to the dissertation in the college library. If it should become a book, which is my intention, I will give each woman a copy of the book.

Ethical Issues

Ethical issues emerge in all parts of qualitative research from purposes to research questions to validity (Maxwell). Women have been treated as objects long enough not to have that exacerbated by becoming objects of research, having their voices, experiences, and lives misrepresented (Kirsch & Mortensen). Doing this qualitative research provided opportunities for me to become part of the research process in order to build trust among those participants, so that they were more involved. Crucial to that trust was my commitment of honesty and openness during the process, and a chance for the women to withdraw at any time.

Inviting the initial eight women and then the final three to participate, I emphasized how much their involvement would help me and eventually other women like them. Giving them as much

background as possible about my expectations, goals, and methodology (without overwhelming them), I entered into a covenant of trust with them (Wax, 1995). I went into great detail explaining the informed and voluntary consent forms, making sure they recognized their comprehensive rights as participants in the study (see Appendix D for sample informed consent form). They knew that they could back out at any time without fear of reprisal.

Throughout the research process, they have looked at their transcripts, field notes, and case study. When they make appropriate changes in the data, I revise it. Their approval helps to guard against any misconceptions or misinterpretations and helps these women trust the whole process so that they feel good about their contributions to a new body of knowledge.

Reacting to the informed consent form which is designed to protect their vulnerability to the researcher, these women seemed puzzled with all of the information I was giving them. Many of them grinned when I said they could withdraw at any time, as if that would be the last thing on their minds. In other words, they appeared to trust me and wondered at the distrust implied by the consent form. As I argued in my comprehensive exam, the consent form especially as proposed by Paul Anderson (1998), is legalistic and not representative of a trusting relationship. In a 1999 CCCC panel, "Making Literacy Visible," literacy theorists, Daniell, Gere, Brandt, Moss, and Mortensen all mentioned the difficulty of a consent form in emergent qualitative research. Participants have no way of knowing what they are consenting to ahead of time. Obviously I will continue to use these forms until something else has taken their place, but researchers need to take a look at alternatives such as the feminist, communitarian ethical model proposed by Denzin (1997) which "presumes a researcher who builds collaborative, reciprocal, trusting, and friendly relations with those studied" (p. 275). As long as participants, such as the women in this research, give us the gift of their trust, we have a huge obligation to make sure we don't abuse it.

Summary

The qualitative process of the research design involves choosing the site, identifying participants, involving them in interviews, observing their literacy on their jobs, and drawing conclusions from the data to support the thesis of literacy development since college. Upholding ethical concerns leads to a more trustworthy story of what the researcher observes. In this chapter, I have described the research design. In the following chapter, I will summarize the themes that emerged from interviews with my eight participants.

CHAPTER 5

THEMES FROM EIGHT WHISTLIN' WOMEN

As this chapter attests, the research design enabled the whistlin' and crowin' women of this study to make their voices heard loudly and clearly. Interviewing these former students during January and February, 1999, I marveled at my good fortune to be re-visiting with women who had taught me so much and continued to do so throughout this project.

This chapter includes a summary of themes that emerged from conducting, transcribing, and coding eight interviews (see Table 2 in Chapter 4 for Coding List). I asked questions in three sections. For the pre-college section, questions included what sort of reading and writing they and their family did before college, and who or what most influenced them to come to college. The college section questions focused on what changes they made in their literacy habits to accommodate college work, what effect college had on home life, and what reading and writing they did in my class and beyond. Since ascertaining post-college literacy development was key to this study, the bulk of questions centered on the reading and writing they do now in jobs, home, and community (see Appendix A for list of questions). Having read Chapter 2, the reader will understand how these women's answers fit into the physical and cultural background of the region. I divide this chapter into three categories based on answers to questions about pre-college, college, and post-college literacy. In the text, when I use the participants' actual words, I document with their chosen pseudonym and the interview date; other information comes from interview transcripts. As a guide for the first-time reader, I enclose a composite of the eight women in Table 3 below. To guarantee that their voices are heard, my plan with this chapter is to provide a naturalistic and descriptive view of these women without interruption of literacy professionals' commentary.

Pre-College Literacy

Though my questions in this section were brief, I learned much about the pre-college literacy background of these women. Because the project focuses on Appalachian women, I wanted to be sure of their roots. The answers to questions related to early literacy and literacy models provide information about what motivated them eventually to choose a college education. The themes that emerged in this section were Appalachian roots, family employment, literacy among parents and grandparents, and their literacy. The answers to the question on who influenced them to return to college is included in the college section.

Appalachian Roots

All of these women were born in Appalachia and proud of it. Of the eight, six were raised here, but two spent part of their youth in Michigan where many families migrated when jobs became unavailable in local coal mines. Both returned at a later time with their families of origin and eventually settled in this area, married, and raised their own children.

The attachment to place is one of the most positive features of Appalachian people. Many of these deeply rooted Appalachian women still live in the hollows that they grew up in, places like the Right Fork of Cowpen Creek, Little Robinson Creek, Stone Coal, Big Hackney's Creek, Fishtrap, and Turkey Creek. When Judith returned from Texas after her husband's military service ended, they still had their homeplace: "We didn't have a house on it, but we had our property over there where my parents lived. So we bought us a trailer to put on it" (February 5, 1999). Lucy's ancestors were among the first to settle in eastern Kentucky. She relates how families would buy up a whole hollow and parcel it out to family members as they grew up and got married. Now, if a family moves away, they might sell the property to strangers who may or may not have the same values as the family. Those who do not live in the same hollow but live in the region travel weekly to attend church or to have Sunday dinner with their families.

Table 3: Whistlin' and Crowin' Women of Appalachia Participant Descriptors, February, 1999

	Judith	Hope	Lucy	Mary	Sarah	Jean	Faith	Polly
Family of origin: education	mother & dad have h. s. diploma	mother, h. s. diploma; father, 2nd grade	mother, 8th grade; father, h.s. diploma & voc. school—electrician	mother, left h.s. in 12th; father , 3rd grade & voc. school—welding & mechanics	mother, 8th grade; father, unknown	mother, 8th grade; father, early elem.	mother, h. s. diploma; father, 8th grade	mother & father—8th grade
Family size	4	3	7	6	1	3	9	2
Marital status	Married—spouse disabled	Married—spouse disabled	Divorced	Married—spouse disabled	divorced	married—spouse disabled	married—spouse working	divorced, re-married
Children	2 married sons; 2 girls in h. s.; 2 grandchildren	1 married son; 1 in sen. h..s.; 1 grandchild	1 son, 8 yrs; 1 girl, 2.5 yrs.	1 son in senior h. s.; 1 son grown	1 son in senior h .s.	1 son grown; 1 girl married; son in senior h. s.	1 son in h. s.; girl in junior high	1 girl & son married; 1 son in senior h. s.; 3 grandchildren
H. s. diploma	Yes	Yes	Yes	no—to 8th grade	yes	no—to 10th grade	yes	yes
Years between h.s. & college	24 years	19 years	10 years	15 years	7 years	20 years	20 years	17 years
Degree & Graduation	Middle Grades Ed. Dec. 1997	Early Elem. Ed. May 1995	Art May 1996	Early Elem. Ed. May, 1993	Psychology May, 1993	Nursing May, 1997	Early Elem. Ed. Dec. 1993	Early Elem. Ed. May, 1995
evaluation of college	enjoyed every minute; role model for girls	prepared me well for special ed teaching	Increased self-esteem; "getaway place" [from abusive husband]	gave me life skills that I have used in various jobs	raised self-confidence; a good foundation for my job	turned my life around	prepared me & too many others for teaching	learned life skills; built up self-esteem
current job	7th grade math teacher	special ed teacher—K-5th grade	homemaker; cares for CF child at home	data entry clerk for environmental lab	foster care worker	intensive care unit nurse	Title I assistant teacher	city clerk
unique traits	attended college after h.s.; dropped out to get married	mother urged, "Go to college; become teacher."	abusive spse refused books in house; she did all studying at college	took ACT on a lark; scored 21 on first try; applied to college	father killed in mines when she was 5; mother wanted college for her	took & passed GED on a lark; applied to nursing program	received A.A. degree; waited 20 years to come back	has 7 of 9 aunts & uncles with college degrees, one a NASA scientist

Family Employment

Though primarily homemakers, the mothers of my participants worked outside the home as well as in jobs as varied as hospital dietitian, school bus driver, grocery store owner, aide in a federal program, house cleaner, mostly traditional female work. Most of their fathers worked in the mines; the father of the family that moved to Michigan worked in the steel mills. Other occupations included an electrician, a mechanic, sanitation service manager, and railroad worker. Sarah's mother raised her daughter by herself for many years after her husband was electrocuted in the mines. All provided basic needs for their children, though times were rough, especially in large families. Family sizes ranged in number from one child to three families with six, seven, and nine children. None of these families were raised in what we would consider middle-class homes.

Family Literacy: Parents and Grandparents

Though some of the eight women's parents did not complete high school, these women grew up in homes where reading and writing took place, especially by their mothers and grandmothers. Hope grew up seeing her mother, a high school graduate, teach her dad who had dropped out in second grade: "If he [her dad] needed to know how to read something, she taught him. That's how he learned how to write his name and everything. He couldn't pick up a newspaper and read it. But anything he had to read at work, he could read, but he couldn't read us stories or anything" (Hope, January 20, 1999). After her mother died and her dad remarried, his new wife worked with him, getting library books and material to help him learn to read. He can now pick up a newspaper and read on the eighth-grade level. What strong modeling these two women provided to Hope!

One of the eight women remembers her father being an insatiable reader. Although he went only to the eighth grade, he educated himself by reading Westerns by authors like Louis L'Amour and by subscribing to National Geographic. Most of the eight women remembered their fathers reading newspapers and sports magazines. These women recall their mothers reading on

a more regular basis. Jean brags about the number of Harlequin romance novels her mother read and Lucy about her mother reading detective magazines. Sarah's mother checked out and read numerous books from the library, especially Biblical commentaries. Mary's mom read magazines and newspapers to keep current, but now that her husband has died and her children are raised, she has more time for fiction, self-help books, and, her current curiosity, herbal healing and vitamin books.

If there was no other book in the house, these families all had Bibles. The women recall their grandparents and parents reading it; if one was unable to read, someone else would read it to them. Many of the families who were Old Regular Baptist used the Bible as a guideline to living a Christian life, even if they did not attend church regularly. Judith notes how religious her family was and recalls: "I remember my dad sitting in the evenings when he was home and reading the Bible" (February 5, 1999). This scene reflected numerous others from the eight women. Though they were not surrounded by leather covered volumes shelved on a mahogany bookshelf, these families, especially their mothers, modeled reading for their children in a positive way.

Not only did mothers model reading, they also modeled writing. Phones weren't too available, and it was too expensive to phone relatives who lived out of state, so their mothers wrote letters to maintain close family ties. Mothers also paid the bills, wrote and shared recipes, and kept grocery lists. Two mothers wrote poetry and songs. Except for job-related record keeping, the fathers of the eight women did not appear to have the same need for writing as did their wives.

Though she never saw her grandmother reading or writing, Mary related a conversation she had with her 81 year-old grandmother which indicates how important education was to all members of the family. After Mary enrolled in college, her grandmother said to her, "You know, I always thought I would like to go to college." When Mary asked her what she would have become, the grandmother answered, "An accountant. I would like to have been an accountant. I've always thought I would like to do that kind of work" (February 2, 1999). Commenting on her uneducated

grandparents, Mary notes: "Most of these people are so talented in so many different ways, and they feel less of a person because they don't have that education. But sometimes I think I would trade mine for their wisdom, you know?" (February 2, 1999). Retaining common sense in the midst of their education was a major concern with many of the women in this study.

First Generation College

In spite of their literacy, none of the parents had gone to college except for Polly's extended family; seven out of nine of her father's brothers and sisters graduated from college. Among those relatives is a NASA scientist! However, her father was one of the nine who did not attend college. In fact, none of her siblings or immediate family had gone to college, though her sister had gone to business college. Judith and Faith had siblings who went to college, but they were the first girls in their families to attend. Jean's two sisters, older and younger, were attending college at the same time she was; her younger sister beginning college and her older sister getting her masters in social work. Lucy was the first in her family to finish high school and college. Though their parents did not have college, they knew that their children would do better with a college education. They created in their children the hunger for what an education might do for them.

Personal Literacy Before College

As far as their early literacy goes, these women reported varying degrees of activity. Faith read constantly: "Basically, I have loved to read from the time that I started reading. And I did a whole lot of reading. Nancy Drew and Trixie Belden and all of those books. I enjoyed it" (January 26, 1999). In terms of writing, she wrote her stories and loved writing until she grew to dislike it in high school.

Judith's story of her early literacy is unique: Her school-aged aunts used to take her to the "little country-school" where they attended school: "Before I was even out of diapers, they would drag me along to school with them almost every day. So I was reading and writing probably by the time I was about two or three years old" (February 5, 1999). Mary reports that before college she

read constantly, "Anything. Fiction, non-fiction, biographies, history, whatever. I didn't do a lot of writing except for some poetry" (February 2, 1999). Polly read an occasional Harlequin romance, but she preferred reading magazines, something she could finish in a shorter period of time. She also wrote letters. Lucy and Jean disliked reading and avoided it as much as they were able to. Lucy constantly joked about looking for the movie version of the book, so she wouldn't have to read the full book. Her literacy will be explored in more detail in the case study.

For most of the eight women, then, literacy was modeled by their families, but marriage and other life events intervened, leading them away from considering college immediately after high school.

College Literacy

Once college became their goal, these women took the steps they needed to make it a reality. In this section, I describe the following themes related to their college years: Reasons for coming to college; support or lack of it from their family of origin, their spouses, and their children; personal and scholarly adjustments to college; choice of major; and writing in my class. Whether self- or other-motivated, these women enrolled in college.

Reasons For Coming To College

As diverse as these eight women were, so were their reasons for coming to college at a nontraditional age. In fact, two of the eight women actually enrolled in Preston College immediately after high school, the traditional time to do so, but marriage and family illness interrupted their pathway. For one, an ill grandfather required her help, and she was flunking out of her classes from lack of interest. In another case, a boyfriend persuaded the woman to quit and get married after a semester and a half. A third woman attended a community college and received her associate of arts degree; she then waited twenty years to return to Preston College. When they returned after the intervening years, these women were more serious students.

Many women had husbands who worked in the coal mines and became disabled, two through accidents, one through lay-offs and one because of black lung disease (pneumoconiosis). Judith describes the urgency of needing to get a job to support her family: "One rainy night he [husband] slipped and fell down a steel stairway [in the mines] about seven feet, so he couldn't work anymore. I knew we couldn't give those two girls the kind of education that they needed. So out of necessity and out of want, I decided to go back to school" (February 5, 1999). One woman was divorced and knew that her skill level would not get her more than minimum-wage work: "I thought, well, I've not got a good income, not working or anything like that. And then I thought, what could I do?" (Polly, January 21, 1999). Someone suggested college, and she took the step to enroll.

Two women entered college on a lark. Both had dropped out of school, one in eighth and one in tenth grade. The eighth-grade drop-out went with her younger sister to take the ACT so that her sister wouldn't have to go to the test site by herself. She scored higher than her sister, a 21. So she thought, "Well, I've done this, so I just called the college here and asked a few questions, and I applied and was accepted" (Mary, February 2, 1999). Jean, the tenth-grade dropout, took the GED eighteen years after she dropped out and passed it, much to her amazement. Knowing from her youth that she wanted to become a nurse, she decided she had the skills to apply to the stiffly competitive Preston College nursing program.

Another woman began to think that she needed to model the importance of education for her children when her youngest went into first grade. She felt that "Education seemed to be really important, with him [her son] going to school and what kind of influence school has on him" (Faith, January 26, 1999). Waiting until her little son entered first grade, Sarah knew that she needed to get a college education, something her mother had spoken about all those years. All of these women took courageous steps to walk up the 99 steps leading from the town to the college where

they knew no one to join with traditional students whom they feared were smarter than they, making sacrifices that I had no idea of at the time they were enrolled in my class.

Family Of Origin: Nonsupport

In many regions of the country, adult women might not be close enough to their families to worry whether their parents will approve or not of their return to college. Because Appalachian families are so tightly knit and live so closely together, the women in my study felt it important to seek their families' approval. Though many families encouraged their children to advance their education, when it came time, some of their families objected, though many did not do so openly. Mary talks about her parents who were raised in a strict church that believes women should stay at home and wait on their husbands and take care of their children. They did not openly object to her attending college, but they worried about the new ideas that might make her stray from the path she had been taught. About her mother's adjusting, Mary says: "She was willing to listen. I never swayed her over to my side on many issues, but she changed quite a bit" (February 2, 1999). Polly relates her family's reaction:

> They didn't think that I was smart enough or that my grades would be good, or that I could even handle it with having a family, too. They would say, "You're not going to be able to do that. You've got three children. You need to be here and take care of them. You can't handle both of them." (January 21, 1999)

If the immediate family did not object, sometimes their husbands' families objected. Hope talks about the silence of her sisters-in-law when she decided to come to college. When asked how they showed their jealousy, she said, "They didn't say anything. That was it; they just avoided the subject" (January 20, 1999). Jean's in-laws were more vocal. They gave her all kinds of trouble, making her feel like a bad mother for returning to school even though she, her husband, and children managed the situation. The uncle of one participant reportedly assailed his niece for using his tax money (via the Pell Grant) to go to college. As these eight women completed their programs, these relatives came around and were justly proud of their daughters, bragging to others about them.

Family of Origin: Support

During the time these women were in college, their mothers, many of whom had influenced their daughters to take this step, would frequently fix dinner for them and watch their grandchildren while the women studied. In fact, for three of the women, going to college was an achievement for their mothers as well. Judith's mother encouraged her by saying, "I didn't get this opportunity because when I grew up, the family was only concerned with the boys. Only the boys got to go on to high school and to college. It's just too important not to do" (February 5, 1999).

Sarah's mother dreamed about her daughter's graduation from the earliest time Sarah can remember, though her mother had only an eighth-grade education. Hope's mother, a hospital dietitian who died before she saw her daughter graduate, repeated constantly to Hope when she was in high school, "Go to school and be a teacher" (January 20, 1999). After her mother's death, her dad actively supported her and offered financial help occasionally to help her pay for summer school and other educational expenses. Overall, no family objected enough to deter these women from their goals.

Spouses' Nonsupport

Husbands were generally supportive of their wives' returning to school with two exceptions. For Lucy in an abusive marriage, attending college was an escape from a hellish life at home. She hated to leave school at the end of the day; it was her saving grace. She was not allowed to bring books into the house and had to lie about her class hours so that she could do all of her homework at school. Another woman's husband asked her at one point to choose between school and him; "I told him not to make me decide because he'd lose. So after that, he sort of backed off. Not really supportive but not really against it" (Sarah, January 25, 1999). Sarah always felt that her husband wanted her to stay home and take care of him, that his job should be enough for the two of them. Though he stayed with her throughout her four years of college, they were recently divorced

because, according to Sarah, he wanted to prove his manhood by having an affair. She believes that her independence threatened him.

Spouses' Support

Supportive spouses helped these women out by cooking dinner, taking children to events, and helping their wives study. Jean describes her husband: "He would help me with the tests, even though he only graduated the eighth grade" (February 11, 1999). Faith's husband would work with her two children fixing a meal, especially if she had lots of homework or was studying for a test.

One husband, a disabled miner who had once been able to provide for his family, worried about not being able to do so any longer. To assure him, his wife said, "You've done it. You've had your turn. You're not able to do it now, so sit back" (Judith, February 5,1999). So many of these women came to school because there needed to be a steady income coming into the household.

College Majors

Some women came to college with a definite career in mind and chose a major that would lead to it. Some changed direction after they were exposed to another course, like Lucy who wanted to be a social worker until she took an art class. Being a more "hands-on" learner, she immediately changed majors. Some came undecided, like Polly who said on her course information sheet that her career goal was 'to get an education that will land me a job that I enjoy and will support my family" (Fall, 1990). For many, teaching was a natural profession to enter. None of these women chose nontraditional majors.

Their reasons for choosing a major varied. Sarah, who is a foster care worker with a private counseling agency, shares her motivation for choosing psychology and human services: "I've always been a people person, and the summer before I started school that [major] was just the area I sought with all these reports of child abuse, child neglect, and so forth. And that's what drew me in that direction. And I like working with kids" (January 25, 1999). Five of the eight women

were education majors. Two of those were special education majors; most were early elementary with middle school endorsement.

Adjustment to College: Home

For all the women in the study, there was a strong desire not to let their homes and families, especially their children, suffer too much because of their return to college. They came from traditional homes where the woman did all of the household chores and most of the child rearing. As Polly says, "Where I was a housewife, I was used to keeping my house clean. I learned that it would be all right for me to let it go a little bit" (January 21, 1999). Jean cooked, cleaned, and got her husband ready for work everyday (February 11, 1999).

All of the women reported that they fit college work in after they had taken care of their children. Their children's schoolwork came first, and after they were settled for the night, the woman began studying for herself. That frequently meant long nights, but it was a sacrifice they were willing to make. In turn, children were generally supportive, though some were too young to understand why their mothers were not able to spend the time they used to with them. Polly reflects the feeling of many of the mothers in this study: "I think sometimes they [the children] felt like they suffered because they didn't have my attention all the time" (January 21, 1999).

One event woke Hope up to the fact that she wasn't spending enough time with her son. He had always received A's on spelling tests and was getting C's. When she asked him why he didn't tell her about the spelling test, he said, "Well, you were doing your homework. I didn't want to bother you" (January 20, 1999). She immediately told him that his homework was more important than hers and from that moment on decided not to do her homework until after her children were in bed.

Hope also involved them when she could in her class projects. In her children's literature class, she had to put a children's book together, so she had her oldest son illustrate it and had her

younger son help put the pages together. They still have that book, and can point to it and say, "We did that!"

Several of these mothers spoke about taking work with them to their children's events: basketball practice, games, school events. One even described taking books on the family vacation. They seized every opportunity they could to study and still be with their families.

In family member interviews, I learned about how families banded together to accomplish the work their mothers had done for them faithfully up to that point. When one family worked together doing laundry, dishes, and meals, the children usually chimed, "Mom's working tonight till midnight studying. Stay out of her way" (Judith, February 5, 1999). On the whole, though times were tough, families appeared to manage the interruption that college caused in their lives.

Adjustment to College: Academic

Beyond their families, these women had an adjustment to college based on their time out of high school. For the two women who did not finish high school, the adjustment was even harder. So I asked what changes they had to make in their reading and writing behavior from high school to college.

For the reading question, Mary answered that she had read mostly for pleasure in high school. As she elaborates, when you read for pleasure, "you can read at your own pace and make it last as long as you want. But when you're reading for classes, you've got to really read details and know you have to memorize what you're reading while you're reading" (February 2, 1999).

Jean and others who did not like reading adjusted by finding a method to tackle the material. Before the class lesson, she would read over the material. Then, in class "it could sink in because they would give demonstrations, and I knew what they were talking about which helped me understand it better" (Jean, February 11, 1999). Someone who did better at writing took notes because she didn't care for using a tape recorder. She says, "I just wrote out what they [teachers] were saying because I could do notes better than I could go back [on a tape recorder]. I had to

learn how to write fast" (Polly, January 21, 1999). In general, the group I interviewed seemed to be more hands-on learners which suited the majors and careers they chose: nursing, education, art, and psychology and human services.

Composition Class

In my class, these women shared poignant stories of their past lives in their papers, journal entries, and individual conferences. Some had some trouble learning the patterns of writing and the demands of academic prose. Because I saw so much potential in their writing, I spent most of my time building up their confidence.

They wrote easily about what they knew well: Home skills, children, and other women's issues. Some of the women wrote about recipes for their process paper—apple stack cake and chocolate gravy. Another, using her six-year-old daughter as audience, wrote a paper on the reasons for nicknames. In their research class, the women wrote about issues like date rape, spouse abuse, and other topics.

Asking them about their time in my class, I was surprised to hear that they had trouble because their writing in most cases was so superior to the traditional students' work, mainly because of more substantial content. They responded well to encouragement which I eagerly provided, thinking back to my mother's struggles when she went back to school. Judith's words pleased me: "When I would do my writings, because I know some of them were probably pathetic, you gave me the encouragement to say, 'You can do it'" (February 5, 1999). Reflecting on the research paper she wrote in my class, Polly complained about the extra time in the library. Because it had been so long since she had done any writing, Jean says, "I didn't know what words to put where, how to express it or anything. But I can say that in your class, I learned how to express it and how to put it together: the introduction, the body, the conclusion. I learned what you look for and how to do it" (February 11, 1999).

Mary reflected further: "At first I thought it would be difficult, but once I started learning some patterns about writing, how to get across what I wanted to because you can't just write something down on paper, [it was not so hard]. There are certain steps you've got to take. And I was never taught those steps" (February 2, 1999). After she learned them, she really enjoyed the writing. Faith, who took both freshmen English courses under me, was hard on herself: "I just had to write down everything perfectly. After a couple of papers and you wrote your little notes back to me, it just made me feel better, like I could probably, if I tried hard enough, do okay" (January 26, 1999). Hope said she felt more secure by the third paper she wrote.

Many remarked about the help of the small groups that I use in my teaching for audience awareness and peer editing. The process also assisted them in adjusting to working with and sitting alongside 18 year olds. Although many of the participants feared returning to school with younger students, two of the eight expressed the fear most succinctly: "I felt a little funny because I felt more like their mother. I guess I worried more what THEY thought about my being there. I was afraid they would think that I was dumb for coming back to school, that I was too old" (Polly, January 21, 1999). Another is more graphic: "I had the fear, honey. I was scared to death. Being in there with kids that were younger than my OWN kids, sometimes I'd say, 'What am I doing here?'" (Judith, February 5, 1999). After awhile, they adjusted and, when the younger students would wonder about their increased load, they learned to give them a humorous retort, "Hey, I'm old. I have to get out of here" (Hope, January 20, 1999)!

These women worked hard to succeed in composition class. Though they made great strides in their writing, two failed the end of term writing proficiency. This two-hour exam is a written response to prompts given as the final for all first-semester English composition classes. As their instructor, I grade the exam first; then another English faculty member grades it. Should there be a disagreement between the original two, another professor will resolve the dilemma. Students who fail have a chance to re-take the exam before the next semester starts. If

they fail again, then they re-enroll in English 111. If students pass the exam, then the instructor averages the grades together and adds the score to the semester grade. This exam creates a great deal of anxiety because, even if students have decent grades, they cannot pass the class without passing the proficiency.

One participant in this study who failed the first time passed on the second try; another failed twice and had to repeat the course (where she earned a B). Those enrolled in English 112 where no proficiency exists, received a final grade of B and an A. One woman enrolled in both semesters. The only C grade went to one of the case studies.

