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DO YOU BELIEVE IN GENEVA?

Methods and Ethics
at the Global Local Nexus

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The real justification for including Aboriginal knowledge in the modern curriculum is not so that Aboriginal students can compete with non-Aboriginal students in an imagined world. It is, rather, that immigrant society [all non-Aboriginal peoples] is sorely in need of what Aboriginal knowledge has to offer.

—Battiste (2000, p. 201)

Over the past 15 years, we have designed participatory action research (PAR) projects with differently situated young people in prisons, schools, and communities. Some projects have been planted firmly in the *politics of place:* the South Bronx, suburban privilege, a prison. Others have been designed to gather *material about domination and resistance across places,* what George Marcus (1995) might call a multisited ethnography. Most recently, we have begun to work with youth activists from around the globe in a human rights campaign designed to unmask the policies, practices, and patterns of injustice and reveal the flashpoints of collective resistance. At this global-local nexus, youth PAR excites and grows tangled—a clear window for witnessing and kneading the complex relation of critical and indigenous methods. Taking up the challenge offered by Marie Battiste, in this chapter, we cast a critical eye on our participatory research methods with youth, through the lens of Indigenous knowledge.

We invite a conversation about participatory methods, oscillating at the global-local pivot, by commuting between three kinds of texts: participatory and Indigenous writings on method, online exchanges of an international discussion group of participatory researchers we convened, and collaborative work we have undertaken with the Global Rights coalition of youth activists. Across texts, we interrogate the dialectics of method that erupt as critical youth work digs deep into local places and travels cautiously across the globe (Chawla et al., 2005; Gilmore, Smith, & Kairaiuak, 2004; Hart, 1997). We end with suggestive thoughts for activist scholars inquiring with youth *in* a place, *across* places and then those who dare to trace *global footprints* of domination and resistance. To ground our thoughts, we enter the Global Rights training with youth activists from across the world.

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Surrounded by young activists, drawn from all corners of the globe, we gathered for Day 2 of our participatory action research training. Global Rights: Partners for Justice sponsored the amplifying youth voices on rights, poverty, and discrimination program to mobilize young people from marginalized ethnic communities to improve their educational opportunities and amplify their decision making related to poverty reduction and development. As part of this program, the activists were to undertake participatory action research projects in which they would gather local evidence of educational discrimination and use this evidence to fashion an advocacy document that they would use to lobby for reform at the United Nations (UN) Commission on Human Rights in Geneva in 2006. The project is seeded in the international human rights agreement articulated in the Dakar Framework for Action on achieving the Education for All (EFA) goals, particularly Goal 2: *ensuring that by 2015, all children, particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances, and those belonging to ethnic minorities have access to and complete, free, and compulsory primary education of good quality.*

The project was organized to develop a radical, global participatory action research coalition, documenting local forms of educational discrimination in home countries as well as the global redlining of educational opportunity.

The training session was designed to generate a bottom-up survey that could travel respectfully across these very different communities to determine levels of discrimination in terms of denial of *access* (e.g., transportation, or local practices that disallow certain castes, colors, tribes) to *free* (e.g., fees for school, books, uniforms, travel), *complete* (e.g., how many years), and *quality* (e.g., adequate books; supports; desks; bathrooms; qualified educators; culturally sensitive and responsive curriculum; meaningful assessments, not just tests that punish) education. In each community, focus groups would be conducted to gather local stories of blocked and denied educational opportunities and stories of privilege. Global Rights would collect the material from across meridians, and some of the young people would speak back, in policy, scholarship, and outrage, to the UN Commission on Human Rights in Geneva 2006.

Our task was to help create, collaboratively, a survey that would speak to and migrate across territories, to assess what we were calling the global blades of educational discrimination that deny young people—girls and those who are of low caste, live in poverty, have dark skin, or belong to the wrong tribe—access to free, complete, quality education; then each of these young activists would return to their homes and create a participatory research team there, to conduct the work locally. As we tried to construct an instrument that could travel the globe, marking and tracking the international latitudes and local scratches of social oppression, we confronted key challenges of method that haunt any design, particularly one that yearns to stretch globally and yet put down roots locally.

