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# Turning the Kaleidoscope: Telling Stories in Rhetorical Spaces

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*In this essay, I reflect on the work of Lorraine Code on Rhetorical Spaces and the work of Dorothy Smith on Institutional Ethnography to explore how stories are translated and seen as though looking through the different turns of a kaleidoscope. The stories I am referring to here are intake stories in human service agencies. The question is how do the front line human service workers translate the noise of everyday/night life of the "client" into the human service jargon/forms. I also explore the issues of how the front line worker with the intention of being professional, disembodies herself and the self of the client by dissociating from her life story during the translation process. The ultimate purpose of my work is to develop a pedagogy for a human development program.*

## Introduction

As I write these words, I contemplate my position as a social researcher. I question my ability to use the language of Smith, Code, Lugones and other social theorists. I question my legitimacy, my ability to write in a persuasive manner the many thoughts dwelling in my head, heart and soul. I question my fluency in a language, a scholarly discourse, which is not my first. I wonder if, perhaps only secretly, those who "know," who have dwelled in this situated territory of sociological discourse, will discover upon reading my work that I am indeed an impostor, an illegal alien in their land. I experience a bifurcation of consciousness, I dissociate from my being, from my roots and experience, I am afraid my real self, the struggling working class, single parenting "other" will appear like the green hulk from an

old television show, filled with rage when I write of my experience and the experience of students who are also learning a second language.

As I anticipate my story telling, I turn and adjust the kaleidoscope, a kaleidoscope of rhetorical spaces, to find the pattern that is most authentic to the telling of this story. The many colored pieces are always there, placed between two plates of glass for all to see. As I turn the kaleidoscope the pieces reconfigure and shift into different patterns, making visible different stories in the same space and time. It is this visibility of the same yet different stories that I want to explore in this essay. As I tell my story in the discourse of sociological theory, I want to be sure the pieces of my self remain, perhaps reconfigured yet at the same time authentic to the meaning and circumstances of my experience. It is through this process that I hope to begin a pedagogy that will enable students, future human service workers, to turn the kaleidoscope of both theirs and their client's stories. This process will enable them to meet professional standards and at the same time stay embodied in both time and space and true to the authenticity of their real selves.

I will first define and discuss Institutional Ethnography. I will then using a life story define my own standpoint in this research. This is followed by a discussion of Lorraine Code's work on rhetorical space and a reflection on the theoretical understandings of Code and Smith as it applies to the work of human service agents. As a department, my colleagues and I have made a commitment to introducing a critical, reflective awareness to our students. In addition, we are searching for a vehicle, a window, if you will, through which as human service workers, they can resist the hegemonic ruling relations of our capitalistic society at work in their profession, a hegemony which reduces names, places and stories to numbers, statistics and social problems. My purpose in writing this essay is to inform that pedagogical philosophy and practice.

### Institutional Ethnography: Unveiling the Rhetorical Spaces

Dorothy E. Smith describes her beginnings in the women's movement as a time when women needed to find a place in the

sociological discourse. Until that time, sociology was written for and by men. The profession of sociology has been predicated on a universe grounded in men's experience and relationship and still largely appropriated by men as their 'territory' (Smith, 1990:14). Women's experiences as well as other oppressed groups were not found in this discourse. Smith recognized a need for a sociology in which people's everyday/night world would not disappear. This "consciousness raising" was a process of discovering oppression in the everyday world of women. Beginning with the everyday/night experience we can open a window to the social relations "that give our daily lives their particular shape" (Smith, 1990:202). Further, Allison Griffith states, "From this standpoint, we can see and explore the disjuncture between lived experience and the social relations of objectified knowledge" (Griffith, 1998:3). "Thus we look for a method of inquiry where inquiry itself is a critique of socially organized practices of knowing and hence is itself an exploration of method" (Smith, 1990:12).