After I had chosen the eight women for this study, I looked at Voices from the Hill, the English Department publication comprised of teacher-nominated student essays. An editorial board decides which essays are included. A required text for English 111, the paper-bound book is based on the concept that students learn more from each other's essays than from published authors excerpted in most composition readers. Many of these women, despite their unfounded worry about what poor writers they were, ended up having their essay(s) printed. Those included Mary's essay on "Making an Apple Stack Cake"; and Jean's essay on "Making Chocolate Gravy," both reflecting traditional Appalachian recipes. In her essay, Sarah challenged the stereotypical portrait of this area in a 48 Hours program filmed in 1988. Also appearing was Lucy's essay describing her childhood as the middle of seven children growing up on the Right Fork of Cowpen (see Appendix E for essays). These essays are just samples of the excellent work these women brought to my classroom.

In their other classes in college, these women encountered writing, particularly those who chose education. In the language arts program, students were asked to write samples of all the items that would be expected of children they would be teaching who are required to submit portfolios from fourth grade on. So these women wrote poetry, short stories, journal entries, and

essays. Beginning the journal in that class, Hope still makes entries in her journal. In humanities and social science classes, these women continued to write papers and essays.

Changes from Freshman to Senior Year

Hope, speaking about how she became more organized as she went through college, summarized her changes this way: "I taught myself: You don't wait till the last minute!" This she learned after staying up too late doing last-minute assignments. For Mary, raised in the Old Regular Baptist church, college enabled her to broaden her horizons: "My parents were definitely parents of the old school, and we were always taught things basically in black and white. I began to see more of the shaded areas and less of the black and white" from her freshman to her senior year in college (February 2, 1999). More of their appraisal of the college is reflected below.

Post-college Literacy

Evaluation of College

Though many could not find jobs in their fields, they generally gave high marks to Preston College. Several women spoke of the pure enjoyment of learning (Judith and Lucy). One woman said that she was finally doing something for herself after being a wife and mother for so long. Attending college would hopefully provide a role model for their children. Several people talked about the knowledge that education gave them that no one could take away. Hope pointed out satisfaction in particular with three education faculty who made learning fun; from their example, she was in her present job trying to make learning fun for her special education students.

Lucy and Sarah talked about becoming more confident in themselves. In contrast to Polly who wished that she had gone to college at the regular time (then she would have a job as a teacher and instill earlier in her kids the need for college), Sarah and Hope felt they wouldn't have done as well at an earlier age. After college, Sarah could say, "I'm a person too. I don't have to take it [nonsense from her husband]" (February 5, 1999). Living with an abusive husband, Lucy felt the college was her "getaway place. I hated to leave" (February 4, 1999). Polly spoke about how

helpful the teachers were once she got over her shyness about approaching them. She was able to get tutors if she was having trouble with an assignment, especially math.

All spoke of the foundation that college gave them for a good job so that they could raise their children better and support them financially. Jean spoke of it as the turning point in her life, others as a commodity they would not trade. Polly sums it up: "Whether I ever use it [education degree] towards teaching, I will always use it in life" (January 21, 1999). When asked what they would be doing had they not gone to college, most talked about being bored, wasting their time, carping at their husband, or making minimum-wage at jobs they hated. There are not many jobs available for women in this region.

Though some women felt that the college gave them a good foundation, Mary and Faith were particularly frustrated at the job market in this immediate area (for which they did not blame the college). Mary reflects: "When you have worked so hard for four years, you really feel like you wasted your time job-wise. But the things I learned in college, I have that knowledge that nobody can ever take away from me" (February 2, 1999). She goes on to relate how her psychology class helped her with her photography job and her science labs help her with her present job working for an environmental testing laboratory. Faith, Polly, Hope, and Mary spoke of the feeling they had that other young women were hired in place of them; they felt there was some age discrimination. Mary reflects their frustration: "The college prepared me to be an excellent teacher. If I had a classroom, I would be an excellent teacher. I have been passed over for a position by people who didn't make the grades that I made and who didn't write the units I wrote, who cheated their way through college" (February 2, 1999). Faith has waited so long for a permanent position, that she says, "When I do not get a position, I am basically used to it now" (January 26, 1999). Their frustrations are real whether they were discriminated against or not.

All of those working in the field they studied for at Preston College feel that they were adequately prepared. If they keep charts in their work, they had practiced in one of their classes. If

they need knowledge of certain psychological principles, they remember them from previous classes. Jean consults her old nursing texts for supplementary information for patients. If there were any disappointments (Sarah talked about not getting an A in an algebra class), they blamed themselves for not studying hard enough. Overall, the college received marks for life-changing effects.

Spouse and Children's Literacy

Since I was curious about what kind of family literacy atmosphere these women were surrounded by in their home life, I asked about their spouses' and children's reading and writing behavior. Like their fathers before them, many of these women's spouses read newspapers and sports magazines. More particularly the women reported their husbands preferred magazines like Lost Treasure and Dirt Rider Magazine to novels. Jean reported that her husband was good at fixing up cars, so he might read something related to that or to instructions for building something. Judith's husband participates in literate activities of watching the History, Discovery, and CNN channels and reports the information back to her when she comes home from work. Mary's husband is too ill from his lung disease to do much.

Many women read to their children growing up and looked with pleasure on seeing their own children enjoy reading. Faith read more to her older son than she did for her younger daughter, so that he was reading before he went to school. He liked to read comic books.

Children's Secondary and Postsecondary Education

One of the hopes of these women as stated earlier was that their coming to college might affect their children's decision to do the same when they were of age. The evidence is that the children are not choosing to enter college at a traditional age, though all but one have finished high school. The summary of the eleven high school graduates who have not chosen college will be treated in more depth in Chapter 7 under women as models.

Employment Since College

Seven of the eight women in my study are employed, though it may not be in the occupation they set out to attain. Some are underemployed but grateful for work since many are primary breadwinners. The one unemployed participant takes care of her daughter with cystic fibrosis, a fatal genetic disease which requires constant care. Unfortunately because of the job market in surrounding counties and because these women are too attached to home and families to move to other areas for jobs, they have met tremendous difficulties finding teaching positions. Only one of the five education majors secured a position within a year of her graduation. Three took substituting jobs on all levels from elementary to middle to junior and senior high school whether they were trained for that level or not.

Eventually, two of those women ended up in non-education jobs. Mary, who graduated in May, 1993, has taken odd jobs like photographer at K-Mart, a substitute teacher, and now a lab assistant for an environmental consulting firm. This employer has seen her capabilities and plans to train her to move beyond the clerical job. Though she would rather be teaching, she pointed out how helpful her college psychology classes were in her photography work, dealing with frantic parents and crying children. In her lab work, she is using skills from the science labs she took. She needed this steady job since her husband is disabled. The other woman, Polly, graduated in May, 1995, and had taken substitute teaching jobs to carry her through until this past January. Then she was offered the city clerk position in a nearby town. Now 42, she couldn't depend on the unstable nature of substituting. In the meantime she has helped her father and her second husband with bookkeeping for the sanitation business they have.

The three education majors who ended up in teaching are fortunate. Hope is teaching special education for kindergarten through 5th grade, but she has to commute twice a day over a two-lane curvy, mountainous road, 45 miles, a trip that takes seventy minutes or more one way depending on whether she ends up driving behind a coal truck. There was no opening at schools

near her home. Another education major, Faith, after graduating in December, 1993, has taken a series of substitute positions, finally getting a non-permanent position as Title I assistant teacher. Since her daughter in eighth grade still needs her, she feels that a permanent position is out of reach for now.

The most successful of the five is Judith who, after graduating in December of 1997, successfully landed a job as a junior high math teacher in October, 1998. During the time of our interview, she was serving her internship which every newly hired teacher must do. As described in "The Overview of the Kentucky Teacher Internship Program," this internship program "is structured to help intern teachers establish a foundation for lifelong professional growth" (C. Baker, personal communication, p. 9). She was guided by a committee of the principal, a resource teacher, and a teacher educator. When program requirements are met, "the committee makes a recommendation . . . regarding the provisional teaching certificate" (p.10). After the year is over, she is evaluated and can begin her tenure at the school where she is teaching.

Literacy on the Job

All of the women in this study use literacy in some way or other on their jobs. As clerk, Polly has to learn the bookkeeping system of the woman who preceded her. She screens the mayor's calls, writes messages, sends out bills and property taxes to residents. She pictured for me the massive ledgers she has to fill in, noting that she does more math than writing. She reads ordinances and minutes of city council meetings. Though she has not been trained for this kind of work, she feels that her college education impressed the hiring committee and that it provided the background to make her trainable.

Mary, a data entry clerk for the environmental testing lab, uses reading to look up information related to a lab sample that has come in and uses writing to write up the report for the client. She posts results on the computer, so is grateful for the computer skills that she learned at

Preston College. Mary develops quarterly reports for test results from the ponds which the lab tests regularly.

The teachers, Judith, Hope, and Faith, write lesson plans for their classes as well as reading materials to prepare for teaching their classes. In addition, Judith teaches reading and writing in her homeroom even though the rest of her load is mathematics. Hope teaches whatever the central office testing staff designates as the special education students' needs, so she can teach anything from language arts to math. She develops Individual Education Plans (IEPs) for each student in grades kindergarten through 5th grade. The bulk of her time with her 4th and 5th graders, however, appears to be in language arts. Reading on a lower level, they need material from earlier grades, but she never lets them know that. She helps them build sentences with word tiles. Faith fills out curriculum guidelines but does more reading than writing since she is teaching in the math and science area rather than in the language arts for which she was trained.

Sarah, Jean, and Lucy's literacy development on their jobs will be explored in the case studies.

Literacy at Home since College

All of the women who have children at home read to them and help them with their homework. Many spend time reading material on the computer. Polly spent part of her interview talking about the notes she writes to herself as reminders, and reflected on people who don't have reading and writing skills: "If I couldn't read, I would have to get into some kind of literacy program. I would HAVE to learn to read. I just don't know how people can live without it. And to read well is wonderful" (January 21, 1999). She goes on to describe her love of vocabulary and how she uses the dictionary constantly and urges her children to do the same when they ask her the meaning of a word. She also uses encyclopedias to look up something she doesn't know since "I don't want to take what somebody else says because I might not believe them." Besides those sources, she has a Physician's Desk Reference to look up drugs when she returns from the doctor's office. She

writes poetry as a direct result of having to write in language arts classes; she now has a folder which contains her poetry.

Judith talked about still loving to read novels when she gets a chance. Mary reads more than she watches TV and likes John Grisham, Danielle Steel, Steinbeck and all the Appalachian writers that she has read. She also writes poetry and writes her thoughts out in a journal of sorts on the computer when something bothers her; "if you don't want to talk to somebody about it, it helps to write about it" (February 2, 1999). She encourages her friends to do the same. She said that she had so much writing in her language arts classes that it was hard for her to evaluate if she were doing more reading and writing now.

Many are so exhausted when they get home from work and with family pressures, they have very little leisure time for reading more than the newspaper, for writing more than a grocery list. Judith and Hope talk about reading for themselves in the summer when school isn't in session, but they do take time to read to their grandchildren when they get a chance. Polly says that she reads more than before she went to college. Although there was no quantitative measure of literacy development, it appears that in most cases, women have developed their literacy to handle the demands of their job, a kind of reading and writing none of them did before college. In addition, they are involved in more activities outside their jobs like reading nursing journals, consulting textbooks that line their shelves at home, writing letters to communicate with people they don't have time to contact during the work week, and keeping journals to record and sort through their feelings. It appears that college has made them more aware of literacy than they had been before they came.

Job Advancement

Not content to remain in one position for too long, most of the employed women talked about job advancement. Since Preston College is only a four-year institution, they do not have many options. Morehead State University, 100 miles away over winding mountain roads, offers

some masters level classes on the PC campus, but the courses are mostly in education and business, so other majors may have difficulty getting programs in their expertise. Even education majors complain about offerings as they near completion of their program. The University of Kentucky is bringing their masters of social work to a nearby town 30 miles away, but the field is competitive. Having the leisure time to drive to these settings and to hold a full-time job is almost impossible. Some people pursue correspondence courses for that reason. Distance learning will one day come to this area and may provide a solution to these problems.

These women considered many alternatives to improving on the job (or changing jobs). Mary, presently working in the lab, would like to get a degree in English and work for a masters, "and maybe someday, I'll get to teach on the college level" (February 2, 1999). Hope was planning the summer of 1999 to go back for her masters either in special education or in teaching reading on the elementary level. Her further education helps her move up the salary scale in the Preston County School. Now that Judith has finished her internship, she will also begin making graduate school plans. Jean's plans include getting numerous nursing certifications and working for her masters in nursing through correspondence. Sarah has taken one class for her social work degree and hopes to resume again in the fall of 1999. Polly says that she would leave her clerk's job should a teaching position become available because it has more job security. What impressed me about these women is their belief that now their education is a lifelong process.

Church Literacy

Having lived here for 25 years and used to the Christian influence, I was surprised that many of these women do not regularly attend church as much as they did when they were growing up. For many, Sunday is the only day they have with their families.

The amount of literacy in their churches growing up depended on its location and membership. Many churches had opportunities for Bible reading but did not have bulletins or other signs of church literacy. There were some exceptions. Mary was secretary of the women's club at

her church and took minutes of the meetings. Being a good cook, she also put together a church cookbook. In addition to a bulletin, the church she attends has a woman who regularly sends cards to sick members. Others were unaware of literacy activities but could talk about their churches growing up.

They were all involved in reading the Bible in church and Sunday school. Hope spoke of the importance of minutes of the Old Regular Baptist church. Lucy says that her church had hymnals which had to be read to follow along with the song. For Polly's church "on the creek where I live," there was not much writing except for papers for Bible study. Rather than a bulletin, someone in Jean's church stands up and announces what is going on in the service.

Use of Technology

Although I asked no interview question about technology, the women talked about its presence in their personal and professional life. Owning a personal computer is also an indicator of how well some of them are doing financially in comparison to the homes they grew up in. Sarah uses the computer to format letters for personal communication; at work she uses the counseling center's laptop to do her daily, monthly, quarterly, and annual reports on her assigned foster care families. Polly's family plays strategy games on the computer, and she uses it for e-mails. Mary says that her computer skills are one of the most valuable things she learned at Preston College; it enables her now to post lab reports and take care of other communication related to the laboratory tests performed at her place of work. At home, Mary describes her journal as a floppy disc on the computer. Jean and other nurses use the computer to check on medicines for the patients to whom they are assigned and to order new ones from the pharmacy if needed. Judith uses the computer for her lesson plans and other school activities. On the other hand, there is Lucy who says that her mother with an eighth-grade education can operate a computer beautifully, and she with her college education cannot handle anything more difficult than a microwave.

Summary

The literacy themes that these whistlin' and crowin' women shared with me are too numerous to share. What struck me most about these interviews was the extensive literacy of their mothers, the courage these eight women took to break the stereotypical behavior of a good wife and mother to return to college, and the almost unconditional praise for the benefits of their college education, even for those who did not get jobs immediately. From these eight women, I chose Jean, Lucy, and Sarah whose case studies follow in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 6

PORTRAITS: JEAN, LUCY, & SARAH

Introduction

After I interviewed the eight women, I chose three women based on the criteria set up in my purposive sampling. I looked for the following:

- Time out of school (from four to six years);
- School achievement (women who were minimal, average, and outstanding students);
- Career achievement (women who are unemployed, employed);
- women who were mothers.

Since all eight of the women had such moving stories, it was difficult to make choices, but after much deliberation, I chose Jean, Lucy, and Sarah who represent the criteria listed above. They graduated from Preston College in the years 1993, 1996, and 1997 respectively. In terms of school achievement, the women had an A, a B, and a C grade in my class. Their overall grade-point averages were 3.68, 2.91, and 2.55. Two are employed in the field they studied for; one is unemployed because she is caring for a toddler with cystic fibrosis. All are mothers with a total of six children among them. Below are their stories. (See Appendix F for final interview with case studies.)

Jean: Feisty & Energetic

Jean is what people refer to as "feisty." Short and stocky, she is full of spunk and energy. I imagine her as a child running around with a frog or snake in her hands scaring other children. She still has a gleam in her eye which shows now that she enjoys life and especially the jokes it plays on people. She is an industrious nurse, working long shifts and ending them with as much energy as she begins them.

Pre-College Literacy

Schooling

As an active child, Jean did not read much, though her mother and sisters did: "I was more of the hands-on—crafts, doing stuff with my hands. I read just enough to get by" (February 11, 1999). School work was hard and she "found it hard to focus" (April 29, 1999). She quit school at the end of her sophomore year to get married. Thinking that maybe her school experience might not have been positive, I asked her to talk about it. Except for one English teacher who "recognized every individual, every student, and she didn't look down [on you]," Jean described teachers who didn't create interest for her (and others like her) because they looked on teaching as a job rather than a vocation: "You take a child [like me] who is not interested [in school] with a teacher like that, then the child will never be interested" (April 29, 1999). Her main reason for leaving was to get married. Though some married students returned to school, Jean found nothing interesting to keep her there.

Home and Family

After her children came along, Jean read stories to them and helped them with their homework but regrets now that she didn't take reading to them more seriously. When she read to her children, "we did it for fun. We did it when we'd have time on our hands. But I think now that it needs to be worked into a child's system so that it becomes second nature to them. If they have a stronger background in reading, it's a lot easier for them" (April 29, 1999). She intends to read diligently to her grandchildren when they come along, so they will have an easier time in school and go further than she or her children did. Jean says, "I feel that I didn't do as good a job with MY kids as I will with my grandkids [in terms of] their reading. I think I should have done more. I don't think they got the outlook that they could have gotten. Once they [grandchildren] get used to reading, they can go anywhere they want to" (April 15, 1999). A foundation of reading that permeates a child's life will help them stay in school, be successful, and want more education after high school,

according to Jean. Jean probably felt so strongly about this topic because of her own difficulty with reading.

Observing her pre-college literacy, a person might assume that Jean would be the least likely to ever contemplate returning to college. She defines her personal and societal role:

> I was the cook and the cleaner and everything. When he [husband] worked in the mines, he never had to do anything. I always did everything at the house. We'd work outside together some, but inside the house he never did anything. When he worked in the mines, I'd get up every morning. I'd have his breakfast ready, I'd have his [lunch] bucket packed, I'd have his clothes laid out, I'd have everything ready. So all he'd do was just get up and put his clothes on and go to work. And then when he'd come home, I'd have his supper waiting on him and his clothes ready to take a bath and everything. And that's the way it was for almost 20 years. (February 11, 1999)

With those duties so neatly lined out and caring for her children, Jean did not have much time for many other activities. Her returning to college must have been quite an upset.

General Equivalency Diploma

The next part of her literacy development occurred eighteen years later when she decided to take the GED "just for fun because one of my friends had taken it, and she talked me into going with her. So I really didn't put everything I had into it. I just took it. Well, then I got the results back, and I passed it. I did really well" (February 11, 1999).

Getting the results of her GED occurred about the time her husband developed black lung disease and had to quit work. Her children were teens and old enough to take care of themselves, and "because their dad couldn't work, that gave me the opportunity to go back to college" (February 11, 1999). Although she knew "from the beginning that I wanted to be a nurse," she applied first for a respiratory therapy program which turned her down. She is actually grateful for that rejection since the nursing field offers more opportunities for advancement than respiratory therapy would have. Her next step was to take the ACT to get into the Preston College nursing program. She took it but only scored 18 and needed a 20. After her pre-nursing classes, she raised it to a 20. Making the decision to come to college was a momentous one for Jean, but her tenacity spurred her forward into the academic world (February 11, 1999).

Composition Class

Having dropped out in the tenth grade and having done minimal reading and writing in the interim, Jean had some adjustment to college. In her own words, coming back was "just like starting school over again. But you can take anybody that's willing to learn and teach them anything. It just takes the will to" (April 29, 1999). Since reading and writing were not subjects that she was comfortable with, she generally learned better if the subject were demonstrated, and she could do it hands-on, like many of her nursing courses.

Jean describes her adjustment to her freshmen composition class: "I didn't know what words to put where, how to express [what I wanted to say]. But I can say that in your class, I learned how to express it, how to put a story together with the introduction, the body, and the conclusion" (February 11, 1999). As her teacher, I saw great potential in Jean. Though I did not realize that she had dropped out of high school until these interviews, I knew that many returning students lacked recent experience with the written code. Actually Jean caught on quickly with the help of peer group feedback and my comments; she had a B average going into the proficiency exam.

Writing Proficiency Exam

This exam (described in Chapter 5) is a two-hour written exam used as the final for all first-semester English composition classes. In response to a large number of students' failing the second part of the composition sequence, the proficiency was developed to determine if students had the skills they needed to be able to write the research paper. The instructor grades the exam first, and then, another English faculty member grades it. Should there be a disagreement between the original two, another professor will resolve the dilemma. Students who fail have a chance to re-take the exam before the next semester starts. If they fail again, then they re-enroll in English 111. If students pass the exam, then the instructor averages the grades together and adds the score to

the semester grade. This exam creates a great deal of anxiety even if students have decent grades because they cannot pass the class without passing the proficiency.

Unfortunately, Jean failed that exam twice, so she re-enrolled for the class the following semester, passed the proficiency, and received a B for the class. She reflects on the first-semester experience:

> I was devastated. But it [failing] wasn't as bad because I felt that [the test] really wasn't adequate because I had a B in my writing and class work. What helped me get by it so easily was that I knew one girl in the class who didn't care that much for class, who goofed off most of the time, and who didn't make good grades. But when she passed her proficiency, I said, "No, no, it doesn't compare."

Later she said that failing made her more determined to do better the next time which she did the next semester.

Though the college has strong rationale for the exam and though another semester made Jean more comfortable with writing, she points to some problems of the proficiency. With a two-hour writing prompt, students may experience many kinds of interference. They might not find a topic that inspires them; they may be too nervous in a timed situation; other factors may intervene to make it a bad day; and their finished product may not be exemplary of their semester work. In her example, a weak, lazy student lucked out and passed while she failed.

Jean's writing was full of details, and she used dialogue well. One of her essays in my class was a process paper entitled, "Grandma's Chocolate Gravy."

I nominated it for Voices from the Hills, the English Department publication used as a required text (also explained in Chapter 5). Teachers nominate essays from their classes to be placed in this bound paper covered book for the upcoming year. The editorial board decides which essays are included. The concept is that students learn more from each other's essays than from published authors excerpted in most composition readers. Her essay was printed the following year. She explains the process to her audience, Allie, the ten-year-old daughter of weekend guests

for whom Jean was trying to fix breakfast, using dialogue throughout (see Appendix E for complete text). Below is an excerpt.

> "Allie," I said, "I still remember the conversation my grandmother and I would have every morning. She would walk into the bedroom and say, 'Jean, it is time to get up. Come and eat your breakfast, I have to go milk the cow.' I would reply in a low voice, 'Not right now; I want to sleep just a little bit longer.' Then as she turned to go out of the bedroom, she would say, 'I made chocolate gravy. You'd better get it while it's hot.' Those were the magic words—CHOCOLATE GRAVY. Before she got to the kitchen I was right behind her."
>
> "Sometimes I would get to sit and watch my grandma go through the steps to make chocolate gravy. She would use these ingredients: 1 ½ cups sugar, 4 tablespoons flour, 4 tablespoons cocoa, ½ cup milk. First she would combine the sugar, flour, and cocoa in a bowl, making sure they were all mixed together. Then she would pour the dry ingredients into a cooker on the stove. Next, Grandma would add the milk and water, stirring until thoroughly mixed. She placed the cooker on medium heat until it started to boil. Grandma would stir the mixture until it was just right, making sure not to let it scorch." (Voices, p. 12)

The essay reflects Jean's expansive personality. She creatively uses a younger audience to direct her process and using dialogue adds interest to what might be a mere recipe recitation.

Beyond my class, she described another adjustment in overcoming academic obstacles in a nursing class where she did an assignment based on poor advice from a relative. When she got the assignment back all marked in red, she talked to her teacher who encouraged Jean to learn to trust herself and to avoid non-professional advice. "When I put what I did on the paper, there weren't half as many red marks. I mean you can take all the pointers and help you can get, but you really have to do it your own way" (April 29, 1999). That experience built confidence in her own abilities.

To fully understand the material in her other classes, Jean describes reading the material the night before and then having it reinforced with lecture and demonstration the next class period. She took three and a half years to complete the two-year nursing program, mainly because she had so many pre-nursing classes to take. She graduated with a 2.9 GPA.

Effects of College on Family

To determine the effect that Jean's literacy had on her family, I interviewed her lovely twenty-year-old daughter, Shannon, one afternoon. This interview illustrated the intergenerational effects of literacy development.

In response to the effect of her mother's returning to school when Shannon was fourteen, she remarked:

> It was a big change. She had been at home for fourteen years as the mother. Supper every evening at 3 o'clock and just there all the time when you needed her. And then when she went back, we [her dad and two brothers] all had to pull together and support her and take on responsibilities as far as washing dishes, doing laundry, sweeping, mopping, fixing supper, helping each other take on her responsibilities. (April 15, 1999).

The adjustment was difficult, but everyone pulled together, including her older and younger brothers who were used to being waited on.

Though Jean had more school work herself, she would always make time for her children's homework: "We came first, and she did her studying at bedtime" (Shannon, April 15, 1999). Jean describes the little night light she bought to clip on the top of her side of the bed which would enable her to study until 1 or 2 a.m. unless there was a test or something else when she might have to study later (February 11, 1999). To illustrate Jean's literacy, Shannon says that her mother read books, newspapers, and magazines while the children were growing up. Jean also wrote letters to family in Ohio. While she was in my class, Jean was able to help her daughter with her high school writing, especially, how to put an essay together, "how to bring it all together, and [to know] where it goes" (February 11, 1999).

When I asked her what changes she saw in her mom from the start of college to the finish, Shannon answered: "She always worked hard and never let anything bring her down. And it's like now she's got a lot of self-confidence. She's a lot more determined. And I think that she's even going to go back [for more education]! There's no obstacle too big for her" (April 15, 1999). She says that her mother took the step to go back to college in the face of people like her dad's parents

who said that Jean should stay at home. Shannon says her mother let her in-laws know: "'This is what I want, and this is what I'm going to do, and I'm going to make it regardless.' My mother has given me that confidence" (April 15, 1999). This determination is a role model for Shannon who just graduated from the Licensed Practical Nursing (LPN) program through Mayo Vocational School.

Jean's textbooks went everywhere with the family. Jean explains how she worked so that her studying did not interrupt the family schedule: "We'd always go places that we always went to. But the only thing was, my books went too. We would even sometimes just go to the grocery store at Preston. But my books went too. We went on vacation to North Carolina. My books went too. If I got a spare moment, I read" (February 11, 1999). She even took her books to football games and other places so that she could read while she sat in the bleachers.

When Shannon graduated from high school, she enrolled in the LPN program. Among all areas of medicine that she was exposed to in her program, she most enjoyed the area of psychiatry, so when she gets her RN or BSN, Shannon hopes to work in that area. When I asked her why, she paused and said, "It's just different people, different attitudes, different minds, different ways of thinking and despite these differences, they are still people" (April 15. 1999). Jean, sitting in the interview with us, observed that Shannon was a compassionate person who treated patients as people and not as problems. Shannon added, "When I walked in [to the psychiatric ward], you saw no smiles. And it was like at the end of the day, everybody was bragging on how my smile made them smile. And everybody was smiling. I had them playing games" (April 15, 1999). Jean noted that psychiatric nurses are in great demand, so Shannon should have no trouble getting a job once she has the qualifications.