The most palpable tension could be felt in the distinct goals of global and local work. A collective desire to be heard and to affect public policy saturated the room: This is really important for young people to gather together, across continents, and build a movement for educational justice, bolstered

by statistics and testimonies about the global blades of domination. At the same time, the air thickened in an unspoken dialect, fuming in each of us: How will this help my people, my community, my family? Tensions of North and South; Indigenous, undocumented, and immigrant; and the imperial presence and terror exported by the United States and Great Britain seasoned the air, unspoken, as we sat together, with bagels and cream cheese, under the Manhattan Bridge in Brooklyn, New York.

▣   WARNING: LANGUAGE AND LAND HAVE BEEN STOLEN

As we prepared for this chapter, trying to write together as three differently positioned women, reading across literatures on Indigenous, participatory, and critical knowledges, we ran into the problem of language. The language of possibility, democracy, hope, and culture had already been co-opted, distorted, stripped, and overdetermined by neoliberalism, colonialism, and the new scientism (Lather, 2005). Although we have published on the democratic commitments of PAR work with youth (Fine et al., 2004; Zeller-Berkman, in press), we were stunned and compelled by Sandy Grande's (2004) work on the illusion of democracy without sovereignty. So, too, we had to reconsider the long-assumed PAR aim of youth "speaking back to power" (Cammarota & Ginwright, 2002; Fine & Torre, 2005; Lykes & Coquillon, 2006). Speaking back, like inviting "contact" between differently positioned groups, may be an opportunity for radical inclusion but more often degenerates into a contentious scene of exclusion and soul murder (Painter, 1995).

The more we wrote, the more we came to see that Michelle's desire to reclaim the research standard of generalizability as the radical linking of social resistance across sites of injustice has already been compromised by the hegemonic use of *generalizability* as universality and sameness, deployed to deny and smother difference. The more we read, the more infuriated we became, as we witnessed words such as *decolonization* and

Indigenous swept into critical discourse as metaphors, decoupled from long histories of persecution and struggle.

One of our methods for writing this chapter has been to pay close attention to what, in our quilted discourse, can serve as a metaphor and what cannot. Rather than lines drawn in the sand, these are instead reminders of the slippery surface of language, the seductive pull of solidarity, and the terrific sloppiness with which we make names and claims under imperialism.

Both those who are served by domination and those who are committed to social justice, seeking solidarity among oppressed peoples, engage in the too common practice of taking on the charged, contextualized, experienced words of brilliant communities and stretching them to fit inside their own mouths and own communities. On one hand, we recognize the assimilationist, exploitive tradition that is at work behind this practice and recognize that there are some who always feel entitled to scoop out the most on-point language and plant it in their work. Marie Battiste highlights a keystone component of postcolonial indigenous thought as being based on "our pain and experiences and it refuses to allow others to appropriate this pain or these experiences" (Battiste, 2000, p. xix). We urge our readers and remind ourselves to resist the appropriation of pain and language of Indigenous peoples and other oppressed peoples.

On the other hand, there are some ideas that speak so poignantly to issues of maldistributed power that our work across space, across time, across disciplines is deepened, thickened, by being compelled by them into practice. Colonization and sovereignty, as a prerequisite to democracy, as we discuss later in this chapter, are examples of those ideas.

Being Indigenous, the Indigena are not metaphors. Those of us who are Indigenous have experienced the everyday realities of continued colonization, which has shaped the ways in which we think of ourselves, one another, and the "whitestream" (Grande, 2004) and the ways in which we write, speak, and come to research. Those of us who are not Indigenous have been

profoundly shaped by our witnessing of colonization, by our roles as accomplices, abettors, exploiters, romanticizers, pacifiers, assimilators, includers, forgetters, and democratizers. Indigenous knowledge and experiences are markedly different from local knowledge.