The question for this method of social inquiry is how do things work? "We're not after 'the truth' but . . . to know more about how things work, how our world is put together, how things happen to us as they do" (Smith: 1990:34). For my research, the questions would be: How are the everyday/night experiences of the women in homeless shelters, the parents in child-protective cases, or the teens in group homes connected to the discourse of social work, the language of social welfare policy, and/or statistics used in the debates of legislators? For example, how does a social worker, after an intake interview, translate the story of the everyday experiences of the women interviewed into the professional language her clinical notes and subsequently into the single DSM IV category needed for insurance and other policy-based purposes? How much of the "clients" life experience is erased in order for the professional to fit that life into the categories defined for her? Who defines the categories in the DSM IV and who benefits from this practice? "People's lives, difficulties, conflicts, and problems provide raw materials to be inserted into professional frames and theories to produce the case. The transformation of the everyday into the extended discourse of professional social work comprises a taken-for-granted bedrock for social work intervention" (de Montigny, 1995:26).

According to Smith it is "Through such procedures, [that] institutional forms of discourse are made to stand in for the situated practices and reasoning of individuals" 1989:157. The professional discourse "substitutes the regulated tonal symmetries . . . for the noise of daily life" (deMontigy, 1995:28). These professionals may or may not know or understand the rage behind the answers to questions posed to label this woman according to the professional discourse. A silent rage of women disempowered in the human service system. But the eyebrow is raised and the knowing "aah" is sounded when another professional hears the DSM IV category. However, a major portion of that woman's life is erased, her story is not told. Instead it is replaced with a category, a number that entitles the professional to third party payments either from private insurance or the welfare state. An institutional ethnography would include, actually begins with, the woman's story. It would describe her story, her everyday/night world from a standpoint outside of the institutionalized discourse of the social work profession. "The discovery of this excluded standpoint provides a point of departure for investigating how the everyday worlds in which we live and act are shaped by institutional processes (Grahame, 1998:3).

This point of entry could be the story of a "client" or the social worker herself. For indeed it is the social worker who is the translator. It is she who takes the world of the "client" the noise of the client's everyday life, if you will, and translates that into the professional discourse of the social work ideology. It is her participation in the accounting, the report writing through which the "client's" everyday life is erased, substituted for numbers and statistics. It is her standpoint, which can be influenced in the curriculum through the transformational experiences in the classroom.

The Institutional Ethnography does not stop here. "It is not just a life story." The life story is the point of entry. The institutional ethnography is an exploration of how relations of ruling are in fact sustained and re-enforced in the everyday world of social work, education, labor and health care. The aim of research is to understand and disclose how the social relations of ruling are woven into the everyday life of workers and professionals through the use of texts. In the case of social work, the texts are

the case files, the safety assessment forms, the statistical surveys and funding reports. "To do social work is to engage in socially organized practices of power: the power to investigate, to assess, to produce authorized accounts, to present case 'facts' and to intervene in people's lives" (DeMontigny 1995, p. 207). In "The German Ideology," Marx identifies ideology as a kind of practice in thinking about society. Therefore, to "do social work," a person engages in this organized practice of thought. By participating in this practice, the social worker applies the ideology or the thinking of society developed by the professional field of human services. By translating a women's life into the DSM IV code the professional social worker is practicing not only this ideology but also the process of de-storying themselves and others.

Smith singles out three tasks in actually doing institutional ethnography. "The first task centers on ideology and involves addressing the ideological practices which are used to make an institutions' processes accountable. The second task centers on work in a broad sense and involves studying the work activities through which people are themselves involved in producing the world they experience in daily life. The third task centers on social relations and involves discovering the ways in which a localized work organization operates as part of a broader set of social relations which link multiple sites of human activity" (Smith 1987, p. 166). These tasks are begun at a point of entry. For Smith, this entry point is a text.

For example, in Ontario there is a new education bill #160, which standardizes the curriculum. Further, In New York State and Ontario, there is a new assessment form for Child Protective. Likewise in health care, there are new forms, which standardize care. The professional, (teacher, nurse, social worker) who once had autonomy in writing case reports, report cards, etc. now has to use a standardized report. The noise of the everyday/night world of the professionals and their clients are invisible in these reporting forms. The middle class professional feels powerless and in the midst of a powerful standardized machine. These standards are reshaping and reorganizing the everyday/night life of professional workers. Where did this start? Who writes the standards? These are questions being answered through the methodological inquiry of Institutional Ethnography.