In terms of her own literacy, Shannon spoke about all the writing she had to do for charting hospital records and reading of the nursing texts in the LPN program (which her mother said were similar to ones she had at Preston College). Out of 36 who entered the 15-month LPN program, Shannon was one of twelve who graduated, so her academic performance was good. She

experienced every kind of health care including home health care, a doctor's office, nursing homes, and the health department in addition to all aspects of hospital nursing. Shannon enjoys reading nursing texts and journals as her mother does.

Recently married, Shannon likes to read nursing books and journals, home and cooking magazines (for the recipes) when she is home (which is a trailer behind her mother's house). It appears that Jean's influence has directly determined the future of her daughter whom I predict will go far.

Family Support

To add to Shannon's observations about family support, Jean describes her husband's support as "one hundred percent" (February 11, 1999). When Jean began college, he began helping her with her chores and now has taken them over since she works the night shift. He would help her with her tests even though he only had an eighth-grade education himself. Describing his one hundred percent support, Jean said, "He never, not one time, asked me not to, let alone tell me not to [finish college]" (February 11, 1999).

His parents, her in-laws, did not feel the same ("His family is more like pre-historic age") and felt that she should be home doing cooking, cleaning, and caring for children. Her own parents encouraged her; she is one of three girls all of whom have a college degree with one working on a masters in social work. She portrays her mother: "She didn't go back to school or anything. She just had the family. And that's what kind of sometimes amazes me where she graduated high school and then he [father] didn't even finish, and then all, we didn't have that growing up, but still yet here they produced three girls and every one of them has got a degree" (April 29, 1999).

Jean successfully completed her nursing program in three and a half years. She graduated in May, 1997, and was hired at the local hospital in July, 1997.

Post-college Literacy

Pre-Shift in MICU

Once Jean began her job, she realized how crucial reading and writing were to being a successful nurse. She has progressed from her pre-college literacy of reading to children and reading newspapers and magazines for herself to reading nursing texts and journals, in addition to the correspondence courses and testing material for the advanced certification she is working for in nursing. In her writing, Jean has progressed to 50% or more of her day being taken up with writing nursing assessment notes.

To determine her post-college literacy, I shadowed Jean for four of her twelve-hour shift in the Medical Intensive Care Unit (MICU) of our local hospital on April 4, 1999, and interviewed her afterwards. The reading and writing Jean does on her job is the foundation of safe and documented patient care. Because she is busy caring for the physical needs of patients, she uses shortened phrases and acronyms to facilitate quick but accurate notes. She is never without pen and paper while she works, stuffing them into one of her pockets while she checks an IV. Incredibly, Jean has not had a formal orientation to the MICU nurse duties because they are so understaffed. She plunged in, using skills learned in the heart unit and asking for help when she needs it.

I was impressed during the visit with how prepared Jean was when she came in to be debriefed by the previous shift's nurses. When I made that observation in our follow-up interview, she said, "I go in 45 minutes early. And when I get there, I can look in [the charts], and I get my list of patients, and I pick up any little odds and ends that have been done or what they [nurses] leave off there. And I build on it" (April 29, 1999). In contrast, the other two nurses on duty with Jean came in with blank sheets of paper to record data. (This perhaps parallels her reading the class material the night before so that she would understand the material better in class the next day.)

As she hears about each patient from the three previous shift nurses, Jean adds to her notes. As I observed in my field notes: "Using their own nursing notes and a huge notebook filled

with doctor's orders among many other things, each nurse [from the previous shift] kindly and competently reviewed assessment of patient's conditions, medicines, what to watch for, if the patient had visitors, etc., for the patients in her charge (usually two). They noted restraints, tube feedings, allergies, physical therapy" (Field notes, April 4, 1999) (for sample of field notes, see Appendix G)

After an hour of being updated by these nurses, Jean and the two nurses on the night shift talked about which patients they would take by room number. Jean took number 2, a 52 year-old woman dying of heart failure, and number 6, an 82 year-old man in isolation because of his resistance to an antibiotic.

Shift Begins

As she did her work, Jean added to the sheet of paper with the notes she had taken from looking at the patients' charts and hearing what the other shift nurses had reported. Eventually she recorded all of this on the nursing assessment form which is kept for as long as the patient is in the hospital. This form records items such as:

> general appearance, mental status, skin, pulmonary status, cardiac status, GI status, bowel sounds, feeding tube, and renal information. Nurses fill that out, then continue on an extra report form for follow-through for the entire time the patient is in MICU. The extra report form records vital signs, hemo dynamic, cardio-pulmonary, neuro, lab, intake, output, critical care flow sheet. Jean charts every two hours. All is attached to the form which becomes part of the notebook. (Field notes, April 4, 1999).

In her former job on the fourth floor, she did assessments every two hours with a full assessment of the patient and their medicines at the beginning. Then she would go back every two hours and close to the end of her shift, she would reassess several things, including going through charts and checking medicines (February 11, 1999). On the days that she relieved the charge nurse, Jean had additional paperwork.

She describes her own system for taking notes: "I guess I find my own way of doing things, like a system. I've got my own nursing assessment values. I go from top to bottom, and it's a lot easier. I can write it a lot faster like that once I get my system down pat" (April 29, 1999).

As she visits the two patients in her care, Jean continues to add information to the sheet she began taking notes on at the beginning of her shift, and then transfers the information to the permanent nursing assessment form. All of this information is crucial to the attending physician as well as the nurses that follow her night shift when they consult the notes.

As the evening progresses, one of her patients who was in isolation and not in need of intensive care was transferred to another floor. Before they moved him, Jean had to transfer the notes from her sheet to the nursing assessment form. She recorded, "awake, arouses easily, and talks incoherently at times." She observes dressings, the medicines he is taking, the site injury (hip replacement), the color of his urine in the catheter, and other items. Compared to the nurse notes of the prior shift in the patient notebook, Jean appeared to be more specific. As required, she signs her name after each time entry. Occasionally, she records, "no change noted," "linens changed," "no distress noted," "isolation precautions in use." Additionally, she records position of bed side rails, whether the call bell is within reach, what the heart rhythm is, when meds are given, and finally, "will continue to assess for further needs." For the transfer of the staph patient, she gave the nurse's name whom she called to initiate it, the charge nurse's name, and the name of the doctor who authorized the transfer (Field notes, April 4, 1999).

The other patient in her care that night was dying, and the family had requested that the medical staff withdraw her life support systems at midnight. Jean received specific instructions from the woman's attending physician on how gradually to withdraw life support. She died early the next morning.

In addition to writing, Jean uses reading constantly. She began her shift by reading the patient charts, and as my field notes attest:

> Another thing Jean has to check is all the medicines (meds) that each of her patients is taking. She reads through the doctor's orders (in a huge red notebook), and as she checks, she writes her initials next to the med. That shows the next nurse that Jean was aware of meds and their exact amount indicated. She checks as far back as the patient has been in ICU.

> In their room, Jean checked each patient's heart monitor, checked the various fluids that were going in intravenously into their bodies. Many of the monitors are computerized. (Field notes, April 4, 1999).

She must also be able to read lab tests that come back from various labs. For example, an arterial blood graph would show whether patients "need more oxygen or have their oxygen turned down, if they're getting too much oxygen pushed in" (April 29, 1999). At one point she looked in Nurses IV Drug Handbook to check on the medicines for one patient to be sure of the medicine's compatibility with the fluids going into the patient's system. She also checked on availability of medicines for each dosage during her shift, so that she could get what she needed from the pharmacy before it closes from midnight to 7 a.m. They needed a bag of fluid for one patient, keyed it in to the computer (which has every patient's medicines listed), checked what they needed, and called to ask if the pharmacy could send it up right away. She checks blood levels because antibiotics can get toxic. All of the information she records goes in the patient notebook which follows them wherever they go, so that when the patient was transferred, the notebook went with him (Field notes, April 4, 1999).

Cooperative Nurses

Observing Jean and her co-workers was a pleasant and positive experience for me. I was most impressed by the caring of the nurses for one another. There was no territoriality among them with regard to their patients. If a nurse needed help, then another offered it without complaining. In trying to transfer the staph patient, one nurse worked on calling the physician and whoever else she needed to in order to procure a private room so that he could continue to be isolated. At the same time, the charge nurse and three nurses from another unit helped to transfer the patient to a gurney that would in turn transport him to his new room. During this time, Jean was getting the patient notebook ready, recording her notes about everything she had done so far on her shift. She sent the notebook ahead except for the nursing notes because she wanted to share them with me for the purpose of this study. The housekeeping staff came in immediately in

isolation garb to clean the room he had been isolated in. They needed the bed for another patient in the emergency room (Field notes, April 4, 1999).

The other nurses made me feel welcome and talked to me easily. Once they knew I was Jean's former English teacher (I had actually taught one of the prior shift nurses as well), I heard all kinds of comments that illustrated their vision of writing teachers as grammar police. The charge nurse said that he always hated writing in school. Another nurse noted that "we don't write in complete sentences here," and another, "Don't check my work!" They don't view their own writing which records crucial information with lifesaving effects as legitimate or correct.

One of the nurses on duty with Jean made the most pointed comment about the importance of the nursing notes. She said that she sometimes felt that they were writing to protect themselves and the hospital from legal problems as opposed to recording information that would help save lives. She does acknowledge though, that one mistake by a nurse could cause the patient to suffer and, worst-case scenario, die, so each nurse records as accurately as she can. Jean seems to be overly conscientious about her notes.

Job Advancement

What illustrates Jean's literacy development more than her job literacy is her desire for more learning whether it means an increase in pay or not. After her graduation in May, 1997, she was hired in July, 1997, as a staff nurse on the midnight shift and has quickly moved through the ranks. From the time I first interviewed her until the time of this writing, she has been promoted and has filled two positions. During our first interview in February, she was the fourth floor (heart patients) relief charge nurse. Her duties when the regular charge nurse is off-duty are making "all the assignments. I observe what the other [nurses] are doing, make sure everything goes smoothly. Then I've got extra paperwork to fill out. Then I look out for the on-coming shift and make sure they have enough work" (February 11, 1999). In her work on the fourth floor, she learned much about heart patients, but she had "gone as far as I can in the learning process. I mean, I could stay here

and maybe eventually become charge nurse. But there's not enough goal there. It's going to be the same thing over and over" (February 11, 1999). She thought there would be challenge in the MICU and in February had applied for that position that she had at the time of the second interview in April.

In addition to seeking advancement in her positions, Jean wants to learn more than she is learning in required, hospital-sponsored continuing education programs and in-service workshops for nurses. To qualify for working in the proposed open heart surgery unit which should open within the next five years, Jean wants to pursue a masters in critical care nursing through a correspondence course from Regency College in New York. Students work at their own pace with "the book learning, then clinicals," and when they are ready, take their test in Cincinnati or Lexington. She would then have a Masters in Nursing, her long-term goal.

In the meantime, Jean is seeking certification for Intravenous Care Nursing. For training, she attended a review class at the local community college where "they give you a list of articles that you can get at the library about different kinds of IV accesses and angiopaths and stuff like that. And then they give you a list of books that you can buy, money out of your pocket. But if you're really dedicated or really want to do it, then you'll buy a couple of books" (April 29, 1999). She says that it takes a lot of studying of signs and symptoms of different diseases, knowing medications and IV solutions for those diseases. The test for the certification is twice a year and has a 60% pass rate because of its difficulty. If she successfully passes the exam, she will have the letters, ICRN, placed on her nursing badge along with her R. N. She will then have to keep up her certification with 30 contact hours of classes every two years.

For Critical Care Nursing Certification, she needs 1700 contact hours which she plans on accumulating by next year with hours in the MICU. After that, she can put the initials CCRN on her badge. Neither of these certifications or masters degree incurs an automatic raise in pay, but they do increase her employability in other areas.

Her method of studying for these certifications illustrates her accumulating literacy. To understand the material she reads, she develops flash cards to study. She reads the material, then takes copious notes and quizzes herself with the flash cards. In answer to the percentage of time she writes on the job, she says, "Fifty percent because as many notes as I've got to check and everything. When I'm home in my free time, what I'm doing is making flash cards and taking notes out of a book. So I'm doing a majority of writing at home [as a result of] now while I'm studying" (April 29, 1999). (Her notes for that exam are exhibited in Figure 2 below).

When I asked her about literacy since college, Jean said she feels that she is doing more reading and writing than she did in college. She single-mindedly pursues her interest in patient diseases. She says that "if we get a patient on the floor with something we don't know or haven't heard of, I'll go home and I'll read up on it. I'll drag my old medical books out and look through and see what I can find. And like for the lab values or somebody's got something out of whack, I go back, and I just try to figure out why and read it" (February 11, 1999). In addition to test material, she reads her nursing texts and nursing journals like RN and American Journal of Nursing regularly at home. She looks for information on "new medication, new techniques, new illnesses, old illnesses, anything to do with nursing" (February 11, 1999).

Home Literacy

What is ironic about all of this is Jean's continued insistence that she is not the reader in the family because she doesn't read books like Harlequin romances or Stephen King books as her mother and sisters do. She says, "Mother is still a really good reader. They all are. I'm the odd ball" (April 29, 1999). Like Lucy below, she associates reading with fictional novels and prefers to watch the movies based on the novels rather than reading them herself. When I mentioned that she did so much reading related to her job and shouldn't feel bad about not being a novel reader, she responded that she might pick up more reading if she had more leisure time. Presently if she

43 III ①

D. Acid - Base Balance

Definition - the amount of hydrogen ions in the blood which create a Ph value

Ph - the amount of hydrogen ion concentration a solution c a ph of 7.0 neutral

Acids - contain hydrogen ions

Alkalies - Posses no hydrogen ions, but may accepts them from acids

Kidney - bicarb

42 III ⑤

6 Burns 3-24° phase

1st 24° loss Phase - cell damaged capillaries "leak" flu
deficit | hyperkalemia | hyponatremia
Oliguria Fluid resuctition, Monitor for ↑K+

2nd 24° Stabilization - cell seal "leaking" stops
compensation begins. SI ↑ in urine
↑ in urine out put Level off fluids

3rd 24° Reabsorption phase - Fluids shifts back to the blood stream | monitor out put urine ↑. Reduce fluid Interstital edema shifts to Plasma.

Figure 2. Jean's flashcards for studying

reads at all, it's in the nursing field; "If I do keep up with anything, it has to do with nursing" (April 29, 1999). My instinct after talking to her is that if she has leisure time, she is going to be involved in a physical project.

Jean and her husband began their married life making payments and living in a trailer. When they sold it, they built their first house, then another two-story house. "We built it. It's ours. We built it with our hands. And we owe nothing on it" (February 11, 1999). When she was nervous while studying for her nursing boards, she and her husband built a gazebo over their creek bed. Knowing how hard it would be for her husband after he was declared disabled from black lung to sit around while she was working, she borrowed money to get a 1951 Chevrolet for him to rebuild. Now he is helping a neighbor rebuild an old car. She states so aptly, "I like to learn, and I know that reading is a big important thing, but most of our [work] is creative stuff" (February 11, 1999). She learns in a multitude of ways.

In addition to all of the other activities in which she is involved, Jean makes homemade quilts, embroiders, and helps her husband build outside furniture and as noted two houses. She also subscribes to the local paper and owns a set of encyclopedias and handicraft books.

When I asked her if she felt more financial security now, she answered, "Definitely. I know that (sigh) everything's a little [unstable labor conditions] right now, but I feel that if I was to—especially being an RN—if I do lose my job at Preston Methodist, I feel that if I wanted to move to another place or something like that, I think I could find one [job] somewhere else. It might take a little while, but I think I could find one" (April 29, 1999). During college they had to rely on his disability check and her financial aid loans; now they are talking about getting a place in Tennessee to fish and farm in their retirement.

In addition to financial security, Jean feels that her nursing education gives her something "nobody can take away from you." She has more self-confidence after college with the knowledge

that "I'm just as good as anybody but no better" (April 29, 1999). She is proud that she graduated from our college's nursing program which has the reputation in her words for being hard compared to the local community college's nursing program. She says that nurses who graduate from Preston College end up with jobs at Preston Methodist Hospital and "they're still working there" (April 29, 1999). Looking back at her college experience, Jean says that going back "gave me an idea seeing where my strengths are" (February 11, 1999).

Effects on Family

Most important to Jean is the effect she has had on her children. In addition to our portrait of Shannon above, her two sons believe in education, though college is not for these "hands-on" learners like their mother. Her older son went to the local vocational school and didn't feel challenged enough, so he quit and is presently working construction. He wants to go back to school when he can save up enough money for it. Her younger son, still a junior in high school, has to be forced to do his homework. He wants to go to vocational school when he graduates. Jean says that "school has never been his thing. I don't know whether it was challenging enough for him or what" (February 11, 1999).

When I asked her what inspires her, she said:

> I think it's just setting an example for my children and then knowing that I've got a story to tell my grandchildren. And that can always help. I think it will help. I think I will be a strong influence on them, especially, like I said, the reading of books. I know that I'll make a difference. And that little difference, to me, will be worthwhile. Better than running for President. (Laughter.) (April 29, 1999)

Besides the legacy she has left her children, Jean has a legacy for her grandchildren—they will not, if she has anything to say about it, drop out of school as she did. Though Jean cannot necessarily change poor teacher attitudes, she can correct the reason she felt that school wasn't interesting to her, not liking to read. For that reason, she wants to build a love of reading and thirst for learning in her grandchildren.

Summary

Jean defines a literate person as someone "who doesn't think that they know it all and there's always something to learn. Even with nursing skills, I feel that I don't know it all, and I just know a little bit. But if you know that, and you're willing to work for it, you'll learn" (April 29, 1999). She feels strongly that reading and writing have been her key to literate development. (See Table 4 below for Jean's post-college literacy development.)

Table 4: Post-College Literacy Development: Jean

JEAN	
WORK	*Reading:* Charts, doctor's orders, lab tests, drug handbooks *Writing:* Notes made throughout shift, nursing assessment, initials notes and changes, patient notebooks *Technology:* Check patient pharmacy records, order medicines *Job advancement:* Studying for the following certifications: IVRN, ICRN, CCRN
HOME	*Reading:* House plans, handicraft books, encyclopedias, RN & Journal of Nursing, college nursing texts, tri-weekly newspaper, flashcards and study guides for advanced certifications. Prefers working with hands to reading novels. *Writing:* Taking notes for test purposes, highlighting for emphasis *Technology:* Medical pages on internet at home to look up diseases and medicines for patients

Lucy: Humorous & Faithful

Lucy is a 37-year-old woman of large stature with dark hair and glasses whose sense of humor has held her in good stead throughout her life. Had Lucy known Jean, they would have run in the hills together. I almost didn't get a chance to talk to Lucy as this excerpt from an e-mail to my dissertation director illustrates:

> Had the best interview ever on Thursday with a woman who missed two appointments and whom I thought I would never be able to talk to. After the second missed appointment, I saw her in the grocery store. She felt badly that she had missed again. Not wanting to push her, I said to call me and let me know of a good time to talk, not really expecting to hear from her since her lapses might have meant that she hadn't wanted to talk. She called me the next day and we met the day after in my office. (Sohn, e-mail, 1999)

Lucy describes herself "as an open book, the person in the doctor's office who will tell you their life story and carry on a conversation" (February 4, 1999). If I had missed my chance to know this remarkable woman, my life would have been diminished.

Pre-College Literacy

Lucy grew up as the middle child in a family of seven children; she says jokingly, "the good one. The neglected one" (April 22, 1999). Her mother finished eighth-grade and held numerous jobs as Lucy was growing up; her father "graduated from high school, and then he went to vocational school where he learned how to be an electrician. Then he went on to work in a furniture store as a salesman, delivery man, all-around fix-it guy" (February 4, 1999). Her mother read books and detective magazines, and she wrote poetry and songs. The Bible was always a central feature of their lives; her mother also taught Sunday school at the local church.

She describes the home she grew up in with great affection: "We had no running water, no electricity. We had to burn coal and carry our water, and we were happy as we could be. We eventually had electricity, but we never did have running water unless we ran up the hill and back down to get it" (February 4, 1999). They did not have a telephone but had access to her grandfather's in emergency. Widespread phone service did not exist in this area until the late 1970s, so there was no one to call. They had a television but no cable, so they rigged some metal wire on the mountain to make an antenna and got three stations.

Everyone helped with the garden and work around the house. She tells about days where they would "leave the house at 8:30 in the morning and not come home until dark, and Mom would never know where we were and not worry about us as we roamed the hills and in the creek bed. She knew we were safe" (February 4, 1999).

When she described her elementary school experience, Lucy used a term that I had not heard of in describing her elementary and secondary school teachers-- "generational" which she defined as "one generation after another of the same family. They [the teachers] had their favorites" (February 4, 1999). Her relationship with them was not positive: "I was from a low-income family, and they had to teach me. And that's basically the only relationship I had with them" (April 22, 1999). They had their favorites and Lucy and her family were not part of that group. She elaborates:

> Everyday that I came to school, she [the teacher] would have something to say about my clothing. Everyday. I was in sixth grade. And every time I came to school, she might say, "Well, it looks like Lucy left her skirt at home and wore her shirt." So one day I told her, "Well, if you want me to wear it, buy it for me." (February 4, 1999)

When I asked if she was made fun of for the way she talked, she said that students and teachers all spoke the same because they were from the same region. She thought the reason for the abuse was because "I'm obese, and I was as a child. I've never been small. So that plus the fact that we were seven kids in our family, and my dad didn't have a real high income job" led the teachers to feel free to treat them poorly (February 4, 1999). When both children and teachers ridiculed her, it was too much for Lucy.

Though she did well in math, Lucy alluded to a reading problem in both interviews. If so, then going to school may have been frustrating. During the time she attended elementary school, there was not as much knowledge about learning difficulties, so the teachers may have set her aside as a slower student. It came as no surprise to me that she mentioned no influential teacher in her life.

During her high school years, Lucy wrote poetry and short stories for herself, but she cannot remember ever writing an essay in school. In addition to her schoolwork, Lucy worked at a major chain store from the time she was 16, moving from department to department and ending up as head cashier. Her pre-college years were uneventful except for the times she enjoyed with her family; "What we did was a novel in itself" (February 4, 1999).

College Literacy

Lucy was one of the few women in my study who went directly from high school into college—for a short while. After a semester, she quit college because "I was tired of school. I was the first of seven children to graduate from high school and the first to go on to college. But after awhile, my grandfather became ill, and we were close. So instead of going to classes, I was watching him and trying to work. So I just dropped out for ten years, got married, and had a little boy" (February 4, 1999). Later she expands on the details: "I was more or less flunking out. It was either I leave, or they were going to ask me to leave. So I beat them to it" (April 22, 1999). About ten years later, when she became dissatisfied with work and after her son was born, she decided she wanted to go back to college. In order to afford her college education, Lucy continued to work at the chain store and took out student loans.

Everyone in her family was supportive of her return except for her husband who came from an area in a nearby county which she describes as

> where the Kentucky stereotype starts. These men control everything women do. They want to make sure they [the women] don't do anything unless they say so. But they don't want to work. It tickles the men to death if the wife has a job and supports him. They call him a go-getter—he'd take his wife to work and go back and get her. (February 4, 1999)

Though she laughed as she made the joke, her life with him was no laughing matter. When she decided to return to college, he would not allow her to bring any of her books into the house, so she had to do all of her work at school. Since he drove her to school and back, she would lie to him and tell him that she had to be at school an hour before her class so that she could do her homework. At the end of the day, she would ask him to pick her up an hour or so after the last class was over. Then she could go to a quiet spot at the college to do her homework. If it didn't get done then, she could not do it at home. If she had to study for a test, she could not stay up all night studying like most students. He did allow her to keep her books in the car.

In addition to his aversion to her schoolwork, he would not even let her read newspapers or magazines when they were at home together. She had to do housecleaning or take care of her

son, Bud. He objected to her parents' taking care of the baby while she was in class but made no effort himself to care for him. In fact, "he wouldn't even stay in the same room when the child ate" (February 4, 1999).

When I had her in class, she told me frankly that her husband did not support her being back in school, so if her work was not perfect, he was the reason. At the time, I never thought that his non-support of her school work would mean actual abuse, but I discovered later from these interviews that his alcohol and spouse abuse was constant. She believes that his alcohol, sickness, and ignorance compounded to make life difficult for him and hence for her.

She began crying in the interview as she told me how her art teacher/advisor was instrumental in finally getting her to leave her husband. After a particularly abusive weekend, Lucy came to the college and dropped in to visit with her advisor. Seeing that she was upset, her advisor asked what was wrong. Lucy told her what she told me: "That weekend, I had found out that he had been cheating on me, and I had confronted him. And I went through 30 hours of abuse—yelling, screaming, and hitting. He even used a knife" (February 4, 1999). This faculty member immediately called the campus minister who worked with Lucy to get a lawyer who took her divorce case pro bono and guided her "through all the abuse time and the divorce, because there were incidents after I had him removed [from the house]" (April 22, 1999). She did divorce him, and two years after the divorce, he died of cirrhosis of the liver.

Consequently, her advisor rescued her from her bad marriage. During the time she was still married to this man, college for Lucy was her saving grace. Knowing that she liked working with people, she thought she wanted to become a social worker (she recorded on her student information sheet for my class that she wanted to work in adult basic education), but after one art class, she became an art major: "I loved working with my hands because it kept my mind off [the abusive situation]. The college was my little get-away place. I hated to leave [at the end of the day]" (February 4, 1999). When she first started out, she was getting her education to prepare

herself for a job, but "after I got into it, it got to be more for me, to make me feel better about ME" (April 22, 1999). During the five years that it took her to complete her program, she also involved her growing son by bringing him to college with her and enrolling him in day care.

Composition Class

In my class, Lucy told me immediately that she had trouble with spelling; she remembered especially the word "their." She thinks that now maybe she was "dyslexic or something because I even READ the word wrong." Though she had written poems and short stories, she had not written in high school, so writing in my class "was a new thing for me. I struggled with getting the right format and using the right verbs and spelling. I used spell check when I was here, and I still couldn't get it right. The word was so BADLY misspelled" (February 4, 1999).

