

Post Institute Reflection  
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As I reflect on our week together I am struck most by our guides. The notion of discovering community seemed to resonate for each of us: participant and guide, differently. As is always the case, the process for the participants was made transparent through our sharing, reflections and discussion. As is also the case, experiences and biases of the guides and teacher were outlined by points made, skills highlighted and observations shared. The structure and presentations in the class assumed a level of competence and an attitude for learning that established a milieu where these were the norm. This established culture is what I hope to build for the learners in our learning community in the 3/4 classrooms in Lincoln. I "re-membered", two important vehicles, *story* and *purpose* through our work together.

To start, it was Greg's passion and excitement about our work that hooked me, but it was expertise and embodiment of what had been a philosophical experience that kept my interest. As a minor in comparative religion I was familiar with the importance of listening closely, identifying and assuming the lenses of the individual you are learning from, and trying on those lenses to facilitate your own empathy and understanding about their world view. Through our discussions and work I came to understand ethnography as a practical manifestation of my interest and prior work in phenomenology. The genius of placing a foundation for our ethnographic work in our stories takes on new importance to me as I reflect on the philosophical underpinnings. Previously, I have looked at this with more of a practical community building lens, sharing personal stories works for establishing the group and building empathy. I am now committed to the basic tenant that individuals' stories are the most powerful means of individual learning, seeing "stories as the containers for experience" is a powerful image. The trick, as a teacher, is to insist that individuals put their own stories aside, listen with empathy to another story, understand it from the point of view of the story teller, and then learn through "re- membering" their own understandings with this new informed position. It was enlightening to watch Greg navigate the balance between insisting that we both put our own stories aside and remember them, as we reflect and plan our own work with students.

The structure of the class, workshops and experts in sustainability, place based education, student centered learning and community service felt like stalls at a local farmers market. They are familiar, local and elemental foods. These foods appeared ordinary but provide nourishment and sustenance to our learning and the learning of our children. Documentary was the preparing of the meal. My internship in videography, with Paul, was like trying out the wares. I interned with an expert; an expert sharing not only his expertise in the medium; but his practice, his art, and his humanity. An ethnographer, practitioner of this work and teacher; I feel fortunate to have worked with, observed and listened to each of the documentarians. Providing a structure for learning with this level of integrity is an art. An art I can only hope to emulate in my own practice. And so our project is our attempt to interpret the structure and the ethos of this class for our students in Lincoln. As a school we have a foundation in our town; we are held and supported by a generous community. It is our hope to facilitate a purpose for our discovery.

As participants we entered this class with a purpose; we were discovering community. My process of discovery was both practical, like shopping at a farmers market, and philosophical, it provided soul food.