"Feminist researchers exploring restructuring note that educational restructuring is embedded in transformations of global capitalism that include a re-instantiation of gender, race/ethnicity, class, sexual orientation and social class in equalities" (Griffith, 1993, p. 5). As professionals use the standardized forms, curriculum, they are indeed putting into practice in their everyday life the regimes of power. They are unable to deviate from the universal standards. They and their students, clients, patients become "de-storied" in a restructuring of global capitalism.

Gillian Walker in her work with women in Vancouver wanted to "work with the women as women . . . rejecting the traditional professional approaches to 'treating clients' . . . [She] tried to use [her] experience as an activist as a basis for organizing a program" (1990, p. 23). The "tensions and contradictions" in that work resulted in her study of "family violence." Her work on a multi-agency task force aimed at providing information, coordinating services and pressuring government to recognize and respond to the emerging problem of family violence was marginalized as "biased, subjective, naive, inappropriate and sometimes divisive" when it could not be easily accommodated within the knowledge-making circle of scientific inquiry. Eventually the statements of the taskforce were "relegated to the category of 'knowledgeable lay people' with the power to monitor only from the sidelines" (p. 23). It is significant and ironic to note that the taskforce statements were from women who had beaten and abused. These statements were also dismissed as biased and subjective. The "experts" were professionals, academics, who used professional scientifically produced facts and statistics. Anger, outrage, and any other emotion were dismissed. The "facts" were storyless, nameless, accountings of "family violence." The experiences of the women abused and beaten by men become examples of family violence treatable in the criminal justice and human services systems.

Henry Parada in his work on child protective policy and reporting addresses the issues of reporting which Ellen Pence calls institutional technologies which she understands as those work settings, routines and documentary practices that produce or mediate the actual outcomes of an institutional process. Parada's work defines the operations of child protective's "safety assess-

ment" form, which is used to determine if a child should be placed in the care of the state. Specifically, Parada uses Pence's intersection of work and texts, which she calls "processing interchanges." A process interchange is a work setting into which documents are transmitted, to become organizational occasions of action, processed and sent forward into the next stage of the institutional process. At each step in the child welfare process, a social worker receives a case as collection of documents or a computer file, a report or other text, takes some action in relation to it, which adds to the incoming or produces a new documentation and forwards the product on to the next organizational occasion for action.

An entry point: "Who are you, anyway?"  
The Story of an Unlicensed Practitioner

There is no better point of entry into a critique or a reflection than one woman's experience—it is not an endpoint but the beginning of an exploration of the relationship between the personal and the social and therefore political.

Bannerji (1995, p. 55)

"Who are you anyway?" The director of a new program I was developing posed the question to me. I was working on the funding proposal for a women's transitional housing facility, placing the numbers in the right categories, attempting to represent the vision I had constructed in my mind with those objective numerical columns of accounting language. "I just never know how to talk to you," she replied. "One minute you sound like an accountant and the next minute a social worker. What *is* your background? I am a certified social worker, you know, what are you?"

Well, this was just the beginning of my life as an impostor, an uncredentialed worker in the field of professional social work. A world, which required letters after one's name. A world, which had a specific language. A world of professionalized practice, which had an overwhelming impact on people's (or in the professional discourse choice of words—"the client's") everyday lives. A well-defined rhetorical space.