For her process paper, Lucy wrote a story about an adventure with her brother, Marty, cleaning the bees out of a neighbor's corncrib. I submitted the paper, and it was published in the 1992-1993 edition of Voices from the Hill (described above in Jean's case study). In the essay, after graphically portraying their preparation process for the task, she leads up to the part when they arrive at the corncrib to begin their work. Her brother Marty takes a hook to pull the boards out one at a time:

> The bees were everywhere, filling the sky like a dark cloud.
>
> "Oh, my god!" Marty yelled as he grabbed the smoke gun and began puffing out the smoke towards the angry bumblebees, but there was no effect. . . . Soon all the bees were out of the corncrib and ready for war.
>
> Then I felt the sharp, warm sting of a bee to my ear and the back of my neck. I suddenly realized with horror that the bumblebees had gotten under my net. I began to scream in pain. "Help me, Marty. They're in my hat."
>
> "Hold still," he yelled as he grabbed a horseweed out of the ground. . . . By the time he got to me, I was halfway down the hill, and all my gear was lying on the hill behind me.
>
> He took the horseweed and began to smack at me. . . . Although I had about a hundred knots on my head, and my face was blood red with whelps, the job was done. The bees were gone; when Marty was pulling out the board, the queen bee had been squashed and the worker bees wouldn't stay if they didn't have a queen.

> I'm not sure that the fifteen dollars we earned was worth the pain I had to endure. I'm not even sure the money covered the cost of the alcohol and medicated cream that I had to use on all my stings. But there is one thing for certain: the next time neighbors have bumblebee hives in the corncrib, they'd better learn to live with them. Because of this experience, the beefighting days are definitely over for Marty and me. (Voices, 1992-1993; see Appendix E)

Her use of quotations and building up of suspense with good detail in this essay convey her talent as a natural storyteller. Lucy passed the departmental proficiency exam on the first try (see Jean's case study) and earned a C for the class. She went on to take the second semester which teaches the research paper. She explains: "English 112 was hard. But my English background is not good anyway. I'd never done a research paper before college, it was hard to find a topic, and I am lazy. If you do research papers, you have to read" (April 22, 1999). Since reading is a problem for her, she did not do well in the class; she received a D.

College Major

In her art classes, Lucy did some reading, but she also did some writing. She had a research paper on an artist for art history and took essay exams in most of her classes. The reason art was so appealing to Lucy was that "if it's a class where I can do something with my hands, I'm better at it, but listening helps in lecture classes. I am not a big reader, so I get more out [of something] with someone TELLING me what it says [rather] than me actually reading it" (April 22, 1999). She graduated with a 2.55 GPA, one that may have been higher if she had been able to take her books home to study.

When I asked if she considered herself more educated with a college degree, she answered, "Yes, as far as book knowledge. But I always considered myself a worldly wise person as far as common knowledge goes" (April 22, 1999). She spoke to a common concern of these women that they not lose their common sense in the midst of being educated (see Mary quoted in Chapter 5). She thinks that everyone gets an education for different reasons; for her it was an increase in self-esteem.

When I asked her to evaluate her college experience, she said, "I learned a lot. It helped me personally to really find myself, and it even helped in raising my children. It gave me a better outlook on education because I was one of those slackers in school" (February 4, 1999). Beyond influencing her son and daughter, she has influenced her siblings: "They won't admit to it, but since I graduated, two brothers and two sisters got their GED. And one sister went on to nurse's aide training" (February 4, 1999). As she amply illustrates in the next section, Lucy uses her literacy in many creative ways despite not being able to work outside the home.

Post-college Literacy

This section represents information gathered in two interviews and a field visit.

Part of this case study is a shadowing of participants on their jobs to determine their literacy development since college. Since Lucy does not work outside the home, I decided to observe her home literacy. When I mentioned that I might come into her home to make these observations during the first interview in February, she immediately began to apologize for her trailer: "I've been remodeling my trailer, and the outside is gorgeous but the inside is old. When they started tearing off the old siding, water had come down between the walls and rotted every two by four out. Now my walls are patch work. They call me the duct-tape queen. If duct tape can't fix it, it can't be fixed" (February 4, 1999). I assured her that the condition of her trailer was no problem for me, that I just wanted to observe the reading and writing she did during the day.

So at the end of March on a sunny day, I went one mile down the right fork of Cowpen Creek to spend a morning with Lucy. Her sister had given me directions, and I got there with no trouble. Cowpen Creek follows a narrow, windy mountain road whose mouth is just off the four-lane state road with many strip shopping centers. Once into this area, away from the traffic, I calmed down.

Her trailer sat between her mom and dad's trailer and another trailer they keep like a guest house for any family member who needs it. Hers has brand new tan siding which she got after

extensive water damage was done to the trailer. Toys and animals show that children live there and enjoy themselves.

When I arrived, Lucy was feeding two-and-a-half-year-old, blond-headed Sally, who had just come from spending the night at her grandmother's. I thanked Lucy for having me and encouraged her to go about her day as if I were not there—I was there to observe her normal routine.

What amazed me about my visit was how comfortable Lucy's cheerful nature made me feel from the beginning of my visit until the end. During this visit, I learned more about Lucy's literacy since college.

Literacy and Cystic Fibrosis

Misfortune befell Lucy again before she graduated when she became involved on the rebound from her first marriage in another unstable (but not abusive) relationship and became pregnant. Her daughter, Sally, now 2 ½ , was born with cystic fibrosis (CF), so Lucy's life after graduation changed drastically. She has stoically and lovingly endured two years of hospital visits, respiratory treatments, and worry over a child whose future is questionable since the average age for survival is 30.1 years (February 4, 1999).

Lucy's literacy has helped her learn everything she can about the disease. In addition to a newsletter which she receives monthly, the doctor gave Lucy a huge notebook with information on cystic fibrosis which Lucy earlier told me she read from cover to cover. During my visit to her house, she showed me the notebook, particularly noting the illustration of how to do the patting (or percussion) for an older child, a process which becomes more difficult than what I had earlier witnessed her perform with the slight little Sally (field notes, March 30, 1999). Because she gives breathing treatments to Sally five times a day and has to administer numerous medications, there is no way for Lucy to work outside the home even if she wanted to.

Although the treatments have become routine now, Lucy says that "when she [Sally] was firstborn, I had to keep a journal of every time she ate and everything she ate because when she eats, she had to take medication to digest the food. With cystic fibrosis the digestive system doesn't work properly either." She has tried to organize a support group for parents of children with cystic fibrosis by finding out their names and calling them, but no one is interested. She is frustrated that "no one wants to get together. I've tried. I even talked to the health department about starting a support group. I don't know why either. It's not contagious or anything. They just don't want to talk about it" (February 4, 1999). (The Hospice agency here has the same trouble initiating bereavement groups.)

Because Lucy cannot work outside the home and is presently unmarried, she has worked with an attorney to get the benefits she deserves. Because of her cystic fibrosis, Sally draws disabled social security; Medicaid covers her hospital expenses. Because Lucy has medical problems, she draws a check as do both of the children. During college, she got AFDC "which was $197 a month and that's all I got" since her ex-husband was not paying child support (April 22, 1999). All of Sally's expenses are covered by supplemental payments, so that her health costs are covered.

For peace of mind about Sally, Lucy has a doctor at the University of Kentucky whose specialty is cystic fibrosis. He has been and will continue to assist Lucy with management of the disease which becomes more complicated when Sally goes to school since she will be more exposed to germs and diseases which may land her in the hospital. Lucy will not let this doctor give Sally experimental drugs for a cure; she wants to wait until the drugs are proven safe. She would rather lose her child through the disease's natural process than to have her die from an experimental drug (April 22, 1999).

Literacy For Communication

Additionally, Lucy uses literacy to communicate with others. She regularly writes Sally's half sister, a woman in California, and her own sisters in other parts of the state.

When she gets upset, Lucy is prone to write letters to the editor of our local paper. The letter she remembers the most is one about deadbeat dads. The motivation was her frustration about her sister's problems with an ex-husband:

> He was married to somebody else the same time he was married to her. So they got a divorce, and when her child was born, they had to go for blood tests, and he refused. So they had a trial, and the jury said, "It's your daughter; you have to pay." So he pays fifty dollars a month. And he's nine years behind. (April 22, 1999)

Many others she has written but not sent. She says that she is "one of these people that if something inspires me at that moment, I'll get real heated, and I'll write something and then I'll calm down afterwards" and not send it (April 22, 1999).

She has had a poem published in the local newspaper and in a book which some literary company wanted to sell to her for $99, for the luxury of seeing the poem in print. She did not purchase it.

Literacy for Household Maintenance and Self

I learned in my visit with Lucy that like many people, she uses literacy to maintain her household. She pays bills on the first of the month at her kitchen table before her social security check comes out on the 3rd of the month. Her receipts are kept in a box at the top of her daughter's dresser along with prescription receipts.

She regularly jots down events on a calendar (during my visit, I noted appointments for Bud and a birthday) and keeps a journal of special events that happen to her and her children (April 22, 1999). (See Figure 3 below). In that entry she reflects on her son's being away at camp for the first time and how she and Sally dealt with it. How poignant her reflection that Bud surely could have missed her more. In journalistic style, we do not expect perfect grammar.

When I asked her for the percentage of each day that she reads, she said about a third. Sally brings her books to read over and over. Lucy reads recipes since she loves to cook,

especially for her friends. Because she loves soap operas, she subscribes to Soap Opera Digest. While I was there, we watched one of what she described as the trashiest soap operas on television, in fact so bad that they were about to take it off the air. She also reads Readers Digest which her parents subscribe to.

Although she would rather watch a movie based on the novel, she loves short stories, "short sobby stories. I am just a sucker for sobby stories" (February 4, 1999). She goes on to say, "I am not a real good reader. I never did like to read, because my mind wanders. I start reading and I just wander off and lose the page. I think 'Well, how would I have written this?' I'm real critical when I'm reading" (February 4, 1999). In my second interview with her, she elaborated on her reading problem: "When I read things, I try to go to the key point. I don't want the build up, the introduction. I don't read books because I don't get anything out of them. I miss what the author's doing trying to figure out what I would do. So I just don't try" (April 22, 1999). When I asked her if she had recently read something that touched her, she described a recent story in the newspaper about a 13-year-old victim of cancer who had written a book about his ordeal so that others could learn from it (April 22, 1999). I had brought the very same article to my class to illustrate one of the multiple uses of literacy.

Literacy With Children

Lucy stated many times that the challenge for her life right now is her children, trying to figure them out, motivating them to do well. For the children, she subscribes to the Barney magazine which all three of them read together, and to the Globe company which has sent a series of Dr. Seuss books and will send a New World Encyclopedia set when the trailer remodeling is finished.

JUNE 14, 1999
Bud left for camp today, his first time away. I think maybe he might not stay the whole week. Sally misses him already. Another day of potty training going well.

JUNE 15, 1999
Called Bill--he said Bud got to camp ok. I have to admit I miss Bud too and I'm a little worried. Sally's first day of potty training--no accidents.

JUNE 16, 1999
Cleaned Buds room--took all day. Sally helped--she misses Bud a lot. Took Sally to play with Brian; they fought the whole time.

JUNE 17, 1999
Same old Same old.

JUNE 18, 1999
Called Kathy about making Nadia's shower cake. They decided on a double heart (make note--need to practice).

JUNE 19, 1999
Bud came home from camp. He had a great time so much so he wants to go back. I missed him more than he missed me. He was invited back for the 5-10 July. He is already packing to go back. I'm glad he had a good time but he could of missed me a little more. Sally was glad to see her brother but as I write he is tormenting her. Oh to the wonderful sounds of screaming children!

JUNE 20, 1999
Took the kids out to eat after church. potty train has been a success. Now I need to order her a trophy. I promised.

Figure 3. Lucy's journal entries, June, 1999

She buys the Appalachian News-Express and reads it. She works the crossword puzzle book with her children (Field notes, March 30. 1999). At the time of our second interview, she was reading instructions for installing a swing set for her children which she jokingly said had her in tears (referring to her preference for sobby stories)(April 22, 1999). There were three Bibles in the house, one a brand new one which Bud had won at school when the Christian Appalachian Project had an Easter egg hunt (April 22, 1999).

The Bible rested on the top shelf of the bookshelf located in her son's room. Lucy didn't want me to enter that room because she said it was too messy for me. I assured her that I had seen messy rooms before since I had two children of my own whose rooms were clean only because they are away at college. After we got her daughter ready for the day, including her treatments, she let me sit on Bud's bed to record the contents of the bookshelves. Below are my field notes:

> On the bookshelves are many things: Lucy's art and other college textbooks (which she goes back to periodically), 2 Little Brown Handbooks [the handbook used in both sections of English at Preston College], a coffee table type picture book called Mountain Worlds that one of her sisters gave her because she thought Lucy might paint a picture for her from it. There were all kinds of children's books, crossword puzzle books, a home remedy book, and blank notebooks and scrapbooks (she has other books and papers in boxes). It was interesting that she works crossword puzzles with her son in addition to helping him after supper with his homework. Sally brought me a small book, Where's Santa's Kitten, from the shelf and sat next to me on the bed and read to me, so I could see that she has been read to by her mother. She knew the pictures and told me about them.
>
> It looked like Lucy had yearbooks from Mullins High School and Preston College as well, all on the same bookshelf. Her son uses the blank notebooks left over from Lucy's college days to scribble in. There are videos, one of Charlotte's Web and other action-type movies, computer games strewn about, and books which the school gives to the children at different times during the school year. I laughed to see Gateway to Spelling since Lucy had so much trouble with spelling during my class. (Field notes, March 30, 1999)

Lucy is a loving parent who has fun with her children. With them, she reads, works crossword puzzles, helps with homework, watches wrestling, and goes to church. They in turn see her write letters, paint and sculpt, sew with only a pattern as a guide, make and decorate cakes, take photos, laugh, and take care of them. When she can, she tries to visit the public library and bookstores to find books for her children.

Art Work

When she took her first art class at Preston College, she exclaimed with joy, "That's what I'm here for!" The products of her art work were displayed on her walls and around the trailer. An oil painting in her bedroom entitled "Broken Promises," featured a cloth in a jar with masks around, one broken apart. Another was a water color of a little boy with a big fishing hat, and another on the living room wall, a still-life of a child's clothes and shoes. She showed me some oil paintings

stored next to dressers, to be put back on the walls after the renovation. She also had a beautiful sculpted pink and beige clay angel which she says she took with her during Sally's many hospital trips during the first year of her life (field notes, March 30, 1999). She hangs Bud's drawings and school work wherever she can. She prefers free handed sculpture but has arthritis in her hands now, so her projects take longer than they used to (February 4, 1999).

Interaction With Son's School

Lucy is a concerned parent but describes herself as a calm and supportive parent unless there is provocation. Before the first interview, Bud's parent-teacher conference had just taken place. Lucy reported that he was basically doing well. (She bragged about what a good speller he was; she still misspells words after all this time.) She likes his classroom teacher but despises his homeroom teacher. That teacher has sent Avon books home with the children expecting their parents to purchase items. She embarrassed Bud in class by saying that he had lice in front of his classmates. To counteract the influence of this woman, Lucy went to the school nurse to have her son tested; he did not have lice. She also called the Board of Education to report the Avon business to the authorities since it seemed a clear conflict of interest. Because she has been wronged so many times, Lucy has learned how to work through the system to achieve her aims. Since she had to fight the "generational" teachers during her experience at this same school, she does not want her son to suffer what she had to. She now has to battle a close-minded principal who perceives that his teachers are always right, and parents have no say. Bud brings home so much homework that she wonders what kind of instruction is going on in the classroom.

Beating the System

Another way that Lucy has learned about the system is having to negotiate payments that she and her children deserve. According to Lucy, "They fix the laws so that you've got to pay someone to go to bat for you. I think it's because your lawmakers are lawyers. It's big business" since 80% of everyone who applies to social security automatically gets turned down (April 22,

1999). She hired an attorney known for working with social security claims. Then she filled out the necessary forms, went to doctors recommended by the Social Security Administration to determine her eligibility, and attended a hearing where the judge asked her about her health and physical limits. After that, her attorney "brought in some medical terms and that was it. It wasn't like he went out and did a whole lot of work. And I paid $4000 just for that" (April 22, 1999). The settlement was for $17,000 over a period of several years; she received $12,000 and the lawyer, $4000. That money was used to purchase a new car so that she did not have to depend on others for transportation and to make needed repairs on the house.

What struck me about Lucy during this time is how generous she is with her family and friends. At the time of my visit, she was baking a cake and decorating it for her niece. She showed me pictures of a dress she made for herself with 100 sequins hand-sewn on the front and of Halloween costumes for her children. For her friends at the Mine Health and Safety Administration, she designed and painted a symbol on their hard hats (February 4, 1999). She refuses to charge friends for anything she does.

What impressed me most during our last interview was the way she likes to "help different people" in need. She may mend clothes for someone who can't afford it and make health baskets for others. In particular, she used her knowledge of the system to get help for a close friend of the family in her twenties who had lost her trailer in a fire. She "called the Hope Center, and they said all they needed was a copy of the fire department report. And then Wal-Mart said all they needed to do was come down and fill out a request" (April 22, 1999). She did all of this over the phone to help these distraught friends.

Lucy ruminated at the end of her interview about how dependent she was on her family, still living so close to her parents, even to the point of sharing a phone with them: "Being from a large family, no matter how old you get, you're still afraid of your parents. I am 37 years old. I live right next to Mom and Dad. When I go somewhere, I've got to tell them where I'm going. And if Mom

gets upset about it, we discuss it, or I just don't go. It's like I'm asking her permission." I asked her what would happen if she met another man she wanted to marry. She said that he would just have to move into her trailer, and "he'd have to ask Mom first" (April 22, 1999).

With the all-area phone calling, she can reach any of her sisters at a local rate, so she spends part of her day keeping in contact with her siblings. The trailer she lives in will be hers when her father "goes to the courthouse and makes a deed" (April 22, 1999). In the meantime, she doesn't pay rent, and her dad pays the property tax.

Summary

Lucy battled many adversities to get her college degree, though she had a stable upbringing with solid values to keep her going. Though her marriage was not good, she has two beautiful children for whom she cares deeply and for whom she is carving out a literate life. As she reflects on her knowledge, she credits her family: "I think it comes from being raised in a large family because you see so many different people as far as their attitudes and things. You experience so much more because when you're from a large family there's always something happening to one of them that you learn as far as just being worldly—common sense" (April 22, 1999). Her family continues to surround her and, after the rough life she has led, I don't blame her for nesting in its comforting cocoon. (See Table 5 for Lucy's post-college literacy development.)

Table 5: Post-College Literacy Development: Lucy

LUCY	
WORK	Does not work outside her home. See next column
HOME	*Reading:* Soap Opera Digest, Reader's Digest, Barney magazines Dr. Seuss books, crossword puzzles, swing-set instructions Bible, recipes, homework visits bookstores for children Cystic Fibrosis Instruction Manual *Materials:* College texts, children's books, yearbooks, videos *Writing:* Pays household bills, records events on calendar, medical receipts, journal of special events, journal for CF child personal letters and letters to editor, poems – published and unpublished. *Local expertise:* Knowledge of system to help self and others *Technology:* Phone, microwave, satellite dish

Sarah: Organized & Independent

When I remembered Sarah, I recalled a perfect student. What impressed me upon meeting her again was her complete dedication primarily to her 16-year-old son and secondarily to the foster children assigned to her. She is a perky blonde of medium stature, who was probably the teacher while playing school with her friends as a child. She describes herself as a loner; my guess is that the demands of her job require so much of her during the day that she has no time or energy for social contact after hours.

Her story is so bound up with her mother's (and I interviewed them both) that I open with information from her mother's interview which informs us of Sarah's early literacy.

Pre-school Literacy: Sarah's Mother

In my methodology, I had originally conceived of family interviews to confirm and complement my participants' reports of their literacy development. Since the women were all first generation college students and since these women defied cultural norms in coming to college, I

was curious about their family's role in and reactions to the women's decisions. Basically, the interviews were supplementary to the basic information from my participants.

From the time Sarah described her mother in the January interview, I had hoped that she would be the family member Sarah would choose for the family interview. In fact, Sarah describes her mother as nervous about my meeting with her: "Lord, she called me I don't know how many times last week so worried. I said, 'Mom, she just wants to sit down with you and talk like a normal conversation'" (May 4, 1999). Our "normal conversation" of almost three hours astonished me so much that I decided to feature her in Sarah's pre-school literacy section to illustrate the intergenerational effects of literacy and the miracle of Sarah's education.

With only a seventh-grade education, Naomi modeled reading the Bible, taking notes on its content, and consulting outside sources to learn more about it. The information below is gathered from the April 30 interview with this remarkable woman and supplemented with Sarah's two interviews.

What immediately becomes apparent upon meeting Naomi is her sharp mind and common sense. Though she described herself as uneducated at one point and later as a "flat-out good student" in elementary school (April 30, 1999), this woman could herself go to college and even now teach faculty if they were open to learning from her experience.

What kept Naomi from completing high school is a story in itself. At the time, families had to buy all the books for high school, an exorbitant expense for most poor families. When Naomi's older sister quit high school to get married after her parents had sacrificed to buy books, they became angry and decided that Naomi would not go. That did not deter her from reading: "I was always reading—growing up, I'd read all kinds of books, like those true story books—but they all got to sounding like soap operas. And I used common sense [which] will teach you things if you'll use what the good Lord has given you. I see people that are really educated that don't have the common sense to go to the road" (April 30, 1999).

The other life-shaping event that affected this family when Sarah was five-years-old was the death by electrocution of Naomi's husband, a bolt machine operator in the coal mines. Having someone knock on the door with the news of his death made Naomi determined that Sarah was going to have enough education to make a life for herself. She goes on to say, "I always taught her to stand on her own two feet, never to be left like I was. If she got an education, she didn't have to depend on any man" (April 30, 1999). In fact, Naomi didn't "depend on any man" until she remarried 19 years later after Sarah was raised: She would allow no men near her house while Sarah was a child.

From the time she can remember, Sarah remembers her mother's talking about college: "My mom was pushing me to have something better than what she had—a limited education, limited abilities. Ever since I was little, I can remember her going over and over how important education was. She wanted more for me" (January 25, 1999). With a minimal social security check that amounted to about $200 a month, Naomi eked out a living for her daughter and herself, sacrificing so that Sarah had everything she needed. "I never drew a welfare check in my life!" she proudly proclaims (April 30, 1999). It was only when Sarah was in high school that Naomi took a job outside the home driving a school bus to help with expenses. Every chance she got, Naomi put away money for Sarah's college fund, and had $10,000 when she graduated from high school. When Sarah ran away to get married, it broke Naomi's heart but she got Sarah to complete high school by threatening her. Eventually Sarah went to college.

Unlike Jean and Lucy, Sarah had an easier time in elementary and secondary school where at graduation she won the Accounting II award among six others that she cannot recall. She was a cheerleader as well. Sarah took regular trips to the library in a town 20 minutes away because the elementary and high school libraries at her school were so limited, especially with so many students using them, and the sources outdated (May 3, 1999). Even now, Naomi and her second husband spend time at this library and bring home tons of books.

Naomi's approach to Bible reading is to get as involved as she can. When I asked how often and long she read, she responded, "sometimes for hours." She prefers the New to the Old Testament because it shows us "how to conduct ourselves, [how to] apply to our daily lives, and make us a better person. And it will point out when you're not a better person" (April 30, 1999).

She discusses her method of reading:

> You come to so many words because I don't have that big of an education. So you come to a lot of words in the Bible that you don't understand, and you just think that you know. Well, you go on and read a little bit farther in it, and it doesn't make that much sense to you. If you'll back up and say, "Well, maybe I'm not understanding this word," and you look it up, then it puts a whole different light, meaning, on your Bible verses. (April 30, 1999)

In contrast, the preacher at the Penecostal Church she attends approaches the Bible differently. Sarah says about him: "The pastor has a very closed mind [which is the result] of a lack of education. With education comes more understanding. My mom wants to hoard everything she can [about the Bible], and he is trapped within his mind" (January 25, 1999). Not arguing with his basic goodness, Naomi says he doesn't pronounce the words correctly, and words don't "mean what he thinks [they] mean. He won't go back, and he won't look it up, so I try to bring some of this to his attention, and he gets upset with me and says, 'I am the pastor'" (April 30, 1999). For her, his authority is not based on the accurate interpretation of the word. This battle with her pastor appears to be one of a literate and well-informed woman with a close-minded man.

In her reading about the Bible, she finds out about various interpretations of Biblical passages and other relevant background:

> King James had the Bible interpreted, according to this writer, seven times before he'd have it released into English, because he wanted it in there written like HE wanted it written. And he didn't want too much said about women. For instance, in the book of Romans (I believe it's the 16th chapter) where it says Phoebe the servant? Well, in the real Bible it doesn't say Phoebe the servant. It says Phoebe the deaconess. I mean, that's on the scrolls in Jerusalem. You can hire a rabbi over there to read them. And there's a lot of the Bible that's been changed around. And I learn about these things, and it gives you a better understanding. (April 30, 1999)

The "better understanding" for Naomi is part of being an educated person. Learning is a lifelong process, something which Sarah learned from her mother. When I asked both mother and daughter

to define education (on two separate occasions), I got these responses: Sarah notes that "The qualities of an educated person are life experience, openness to change, and the willingness to experience new things" (May 3, 1999). Her mother reiterates, "When you get close-minded, then you can't ever learn. You have to stay open-minded to learn. And I don't care if you live to be a hundred, if you keep an open mind, you can always learn something new." She also observes that "every woman in the world has a right for an education however pretty or ugly they are" (April 30, 1999).

Sarah observed this about her mother: "Mom would have done well in religious studies because she reads so much and has a big vocabulary as far as that terminology is concerned. She's always buying more things to help her learn more about Bible history. She's teaching herself" (January 25, 1999). Naomi told me about how curious she was when she would drive the school bus to events at Preston College. She would always visit the biology lab and look at the specimens with great curiosity. I told her that not everyone would find those equally entrancing, and I thought she would be good in the science area as well (April 30, 1999).

This remarkable woman raised Sarah to whistle and crow when she should and "to never let other people tell her how to live" (Naomi, April 30, 1999). For both of them, Sarah's graduation was the mutual culmination of a dream. Mother and daughter remember:

> Naomi: I was sitting there [at graduation], and I was saying, "That's my baby." And I'd say, "Is that really my baby doing that?" to myself. And I was so proud, I could hardly speak. She's the only one in our family that had ever graduated college. And she was the one with the least opportunity. The rest of them [her family] had a mother, a father; they were working people. But their parents weren't as interested in them as I was in mine. And she was the least likely one to have [graduated]. But she was the only one that did. (April 30, 1999)

> Sarah: I guess the one thing that made it [going to college] all seem worth it to me was on graduation day when my mom got to stand there and watch the dream come true. And just as soon as they started playing the music, my mom started crying. So that is what I worked hard for. Her dream and my dream. (January 25, 1999)

The true spirit of whistlin' and crowin' women came to fruition in Sarah's graduation, the result of Naomi's passing along her wisdom and desire for self-improvement. Sarah chose a

profession that helps children have a better life than the terrible home environment many of them come from. She is making her voice heard through reading and writing in her profession and raising a son to consider the value of an education in his future. Naomi's grit and wisdom have a large part to do with Sarah's achievement of her dream.