While colonization and continued colonization are not metaphors, colonization, because it is the primary relationship between the United States and oppressed peoples, can be a lens through which to understand not only the rez but also the ghetto, the windswept island, the desert, the suburbs, the gated communities, and the country club. "When the United States takes control of Iraqi oil after the war, will it do a better job of holding 'in trust' that country's oil for its people than it did for Native Americans . . . and exactly who will handle the job, the BIA (Bureau of Iraqi Affairs)?" (Snell, 2003). Understanding colonization as the primary relationship between the United States and oppressed peoples makes us know that decolonization involves not only bodies but also structures, laws, codes, souls, and histories (L. T. Smith, 2005). This understanding affords us the reminder that it is not the Indigenous who need humanizing, it is the worldview of the whitestream that needs to be humanized.

Geneva, like Native America, "is not only a place but also a social, political, cultural, and economic space" (Grande, 2004). As places, Geneva and Indigenous communities and local communities represent two poles in a local to global hierarchy. Considering them as spaces, we resist this hierarchy, instead framing this relationship as the global-local nexus. Space is not a metaphor.

Despite the appropriation of language, as well as geographic and politically distinct biographies, we move forward in this chapter, stumbling across words that have been colonized, trying to sculpt research projects that span across sites and dig deeply into the local, drawing inspiration from Patti Lather's (2005) project of "using and troubling a category simultaneously" (p. 2). We work to carve out moments of conversation between participatory action research and Indigenous writings while refusing to paper over the tough differences. We aim toward research with youth

that respects culture and place while it resists stultifying and suffocating presumptions of culture as static. We struggle toward research born in collectives that refuse the easy slide toward consensus and solidarity but leap cautiously to connect across movements of social resistance (e.g., see Correa & Petchesky, 1994, on international reproductive rights; Davis, 2003, on international solidarity for the abolition of prisons).

◙ PARTICIPATORY YOUTH INQUIRY

With long roots in Africa, Asia, and Central and South America, PAR was born in the soil of discontent, understanding critical inquiry to be a tool for social change (Brydon-Miller & Tolman, 2001; Lykes & Coquillon, 2006; Martín-Baró, 1994; Rahman, in press). PAR is, at once, social movement, social science, and a radical challenge to the traditions of science. As Anisur Rahman (in press) has written, "The distinctive viewpoint of PAR [recognizes that the] domination of masses by elites is rooted not only in the polarization of control over the means of material production but also over the means of knowledge production, including . . . the social power to determine what is valid or useful knowledge."

Interested in social inquiry that documents (in)justice broadly, in terms of economics, land, cultural and personal integrity, bodily autonomy, educational opportunity, and knowledge production, our work with youth seeks to reveal the contours of injustice and resistance while we challenge the very bases on which social science sits. Enervated by the political urgency of the times, we work toward methods for a youth-based inquiry of contestation. At the same time, we worry about what can be done globally and locally when surveillance and fear surrounding the walls between rich and poor have thickened, and the "war on terror" and the war on knowledge production contaminate everyday life (see also Lather, 2005; Lewin, 1946; Payton, 1984; N. Smith, 1987).

Participatory methods respond to these crises in politics by deliberately inverting who constructs research questions, designs, methods,

interpretations, and products, as well as who engages in surveillance. Researchers from the bottom of social hierarchies, the traditional objects of research, reposition as the subjects and architects of critical inquiry, contesting hierarchy and the distribution of resources, opportunities, and the right to produce knowledge (see also Lather, 2005).

In varied settings, our collectives have focused on the history and accumulation of privilege and oppression, the policies and practices of reproduction, the intimate relations that sustain inequity, the psychodynamic effects on the soul, and the vibrant forms of resistance enacted by individuals and collectives (we draw from and contribute to Anand, Fine, Perkins, & Surrey, 2000; Brydon-Miller & Tolman, 2001; Cahill, 2004; Cammarota & Ginwright, 2002; Chawla et al., 2005; Fals-Borda, 1985; Fine et al., 2003, 2004, 2005; Fine & Torre, 2005; Freire, 1982; Guhathakurta, in press; Hart, 1997; Ormond, 2004; Rahman, in press; L. T. Smith, 2005). We have built democratic spaces with youth and "elders" (teachers, ancestors, civil rights activists, "older" prisoners) to change the questions asked, challenge the assumptions (even our own), disagree, radically inquire, and challenge policy and practice.