As you probably figured out by now, I did not have those letters after my name and I was not fluent in the language. I had

worked my way up the ladder at a social service agency. With only a high school diploma in my back pocket, I began by typing leases, moved on to developing rental policies and then I began to fill in at the residential facilities when the workers were on leave. I gained a working, practical knowledge of the facilities from the heating equipment to the formal state-mandated policies. I could conduct a physical plant inspection as well as the required audit of the clinical files. I spent many hours listening to people's stories while playing cards with the persons who lived there, discussing the various problems they encountered in the network of services, which defined their everyday/night lives. Only a paycheck away from being a resident myself, I felt a commonality with the persons who lived in those residences, the persons whose everyday lives and stories were compiled as numbers on charts and service records, who ended up as statistics in policy proposals, and whose names and faces were unknown to the policy makers who had power over their lives. But who was I? Where was I? What rhetorical space was I allowed to speak and be heard in? Lorraine Code's work on rhetorical spaces helps us understand this.

### Rhetorical Spaces: Invisibility of Social/Ruling Relations

. . . women learn to "translate" when they talk about their own experiences. As they do so, parts of their lives "disappear" because they are not included in the language of the account. In order to "recover" these parts of women's lives, researchers must develop methods for listening around and beyond words.

(DeVault, 1999, p. 66)

Lorraine Code defines rhetorical spaces as ". . . fictive but not fanciful or fixed locations, whose territorial imperatives structure and limit the kinds of utterances that can be voiced within them" (1995, p. ix). Rhetorical spaces are located in space and time and are locations where it matters who, where and what you are if you are to be heard or even if you are to speak. DeVault refines translation as "the various ways that women manage to deal with the incongruence of language in their everyday speech. Sometimes, too, translation means trying to develop a more complex meaning, trying to respond more fully to questions

that are not quite appropriate" (1999, p. 67). Language, "talk" therefore is in the lives, social structure and circumstances of the everyday/night world of "agents engaged in deliberations that matter to them" (Code, 1995, p. xi). The task of institutional ethnography is to uncover the different rhetorical spaces in the everyday/night world and make them visible. This is the entry point of understanding the ruling relations of that rhetorical space, ". . . uncovering the processes of theory and knowledge production and relocating epistemic activity from the 'no one's land' that is has seemed to occupy into human speaking and listening spaces" (Code, 1995, p. 154).

Telling stories locates the space and time within the lives and projects of specifically situated, embodied, gendered knowers. According to Code, these stories are the ". . . poesis, [that is, the making] function of stories, where the character (s) are at once artificers and artifacts of 'their' action and experiences" (1995, p. 159). Stories can and must be the entry point for a methodology such as Institutional Ethnography. The ethnographic gaze of institutional ethnography make stories ". . . audible through the multiplicity of voices of which knowledge and epistemologies are made, challenging assumptions of linear progress toward establishing self-evident necessary and sufficient conditions and contesting the hegemonic claim of the dominant, yet not self-identifying, epistemic voices" (Code, 1995, p. 160).

According to Smith, this is the problematic: that we enter into social relations beyond our control that our own activities bring into being thus our own powers contribute to powers that stand over against us and over power our lives (1999, p. 25). The institutional ethnography is an exploration of how relations of ruling are in fact sustained and re-enforced in the everyday world of ordinary lives. Institutional Ethnography is a method to uncover the different rhetorical spaces in the everyday/night world and make those spaces visible. The entry points of understanding the ruling relations of that space is the talk of everyday life, the stories we tell of our everyday/night lives. Smith refers to this strategy as "an investigation that explores the embeddedness of particular actors in a 'ruling apparatus' or 'regime' that coordinates their activity." It is a process of dismantling the kaleidoscope to examine the pieces of glass that make up all the stories. Institutional

Ethnography as a method of social inquiry can be used to bring into view and unite the fragmented whole. We must hear many stories to get the entire picture. It is not just a life story. The life story is the point of entry.

The discourse of human services practice and ideology is a rhetorical space, where specific ideas and voices are heard, supported and taken seriously . . . were it matters who is speaking and where and why. Where the question of "who are you?" has a direct relationship to the possibility of knowledge claims and legitimacy. Rhetorical spaces are situated discourses where "cognitive authority is readily granted, or denied and silenced." The language or rhetorical space of human services is in the lives, social structure and circumstances of the social services system. By mapping the texts and language associated with the knowledge base of human services profession, institutional ethnographers can discern " . . . whose voices have been audible and who have been muffled, whose experiences count and how epistemic authority is established and withheld" (Code, p. 155).