College Literacy

Family Support

Though Naomi had dreamed that Sarah would go from high school to college, Sarah did not. She had a son, Luke, who was born during her first marriage, which lasted from late spring of her senior year of high school until not quite two years later. Her first husband was an alcoholic whom she didn't love; they were divorced when her son was seven months old. So that she could be with him in his formative years, she waited until Luke was in first grade. When he went to school, she "knew where he was every day from 8 o'clock till 4 o'clock in the evening" (January 25, 1999), so she enrolled at Preston College.

While she was in school, Luke would call for his mother every time he saw the video of Reba McIntire's song, "Is There Life Out There?" "Mom, here's your song. Come and watch!" (January 25, 1999). The song video depicts a woman who married in her twenties with two children, went back to school, wondering if she has a life beyond her family and her home. Sarah's son became her cheerleader, loving to go to the college for visits. While he was in school, his school work would come first, and "after he had done his homework, had his bath, brushed his teeth, and gone to bed, it was my time. And sometimes my time was all night" (January 25, 1999).

Her second husband, Bill, did not feel so enthusiastic about Sarah's return to college. He was a traditional male married to Naomi's daughter. Naomi thought he wanted Sarah to be like his mother who was more compliant (April 30, 1999). He felt that he should be the breadwinner and felt that Sarah in college "was a threat to his manhood in providing for his family. And after I started college, I didn't have as much time for him. So he sort of got pushed to the side a little bit." At one

point, her husband asked her to choose between him and school. She told him "not to make me decide because he'd lose" (January 25, 1999). From that time on he did not pressure her again, but he was not wholly supportive.

When I asked Sarah how her reading and writing changed from high school to college, she said "Reading more. Writing more." When I asked where she would be without college, she referred back to her husband, "I would be sitting at home taking all the crap that my husband dished out. I wouldn't be able to support my son and myself" (January 25, 1999). Though they remained married during her college years, Sarah and her second husband divorced in March, 1998. During the hearings, her husband told Sarah that she "changed when [she] went to college. But I feel that he changed because he was always an insecure person, and you had to always Band-Aid his insecurities." When they were talking, he would say "What does that mean? You're using words I don't understand. You're talking mumbo-jumbo. I don't know what you're talking about" (January 25, 1999).

College Performance

While Sarah may have wondered about "life out there," she had no regrets about waiting to come to college when she did because "when I went back, I knew what I wanted. I knew where I was going. If I had been fresh out of high school, I wouldn't have done nearly as well. I wasn't focused. I didn't know what I wanted then" (January 25, 1999).

Always touched by horrific reports of child abuse and neglect, she decided that she wanted to get into a field that would let her work with those children. So she majored in psychology and human services.

Sarah performed well in all her classes and was a tenth of a point from graduating summa cum laude (she graduated cum laude). Good grades meant more to her in college than in high school (May 3, 1999). To complete her degree in four years, she had to go straight through two summers.

When I asked her about writing in my class, she said she wasn't sure of her writing at the beginning. As with many women returning to school, I saw the potential before she did. She passed the proficiency easily and ended up with an A for the class, and she did well in English 112 with another instructor. She had one essay from her second semester of English published in the previously referred to publication of student essays, Voices from the Hills. In response to a 1988 CBS 48 Hours tape about a nearby Appalachian community, she writes an essay entitled, "Looks Can Be Deceiving." In the essay, she challenges the media stereotypes of this area, responding to tightly knit families, shacks for housing, and early marriage. Below is the first body paragraph after the introduction:

> During an interview with the Johnson family from Muddy Gut holler, the interviewer repeatedly asked, "Why don't you leave this place?" The response from the Johnson family was that they did not want to split the family apart. This is not necessarily typical of Appalachians. Many people feel close to their families but do move away for one reason or another. For example, I was brought up in a holler called Big Hackney's Creek. After I married Bill, we moved to Johns Creek to be near his job. Bill is a truck driver, and our living closer to his job makes it easier for him. We have made Johns Creek home for now. My Aunt Sheila grew up in the head of Grapevine. After her divorce, Sheila and her three kids moved to Florida, because she is an LPN and the wages are better there. She has made Florida her home until something better comes her way. My friend Pamela was raised in a holler called Hen Roost. After she married her husband, Frank, she moved to West Germany. Frank is in the united States Air Force and is stationed there for three years. Germany will be Pamela's home until it is time to move again. (Voices, 1990-1991, p. 52; see Appendix E for complete essay)

When Sarah took two religion classes at Preston College, she learned that what her mother had always told her about the Bible was true, that it had all kinds of stories—love, murder, intrigue, and so on. She felt that the classes helped her with her knowledge of the Bible and confirmed her mother's previous observations.

In terms of preparation for her job, Sarah feels that the college gave her a firm foundation. She remembers nothing negative about college except for horrible test anxiety. She also regrets the math course she took in which she did not do as well as she had expected.

From freshman to senior year, Sarah "felt more confident, higher self-esteem. The more I progressed in school, the more confident I became that I could do it. And I was bound and

determined that I was going to graduate with honors. And I did" (January 25, 1999). Her mother agreed that Sarah was more independent, happier, and more willing to keep learning after college (April 30, 1999). Basically, Sarah liked going back to school and learning new things. She would like the college to develop a Bachelor of Social Work "because you have more opportunity in this area with the hospitals and other agencies to be accredited. You would have more opportunity for employment" (January 25, 1999). Primarily, she feels that college contributed to her sense of independence and financial security which in turn threatened her husband and had a direct effect on the divorce (May 3, 1999).

Post-college Literacy: Job

Social Services Work

Like Jean, Sarah is inundated with paperwork and said in our last interview that all of the forms she had given me during the field visit have been changed and that she will have MORE paperwork resulting from social services reorganization. To see what kind of reading and writing she uses on her job, I visited her on her reporting day which she usually schedules near the beginning of the month. Below is a summary of those field notes written April 6, 1999 with supplementary material from both interviews with Sarah. Because the field notes are so extensive, only the interviews will be documented.

Graduating cum laude from Preston College in May, 1993, Sarah treated herself to a summer of relaxation before looking for a job. Her excellent school record and recommendations from professors netted her a job that October with the local section of the statewide mental health organization. She relates her work experience:

> I worked there with adults who had MRDD (mental retardation developmental disability) and SPD, which is severe psychiatric disorder. I worked training them, but I also did vocational assessments, which was like writing a comprehensive story. You've got to know their skills, their limitations, their strengths. And you have to write all of this up in an assessment form by hand. (January 25, 1999)

She worked there for four years.

Wanting badly to serve children who "couldn't fight for themselves" (Naomi, April 30, 1999), Sarah was happy to hear about the opening in the fall of 1997, for a foster care worker at Cornerstone Counseling Center, a center affiliated with the Kentucky Baptist Home for Children. Their mission is to provide "Christ-centered ministry to provide care and hope for hurting children and families through the financial support of the commonwealth's southern Baptist churches" (Smithwick, 1999). She came to work as one of three case workers in October of 1997. She states, "There [MCCC] I worked with adults Here I work with children, so this is where I wanted to be. Being a single mom, I have to stay where the money is better. So that keeps me here" (January 25, 1999).

The state Department of Community Based Services (formerly Cabinet for Human Resources) contracts with the agency for care and placement of hard-to-adopt children who have already been removed from their homes, and "are really hard to place" since they have "the more severe emotional or physical problems." Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children have therapeutic homes throughout the state and the foster parents who "have already been trained to deal with kids that are capricious. We get the biggies." Each child in foster care has a rating; two of the six in Sarah's caseload are worst-case scenario or level five. One is six-years-old; one is almost 18. Most of the children in her care have been abused or molested, and all are placed in counseling as soon as they are placed in foster care. She elaborates on their experience: "It's a shame what parents do to their children. You've got to start very young with them if they're going to turn out to be any type of decent human being. And these children have suffered abuse and neglect. The reason they become so hard core is that's the type of learning and coping skills they've acquired" to deal with their unbearable experiences (January 25, 1999).

Sarah uses her literacy to serve these wounded children. Believing in the adage quoted by her supervisor that in serving the public, "If you didn't record it, it didn't happen!" (Tackett, personal communication, May, 1999) and being a meticulous person about detail, Sarah has devised several

ways to keep accurate notes. Using her three day-planners, notebooks, and phone, fax, and home visits, she gathers information and transfers it to various forms. She chooses one day of each month near the beginning of the month to complete these forms on the agency laptop. For her records, she keeps a floppy disk and a hard copy which goes into the notebook for each child in her care (three are to be added to her caseload of six as of this writing). Because of client confidentiality, I could not get a copy of what Sarah actually writes, but in the next few paragraphs, I note the information she has to record.

Paperwork

One crucial part of her job is identifying strong and reliable foster parents with which to place these suffering children. So one of the forms she fills out is a Preliminary Information sheet on possible foster parents that asks them about their age, highest grade completed, marital status and years married, occupation, and church affiliation. The remaining information requested pertains to personality, conflict resolution patterns, quality of their marriage, disciplinary techniques, and other factors that point to adequate care of foster children.

Because they are a Baptist affiliated institution, the agency is interested in the foster parent's religion, so they ask about denomination, church attendance, and involvement. The couple or parent does not have to be Baptist, but the agency does expect some sort of religious affiliation since their ministry is "Christ-centered" (Smithwick, 1999). Though most foster children go to services every Sunday with their families, " we don't force religion on these kids" and none have been resistant so far to attending church with their foster families (May 3, 1999).

After a home study is done and written up, four people sign approval of the form including whoever prepares the home study, the foster care director, the family services director, and the regional administrator.

Once the family (single parents are acceptable) has been identified, the agency provides 42 hours of special training which includes behavioral techniques of discipline, ways to physically

restrain children should they become uncontrollable, and other skills. At the end of training, there is a skill-out where the parents demonstrate their newly learned skills. Once approved, the foster parents have to renew their training yearly.

Literacy is required of the foster parents. They must keep daily written logs which "describe their daily events, like, if they [the children] played sports or helped with certain tasks around the house. It's documentation to show what they have done daily" (May 3, 1999). The parents note what they do together and separately. Sarah looks at these reports when she does her weekly visits to the family.

Monthly, Sarah has to fill out the Treatment Review Form for each child in her care. On it, she records family contact, emotions and behaviors, relationships and social skills, education, recreation, spirituality, and physical health (see Appendix H for form).

For each home visit or outing, she fills out the Home Visit Checklist which details the foster home she visited, the date of the visit, and who was present. Then she reviews the treatment plan which includes information about the child's health status; behavior; education (day care, school); family contact (child's contact with biological family); recreation/spirituality; Department of Social Services Agency contact; independent living; and permanency plan (reestablishing residency with biological parents; terminating parents' rights or moving toward adoption). If she goes by the house and no one is at home, she writes "ATTEMPT" on the form, and under assessment: "No one was home at this time."

Every three months, Sarah fills out a Comprehensive Individual Treatment Plan. This form most particularly applies to the child's psychological and environmental problems, emotional and developmental concerns, family concerns, and educational or employment issues.

In case her foster children are involved in any of 34 possible incidents such as AWOL with whereabouts unknown, drug trafficking, possession of a deadly weapon, sexually perpetrating or assaulting others, and any report of sexual, mental, emotional, physical neglect requiring 24 hours

verbal notification and data entry, she fills out a Client Incident Report. She might recommend any of 24 possible actions taken to resolve the incident, including referral for medical treatment, seclusion, transfer to another unit, termination, hospitalization for psychiatric or medical evaluation, or report to law enforcement. Sarah has filled one of these out on several clients whose records I viewed. She describes one of them:

> I know this one [foster] kid had gone AWOL. She took off without permission, and nobody knew where she was. She and her friend stole a car, damaged the car and ended up in Ohio and Georgia. We got them for habitual runaway. They had to go to court. Because she had done it more than once within a certain period of time, she spent some time in detention. I had no quarrel with the court over that. (May 3, 1999)

When the foster children in Sarah's care are removed from undesirable homes and placed in foster care, the main goal of the program is that they may one day return to their biological parents if they conform to treatment goals with Community Based Services within a twelve-month period (though they are evaluated every six months during that year). Sarah describes one case: "We have three kids with a mom who has failed to meet any of her treatment goals. She has gone a certain period of time without any contact with her kids. She's making no effort. After a certain period of time, they can start TPR (Termination of Parental Rights)" (May 3, 1999). That process cannot occur without recommendation from the counselor and has to be documented for the court by the therapist. Sarah could initiate that process by filling out that form.

When a child leaves foster care (which can be because the biological parents have fulfilled state requirements for acceptable changes or when he or she turns 18), Sarah fills out a Service Termination Form A. At 18, foster care children are "considered adults. They can go back home, do what they want to do, or decide to do extended commitment to the care" which allows them to get some type of vocational training or college" (January 25, 1999). Many in fact don't have a home to return to.

Record Keeping

Sarah keeps a three-inch-thick notebook for each foster child in her care. At the front of the notebook is a "Client's Review Survey" which includes a list of all possible forms and a check by the ones that are included. In addition to typing her staff notes, Sarah keeps a disk filed and has a separate one for each category of forms.

In addition to this notebook, she had a plastic accordion folder with all kinds of information. Each case worker is on call every three weeks (from Tuesday to Tuesday—they carry an on-call pager for that purpose because someone has to be on call for 24 hours a day), so Sarah keeps notes on all clients in the agency's care who might call.

Sarah uses her written records for monthly meetings with the treatment review team made up of the three foster care workers, the supervisor, and the treatment support worker who works half-time to cover situations that the full-time staff cannot get to. Additionally, she uses the information when she meets monthly with the child's counselor. Every three months, she meets with the child's social worker from Department of Social Services. She works with the court systems in both Floyd and Preston Counties when her foster children become involved in an altercation or when parental rights need to be terminated.

Sarah's method of taking notes in her daily planner is deliberate though it looks casual. Sarah is a superbly organized person. In the notebook she carries around with her, she has a list of common client misbehaviors, treatment goals, objectives, target dates, interventions, staff responsibility, and outcomes. In addition, she has a sample of a discharge summary, a copy of annual foster home evaluation, the child/youth supplement, list of current treatment plans, and sample goals and objectives for foster parents. The two other foster care workers sign off on the treatment plans. If Sarah makes an error, she puts a line through it and initials it (see Table 6 for list of forms).

Table 6: Sarah's Foster Care Forms

Name of Form	**Time Completed**
Preliminary Information on Foster Parents	As needed
Treatment Review Form (for child)	Monthly
Home visit checklist (family)	Weekly or per visit
Client Incident Report (child)	As needed
Comprehensive Individual Treatment Plan	Every three (3) months
Service Termination Form A	As child leaves foster care
Termination of Parental Rights	As needed

Client's Review Survey (refers to listing of all possible forms in a notebook for each child)

Her day planner is what she uses to keep notes when she is on field trips (she waits until she returns to fill out forms). In addition she records the times of home visits, medical information about clients, results of phone calls. A typical page from her day planner might look like this:

completed A's discharge
T___ approved
PMH (hospital) drug screen
fax
h. v. (home visit)
paperwork due
client SSI (social security insurance
appt (appointment) at office
have directions faxed to office

In addition to the writing she does, Sarah has to do some reading. To work with the client and fill in the Comprehensive Individual Treatment Plan, she needs to be able to read the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM) which classifies all mental disorders. She reads other foster care workers' reports since they all work together and may be on call when these clients call. She also has to read when she gets "some of the psychological evaluations that come in. We also have a lot more reading" when they are writing up reports (January 25, 1999). In her book shelves

she had books about children: Kids Have Feelings Too; Depression; The Angry Teenager, and several math, reading, and curriculum books which she loans to foster parents whose children are having trouble in those areas.

Because filling out so many forms and reports without being repetitious can be difficult, Sarah prides herself on creatively prepared and accurate staff notes. In fact, she reports that, on her evaluation "in October, my writing ability and skills were listed as one of my strengths" (January 25, 1999). Sarah is impatient with poorly written communications from staff and usually composes memos or letters that need to go out from the agency to foster parents or outside agencies (May 3, 1999). Others seek her out because she is more confident in her writing: "Anytime they want a certain type of memo or letter written up, I end up having to write them because my wording and [writing] skills are better than some around here" (January 25, 1999). Reading departmental memos, she says that she "cannot stand certain errors, like fragments and comma splices. It DRIVES ME UP THE WALL, especially if [the person writing it] has a college degree" (January 25, 1999). Basically, Sarah has confidence in her writing.

Job Advancement

To advance herself on her job, Sarah has taken one course toward a Masters of Social Work. She will continue the program in the fall. She is willing to move if the opportunity presented itself, but for now, she wants some stability and permanence for her son until he graduates from high school. Her resume in Appendix I reflects her many talents and skills as a resume writer.

Post-college Literacy: Home

Before college, Sarah read Harlequin and historical romances and magazines, but now "I have no time for stuff like that," so she hasn't read one of those in years. When I asked her to describe her bookshelf at home for me, she said: "You will see a set of encyclopedias, a lot of textbooks, psychology books, counseling books. There are some math books and a few history books" (May 4, 1999).

Presently, she is more likely to read self-help and self-exploration books like Co-Dependent No More or Self-Taught, which might help her in working with her clients. She also reads stories based on real life events like a murder in Fleming-Neon, a town close by, and The FBI Killer, written about the FBI agent [who had lived in my neighborhood at the time] who killed his informant here in Preston County. She reads the tri-weekly newspaper and her mail as well.

For her recreation, Sarah loves fishing, so she subscribes to fishing magazines. She says that fishing "takes her to a place where I don't have to think, just rest" (May 3, 1999).

Though she uses her computer at work, she likes to play on the computer, and her son teaches her about other uses. Sarah uses the computer to communicate in writing with her landlord, her attorney, and other businesses (see Figure 4 below): "I'll sit down and do a letter form on the computer and do my own letterhead and design my own thing because usually by the time I get home, everybody is closed, and so I just write them letters." With her many daily planners, Sarah is constantly writing, "keeping a calendar of events" (January 25, 1999).

Crucial to her is her influence on Luke's education beyond high school. She says that when she is in his presence, he says he hates school, but when he's with others, he talks about "wanting to further his education. He's already sent out information for colleges. And I'm encouraging him to go with something he's interested in" (January 25, 1999).

101 Meathouse Road
P.O. Box 203
Kimper, KY 41539
606/631-1632

December 17, 1998

William Lawrence Roberts
P.O. Box 241
Pikeville, KY 41502

more deletions

RE: .....
Pike Circuit Court, Action No. 97-CI-01763

Dear Mr. Roberts:

Enclosed you will find an agreement that I will settle for out of court regarding my recent divorce. Therefore, I need for you to present these things to Jeffery's attorney, Agnes D. Sipple, so that we can finally get this whole thing over and done with.

If you have any questions or concerns, feel free to contact me at home or at work. My work number is 606/478-3200. I appreciate you for all your assistance in the past and in the future.

Sincerely,

Enclosure

(both parties teenage son)

1. I want full custody of .
2. Bill Jeffery will have standard visitation rights.
3. Jeffery will continue to pay $300.00 monthly child support until Leamon graduates from high school. Currently, Leamon is 15 years of age (date of birth is January 17th) and a Sophomore at Pike County Central High School. Payments will cease to exist after the month of high school graduation because Leamon will turn 18 years of age six months before his expected high school graduation. As we all know, the senior year is the most expense year of school. Therefore, Jeffery will only have 2 ½ years of financial obligations.
4. Jeffery will continue to provide medical insurance for Leamon and will be responsible for any expense that is not covered by the medical coverage if the expense pertains to any medical treatment that is out of the ordinary as described by the medical insurance. In addition, Jeffery will sign the insurance checks over to me that is reimbursed by the insurance company regarding Leamon because this money will be paid in advanced by the child support.
5. I will continue to provide dental insurance on Leamon as long as it is available to me through the company where I work. I will be responsible for any dental bills that are not covered by this insurance.
6. Both parties will assist as much as possible with any college or vocational expenses that are reasonable.

Figure 4. Sarah's letter to her attorney

Previous Savings Account:

1. There will be no division of money due to the depletion of this account for various reasons as presented to the court previously.

Marital Possessions:

1. I will be granted full ownership of the 1990 Chevy Cavalier, which has been paid for since April, 1994. I will accept full responsibility of any expense regarding said car.
2. Husband will continue to have full ownership of his 1993 Chevy S-10 pickup truck and will continue to assume full responsibility of any expenses for said truck.
3. Husband can pay me half of the value of the 1979 Bass boat or the boat can be sold and the profit divided among both parties.
4. I will have full ownership of the outdoor building. Husband has already taken ALL his personal belongings out of the building such as his hunting and fishing equipment, tools, etc.
5. I will continue to have full ownership of ALL home upkeep tools such as lawnmower, weedeater, etc.
6. I will continue to have full ownership of ALL household furnishings.
7. I will continue to have full possession of the parties 1997 mobile home that is currently located at Kimper, Ky. Husband will continue to pay $250.00 as he has for the past year to assist in providing our son a home until he graduates from high school. I will be allowed to move the location of the said home at my expense if I choose to do so in the future. The mortgage payment at this time is approximately $355.00 a month. I will continue to pay the lot rent of $125.00, which will be about equal money in providing our son a home. However, if I should remarry, the home will be my full responsibility or if I choose not to keep the home, it will be sold and any profit will be equally split between ex-husband and myself. In addition, I will continue as I have for the past year to be responsible for the mobile home's insurance coverage. Both parties will equally pay any property taxes until our son graduates from high school. Finally, both parties' names will remain on the title and on the mortgage payment until our son graduates from high school. At that time, ex-husband will remove his name from the title and he will no longer be responsible for the mortgage if the home is not sold.

Summary

Finally, when I asked Sarah how her reading and writing skills have changed since college, she says she doesn't think they have changed that much because she did so much writing in both settings.

Asked about what challenges her now, Sarah echoes Naomi:

> My husband was always throwing up to me, "You're too independent." He would have loved for me to stay dependent on him. But I wasn't raised that way. And I guess that gives me a lot of self-satisfaction. But since he's been gone, we've got a new car, we still have our home, and we pay our insurance on our home. We've not been late with any bills. I am bound and determined I will be successful.

My estimation is that Sarah is moving closer and closer to her goal. With a masters in social work and her excellent experience, when she is ready to move, she will be very employable, successful, and independent. (See Table 7 for Sarah's post-college literacy development.)

Chapter Summary

Jean, Lucy, and Sarah teach us about literacy development since college as well as about other literacies they brought to the study. Their joys and trials teach us about lifelong learning and adult development. In the next chapter, I draw conclusions related to the research questions with which I began the study.

Table 7: Post-College Literacy Development: Sarah

SARAH	
WORK	*Reading:* Diagnostic And Statistical Manual (DSM) log that foster care family keeps psychological evaluations from counselor reports on clients of co-workers, departmental memos, daily planners. *Writing:* Three daily planners–well organized weekly, monthly, quarterly, and annual reports (see table 6), notebook, completed home study of foster parents signs off on forms, imaginative staff notes, job advancement: MSW courses *Technology:* Fax, phone, laptop at work, floppy disks for records.
HOME	*Reading:* Encyclopedias, true life crime books, old texts, fishing magazines, tri-weekly paper, counseling and self-help books *Writing:* Daily planners *Technology:* Compose letter and letterhead design for letters to businesses/ lawyer/ landlord.

CHAPTER 7

ENDINGS: LITERACY DEVELOPMENT, ACHIEVEMENTS, RECOMMENDATIONS

> I was touched when I read your comment about me [in the case study] because I too enjoyed our interviews. . . . I would like to thank you for allowing me to be a part of this study. (Lucy, letter, July, 1999).

This letter from Lucy moved me to tears. In my last phone conversation with her, I reassured her that it was she who needed to be thanked for sharing her story. In my research, her voice blended with others in a well-orchestrated chorus of whistling and crowing women, almost deafening at times. Though the academic literacy of the college is a small part of their lifelong literacy, it was a key to making their voices heard, to defining themselves as credentialed and literate persons. These eight Appalachian women, grounded in the context of the land, families, religious values, speech, and education, shared a depth of information with me that I summarized in Chapter 5 and 6. Examining what I discovered, I am amazed that these women made their way to college since they had very few if any models. Like Connelly & Clandinin (1990) I invite readers now to look at what I did and see what I saw by addressing the original research questions, connecting them to the review of literature, making recommendations, and drawing conclusions.

At the beginning of this study, I set out to determine the following:

- Whether and how education changed these women's literacy habits;
- What sort of literate practices they used on the job, at home, in the community;
- What effects their education had on their children;
- Whether their college-enhanced literacy helped them achieve the hopes they had when they came to college.

Using qualitative methods, I interviewed women whom I had taught in former years, and for the case studies interviewed family members and observed participants on their jobs to determine the

answers to the research questions above. Although I learned plenty from these women when they were in the classroom, these interviews have taught me more than I could ever have imagined.

Education's Effect on Women's Literacy Development

> At first I thought it would be difficult, but once I started learning some patterns about writing, how to get across what I wanted to, because you can't just write something down on paper, [it was not so hard]. There are certain steps you've got to take. And I was never taught those steps. (Mary, February 2, 1999)

> The more I progressed in college, the more confident I became that I could do it. And I was bound and determined that I was going to graduate with honors. And I did. (Sarah, January 25, 1999)

Mary and Sarah reflect on the evolution of their college years from insecurity about writing to doing well in academic subjects. Coming to college, they had difficulty in my writing class because of lack of confidence based on unfamiliarity with the written code. This research confirmed for me to an extent, the effectiveness of my teaching techniques which include having students keep journals (at the time, unstructured; now, literacy narratives), having them work together editing drafts, and meeting with me twice during the semester for individual conferences.

All developed strategies for tackling academic reading. The acceptance of their essays into the student publication previously referred to confirmed their abilities. Their adjustment to college continued throughout their years until graduation with increased confidence. Hardest for some was the challenge, especially in religion classes, to their fundamentalist faith. Like my friend, Candy, who stopped going to church rather than face the dilemma of being challenged by family and church friends who believed in the literal interpretation of the Bible, perhaps these women do not attend church that frequently for the same reason (C. Knudson, personal communication, July 3, 1999). Limited church literacy and doctrine would discourage thinking any more broadly. Mary elaborates: "My parents were definitely parents of the old school, and we were always taught things basically in black and white. I began to see more of the shaded areas and less of the black and white" from her freshman to her senior year in college (Mary, February 2, 1999). Going from this dogmatic kind of thinking to acknowledging the gray areas in between was difficult for the

nurses in Sitler's (1997) study because literacy of the workplace does not account for the ambiguities inherent in academic literacy; the notes they take for their patients are clear cut and literally tied to life and death matters.

Though I began this study in a naturalistic mode, I wasn't thinking clearly when I assumed that I could measure the effect of college on literacy development by looking at frequency, duration, and quantity of post-college literacy. After several interviews, I gave up on the idea, even thinking about changing the title to "literacy practices." Measurement and evaluation equated to time spent checking off, timing, counting. Since development itself is not static and defies quantitative measures, I learned that I could show qualitative development by describing literacy behaviors without quantifying them.