While all PAR projects are constructed to speak critical truths to those in power—to change structures, not squeeze youth into them, and to ally youth-led projects with churches, schools, labor unions, and other institutions of civic authority (Appadurai, 2002; Cabannes, 2005; Cahill, 2004; Chawla et al., 2005; Rahman, in press)—some commit to writing academic scholarship, whereas others spawn organizing brochures, speak-outs, poetry, videos, popular youth writings, spoken word performances, theater of resistance, or maybe just a safe space free from toxic representations.

Many of our projects have been *place based,* dug into the soil of vibrant, if historically oppressed, ZIP codes, prisons, and schools. But many of our projects have also been multisited to "examine the circulation of cultural meanings, objects and identities in diffuse time-space" (Marcus, 1995, p. 96). We have worked with youth *across* elite and underfinanced schools, with women in prison and those now released, and with

suburban and urban students. Youth have visited and surveyed each others' schools, crossing borders of politics, real estate, and emotion, inquiring across place to make visible the spikes of injustice that pierce specific sites and to document the patterned distributions of resources, opportunities, and respect that naturalize inequity across public schools in the United States. We have written about these youth PAR projects in varied venues and refer readers to those chapters for details of the theorizing and practice of participatory method (see Cammarota & Ginwright, 2002; see Chawla et al., 2005, on the Growing Up in Cities [GUIC] project for a rich description of a rich international work of support for the GUIC, and see also Cabannes, 2005, on that volume; Fine et al., 2003; Torre & Fine, 2005).

We write as three women who have been immersed in youth organizing, prison reform, social justice work, and feminist and antiracist campaigns; three women who believe in the possibilities of youth movements organized across time, space, and lines of power, with youth inquiry as a tool of political struggle. But we know that "fallen" power lines can kill. We believe deeply in the significance of working doggedly, *in a place,* with local history, context, and struggle under your fingernails, and we believe that *across places,* youth inquiry and resistance can be fueled by global connections and contentions. And finally and fundamentally, we assert that some knowledge carried in oppressed and indigenous communities should not be reported or documented; it is not to be known by those outside of the local community—that sacred local knowledges can be defiled and that research has, for too long, been the "neutral" handmaiden of knowledge commodification.

We return now to the Global Rights training—a place where the air of global possibility and colonial danger filled the room.

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Global Rights was onto a most significant human rights campaign. The cross-nation mapping of oppression, narrated by youth, swept through the room with winds of outrage, despair,

and hope. The young people embodied incredibly rich, complex, and diverse histories; contexts; and contemporary relations to global capital and the new imperialism. The idea that we could come up with a common framework for measuring educational discrimination seemed, at once, enormously vital and nuts.

The more we talked, the more we realized that the concept of "discrimination" had its greatest clarity in the abstract, north of the grounds in which people live. Once we heard about life as lived in *real* towns, barrios, fields, cities, communities, or kitchens, we recognized that the ripples of globalized oppression take varied forms—alcoholism, domestic violence, hopelessness, economic indigency—none easily reduced to a simple descriptor of discrimination. We had to shovel down into the sands of local places, dotting the earth, to understand how discrimination is lived.

By Day 3, Michelle was "modeling" a focus group, the kind these young people might facilitate with youth back home in order to generate a map of deeply contextualized, situated stories of discrimination, denial of access, obstacles encountered, and resiliencies displayed by youth in their communities. We would put together a Global Advocacy Document and local advocacy documents, stuffed with numbers from "across" sites and within, seasoned with rich stories of living life locally, to facilitate testimonials and social change in home communities and, of course, Geneva.

It was in the focus group that some of the key issues we seek to discuss in this chapter were voiced. Michelle asked five participants (from Nepal, Tanzania, India, Cameroon, and Algeria) to first draw maps of their biographical travels from childhood to present, through schooling, and to draw through place, emotion, and struggle the obstacles they encountered, the people and movements that supported them. One chair was left empty for anyone in the "outer circle" to join us. The problematics of globalizing hope through research poured into the group like lava. The pain of everyday life inside long histories of colonialism, abuse, and injustice could no longer be denied. The existential question of "proof"—will they ever listen?—whispered in all of our ears.