In the case of this essay, I begin with my own experience in the human services world. I use my experience not as an autobiography but as a point of entry "to begin to pry open the operations of an institutional complex which others can investigate from different starting points and with different emphases" (Grahame, 1998, p. 4). As an outsider in the world of social work, my experience is a point of rupture, a point where we can begin to consolidate a knowledge outside the institutional discourse. I did not know the language; I was not socialized as a professional social worker, which is why the director did not know how to "talk" to me. According to deMontigny, "the professional self is a fractured self, a piece of the self exchanged for a salary and once exchanged it finds itself a participant in production guided and directed by commands, forms of order, relevances and discourses that transcend the sphere of immediate experience" (1995, p. 14). There were many occasions when those with the MSW after their names would tell me I was not acting "professionally," that I was crossing professional boundaries by giving a "client" a hug, or taking a resident to the local coffee shop. I acted on my intuition, on what I thought was needed at the moment. DeMontigny states clearly that "good social work is not marked by confident

pronouncements, certain decisions, and resolute action, but by an openness to dialogue, self-reflection, self-doubt and humility. Further good social work goes where the client is and in order to have dialogue with others one must first have had a dialogue with self" (1995, p. 56.).

The forms used in this institutional process tell the story of the client. Parada describes the forms used in the child protective process as a report in which cultural markers are erased. The forms usually tell the story of a deviant relationship to middle-class Anglo family norms. All questions on the forms must be filled in with numerical codes. There is no place to put "subjective" material. "The intake social worker is actively converting people's actual talk into a set of categories or formalized reporting conventions that produce the virtual reality of the case for the organization" (Parada, 1998, p. 2). This text becomes the family reality. This text determines the intervention and services or lack there of which the family receives. The story must be told in the language of the text. It is then passed on to persons who have the power to make decisions about this family/client without ever seeing the family/client face-to-face. The family becomes the text that is passed on as a case file.

Decision-makers are distant from those whose lives are affected by the decisions. The texts are also interpreted along the path of the processing interchange. In an experience I encountered at the women's residential facility, a file was passed on from intake worker, to a social worker, to a child-protective worker and was in the process of becoming a court document. While I was discussing this matter with the "client," I mentioned something I had read in the report about her father. The information, which was vital to her case, was incorrect. No one had verified with the client and the client was unable, forbidden, to see her own record-to verify the information contained there in. "Almost all interchanges are structured by the use of computer logs, programs, reports, standards and legislation, which screen, prioritize, shape, and filter the information the social worker uses to produce an account or document to a case" (Parada, 1998, p. 1). I wondered at the time how many times this passing on of incorrect "facts" had influenced decisions regarding people's lives. I envisioned in my mind the intake worker, the front-line social worker, an entry

level position, perhaps over worked from her many hours with clients, perhaps getting ready to go home, now having to do one more intake. Perhaps she was hurried; perhaps she didn't quite understand the story being told to her, and the story she had to translate into the institutional language. I wondered if she realized the impact that form, her translation of the story was to have on that woman's life. In the case above, I corrected the error. The woman, whose case was going to Family Court, continued her education and is living with her children. If the error was not corrected, her children may have been placed in protective care, she may have given up her education. One does not know.

### A Storied Pedagogy: Exploring Rhetorical Spaces in the Classroom

The educational process consists of establishing transformative connections between how people live or act and how they think. The usefulness of the knowledge lies in its ability to give a reliable understanding of the world and to impact or change lives rather than simply to function efficiently. Thus an active education begins from experience. A whole new story has to be told with fragments, with disruptions, and with self-consciousness and critical reflections. Creating seamless narratives.