Wondering if pre-college education had any effect on their post-college development, I found negligible results. The women described rural school systems with inconsistent educational services, especially for marginal students who were not in the "college track." Throughout their lives, most of these women spoke of reading willingly and often. Others wrote poetry or in journals, but they did not write for teachers because they did little if any writing in high school except for occasional book reports. Curious about why schooling was so difficult for them and college more achievable, I consulted Pascall & Cox who state that schooling differs from education: Schooling may have limited these women, but education enlarged their vistas. They had more freedom in the college setting to take or leave what they could use.

Even if they might have been exposed to writing and reading in their early schooling, they waited from 7 to 24 years after they graduated from school to return to college. Most of them were homemakers where their roles as wife and mother took up most of their time. Therefore, they entered composition class with limited academic reading and writing skills. With their motivation, persistence, and teacher help, these women overcame their lack of cultural knowledge to develop more confidence in their literate abilities. With college completed, these women could apply for jobs

which meant higher than minimum-wage pay, work in fields they studied for and loved, develop literacy in their fields, and seek to advance themselves further with more education. In other words "education does offer women opportunities and the credentialist tie between education and work is as strong for women as it is for men" (Pascall & Cox, p. 141).

College affects post-college literacy by fostering critical thinking to help deal with ambiguities in life, exposing these women to alternate voices and meanings (Sitler). It builds confidence in literate skills that were missing from their previous schooling. It exposes them to technology and other life skills by nourishing the hunger for more knowledge. It confers credentials; it fulfills dreams. Yes, college has an effect on the whistlin' and crowin' women of Appalachia which they illustrate in their community, home, and work situations.

Literate Practices in Community

> If I couldn't read, I would have to get into some kind of literacy program. I would HAVE to learn to read. I just don't know how people can live without it. And to read well is wonderful. (Polly, January 21, 1999).

Polly points to how crucial her past education was on her literacy in all aspects of her life. Literate persons add value to the community whether they are active in community activities or not. Feeling empowered by their education, they contribute in a way they could not have previously; they have a say in how the community affects their lives.

However, as to specific community literacy activities, I could not find very many because these research participants are primary wage earners for their families and are often too busy for anything other than working, eating, sleeping, or interacting with family.

One participant in the general interviews put together a cookbook and took minutes for her women's circle. Growing up in the church where her mother taught Sunday school, Lucy is currently planning to teach a course in handicrafts and cake decorating for the women's circle. At her request, I sent Internet sources on art therapy so that she might make a small step toward helping

her minister's wife who is depressed. Lucy's children are exposed to Sunday school material, and they own three Bibles.

Case study participants take their children to libraries and bookstores. Lucy also writes poems which have been published in the local paper as well as letters to the editor to alert others in the community about an issue. To help others who are in trouble, such as a friend whose trailer burned down, she knows which agencies and merchants will help out and what written proof about the crisis the agency needs. In this case, she speeded up the time in which this woman received help and acted in the role of "local expertise" whom Barton & Hamilton picture as "people who become experts through their sense making activities . . . to have their specialised area of knowledge" (p. 243).

Sarah uses literacy to communicate with business people that she doesn't have access to during the work day. Using her computer at home to design her own letterhead, she writes letters to her landlord, her attorney, and other business people. In a letter written to her attorney regarding the divorce settlement with her ex-husband, Bill, she is extremely clear about all aspects of the settlement, but especially about anything to do with her son. She manages the standard letter form and appears to know legal language (see Figure 4 in Chapter 6).

Outside of these connections to the community, she is not active. The intensity of her job requires a total break from interacting with anyone more than her family. In addition to her normal hours, she is required to be on call every third weekend. Her mother reports that she does more than that because her clients will call her directly even if some other foster care worker is on call. Sarah wants the peace of her home after wrestling with damaged lives during the day; her relaxation is fishing. If her son has a school function, she may attend but she is not a joiner (except in elementary school when she joined the PTA).

Like Sarah, Jean works long hours; her night shift is generally twelve hours. After she sleeps during the day, her husband fixes her supper, and she is off again to work. If she has spare

time, she spends it at home studying for exams that will give her advanced credentials or doing handicrafts for relaxation. That leaves little time for interaction with the community.

Literate Practices in the Home

> On my bookshelf at home, you will see a set of encyclopedias, a lot of textbooks, psychology books, counseling books. There are some math books and a few history books. (Sarah, May 4, 1999)

Sarah shares her answer to my question about what I would see if I were to visit her home since a home visit was not part of the original methodology because of time constraints and because workplace literacy appeared to be more instructive for post-college literacy development. Since Lucy was not working outside the home, I was able to visit her home. Jean and Sarah's descriptions had to suffice, however limited they might be.

All three participants use literacy at home for reading newspapers (the local county tri-weekly) and magazines (fishing, soap operas, crafts). All help their children with their homework; Lucy works crossword puzzles and reads to her children.

Jean and Sarah, who work outside the home, spend time at home reading material related to their occupations. When she gets home from work, Jean will look up information on illnesses or medicines she has observed at the hospital. She consults her nursing journals to which she subscribes, medical web sites she has discovered on the Internet, or her nursing texts from college for that information.

For advanced nursing certification, she takes extensive notes from her books to study for difficult exams (see Figure 2 above). There she appears to demonstrate reading for relevant details which she summarizes on the 5 x 8 index card. She highlights in yellow the information she wants to remember.

At home, Sarah finds help for her clients by reading self-help books. Her daily planner guides her family appointments for herself and her son: She has two other daily planners for her job. She also plans to resume work on her graduate degree in social work.

Lucy in particular appears to dislike any kind of extended reading; if it isn't Reader's Digest length, she wants to see the movie. However, she reads extensively about her daughter's disease, reads to her children, and works crossword puzzles with them. In addition, she knew which lawyer to contact to successfully procure benefits due herself and her children. She reads the system to procure deserved benefits: She reads her world!

The effect of college on their literacy in the home is most remarkable in Jean who spends reads for self-improvement and advanced credentials, Sarah who communicates with people she is too busy to contact during the day, and Lucy who reads to get closer to her children.

Literate Practices on the Job

> If you didn't record it, it didn't happen. (Sarah's supervisor, R. Tackett, personal conversation, June, 1999)
>
> I go in 45 minutes early [before my shift]. When I get there, I look in [the charts], I get my list of patients, and I pick up any little odds and ends that have been done . . . and I build on it. (Jean, April 29, 1999)

Reading and writing are crucial, often legal, necessities in the fields of nursing and social work, fields chosen by Jean and Sarah. (Lucy, as noted, cares for her child at home.) Above, Jean refers to her preliminary reading of the chart from which she records notes on a scrap sheet of paper which she "builds" on when she hears the prior shift's debriefing before her shift begins. All of the recorded information ends up on the nursing assessment form for each patient to whom she is assigned. (Because of confidentiality, I cannot reproduce that form.) In addition, she reads charts to see what has previously been done for the patient, reads drug and disease information where she needs it, and understands technology to utilize computer information throughout the hospital.

These nursing skills contrast with writing in the classroom. In her study of nurses taking a required religion class to attain their BSN, Sitler learned that the nurses had a hard time making the transition from the shorthand of nursing assessment notes to dialogical journal writing in the class. Class writing required voicing thoughts, feelings, and opinions which would be taboo in nursing or

foster care notes because of their life and death ramifications (Sitler). Jean moved in the opposite direction, from academic writing to nursing notes and would probably meet with the same difficulty were she taking liberal arts courses like Sitler's nurses.

Illustrating this difference is the reaction of the nurses on the floor with Jean when she introduced me as her former English teacher. Minimizing the importance of their writing, these nurses told me that they didn't write in complete sentences, that they hated taking English in their program, and that I shouldn't check their work. Apparently, the only real writing occurs in the classroom; the only real reading occurs when reading Shakespeare. The obvious differences between job and college writing are real, but one should not be disparaged just because of its different function. Our educational system which has conveyed this attitude should bend its head in shame for allowing Jean to describe herself as the odd ball in a family who love to read despite the fact that she spends hours reading and writing on her job and at home.

Among the eight original participants, two write on their jobs; the education majors in particular do more reading than writing except for lesson plans. Those going on for job advancement recognize learning takes place in context; education majors cannot move on to the next rank in salary without more university courses. Acquiring advanced degrees takes literacy development one step further. These credentials further their knowledge in the field and in many cases equate to a raise in pay. Jean's correspondence courses toward a masters in critical care nursing and Sarah's enrollment in a masters of social work also have more to do with personal pride and achievement than pay.

Sarah's on the job writing is extensive: She fills out weekly, monthly, quarterly, and annual reports. In addition, she reads charts of other foster children posted by her co-workers, and evaluation reports from court and psychological services. To keep herself organized, she reads and writes in her daily planner. Because she is known for her writing skills (and has been commended for them by her supervisor), she is often asked to write outgoing letters to agencies,

foster parents, and other officials. She appears to be self-conscious about her correctness, so much so that she is "hesitant to risk an affront to [her] public image or name, and jeopardize [her] social identity as writers unless certain of [her] grammatical constructions" (Puckett, p. 143).

All three women exhibit a strong sense of independence and the ability to teach themselves (C. Bencich, personal communication, July, 1999). Despite their being marginalized by the school system, these women overcame their fears in coming to college to make better lives for their families. Considering this data, I can see that they have achieved a "confident view of themselves as literate people using literacy as a means of personal growth, job advancement, and social empowerment" just as I had predicted in my proposal.

Education's Effect on Children

Women as Mothers

> My son got a "C", on a spelling test, and he always got "A's." And I said, "Josh, why didn't you tell me about the spelling test? We could have studied." "Well, you were doing your homework. I didn't want to bother you." And I said, "Well, YOUR homework is more important than MY homework." And then that's when I decided that I wouldn't let them see me do homework anymore. (Hope, January 20, 1999)

Hope's interaction with her son was typical of reactions of all the mothers in this study. They took seriously their roles as mothers while they were in college. Among the eight women in the original sample, I saw women determined to succeed in college but not at the price of ignoring their families, especially their children. With great tenderness, they worried that their education would interfere with their responsibilities as mothers. Their choice had to fit into their family life, so they juggled both. I detected no resentment when they spoke about the dilemma though there may have been some during their college years.

Pascall & Cox bear my observation out in their study of returning women who also "placed education within the context of lives in which responsibility for others, particularly children, was assumed as a priority. To that extent it could be argued that neither phase [of their education] had undermined traditional values or provided women with a means to escape the duties that go with

them" (p. 143). Fiene (1991) confirms this phenomena in her study of low-status women in Appalachia: They take pride in their roles as mothers; it is the central part of their lives. Being good mothers means putting children's needs before their own and surmounting "uncommon obstacles" to keep children from harm (p. 51). In my study, Naomi exhibited those characteristics, protecting Sarah for years after her husband died, not allowing any men in the house and not remarrying until Sarah graduated from high school. The same theme echoes in Giesen's study of coal miners' wives: "Homemaking responsibilities were central in the lives of even the several women who had thoughts to more education or training for self-employment" (p. 26). These women speak of making time for their children before bedtime and making time for themselves afterwards.

Jean's daughter, Shannon, describes the rupture in the routine of their lives when her mother went back to college, but says that her mother always put her children first. Shannon presents a picture of a family who came together to help out with chores which their mother had always performed to that point. Shannon, her two brothers, and her disabled father worked together to make life easier for their mother. Now, she sees "no obstacle too big" for Jean (April 15, 1999).

Being mothers also gave these women material to write about. Their papers generally related to their real experiences as mothers and issues related to women such as date rape and spouse abuse.

Women as Models

> How do you encourage kids? How do you get them to [go to college]? Because I always wanted mine to, but they just never did. (Polly, January 21, 1999)
>
> I think they [the children] have seen that if you don't get it [college education] now, it's a lot harder to get it later. (Jean, April 29, 1999)

Polly and Jean ponder the dilemmas of getting children to attend college. Their own mothers, like Sarah's mother, had an unforgettable effect on their daughter's education. Their influence was probably so powerful because the strongest and most crucial familial relationship for

most of these women is the mother-daughter bond (Fiene, 1991). Though their mothers could not break out of their cultural roles (Egan) because of prior schooling and life circumstances, they did not want their daughters to miss out on the opportunity. In addition to encouraging their daughters to go to college, the mothers modeled writing letters, songs, and poems; reading the Bible and novels. One daughter was able to see her mother and then stepmother teach her father how to read at an eighth- grade level (Hope, January 20, 1999).

As noted in the beginning, I selected these women to see what effect their coming to college would have on their children. Knowing that education begets education and that "highly educated parents are more likely than their less-educated counterparts to raise children who themselves recognize the value of education" (Pascarella & Terenzeni, p. 414), I wondered about these women whose mothers did not model college. Having a college education, would they "raise children . . . [to] recognize the value of an education"?

Consequently, I set out to see what effect going back to college had on the children of the eight women who comprised my original sample. For those seven children who have graduated from high school including one who dropped out, none has attended community or a four year college, even though one of them was offered a full scholarship to Preston College. Of the seven, two were women and five men. One daughter has attended Licensed Practical Nursing school and hopes to enter a Registered Nursing program at Preston College soon; another is a homemaker with two children. Of the sons in the study, one attended vocational school and dropped out, one is in the military, two were trained by their respective companies, another is working construction, and one is working as a trucker.

So the idea of modeling in terms of their children entering college at the traditional age does not appear to have worked for these women's children. One possible explanation is that five of the seven children are male. In this male-dominated Appalachian society where schooling is seen as feminine by men, the father in the family and male peers may have been stronger models than their

mothers. In her article on gender based literacy practices in Appalachia, Puckett remarks that the culture believes that it is "more natural for a woman to read and write than it is for a man" (p. 139).

Women, in fact, are becoming the majority population among colleges in Kentucky and the nation. Currently, the ratio of male to female students in college is 45% male to 55% female, illustrating male attitudes toward education (Kentucky State Data Center, 1990a). Men lag behind women in education and in the job force for many reasons: Education is not socially acceptable among their peers, and their careers are based on doing things rather than thinking about things. The current regional job market demands more highly educated and technical skills which they do not have (MDC, Inc., 1999). Only one of the eight spouses of my participants had any college experience, so seven modeled high school education or less for their sons even though their mothers wanted more for their sons.

Rural women have less access to the current job market than women in the urban South. Though they have more education than rural men, they have less than urban women (Fiene, 1988). Limited job opportunities generally mean low pay and low status jobs as Jean describes:

> I think it's a lot different for the girls than it is the boys. The boys can always get out and make a living. They can do something somewhere, somehow. Driving a coal truck, driving something, even though it's not what you want them to do, they can still make the money. But for a girl it's very hard. They can't get out and do what they want. And who wants to house clean for $5 an hour the rest of your life? It's fine; I've done it before. It's good. But you don't want to stay there the rest of your life. (April 29, 1999)

Figures for the state of Kentucky support Jean's observation. Annual earnings for employed women between the years 1979 and 1995 illustrate that women with less education experience a decrease in earnings of 18.3% compared to more educated women with a 20.8% increase in earnings (Institute, p. 16).

Another reason why women like Polly's daughter may postpone college is that she, like most women in the region, may decide to have children between the ages of 18 and 24 and taper off having children as she moves from 25 to 34. In urban areas, this trend reverses itself as women decide to postpone having children until they are between the ages of 25-34 (Kentucky State Data

Center, 1997). When her children are older and she wants a more than minimum-wage job, Polly's daughter may return to college.

The children of these participants may also recognize that their mothers were glad to return to college when they appreciated the education more, had more focus, and concentrated on studies better despite the tugs of home and job.

Jean deliberately postponed her daughter's enrollment in college. While Jean was in college, she observed many 18-year-olds wasting their education. She did not want to invest money in her daughter's education until she was sure of her serious intent. So she encouraged Shannon to become certified first as an LPN, and then if she were still interested, Jean would pay for her nursing school. Now that Shannon has successfully completed the program as one of twelve graduates out of 36 who began the LPN program, she will be seeking entry to the college nursing program.

For the eleven children remaining in the home, only time will tell. Three sons are talking about going to college. Three daughters are planning to attend college and have directly stated that their moms were role models. Three sons are uncertain, though their mothers describe them as hands-on, active learners who will probably attend technical school if they go to post-secondary programs at all. Two children are pre- and elementary school aged.

Whether their children went on to college or not, these women had some influence. Lucy influenced two brothers and two sisters to get their GEDs, and one sister went on to nurse's aide training. Mary convinced a friend and her sister-in-law to attend college. Hope's daughter-in-law is attending college. Siblings of Jean came to school.

Since these women's mothers motivated them to return to college, and many were not able to do so until later in their lives, perhaps these women will keep hoping that their children will attend college; in fact, the children may enter later. Finally, their children may also not have the courage or motivation these women had; in fact, the children could have seen the sacrifices their mothers

made and decided it wasn't worth the price. They may understand as the people in Brandau's (1996) rural New York community "that educational achievement is requisite to higher level jobs and career arrangements, but choose to pursue other, often easier and more familiar, ways of providing for themselves and their families" (p. 39).

Additionally, children of those mothers who majored in education might see that the promises of education are often illusory. Though their mothers continued to evaluate the experience as positive, children may have witnessed their struggles with finding employment. For example, Mary went from K-Mart photographer to lab technician when she had studied so hard to become a teacher.

Polly in particular addressed the issue of children's coming to college by wondering aloud how families encourage their children to go to college (see above), "because I always wanted them to, but they just never did" (January 21, 1999). She believes that had she gone to college after high school, she would have gotten a teaching job without any trouble. Her children would have seen her teaching and wanted to go to college directly after high school. Whether this in fact would have been a reality is difficult to predict.

In fact, as a neighbor related during a recent conversation, the skills of college do not have to directly have the effect of children choosing college. Education helps mothers in their multiple roles as parents. As Lucy states, going to college "helped me personally to really find myself, and it even helped in raising my children" (April 22, 1999). In addition to involving their children in their class projects and sharing their knowledge, these women influenced their children daily as literate models. Though their children may not follow them to the college campus (as yet), these mothers modeled the importance of finishing high school to their children who in other circumstances might have quit, and they set an example of having a goal and pursuing it, so that whether children go on to college is not as important as their exposure to a literate mother.

> Whether I ever use it [education degree] towards teaching, I will always use it in life. (Polly, January 21, 1999).

Before I began this research, I had imagined that these women might be disillusioned with the college if they could not achieve their dreams, knowing that the literacy's promises can be imaginary (Gee). In particular, when I would run into many former students working at minimum-wage jobs, I would recall that they had graduated as education majors. With the lower fertility rate, the declining job market for coal, and the effects of welfare reform, enrollments in public schools in the region are decreasing, so not as many teachers are being hired (B. Hopkins, Preston County Board of Education, personal communication, May 12, 1999).

Those who do not know how close families are may suggest that if these women want a way out of poverty, then they should look elsewhere for jobs—for better opportunities and increased income. However, a colleague who formerly lived in eastern Kentucky with her professor husband and was a nontraditional student in the Preston College English program, points out to me the evolution of her thinking about people preferring to remain "disadvantaged":

> But the magnificent, awe-inspiring beauty of Kentucky's hills and "hollers" and the sense of familial commitment made me see "wealth" and "resources" differently. Having been ping-ponged as academic gypsies, back-and-forth these past many years and realizing too late the negative impact that has on family, I know that "poverty" of soul and poverty of social ties are much worse than poverty of "stuff." (C. Knudson, personal communication, July 3, 1999)

What I found in this study is that three of the eight women who could not get jobs were not disillusioned with college but frustrated with the job market, with perceived age discrimination, and with not being able to use talents they discovered during their four years at the college. They blamed the labor market and hiring personnel as opposed to blaming the college. Pascall & Cox observe the same phenomenon in their study of nontraditional graduates. The women blamed "discrimination at work, family pressures, lack of mobility and so on" (p. 140) for their unemployment.

Therefore, in asking them if they achieved the dreams they had upon entering the college, most were satisfied. Like Pascall & Cox, these women illustrated that they could "negotiate the secondary effects of both gender and class and use educational opportunities to create social and economic opportunities" (p. 146). In that study, the women valued their experience for the new opportunities education opened up for them. Shiber (1999), a colleague from the local community college, finds much the same after he moved here from Michigan. He published a book of essays written by nontraditional students and their teachers as a way to ease the adjustment of incoming nontraditional students to college. He summarizes his evolving feelings about this group of students he had never experienced teaching before he moved to eastern Kentucky: "Important as [achieving personal and professional goals and dreams] may be, it is the sense of self-respect and worth gained from taking that first step into college and sticking it out until they finish that is the true, longest-lasting reward for these [nontraditional] students" (p. 2).

When I asked the participants about any negative experiences during their time in college, they could think of nothing in particular. Any negative comments about the college centered on impatience with themselves about how they performed in a class or about why they didn't get tutoring sooner. All of the women reported life-changing experiences at Preston College: Increased self-confidence; uncovered special talents; multiple skills for living life; specific knowledge in content areas like nursing, psychology, computers, and science labs; practice of skills used on their jobs. It appears that those benefits outweigh conditions like the job market which cannot be specifically controlled by the college. Whatever happens to them after graduation, they have this gift which my women described as "something no one can take from me!" Perhaps their lack of criticism of the college centers on not looking a gift horse in the mouth.

When I asked them why they chose the college over cheaper opportunities to get vocational skills which exist in town at the local branch of the community college and a business college, the case study participants answered that the college had a better reputation. Jean set me straight:

Graduates from Preston College got jobs and kept them, at least in the nursing field. Lucy said that she did not want to have to start someplace and transfer. Sarah could not get her major elsewhere. They all wanted to complete their degrees at this particular institution.

Those who got jobs in their major appear content. Among the case study participants, two have achieved financial security they had never known; even Lucy on supplementary income maintains that she has enough financial help for her son and cystic fibrosis daughter. Sarah has been able to buy a new car and to pay her bills. As a single parent, she is not exactly solvent but getting there. After existing on financial aid and his disability check when she was in school, Jean and her husband are now talking about buying a retirement cabin in Tennessee.

Not all dreams are related to finances, either. All of the case study participants seem content with their lives, two working to pursue advanced degrees which may or may not equate to increased pay. Lucy uses her literate skills to help others who are less fortunate than herself (and we would think her circumstances difficult enough!) All consider themselves literate, educated persons who contribute to the well-being of their communities.

Connecting Data to Literature Review

In the review of literature, I outlined the differences between academic and practical literacy. In my participants' lives, I can see that the two are not balanced. Pre-college academic literacy appeared to have been a negative or neutral experience for most of the women. Trimbur's (1991) pointing to literacy as the arbiter of class may be a reason for these women's discomfort since they did not come from the kinds of homes that matched the dominant culture. Like Mortensen, I know that literacy itself cannot solve social, political, racial, and gender issues; however, becoming part of the societal solutions is crucial for teachers who can also motivate students to do their part.

For the women in this study, college literacy influenced them most dramatically. However, practical literacy has surrounded them from birth to the present. Their workplace literacy differs

from what they learned in their classes, but college gave them the foundation and confidence to handle the reading and writing they have to do and the ability to solve problems that emerge on their jobs and at home.

The principle of cultural knowledge illustrates for me how ethnocentric we become when we expect students to conform to the classroom without any problems. After reading Erickson and Purcell-Gates, I realized that, for all the years that I have lived here, I have never been to an Old Regular Baptist funeral which can last three days and nights. If I went, I would be fearful of offending my hosts, insecure about how long to stay, what to bring. So I imagine the fears of these women in an academic setting that would be as foreign to them as the funeral is to me.

Looking at Heath's concept of literacy events recalls the participants' descriptions about the way their Old Regular preachers would line out songs much as one Trackton resident might read the paper to a crowd who began discussing it. The way families read the Bible to one another and discuss it is another regular literacy event.

Milroy & Milroy's (1991) belief that part of the language prejudice is related to inappropriate application of the written code to spoken language attracts me. Teachers can respect the local dialect and work with students to improve their writing skills. My Appalachian dialect unit in composition works to make students aware of language attitudes and to recognize the differences between spoken and written language. They soon recognize that speakers do not all speak one way; they shift and speak both standard and non-standard. The women in this study, especially Jean, combine the two, but they have learned to express themselves in written Standard English. Everyone understands Jean's nursing notes which are unaffected by her spoken words. She communicates well with her colleagues and the doctors.

Donehower's concept of multiple literacies illustrates diverse ways of communication. One use of literacy among her research participants was spiritual development. For the women in my study, Bible reading is central to their lives, especially Sarah's mother, Naomi. Like Donehower's

participants, mine use literacy for entertainment with crossword puzzles, Soap Opera Digest, fishing magazines, Barney Magazine for their children, and so on. Many used journals to record daily events. Donehower cautions us not to make them choose between one form of literacy and another (ours).

Illustrating how "literacy professionals" doing research can demean the people they seek to help, Donehower remarks in her dissertation how Appalachian people get used to being looked down upon, no matter how well-intentioned people are. I describe this particular story to remind us how expansive we need to be in teaching and interacting with working-class people. In particular, she reflects on James Moffett's (1988) case study of a West Virginia community which banned a textbook he developed for Houghton Mifflin. In Storm On The Mountain: A Case Study Of Censorship, Conflict, And Consciousness, he records the results of his interactions with the people which, according to Donehower, pit "the academic, literacy professional against the supposedly 'anti-intellectual' non-professional" (p. 19). Trying to convince his censors of their error, he takes on a teaching stance and misinterprets their reactions as misunderstanding. Donehower observes that these people understood quite well that Moffett and other outsiders were labeling them as ignorant, "as having less cultural value and less intellectual and linguistic capital with which to play" (p. 20). Refusing to submit to his teacherly questioning and agree to this labeling, they resisted with their own "rhetorical tools . . . heavy scriptural quotation, parables, and local anecdotes and analogies" (p. 20). What upsets Donehower is how one sided Moffett's case study was and how it ignored the perspective of the people. Ironically, the book jacket promotes Moffett's "refusal to ridicule or patronize the book-banners simply because most of them were fundamentalist mountaineers" (back jacket).

Those "rhetorical tools" help Appalachians confront those with whom they disagree in a more agreeable and subtle way. Roskelly (1993) acknowledging her "redneck" heritage, admits that "rural southerners know when to get angry and when not to show it. . . . It's a flaw to 'show

yourself,' the redneck term for thinking so highly of yourself that you might cause others inconvenience" (p. 304). Jones (1999) says mountaineers frequently use humor which "allows [them] to resist what they do not agree with, avoid direct conflict, keep their dignity and self-respect, and have a little fun, too" (p. 6). He discusses a tale which illustrates his point: When a missionary from the North arrives in one town and drives up an isolated mountain road, he gets out of his car when he sees a man sitting on his porch. The preacher asks: "Are you lost?" and the mountaineer replies, "Why, no; I've lived here all my life" (p. 6). The exchange goes on with obvious and deliberate misunderstanding with the missionary walking away, convinced of the man's ignorance, and yet the man is the obvious rhetorical winner. Anglin in her anthropological research talks about how "backtalking" works with Appalachian workers resisting poor working conditions: They hold worship services next to mines or confront supervisors in congenial terms. When people here feel insulted, they won't necessarily disagree openly, but their response will "devil" their opponent if they are really listening.

Studies on nontraditional female graduates in the review of literature illustrate how much college impacts these women; most point to personal and professional development. I observed these effects but added the dimension of literacy. If these researchers were to contemplate the role of literacy in women's changing perceptions of themselves as learners, confronting traditional beliefs, attaining power at work and at home, and other effects listed, they would probably find that reading and writing played a major role.

No one in my study came from the middle- or upper-class like the women in Padula's study; they were mostly working-class women. Though I saw in my own class that the women were better students than younger students, I did not look at their undergraduate performance in relationship to those students as some studies did. The participants definitely did not have free time which characterizes some middle and upper class women who might be taking courses for personal fulfillment.

Rodriguez, Lunneborg, and Hamilton suggest that most working-class women come to college for financial reasons, but more than that, they overcome incredible obstacles and endure the sometimes negative effects of acquiring an education. Although three women in the study were divorced, two of the three were not divorced until after they finished college. Both husbands appeared to have been threatened by an educated woman: Lucy's husband because he had limited literacy and Sarah's because he resented her independence which was reinforced by her mother and her college education. After Lucy's divorce, she still had to get restraining orders because her ex-husband remained abusive. With his death two years later from cirrhosis of the liver, Lucy finally had peace. Sarah initiated a divorce a few years after her graduation because of her husband's extramarital relations; he accused her of being "Miss Independent Woman" during the hearings. Though divorce is difficult for a family to go through, it seems self-defeating to remain static and not get an education just to maintain the status quo.

Rodriguez, Hammons-Byrner, Belenky et al. indicate in their studies how courageous these women are to resist "denigrating remarks about success potential" (Hammons-Byrner, p. 19) which disempowered them in school. They saw in college a way to effect change in their lives and the lives of others and achieve goals they set for themselves. If they had a traumatic experience involving a male figure as Naomi did when she lost her husband when Sarah was five, these women saw education as a way to be independent of men, Naomi's goal for Sarah.

The concept of accumulating literacy (Brandt, 1995) most aptly applies to this study, in particular, seeing the materials and documents that Lucy has accumulated when I visited her home. She had textbooks from college, books people had given her throughout her life, a huge notebook on cystic fibrosis, blank notebooks from college (which her son uses to scribble in), yearbooks from her high school and Preston College, and numerous children's books. She had other materials in storage since her trailer is so small. All participants accumulated literacy in terms of "piling on" literacies they had gathered throughout their lives. Their early exposure to parents' and

grandparents' spiritual literacy of the Bible was their first lesson which was built upon with children's stories read to them. As they got older, many loved to read Nancy Drew, Trixie Belden, and other books; some wrote poems and short stories, wrote in journals. Though not all evaluated their schooling positively, they did some reading and writing and went to the school library once a week; some even wrote book reports. College added to their literacy, many realizing for the first time how to organize their writing. Education majors wrote extensively in their language arts classes. Those with difficulty reading in early schooling were motivated by their subject matter to be more proficient readers in college. Frequently, their first exposure to computers occurred in college, but if it did not, they have grasped it because of their children's or spouse's interest. Interacting with the legal profession, Lucy and Sarah have learned to "read, document, and traffic in symbol systems" that help them as citizens "to protect and exercise their civil rights and to claim their fair share of public resources" (Brandt, 1995, p. 652).

Neilsen's theory of literacy development fits the results of this study—literacy is inseparable from normal adult development. Development of literacy at various points in our lives helps us rise to challenges of the world, to have a say in what happens in our daily lives. These women, finished with their childbearing years and anxious to make their way in the world, knew that they needed college literacy to compete in the world and make a difference, if not for themselves, for their children.

I hope that this research has honored Sullivan's belief that as a female researcher, I have adequately represented gender and gender issues. The women in this study have strong feminist values as viewed from the outside: Witness Naomi's arguing with her minister and wanting Sarah to be independent of men. However, they resist the feminist label because of its strongly middle- and upper-class orientation and other unfavorable images.

These women also know that their husbands and other Appalachian males have been victims of lack of education; consider Lucy's husband who was so threatened by literacy that he

would not allow any reading and writing materials in the house. What can literacy professionals do to overcome this feeling of shame, "the trapping of backwardness," which lack of education instills (V. Villanueva, personal communication, March, 1999)? Is Lucy's husband one of the many in the academic classroom whose isolation led to his lack of cultural knowledge and who was blamed for his personal deficiency and put out to pasture (Geissenger et al., 1993)? This study has been about women finding their voices. However, they do not want to sacrifice the traditional values that keep many families together, for that is more important than individual personal achievement. College has helped these women speak up for themselves, to take steps they would not have been able to take before college, so that they are no longer silent. Coming to empowerment does not necessarily "spark collective change. The heightened awareness that individuals obtain from such [educational] practices can generate confidence and feelings of worth, but if transformation occurs, it may only be actualized on an individual basis" (Qualley, 1994, p. 34-35). Qualley urges us to begin dialogue so that women like this begin to see what societal changes need to be made to make circumstances better for all women. For now, they fight their individual battles and advance women's causes in nonpolitical ways.

Lucy, Jean, and Sarah exude strong voices and Judith, Faith, Mary, Hope, and Polly join in the chorus. After the eight interviews, I wanted to do case studies of all the women, but I think all have made contributions to the study, breaking the silence they had when they, like me, may have felt they didn't have a brain and discovered it in the journey through their lives. They certainly are whistling and crowing louder now.

Recommendations

> You have to stay open-minded to learn. And I don't care if you live to be a hundred, if you keep an open mind, you can always learn something new. (Naomi, April 30, 1999)

As teachers, we hear Naomi's words. Though the results of these case studies are not meant to be generalizable, they point to learning possibilities and recommendations for persons involved in literacy education. Observing what happens after students leave the academic setting illustrates how education "supplemented, shaped, and enhanced their lives" (my proposal). This research alters understandings in the classroom.

Roles for Teachers

Recognizing that women returning to the classroom do not come empty handed or minded, teachers need to identify gifts and talents of individual students before literacy instruction begins. Class and individual discussion and literacy narratives are excellent tools to begin that process. Next, we need to remind ourselves how limited academic literacy is within the total picture of the literacies they have accumulated throughout their lives. Academic literacy can help students acquire credentials, life-skills, and self-confidence to add to literacies they already have and will earn in the future. As Barton & Hamilton remind us: "Educational practices are not the only literacy practices; rather, they are a particular set of practices which may complement and enhance the practices of home and community, but which are also capable of violating and devaluing them" (p. 282). We are only a segment of their literate lives and must not "devalue" their other literacies.

Knowing that most women gain knowledge in diverse ways, but particularly by seeing its connectedness to life, teachers may need to operate in the "teacher as midwife" mode promoted by Belenky et al. In this mode, teachers recognize birthing ideas and nurse them along, knowing that ideas and persons grow with nurturing. They help students "deliver their words to the world" and expose them to voices of others with whom they can blend (p. 219). Finally, this kind of teacher emphasizes the practical connection of knowledge to the real world in which women reside. Students taught by these kinds of teachers will emerge from the classroom empowered by the marriage of their own intelligence to that of the academy. Appalachian women, having been taught practical skills by their mothers throughout their lives, particularly respond to this kind of teaching. It

relates well to their need for maintaining the common sense they value. However, teachers also need to be aware that women learn in more diverse ways and that connectedness is a way of knowing for some men as well (Hayes & Flannery; Qualley).

Caring teachers begin with regard for students in their classrooms. They become listeners and allow students to teach them. They are receptive, especially to adult students who are "already active and important participants in our culture's conversation" (Kiskis, 1994, p. 68). Trusting in students' abilities and literacies, teachers actively engage them in creating their own knowledge. Such teachers eschew paternalistic attitudes and programs which take literacy to people whether they want it or not; we don't want to be missionaries. Students can teach us about their culture, so that we never impose knowledge from unperceived need.

We should love the people we teach, want for them what we want for ourselves, respect their ability to learn, act, and shape their lives, and value their experiences (Horton & Freire, 1990). The logical extension of Horton & Freire's philosophy is "empowering, restructuring, facilitating, modeling, and questioning in teaching. . . . [A teacher] encourages women to participate in dialogical, collaborative, and democratic ways of teaching and learning" (Rodriguez, p. 8). Once students feel relationships with teachers with whom they can "shape their social reality and . . . [are] no longer isolated and powerless, they begin to participate in dialogue with a larger world, first orally and then through writing" (Elsasser & John-Steiner, 1977, p. 361).

Generally, the learning needs of rural students have been ignored by current educational literature, and the principles which I recommend to counteract that trend echoes the approach of good teachers mentioned above. Teachers need to create an atmosphere of trust and support in the classroom, recognize that students want to set their schedules for work, connect classroom experience to what is familiar to them already, and present choices on how to approach, organize, and present assignments (Fitzgerald & Bloodworth, 1996; Rotkis & McDaniel, 1993). One of my case study participants, Jean, says that teachers who are able to communicate with and create a

willingness to learn in students motivate students like herself and make all the difference between her early schooling and college (April 29, 1999).

Faculty need to be aware of gender differences in learning styles and go beyond gender stereotypes (Rienzi, Allen, Sarmeiento, & McMillin, 1993; Flynn). Being aware of class differences and respecting the oral culture from which they came, teachers can encourage their students "to develop and trust their oral and literate ways while continuing to communicate the struggles entailed in being other cultural and outside the middle-class" (Villanueva, p. 115). As teachers and members of the community ourselves, we need to work to change the inequities based on gender and class and link ourselves with "productive social movements that redress social inequities" (Heaney, 1990). The best means of social change is activating strengths of students, getting them to question, to recognize the gray areas of life, to think critically, and to continue on their journey of lifelong education. Then we can look to the "emergence of persons who can think for themselves, can commit to inquiry in place of absolutism, can construct a democratic society that acknowledges and honors diverse beliefs, opinions, and cultural activities" (Taylor, p. 61). Finally, teachers need to keep doing what we do well, what these women have commended us for, but we must push beyond our ethnocentric, cultural views of literacy to recognize the broader view of literacy as symbols and signs that help people make meaning in their lives (Neilsen); our classroom is just one place among many where that can happen.

Changes for Colleges

Colleges need to recognize the potential of these nontraditional women to recruit other students like them. Despite the lack of job opportunities in education, these women felt resolute that the college gave them the gift of confidence and self-esteem. They felt that they gained life skills, and they blamed their inability to get work on the job market and age discrimination. Because they are generally better students, more motivated to finish all four years therefore less likely to drop out, nontraditional women are ideal to supplement declining college enrollments.

To keep first generation students in college and increase their loyalty to the institution, colleges must work to retain them by lessening financial burdens, encouraging student involvement, providing counseling and support services designed for each student (Billson & Terry, 1982). Colleges and universities serving this student population need to provide better career counseling (Christian & Wilson, 1985), perhaps encouraging nontraditional students to have a back-up cadre of courses in case opportunities are not available in the major they originally choose. Better than that, colleges should do more realistic job market searches so that we can channel students into employable fields. If colleges promote the idea that more education means better jobs, then they should not be turning out graduates to face unemployment or underemployment. We also need to continue providing them with the skills of critical thinking and other broad based skills that help them adjust to the changing employment world like Polly, Mary, and other women reported. Their adjustability to unknown circumstances and their ability to be easily trained made the difference between unemployment and employment.

Because these women frequently have to work to pay college costs and are more family oriented than we can imagine, we need to provide chances for them to stop in and out of the educational process. If a family member is ill part of the semester or they have job pressures, we need to be more patient with late assignments. If students have to drop out, we can perhaps give them credit for the work they have done to that point, so that they don't come back to school empty handed. We need to encourage these women not to get discouraged by making it easier for them to re-enter when family circumstances stabilize. Soliday (1999) challenges us to be aware of social class in our "genuine concern for diversity [which] should lead us to question the selective functions of the academy and the role of composition in maintaining them" (p. 731). She encourages us to question policies and practices which act as gatekeeping and continue to divide middle- and working-class students in the academy.

Merrifield et al., referring to literacy programs, suggest that we need to rethink "what it means for an adult literacy learner to 'successfully complete' a learning experience. Leaving the program after a relatively short time should not necessarily mean failure" (p. 209). Perhaps colleges can make such adaptations for nontraditional students.

Rodriguez suggests further that colleges provide low-cost child care, nondiscriminatory admissions and financial aid policies, in-service training for faculty not used to teaching nontraditional students, and outreach to "non-aspiring potential re-entry women" (pp. 7-8).

Writing should occur across the curriculum, so that women can hopefully practice in expressing themselves in more than composition classes. Since women value the connection of learning to their lives, linking expository and workplace literacy skills seems an obvious function of the college, showing contrasts and purposes. Having graduates from different professions (especially the women in this study) come to composition classes to illustrate the importance of writing beyond college might also help college freshmen of all ages see beyond enduring the English requirement to readying themselves for real life literacy. To help students see the connection between academic and practical literacies, we need to use writing "as a means of initiating students into a disciplinary or professional community" so they know what is expected within their professions (Sitler). If education does not "promote further learning by creating interest and promoting power of self-control," then it cannot promote "self-understanding" (Neilsen, p. 137).

Questions For Further Study

Much of this dissertation is what Tobin (1993) calls "happy talk" since for these women college was so positive. While at least among these eight women, their voices are not being silenced, these findings do not absolve us from responding to social and economic realities in the world. Below are some questions the study raises:

1. What happened to the numbers of women who enrolled in college and did not graduate? In Wal-Mart one day I ran into Wanda who had positively contributed to my class years

ago and had come to college in the hopes of advancing beyond the minimum-wage job she had with a grocery store chain. When I asked her if she had finished college, she shook her head and said that she had had some trouble with her daughter which necessitated her quitting. The job at Wal-Mart was also minimum-wage, so she was doing no better. What can we do for persons like Wanda who show such potential and then have the candle extinguished by circumstances not completely within our control? I am also curious about what would have happened to some of the women in my study if their husbands had not become disabled in the mines. Are there not women out there in similar circumstances who give up rather than take the courageous steps these women did? What can we do to reach them to make sure their voices are heard?

2. In looking at literacy in the workplace, Sitler and I in our research found numerous studies about adult education programs in the work setting, but very few about how academic and workplace literacy connect with the exception of one source which examines "skills and competencies students need to succeed in today's workplace and details how colleges and universities can strengthen the curriculum to cultivate those skills" (Evers, Rush, & Bedrow, 1998). Sitler encourages educational practices which work to connect life and school settings so that "literacy and learning flourish because the academic and the rest of life [meet] at the edges and create a fertile learning environment" (p. 255). How do students make the transition from expository, academic writing in college to the kind of writing nurses and social workers, for example, do? What can we do to get students to see how valuable each is and not denigrate workplace literacy as something not as good? What changes should we make in the way literacy is taught to accommodate women in similar circumstances?

3. Since the focus for this study was post-college, I drew on pre-college literacy only briefly. To complete the picture of total accumulating literacies, further study might examine early literacy. Having the participants submit a literacy journal might provide a description of their literacy foundation to correlate with current data.

4. Investigating pre-college literacy might also lead to some understanding of how elementary and secondary teachers can motivate students like Jean and Lucy who appeared to have learning difficulties. Examining teachers in the Carolinas, Heath observed how unaware they were of Trackton and Roadville students' methods of play, sense of timed tasks, parental commands, and uses of questioning. Their ignorance resulted in failure of those students as their nonstandard ways with words clashed with teachers' middle-class values. While my participants were in school, teachers were unaware of the concept of "learning disabilities" which may or may not have been to their advantage since now teachers frequently tend to rely on the term as a catch-all to place elementary and secondary students whose problems are unmanageable. In fact, some educators believe that

> the wide use of [that] ill-defined category implies that children are being classified as LD when there is no agreement on how they should be helped, scant evidence of programmes that work. . . . In fact, formal and informal socialisation experiences are teaching the child to behave according to the diagnostic category in which he has been placed. (Clay, 1987, p. 171).

Further study on how teachers activate learning and manage students' learning difficulties might prevent students like Jean from dropping out.

5. The area of adult development has fascinated me since the time I worked for seven years as Director of Continuing Education. Just as it is helpful to understand learning styles, so literacy professionals who understand the stages of adult development, though not static, might make teaching more productive. Neilsen deals with some aspects of adult development, but the research is extensive. Observing authors such as Knowles' (1998) The Adult Learner, Knox's (1986) Helping Adults Learn and others in the field, we might adjust our teaching of literacy to nontraditional students who come not in search of marriage partners as did the subjects in Holland and Eisenhart's (1990), Educated in Romance, but in search of opportunities to grow and learn.

6. Another emerging theme in this study which echoed loudly from the voices of the women in this study and in the writings of Horsman, Donehower, Villanueva and others is the notion of

common sense. Mary vowed that no matter how well educated she became, she hoped she would retain the common sense of her uneducated family. Lucy suggested that she had no worries about Y2K because

> one-on-one [our] common sense is a lot better because I think common sense is what helps you through life. And raised in an area like this you learn to provide for yourself as far as gardening, knowing, even out in the wilderness, what greens to eat, what roots, where to find shelter and stuff. I think that's the K2Y or Y2K. The thing, you know, everybody's panicking. I can survive. (Laughter.) I can cook on an open fire, I can can [produce], I can garden. (April 22, 1999).

Naomi marveled at the people with book learning who didn't know how to cross the road. They seem to reflect a basic concern that education might take away this connection to the real world, pointing to that dichotomy again of academic and practical literacy.

Common sense is defined as "the commonly held conceptions of the world held by various cultures, a culture's way of seeing and believing . . . carried and transmitted by discourse" (Villanueva, p. 124). It equates to cultural integrity which Soliday (1999) says working-class students fear losing entering the academy and which Appalachians have a saying for: Education might lead to "getting above your raisings." Resisting that absorption, many may drop out. Common sense corresponds to personal empathy and experience which Horsman's women counted for more than an educated person's knowledge; in other words, book learning does not equal "real" knowledge. Luttrell (1997) in Schoolsmart and Motherwise believes that "women . . . were drawn to commonsense and intuition because these forms of knowledge rest in women themselves (not in higher authorities) and are experienced directly in the world (not through abstractions)" (p. 32). Common sense is "the highest form of problem solving" (Fingeret as cited in Horsman, p. 215).

I believe that pursuing this conflict between wanting an education to change the status quo versus maintaining the foundation of their common sense would be worth looking into.

Conclusion

> If I hadn't come to college, I wouldn't be the person I am now. I wouldn't trade that growth or the knowledge I've gained. Yeah, I'm glad I did that. I'm glad I did that. It made me a better person. (Mary, February 2, 1999).

Though she has not been employed in the teaching field and is underemployed in her present job, Mary reflects positively on the college's positive contribution to her life. Her response echoes the awareness I came to when I finished the course work for this doctorate. Like the Scarecrow in The Wizard of Oz who wanted a brain and finds out from the Wizard that "You've had a brain all along!" so did the IUP faculty reinforce my intellect in a way that no other experience could have. After eleven years as an adjunct, the doctorate (though not completed at this writing) has already secured me a full-time position at Preston College. Colleagues treat me differently and appear to be listening. I have moved like the women in my study "from a passive to an active role . . . understanding themselves and the forces that shape that context sufficiently well to see themselves as an instrument of knowledge and influence" (Neilsen, p. 132). Confidence has replaced doubt.

What these women communicate in this study is that in their occupations, their communities, their families, they are making their voices heard. Their college education has given them courage to take steps that others in their places may not have taken. In fact, they are part of an elite group, 5% of women in the five-county area to complete college (Kentucky State Data Center, 1990b). Though just one part of their accumulating literacies, college literacy was the incentive that spurred them on to get the credentials they needed for their occupations. Additionally, college gave them life skills that also built on those they already had and those they will gather as they grow older.

Their voices crow in their individual ways. Lucy roars that going to college was originally to prepare herself for a job, but "after I got into it, it got to be more for me, to make me feel better about ME" (April 22, 1999). Jean, passing on a legacy to her grandchildren, bellows that making a

difference in her world would be "better than running for president" (April 29. 1999). Sarah's voice shouts: "I am bound and determined I will be successful" (May 4, 1999). They know that if they do not seek solutions to problems of Appalachia, then those from the outside will step in (Bailey, 1998).

When I re-read the transcripts and case studies, I am made speechless by all that I didn't know and learned from these articulate, generous women. They gave me the most precious gift of time and generosity, countless riches which have touched me deeply. As I ended my proposal, "No doctoral program could have taught me as much as they have in so gracious a manner." I thank them for the honor of their trust; their treasures fill my heart. I hope my representation of them makes their whistlin' and crowin' voices reverberate throughout the land, for they have indeed come to good ends.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A--Interview Questions For Eight Women
January And February, 1999

Literacy is defined as the use of symbol systems, most particularly reading and writing in our culture. We read and write shopping lists, junk mail, letters and cards, poems, diaries, songs, official letters, bills, forms, scrap books, recipes, address books, local newspapers, catalogs, ads, instructions for new products we buy. We keep records, calendars, appointments; we take messages. If we belong to a group, we read minutes, newsletters, notices. Watching TV, looking at the computer, helping child with homework, researching family history are also considered literacy. All of this besides reading books, newspapers, and magazines is literacy.

PRE-COLLEGE

1. Before college, what sort of reading and writing did you/your family do?
2. Who or what most influenced you to come to college?
3. Were you the first in your family to attend?

COLLEGE

1. When you were in college, how did you have to change your reading and writing habits? Your way of thinking, of gathering knowledge? From freshman to senior year, what changes did you notice in yourself?
2. What was the most or the least helpful to you when you were in college?
3. Some of you expressed a fear that getting an education might cause problems in your family. Did that happen?
4. How did college affect your home life? I am particularly interested in the reactions of your children.
5. Reflect on the writing you did in my class.

POST-COLLEGE

1. In my class, you expressed hopes and dreams. Tell me what has happened to those.
2. Tell me about what you've been doing since college. Describe the changes in you and in your life as a result of college. What might you be doing if you had not gone to college? (significance of education)
3. Do you feel that college adequately prepared you for what you have been doing since college?
4. What sort of reading and writing do you do on the job?
5. What sort of reading and writing do you do for yourself outside the job? (novels, journals, letters to editor, letters to friends) How do these activities differ from your pre-college behavior?
6. If you are active in church, what sort of reading and writing goes on around you? (church bulletins, sending cards to sick members, hymnals, prayer cards, etc.)
7. What are the attitudes of your family toward reading and writing?
8. All things considered, evaluate your college experience.
9. Tell me about your family's literacy.

Appendix B--Questions For Family Members

These basic questions will probably lead to others.

1. Tell me about the time this person was going to school. Why do you think they went back?

2. What was the immediate effect on you of this person returning to college? The effect on your family? Did you change your attitude as she went through college? In what ways? How did other family members react?

3. What changes have you seen in this person from pre-college, college, to now? In what ways has she stayed the same? Changed?

4. Does this person use more reading and writing since they graduated from college? In what ways?

5. How does this person use reading and writing in the home? On the job? In the community (church, school, etc.)?

6. Do you think that going to college helped or hindered this person? Do you think your family member realized all the dreams that she had hoped for?

7. How do you feel about women getting a college education?

8. Tell me about the reading and writing you did growing up and now. This includes grocery lists, paying bills, writing letters or love notes, reading horoscopes, magazines, etc.

Second interview with Lucy; sample page ***Code in bold italics***

Kathy Sohn: Uh-huh. Okay, now one of the things that my people in Pennsylvania ask me is what it's like to live in this part of the country. And I thought if you could just talk about it as if they were sitting here with us--you know, what it's like to live in Appalachia. Of course, there are a lot of stereotypes and all of that kind of things. But if you could just describe a typical day or the religious life, the schools.

Lucy: Well, it's basically like everybody else. We're not outstanding. We're not really stupid or anything. We were all educated, or most of us are. ***Famed***
And it's just you get a sense of security. I think it's because there's a lot of your families. The way it is it's not like you've got a family--you're one here and your family's another 50 miles away or something like that. You're like in these little--people call them cliques--you're within the, I'd say five miles, you've got brothers, sisters, mother, father, aunts, uncles, grandparents-they're all--because when property was bought up they bought it up in like big lots and as the children left home each child got a piece of that property, so they're all close to each other. So you've got that family security. ***Famsup***
And then just about every little hollow there's a church. So you have your own little--it's not like you don't associate with anybody else though. You CAN go away from this church but still there's the church in that area. ***Rel***
And then I think the mountains are my sense of security because I've always lived in Kentucky but I've visited other places, and it's just these wide-open spaces, you know. My mother is from North Carolina, so she's says it's just like a box. You get up in the morning and you look out your front door and you've got a mountain in front of you. You look out the back door you've got a mountain behind you. Look the other two sides and there's a mountain. So you're just in there. ***Appdef***
But I think now it's getting worse. A lot of things are starting to filter in here--crime and drugs and stuff. But when I was growing up you weren't afraid to let you kids go out. When we were growing up, we went like in the creek and on the hill. And Mom didn't know where we were. She just knew we were safe. But now it's-- ***chgeneg***

KS: Do you feel that way about Sally and Bud? That you can let them go out right where you live.

Lucy: No. They go out the front door I go out the front door. I stay right with them at all times. But still it's just the area is more open now as far as roads are better, and there are more people coming in. ***chgeneg*** And there are more drugs here than what people can imagine. There's a lot. I know at one time right above us there's some rental property. That's the one thing that you're not really used to up where we live at. But now some people are starting to move away. ***Chgefam***
They're selling their property and selling to these people that are just making rental properties. And it's been about four years ago, the police just surrounded the place. They took the walls down and everything because there were drugs in the walls, down in the vents and stuff, where they were selling. And it was like cocaine and stuff. It wasn't pot. ***chgeneg***

KS: And that was right up your hollow?
Lucy: Yeah. Just right above me.

KS: Oh wow. And did your family used to own some of that?

Second interview with Jean

Kathy Sohn: Now, one of the things I want to do in my paper is tell people about this area. And I wonder, for you, if you can tell somebody just, like my professor, what it's like to live here, what's really good about living here, the reason you stay, and also some things that might be improved.

Jean: I think the major thing is the community. It's a lot of families. They're close. And not only just the close family but extended family. You also consider your neighbor as part of your family. There are times that you can go out and if your neighbor needs something done and you see them out working and you know they haven't been feeling good, you'll go over and do it for them. A lot of places, no, they have their barriers and that's it. ***famsup***

KS: Right, right. He has to do his own work.

Jean: Right. Right. And even if they're sick, let them pay me for it. And that's not the way it is around here. Money doesn't mean everything. And it doesn't mean if you have a lot of money that you're happy. That doesn't mean you're happy. You can have a minimum amount of money and you could be the happiest person ever was. And you don't have to have everything to show that you're--you know, happiness doesn't mean that. And I think that's the major thing around here. ***Appdef***
And I think that's for the kids--one drawback is there's not enough activities to keep the kids occupied. Some kids just don't find anything interesting and it's left up to the parents. And you can tell which, not all kids, there are some, and some parents just don't care and you can tell by their kids. And then if you come from a good community and good fine place that you can tell if there's one really good family on there you can tell because that's where all the kids hang. ***Appdefneg***

KS: Is that right?