Bannerji (1995, p. 65)

Many years ago, I had a book on my shelf—*Prayers* by Michael Quoist. It has since that time been recycled through the Tattered Pages Used Bookstore or the local library. However, in the book was a prayer I think of often about saying “yes.” It was an activist's prayer about the continued, ongoing commitment once the first step has been taken. The ongoing saying of “yes,” once the awareness has been recognized. A pilgrim I interviewed for another project said, “Once you see . . . once you *see* the injustice there is no turning back. Everything is different.” This was the theme of that prayer. It is not just one “yes” it is many. And there are consequences to that “yes.” “Seeing” through different lens, turning the kaleidoscope to new rotations, sometimes leads one to desire change in the social systems of our society. And yet, the most difficult problem with saying “yes” is knowing what to do after that small word is spoken. How does one take action

and still make a living? How does one act in a de-storied world without becoming de-storied? How can, in this case, a human service worker stay embodied, stay present with her client and do her job as described by the agency?

This is the problematic in my classroom. My students want a certificate to get a good job, to get a promotion, to further their career development. Many times they do not want to hear about saying "yes" to transforming the system, even when they recognize it needs changing. They are reluctant to say, "yes" because they wonder how they will stay embodied in a system that de-stories themselves and others. It is easier to not be aware, it is easier, as Michael Quoist describes in his prayer, not to say that first "yes."

As an educator and social activist, I search for ways to empower students to act on their sense of justice and desire to help other people. I suggest that the practice of a methodology such as Institutional Ethnography along with a practice of storytelling is a means to that end. The practice of Institutional Ethnography is based on the assumption that people are experts about their own lives. And that the subject/knower of inquiry is situated in her own life and that life is in relationship to others. Furthermore, it is informed by the idea that what we make an object of investigation is what we ourselves are immersed in. Telling stories locates epistemology within the lives and projects of specifically situated, embodied, gendered knowers. It establishes continuities between the experiences and circumstances that people need to explain, and the theories that purport to explain them. Lives can be understood, revealed and transformed in stories and by the very act of storytelling.

A pedagogy engaged in the methodological inquiry of Institutional Ethnography begins with an entry point of the student's own story. In my graduate class, *The Narrative Study of Lives*, we inaugurate this process by exploring life stories. During the first session we construct time lines of our lives on construction paper. "The life story time line is designed to raise the student's awareness of how her identity has been constructed on both a micro/individual and macro/societal level" (Bronstein, et al, forthcoming) Richard Rorty says:

To fail as a poet, and thus, for Nietzsche, to fail as a human being is to accept somebody else's description of oneself, to execute a previous prepared program, to write, at most, elegant variations on previously written poems. So the only way to trace home the causes of being as one would be to tell a story about one's causes in a new language. (1989, p. 28)

Rorty describes a process of making visible the rhetorical spaces (Code) and the ruling relations (Smith) that define and re-define our locations. The life story time line encourages students to become the authors of their own lives, to legitimize their own stories. Furthermore, in a time of different worlds and different languages, different selves will be called upon to perform the many different deeds expected of people in their different worlds. The life story names these different worlds and explores lives from within people's experience. Through this investigation Smith points out, Institutional Ethnography makes visible how society organizes and shapes the everyday/night world of that experience This is also true with the life story time line

The next step is to assist the students to understand how each of their lives becomes a lens in their "seeing" the world. Their subjectivity influences their decisions, their translations, the words they choose to write in the case notes. The next step in my class is called the "listening project" (Bronstein, et al). Students are instructed to choose a story from their life story time line. In dyads the students tell the other that story. But the twist in this assignment is that the listening is the focus. The listener's task is to become aware and examine their location in the listening. Questions such as: What did you feel while listening? What buttons were pushed by emotion of the teller or the topic of the story? When did you feel connected and/or disconnected? It is about staying embodied while listening to the other's story. The final part of the exercise is for the listener to write a reflective essay on their subjective self in relationship to the story teller, revealing " How difficult it can be to hear things said in unfamiliar forms, and how damaging when respondents are not heard. The critical point is that feminist researchers can be conscious of listening as a process, and can work on learning to listen in ways that are personal, disciplined, and sensitive to differences" (DeVault, p. 72).