Jean: And that helps too because that sets a role model for the kids who don't have it at home. When they don't have it at home it helps. ***faminf***

KS: So they can at least get it down the street if they've got a good family.

Jean: Right. Right. They can get a taste of what--you know, "This is the way THEIR mother does it; you know, I wish mine did that." And they will, they'll learn. Even though that they don't show it right then, when they grow up, they can think back, "Well, you know, my parents didn't do me that way. I want to do mine like this one did." And it helps. I think it leaves an impact on them. ***faminf***

KS: Do you have children dropping in like that?

Jean: Yes. (Laughter.)

KS: All the time. You're the house in the neighborhood.

Jean: Even though when my kids were small, I guess I was strict on them. Sometimes probably too strict. But I didn't let them go to many houses at all. But I made it perfectly clear that other children were allowed to come there, as long as they did--and I wanted to make one thing with the parents; I told them, you know, I don't care for them coming, I will treat them like my own. So if they misbehave, then you know, which I never did like spank or anything like that. I'd get on to them a little bit. But if it comes to that point, you know, I'd just send them home. ***chrr***

But, yeah, and then I thought, well, okay, mine became teenagers, so I've outgrown all the kids coming in. Went in one door and out the other, open a can of pop up. But it hasn't yet. I have still got anywhere from, I think, four years old on up.

KS: Is that right?

Jean: And they still come there and they still--it's just like home to them.

First Interview with Sarah
Sarah: Well, I liked going to school. I liked learning new things. But I guess the one thing that made it all seem worth it to me was on graduation day whenever my mom got to stand there and watch the dream come true. And she cried. They got it on tape. (laughter) They get to watch it over and over. Just as soon as they started playing the music, my mom started crying. So that is what I worked hard for. Her dream and my dream. ***evalc***

KS: Absolutely. And they came together and--

Sarah: At the same time.

KS: Oh. It just makes me want to cry. My daughter is graduating in May and I think, you know, you just work so hard.

Sarah: I felt like I did a lot of things backwards, and if I'd have been fresh out of high school, I wouldn't have done near as well. I wasn't focused. I didn't know what I wanted then. ***evalc***

KS: So you don't really feel any regrets about waiting all that time?

Sarah: No, because when I went back I knew what I wanted. I knew where I was going. ***RR***

KS: Tell me about your interest in psychology. How did you know that that was the course you wanted to take?

Sarah: Well, I've always been a people person, and I guess the summer before I started school that was just the area that I had sought with all these reports of child abuse, child neglect, and so forth. And that's sort of what drew me in that direction. And I like working with kids. ***major***

KS: Good. How did your son react to your being in school?

Sarah: I think it's been positive because now there are times he'll say he's not going to go to school, but then when he's out away from ME talking he's wanting to further his education. ***chlit*** When he's around Mom, he's not going to school; he hates school. But when he's out away from me with his peers and so forth--because I know he's already sent out information for colleges and everything, and we're already receiving stuff and he's sending it out and telling me to mail it of interest. And I'm encouraging him to go with something he's INTERESTED in, not something that I would push him in but something he would be interested in. ***chcol***

KS: How old is he?

Sarah: He's a sophomore in high school. He just turned 16 a week ago.

KS: Oh, and now you've got the car situation.

Sarah: That's a different story. I may never live through that. But the days he got to go to school with me, he enjoyed it. He felt big. Mom is doing something and this--I don't know if you've ever seen the video of Reba McIntyre, "Is There Life Out There?" ***famsup***

KS: I don't think I have.

Sarah: Well, you need to watch that because every time it would come on, and he would see it, "Mom, here's your song. Come and watch!" Because she's going back to school after having--it's sort of like a woman going back to school and she's got two kids. And so he was like, every time it came on, it was like, "Come here, Mom, you gotta watch it. Here's your song." Or if he heard it on the radio, "Here's your song." ***Famsup***

Appendix D--Human Subjects Informed Consent Form

I am so truly grateful to you for assisting me in this research project for my doctorate. I hope the information below will give you some idea how excited I am about what lies ahead.

The **title** of my dissertation above refers to the saying which mothers have used to warn their daughters not to be too pushy or loud: "Whistlin' women and crowin' hens come to no good end." I believe that women should be able to whistle and crow, to make their voices heard, without coming to bad ends.

The **reason** that I decided to do this study is that you and other women like you inspired me as you began to "whistle and crow" in your own way in my class. You returned to school for various reasons and juggled home, school, and jobs to labor toward achieving your hopes of a better life for you and your family. **I have wondered throughout the years what "end" you came to after college, especially what happened to your reading and writing activities.** Your sharing of information will add to a body of knowledge about how women use reading and writing in their everyday lives. In this study, **you become the teacher, and I become the learner**. I will listen to what you say, observe you in action, and share that knowledge with you and others.

You are part of a group of eight former female nontraditional students whom I have taught composition to within the last eleven years. From these eight, I will eventually choose three of you to interview in more detail in the coming months. In addition, I will also observe reading and writing they do on their jobs and interview one family member to ask about the effect of their education.

Whether I choose you for the final three or not, I will value the information you share and integrate into the body of the dissertation. **You will have the chance to see all the information I gather and check for its accuracy. I will always preserve your confidentiality for I do not want to dishonor your contributions to my study.** For the dissertation and any material published in journals or meetings, you will choose a pseudonym to preserve your privacy.

Your participation in this study is voluntary and will incur no risk. You are free at any time to decide not to participate in this study or to withdraw without adversely affecting your relationship with me or the institution I represent, Indiana University of Pennsylvania. Your decision will not result in any loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. If you choose not to participate, you may withdraw at any time by notifying me. Upon your request, I will destroy all information, and there will be no repercussions.

I hope that you will join me for what I think will be an exciting journey toward more knowledge. I believe that outsiders need to recognize that **Appalachian women are special**. If you are so willing, please sign the attached statement and return it to me. Take the extra unsigned copy and a copy of this document for your own records.

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This project has been approved by the Indiana University of Pennsylvania Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects (724-357-2223).

Voices from the Hill

The Writing Program
Pikeville College

Edited by

Brigitte LaPresto
Associate Professor of English

1994-95 edition

Grandma's Chocolate Gravy

Jean

Last Saturday and Sunday turned out to be a very hectic weekend. I had unexpected out-of-town guests who came to visit. Saturday morning was unusually busy. I was trying to prepare enough breakfast to feed everyone. While I fixed the usual eggs, biscuits, sausage, and bacon, I also fixed chocolate gravy. One of my guests happened to be Allie, a ten-year-old. She had never heard of chocolate gravy. Her first reaction was, "Ooh, gross!" Her next question was, "How do you make it?"

As I explained to her, "This is a recipe that I will never forget. You have to taste chocolate gravy to appreciate it. Watch carefully. I will take you through the steps my grandmother went through."

Chocolate gravy is an old family recipe of my grandma's. When I was young, I would stay with her for a week at a time. During this period, she would make chocolate gravy for me. I considered that the ultimate breakfast of all. I looked forward to staying with her and even to getting up in the morning.

"Allie," I said; "I still remember the conversation my grandmother and I would have every morning. My grandmother would walk into the bedroom and say, 'Sandy, it is time to get up. come and eat your breakfast. I have to go milk the cow.' I would reply in a low voice, 'Not right now; I want to sleep just a little bit longer.' Then as she turned to go out of the bedroom, she would say, 'I made chocolate gravy. You'd better get up while it's hot.' Those were the magic words - 'CHOCOLATE GRAVY.' Before she got to the kitchen I was right behind her."

"Sometimes I would get to sit and watch my grandma go through the steps to make chocolate gravy. She would use these ingredients: 1 ½ cups sugar, 4 tablespoons flour, 4 tablespoons cocoa, ½ cup milk. First, she would combine the sugar, flour, and cocoa in a bowl, making sure they were all mixed together. Then, she would pour the dry ingredients into a cooker on the stove. Next, grandma would add the milk and water, stirring until thoroughly mixed. She placed the cooker on medium heat until it started to boil. Grandma would stir the mixture until it was just right, making sure not to let it scorch."

"Finally, she would take it off the heat and pour it into a bowl. I would always take one of her homemade biscuits and tear it apart, placing it on the plate. Grandma would take a spoonful of chocolate gravy and pour it over the biscuit. There she would top it with butter to my satisfaction."

Grandma's chocolate gravy is not only a very special recipe to me, but also holds sentimental meaning. When I think of chocolate gravy, I see myself with my grandmother, sitting in her warm kitchen in the early morning hours eating breakfast. As I explained to Allie, "This is a special recipe that is passed from one generation to the next."

Voices from the Hill

Writing Program
Pikeville College

1992-1993

Marty and I

Lucy

Alex Mullins, a neighbor who lives about a fourth of a mile down the road from where we live, asked my brother and me to get a swarm of bumblebees out of his corncrib (a building used to store grain), in which they had made their home. The corncrib sat on a flat, in a field on the hillside just above his house. The bees had made their hive among some rotten boards that had been stored there. Although he hired us, he didn't think we could do the job. "I don't think you can do it but you're sure welcome to try," he said with a chuckle. Just knowing that he didn't think we could do the job made us more determined to get the job done.

Marty and I then set out to do what Alex saw as an impossible task. First, we had to gather all the equipment we would need. We borrowed two mining hats from our uncle and some fishing nets to put over our heads and faces so that the bees couldn't sting us. Then we took a rake from the barn, a grabbling hook to pull the boards out of the crib, and we got our grandfather's bee smoke gun (a can with a tube coming from it that is connected to a hand-held pump that sucks the smoke from the can). My grandfather had used it many times when harvesting the honey form his beehives. We were now ready for the battle with the bees.

As we began up the hill and got closer to the crib, we could see the bumblebees flying in and out, and I began to have second thoughts. "Are you sure those bees won't sting us?" I asked nervously. "Sure, sure," Marty replied with confidence. Then we began putting on our gear. First, we put on the mining hats, and then we stretched the fishing nets over our hats and faces; we were ready to begin the job.

Marty took the grabbling hook, hooking one board at a time, and pulled it out of the crib. The first board or two came out without any problems. As Marty pulled the boards out, I would rake out the straw and mud that the bees had used to make their home. After about the fourth board, we exposed the center of the hive, and that was when the real battle began. The bees were everywhere, filling the sky like a dark cloud.

"OH, MY GOD!!" Marty yelled as he grabbed the smoke gun and began puffing out the smoke towards the angry bumblebees, but there was no effect. Because the smoke wouldn't stop the bumblebees, soon all the bees were out of the corncrib and ready for war.

Then I felt the sharp, warm sting of a bee to my ear and to the back of my neck. I suddenly realized with horror that the bumblebees had gotten under my net. I began to scream in pain. "Help me Marty! Help me! They're in my hat." "Hold still!" he yelled as he grabbed a horseweed out of the ground that was growing near the corncrib. By the time he got to me, I was halfway down the hill, and all my gear was lying on the hill behind me.

"They're in my hair! They're in my hair!" I screamed even louder in pain. Then he took the horseweed that he was holding and began to smack at me; he might have been aiming for my head, but my face received most of the blows. Although I had about a hundred knots on my head and my face was blood red with whelps, the job was done. The bumble bees were gone: when Marty was pulling out the boards, the queen bee had been squashed, and the worker bees wouldn't stay if they didn't have a queen.

And that is how Marty and I got rid of the bumblebees in Alex's corncrib. However, I'm not sure that the fifteen dollars we earned was worth the pain I had to endure. I'm not even sure the money covered the cost of the alcohol and medicated cream that I had to use on all my stings. But there is one thing for certain: the next time neighbors have bumblebee hives in the corncrib, they'd better learn to live with them. Because of this experience, the bee fighting days are definitely over for Marty and me.

Voices from the Hill

Writing Program
Pikeville College

1990-1991

Looks Can Be Deceiving

Sarah

Each night millions of Americans watch TV for entertainment. When a program introduces us to a different section of the world, it captures our attention because we want to know what other areas are like and how they differ from our own environment. In a recent production of 48 Hours, the producer's crew interviewed and visited some of the people of Floyd County in Eastern Kentucky.

During an interview with the Johnson family from Muddy Gut holler, the interviewer repeatedly asked, "Why don't you leave this place?" The response from the Johnson family was that they did not want to split their family apart. This is not necessarily typical of Appalachians. Many people feel close to their families but do move away for one reason or another. For example, I was brought up in a holler called Big Hackney's Creek. After I married Jeffery, we moved to Johns Creek to be near his job. Jeffery is a truck driver, and our living closer to his job makes it easier for him. We have made Johns Creek home for now. My Aunt Shelia grew up in the head of Grapevine. After her divorce, Shelia and her three kids moved to Florida, because she is an LPN and the wages are better there. She has made Florida home until something better comes her way. My friend Pamela was raised in a holler called Hen Roost. After she married her husband, Frank, she moved to West Germany. Frank is in the United States Air Force and is stationed there for three years. Germany will be Pamela's home until it is time to move again.

Next, the program displayed several different houses. They were small, usually with only a couple of rooms, and only half completed. They suggested that Appalachians live in mere shacks. There are people who actually live this way, but there are many people who do not. For instance, my mom lives at Big Hackney's Creek in a six-room house that has a basement and a carport. My in-laws live at Grapevine in a mobile home. They have remodeled their trailer, and now it is considered a six-room house. My uncle, who lives at Meathouse a few houses above me, lives in a beautiful brick house that has eight rooms. He also has a carport and a paved driveway.

Finally, the program showed a young couple getting married. Before the ceremony took place, the interviewer talked with the bride and groom. The couple talked about how excited they were about getting married and later having babies. This portrayal implied that all the young people of Eastern Kentucky are hillbillies who just want to hurry and get married at an early age and have babies. Sure, there are many young people who do get married and start a family immediately, but that happens everywhere. This does not mean that all Eastern Kentuckians marry by the time they are eighteen years old. For example, I did not marry Jeffery until I was twenty years old My friend Tara was twenty-eight years old before she married her husband Jason, and she did not have her first child until she was thirty. My Aunt Drew is forty years old and is still a single lady today. She says she hasn't found the right man yet.

Even though the different situations that 48 Hours exposed are here, this does not mean that one small area represents Eastern Kentucky as a whole. We do have people who do not want to leave, no matter what. We do have our poor communities. We are considered hillbillies because we live in the mountains, but the crew from 48 Hours showed the rest of America only what they wanted them to see. Gosh, can't looks be deceiving?

Appendix F--Questions For Final Case Study Interviews
April/May 1999

GENERAL:

1. How would you evaluate your high school experiences (academic and social)?

2. How did teachers treat you in the classroom in terms of your work, your language, your dress? Who were your role models in high school?

3. For someone who has never been here, how would you describe daily life in Preston County: religious life, your life, family life, school? What's positive and what could be improved about this place? What is important for people to know about this area?

4. Estimate in a normal work day what percentage of your work is writing? Reading? Slow, normal, and busy day?

5. Do you have any piece of writing which you would consider sharing with me? Any papers from class? Did you ever publish anything?

6. How did you adjust after college? Immediately, 3 months, one year, two years, five years? Any problems with identity?

7. What are your perceptions of what a literate person is? An illiterate person?

8. What way do you learn best? (aurally, demonstrations, lectures, visually)

9. a. Do you, your children, your spouse belong to organizations that send newsletters, magazines, minutes of meetings? If yes, list them. Give examples.
b. Do you do any reading and writing in the community; for example, do you belong to a group (list) that takes minutes, has a newsletter, etc.

10. What are the reasons that you chose Preston College over PCC?

11. a. How have your reading skills changed since college?
b. How have your writing skills changed since college?
c. How have your computer skills changed since college?
Do you use for them for personal growth, job advancement, or social power?

12. Tell me about your use of the public, public school, and college library throughout your life until the present.

13. What sort of books do you own? For example, your textbooks, novels, etc.

14. Do you feel that your college education has given you financial security? Does your husband draw disability? Or do you both depend on your salary?

15. Where, with whom, when, do/did you read and write? Special place for pens and actual writing?

16. When you approach a reading task (on the job/for pleasure), reflect on what your attitude is, why you are reading, what circumstances surround the reading, and how you use the information.

17. How do you exchange information with family, friends, co-workers, supervisors?

18. Who/what challenges your mind now? Now that you are out of college, what inspires you?

19. a. Do you consider yourself more literate, more educated than you were before college?
    b. How does that make you feel?
    c. Do you feel that you achieved hopes and dreams you set out to achieve?
    d. What changes have occurred in your life as a result of higher education?

20. How have your reading/writing/computer habits changed since college? Compare your reading and writing in college to now.

21. a. Talk about something you have read recently—tell the story.
    b. Talk about something you have written recently.
    c. Would you have been able to do either of these while in college—more or less well.

22. How has college changed the way you thought about yourself?

Specific questions for Lucy's final interview:
1. You received a C in my class and 2 Ds in 112. Did you pass the proficiency the first time around? Tell me more about your feelings about that. How did you do in your other courses?
2. Check on names in field notes. Kammi (cake decorating)
3. Meaning of paintings.
4. Check the SSI information.
5. Gift of Bible from????
6. More information about father of Sally?
7. Tell me more about your poetry writing? short stories? subject matter?
8. What kind of songs did your mother write? Did she play an instrument?
9. What kind of work did you do before you went to college?
10. How long was it between your first attempt at college and the second?
11. Year you returned to school? (divorced in 93) Your motivation?
12. What kind of things did first husband trade—any written transactions?
13. When you talk about Pat getting action started on divorce, could you say what steps she helped you take?
14. Remind me again of how many years it took to finish PC?
15. You talked about volunteer work—whom do you mend clothes for, make health care baskets for?
16. Is Gene Leslie part of your family? Who wrote Leslie and Leslie Family, the book you mentioned about your dad's family?
17. Review the family in terms of jobs they ended up in. One sister in Morehead with 14 year old, another sister who became nurse's aide, sister in Georgetown?, your dad's name.
18. Tell me about letters and cards you write, what kind of information you might place in your journal.
19. When you dropped out of college because of your grandfather's illness, were you all living together in one place or in the same vicinity? What kind of care did you have to give him?
20. What's it going to be like for Sally when she gets school aged? How do CF children manage school? Do they have to take breaks for treatments? You said one of people you write to has a son who plays soccer. How does he manage that? It says the median survival of a CF person is 30 years. cases of longer? Does Sally take ibuprofen to reduce lung inflammation. Does Lexington have one of the 113 CF centers? Where were you having her treated down there?
21. Have you always had such a cheerful nature?

Specific questions for Sarah's final interview:

1. How many foster care workers are there in the agency?
2. Go over info from field notes to make sure they are correct. Bring forms to check on acronyms like LODES, CHR.
3. John Michael Adams talked about physical manipulation training. Have you had that and have you ever had to use it?
4. Court appearances for what purpose?
5. What about the religious angle to your work? Do you do any ministering to these children? Are the parents screened for religious orientation? Do they have to be Baptist to be foster parents? What specifically do they have to do with their foster children in terms of religion?
6. Would contact ever be completely cut off between biological parent and child in foster care?
7. Wouldn't it be possible for someone to permanently adopt one of the foster children?
8. How many in caseload are in counseling? In the Comprehensive Individual Treatment Plan, how many of those axes would be filled out?
How many have been molested or abused? Are they automatically placed in counseling because of their being taken away from parents? Is it required?
9. Copy of form with behavior codes: sample list of misbehaviors and goals for treatment. I saw it but did not make a copy.
10. What are math and reading curriculum books used for? (on your shelf)
11. Length of training for foster parents: their literacy. Do they get a packet of materials? Are they tested on anything?
12. You spoke indirectly about Bill proving himself out of the home. I assume he had an affair. Do you make a connection between that and your getting an education, even though it happened afterwards?
13. Your mother said that you ran off and got married when you were 16, but that she made you finish high school. Can you tell me about that?
14. You said in an earlier interview that your mom pushed you to have something better than she had. Did that cause some clashes early on?
15. If I were to walk into your house, what reading material would I see? Where would your writing materials be?

Questions for Jean's final interview:

1. Education of your parents? Grandparents? Occupation? Number of children in family (you and your sister?)
2. Where did you grow up? Are you living near there now?
3. Besides your marriage, were there other reasons for quitting in 10th grade? Did any teacher/counselor try to talk you out of quitting? How would you evaluate your high school experience up to that time?
4. You say that your sister loves to read. Was she always like that? Did she complete high school? Go on to anything else? What does she do now? Was she supportive during your college years?
5. What kind of work did you do before you went to college or were you a homemaker?
6. What kind of things did you read to your children? Did you take them to the library?
7. How long was it between your dropping out of high school and coming to college?
8. Were you the first in your family to attend college?
9. Do your in-laws still feel that you shouldn't have gotten your degree? Do they object to your working?
10. Your older son is working construction. Is he still considering going back to school—you had said in first interview that he wasn't sure of cost, etc. Can he do okay without further training?
11. In an earlier interview, you said that you knew from the beginning that nursing was what you wanted to do. How is that? Tell me more about how you knew.
12. How did you feel when you failed the proficiency? Reflect on taking the class over again.
13. Tell me about how your nursing program prepared you for the reading and writing you have to do on the job: nursing notes, PDR, etc.
14. Does PMH do a writing test as part of employment?
15. Is there a way to get a blank nursing assessment form?
16. Tell me about the review class you were taking at Prestonsburg and what that is for. Will it mean a raise in pay?
17. What exactly is TPA?
18. It looked as if you had already looked at the charts before the debriefing meeting with the day shift, and then added material that you didn't have. Am I correct in my observation?
19. Other terms: operative cath report, high risk, lab values. Questions about the night in MICU.
20. The CCRN is through Regency College of New York? How long will it take you to complete their program? You said you had to have 2500 hours in critical care nursing. How long would that take? Does all of that have to be in an MICU unit?
21. Do you and your husband have plans for the future after your son has gone? Retirement?

Appendix G--Sample Field Notes

FIELD NOTES FOR JEAN
SHADOWING FOR NIGHT OF APRIL 4, 1999

Easter Sunday night I shadowed Jean from 7 p.m-11:10 p.m. as she worked in the MICU (Medical Intensive Care Unit) on her 7 p.m. to 7 a.m. shift. I soon found that acronyms and abbreviations became the rule of thumb at I heard about SWAN's (the device that allows several intravenous fluids to be placed in the patient's body) and TPA (a person with a heart condition).

From 7-8 in the nursing lounge, three nurses including Jean were briefed by the day nurses about each of the six patients in the MICU (heart patients usually; SIMU is surgical unit). Using their own nursing notes and a huge notebook filled with doctor's orders among many things (will go into exact contents later), each nurse kindly and competently reviewed assessment of patient's conditions, medicines, what to watch for, if the patient had visitors, etc. for the patients in her charge (usually two). They noted restraints, tube feedings, allergies, physical therapy.

The two other nurses on duty with Jean came in with blank sheets of paper of varying size to record data. I noticed that Jean had already read the charts of these people and had her own notes to which she added any other information she wanted to know. Jean is new to this unit and has not had any orientation because they are so understaffed that they needed her to just plunge in which she has done without complaining. What is truly remarkable about all the nurses I met is the feeling that we help one another out in any way we can—so when Jean had a question, the charge nurse, Marty Baker (a bulky young man who was full of questions and laughingly told me that he always hated writing) came in to help her if he was not busy. The other nurse, Doris Hall, was unable to do some things (because she was being "floated" in from the 4th floor regular nursing) which Jean helped her with.

Among the news from each nurse during this time (one of whom I had taught at Prestonsburg Community College and who said that my course was one of the best in her program—she was certainly one of my better students who picked unusual topics) was news of two purses being stolen in one day from visitors and a man accidentally pressing the code 300 emergency button in the waiting room (to which two emergency room doctors responded and were angry about).

After an hour of being updated by three different nurses, the three talked about which ones they would take, by number which is the room number they were in. Jean took number 2 and number 6.

Nurses do lots of writing, perhaps more than a newspaper reporter, because their patient's lives depend on it. The nursing assessment form that they have for each patient records general appearance, mental status, skin, pulmonary status, cardiac status, GI status, bowel sounds, feeding tube, and renal information. They fill that out, then continue on an extra report form for follow-through for the entire time the patient is in MICU. That is all attached to the form which becomes part of the notebook. In the notebook are the following tabs: consults, operative cath report, physician's order, graphics, labs, ex-rays, cardio-pulmonary, med. Sheets, patient education, nursing notes, one tab included dietary, PT/OT, speech, ER/social service, and miscellaneous. Another interesting form is the Multidisciplinary Patient Education Record which is filled out in admissions and covers such things as the patient's easiest way to learn, difficulty with reading and writing, highest level of education, physical barriers to learning; preferred language, severity of illness, special needs (TDD, closed captions), patient learning: physical/mental conditions, meds, diet, tests, medical equipment. There is also a high risk form which Jean says is used when patients pull on tubes, had staph infection or is disoriented. It observes side rails, interventions, bed position, etc.

Appendix H--Sample Report Form For Foster Care Worker

Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children
Foster Care Program
Treatment Review

Child's Name_____ Date_____

Family Contact_____

Emotions/Behaviors_____

Relationships/Social Skills_____

Life/Independent Living Skills_____

Education_____

Recreation_____

Spirituality_____

Physical Health_____

Recommendations_____

Revised Goals (Include Goal #s)_____

New Goals_____

Signatures:

Foster Care Specialist	Foster Care Specialist
Foster Care Specialist	Foster Care Specialist
Consultant	Foster Care Director
Other	Other

Appendix I—Sarah's Resume

Career Objective: To obtain a position in a well respected institution offering a chance to demonstrate initiative and abilities in chosen field.

Education:

1979-1982	Feds Creek High School, Feds Creek, Ky.
1989-1993	Pikeville College, Pikeville, Ky Bachelor of Science in Human Services and Psychology
1995	Morehead State University, Morehead, Ky. 3 credit hours toward Master's Degree

Experience:

1983-1984	Quik Chek Market, Lick Creek, Ky.
1993	Pikeville Methodist Hospital, Pikeville, Ky. Internship in the Social Service Department
1993-1997	Mountain Comprehensive Care Center Prestonsburg, Ky. Supported Employment Program 1995- Supported Employment Coordinator
1997-Present	Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children Harold, Ky. Foster Care Specialist

Skills: Individual and group counseling; linking, advocating, and skills teaching to individuals who have a severe emotional, mental and/or developmental disability; supervisory experience; knowledge and experience with Social Security issues, Vocational Rehabilitation services, and Vocational Profile assessments; plan and carry recruitment efforts for agency program; study, train, and license prospective foster parents; process referrals of children and match such children with appropriate foster homes; placement and supervision of foster children in foster homes; maintain appropriate records; basic knowledge and experience with the juvenile court system, the local law enforcement agencies, the Department for Community Based Services, and the Department for Juvenile Justice.

Activities and Honors: Dean's List, Essay published in the Voices from the Hill, Cum-Laude-Pikeville College, and Kimper PTA Member

References: Available upon request

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