A paradox exists in this reflective listening project. When the listener becomes aware of her subjectivity, her differences in the story telling, she can then and only then go through that subjectivity to really hear the story of the other. If she is not able to reflect on her standpoint, she will not be able to stay embodied in the process and will then dissociate from the telling. It is here where the “de-storied” process happens. Michel Foucault, in his work on intellectual memoirs as performative acts poses the questions: “What is my present? What is the meaning of this present? And what am I doing when I speak of this present?” (Quoted in Code 1995, p. 2). This is not the “endpoint of the investigation . . . My assumption here is that learning more about how and why we see things as we do will allow us to understand more about the meanings others make of their (and our) lives and to locate ourselves (and others) in more complex and meaningful ways rather than only through simplistic identity categories” (DeVault, p. 210).

Daily life is not a tidy house where china ornaments are arranged in tight rows for display. In daily life, china is shattered, the shelves are knocked down, dirt is tracked across the carpet, and screams shatter the mirror.

de Montigny (1995, p. 223)

de Montigny profoundly defines the everyday/night noise of life. In his book *Social Working*, he describes the life of a social worker—the journey from a working class life through graduate school to the office. Using his own life as an entry point, deMontigny discloses the difficulties in “. . . producing stories that erase the split between lived realities and organizational categories . . . the textual accounts [that] silence the deep craziness of daily life” (p. 25). His vividly describes the process of forms and case files. “People’s lives become the raw material lifted out of spoken words, carried across the distances between apartment and the office, and reworked under the glare of the florescent light, over the office desk, and onto the officially sanctioned forms. A person’s life, once inserted into a social work story, becomes an individual case of child abuse . . . the person becomes a client who in turn is a child abuser . . . or mental patient. Once the person’s story is shaped by that person’s assignment to the terms of a recognized

category that person becomes a subject to the themes, patterns . . . and interventions best designed to address the problem category” (p. 25). This is the process of “de-storying.” This is a process that most human service workers must participate in. The challenge in my classroom is to teach the students, future human service workers, a method of going through this mandated process without de-storying themselves or their clients.

Recognition of this process as a destroying process is the first step. (One way this can be accomplished is by using deMontigny’s book as required reading.) The next step is the reflective autobiographic process of the life story time line, including the listening project. A final step is to incorporate the methodology of Institutional Ethnography into the research methods courses in all social work and human service programs. Through these steps, educators can develop a storied pedagogy, which incorporates a recognition of rhetorical spaces in the reproduction of ruling relations. Students can gain an understanding of how the professional standards, especially standardized forms, also reproduce the ruling relations of a capitalist system. By using the concepts of institutional processes, students can begin to understand how they can be a part of the institutional story of the client. That is, the student could explore the processing interchanges of a case file/form from intake to intervention and beyond. This would enable the student to understand the working of the institutional processes in human service agencies.

### Conclusion

I felt small and bewildered and put up a struggle to keep something of myself from vanishing . . . to maintain a little sense of significance  
Bannerji, (1995, p. 63)

“Who are you, anyway?” The question is asked time and time again as one dismantles the kaleidoscope. Sometimes the question is even asked by our own selves as we examine each of the colored pieces of glass that make up our story. In truth, we are many “selves” just as there are many colored pieces and even more patterns formed with those pieces in the kaleidoscope. Each rhetorical space,—the classroom, the human service office, the client’s apartment, the human service forms—requires a different

configuration of the colors. But when we have listened with skill to the "other's" story through informed reflexive subjectivity, we can be true to the storyline and act in resistance to the ruling relations playing out in our lives. We can follow the institutional processing interchange of texts whether it is in the university or a human service agency with the purpose of staying embodied and through the methods of institutional ethnography name and made visible the rhetorical spaces. "Our experiences, our history, our emotions, our very selves bec[o]me material to be entered and worked up inside the frames of an extended professional discourse" (deMontigny, 1995, p. 66). Teaching these methods and skills to future human service workers can and will empower them to resist the reproduction of ruling relations in their everyday/night world.

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