There is, of course, an important project under way—to work deep and wide, to insist that Geneva listen. And yet throughout the room, like waves of hope and despair, you could read faces asking, "Will this matter back home?" "Do self doubts count as the last drop of oppression and discrimination?" "How are the fists and the slaps of a father accounted for in a human rights campaign for education?" "Should we consult the elders in our community about the work?" and "If we consult the elders, will they shut down the conversations of the young people?"

At the very exhausting and exhilarating end of our 3 days together, Aliou from Cameroon spoke, "You know, this isn't a criticism of the last few days, but I want to say that we might never get to Geneva. Even if we do, I don't think they believe in us. But I have grown so much, learned so much, being with all of you these last few days, listening to stories of young people fighting for justice in their own communities. Our relationships, our skills, that's what I'll take back to my community. But Geneva, I don't know that I believe in Geneva."

Aliou gave voice as others nodded; some whispered over cigarettes. Bold in his recognition that perhaps he does not believe in Geneva . . . and perhaps they do not believe in him, Aliou refused to be a trophy in a human rights race. He was soon joined by others who argued that the work would be hollow if it did not speak back to their home communities, if it was not organized for local audiences, if it did not provoke local change.

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Breathing in the power of possibility, our eyes stung, as well, at the treacherous contradictions that lay at the global-local intersection. Since then, we have been thinking hard about the dialectics of method tucked into the folds of global-local work. We take up four of these dialectics, to provoke imagination for method, to spark a conversation, to invite participatory inquiry that privileges the local while stretching thoughtfully toward the global.

The four dialectics examined here seem pivotal to us but may in fact be idiosyncratic or

random. For a provisional moment, however, they seem worth speaking aloud: preserving the right to "difference" in human rights campaigns devoted to universal access, documenting the history and geography of privilege as well as pain, nesting research inside grounded struggles for sovereignty that must be addressed before claims of democracy can be voiced, and articulating the obligations to local audience and local use when "jumping scale" toward global analysis.

◨ "Difference" and Access

Our eyes first stung when we realized that the discourse of human rights' struggles for universal "access" to education can silence or homogenize local demands for "difference."

Tano, a Roma student from Bulgaria, complained that Roma children "only have Roma educators and other Roma in their schools." Others were insistent on education with and for peers who "come from my community." While some want to be prepared to attend "elite" secondary and higher education, others—particularly Indigenous activists—are engaged in the fight for language schools, cultural respect, and challenges to colonizers' histories. Some want to be educated "with all kinds of students and teachers," while others want local, culturally sensitive, and immersed education. Some struggle for access to English as liberatory; others view it as imperialism. Some have no schools for miles; some have only seasonal teachers; some are segregated and want to be with "others"; some are "integrated" and yearn for a space of their own. Some trust contact with dominant groups, and many do not.

As the stories filled the room, many began to whisper, "Access to what?" Did we all want the same thing? Do all groups really seek access to a Western—"free, complete, quality"—education? A provocative essay by Michael Marker (2006), a native scholar from British Columbia, helps us think through this dialectic of access and difference: "While other minoritized groups demand revisionist histories and increased access to power within educational institutions, Indigenous people

present a more direct challenge to the core assumptions about life's goals and purposes. Urban African Americans and Latinos mobilize around equity and access discourses but indigenous cultures posit a social stance outside of assertions of pluralism; rather claims to moral and epistemic preeminence based on ancient and sustained relationships to land" (p. 4).

When state institutions (or private ones) "allow" access to those who have historically been denied, too often, buried in the victory, lies an insistence on sameness in the name of inclusion. Access then doubles as vulnerability and sometimes degradation. Institutional racism gets a second life, unfettered (see Fine et al., 2005; Gilmore et al., 2004). Difference is the price of admission; failure, shame, and disappearance follow for most.

To this point, Sandy Grande (2004) "reject[s] the whitestream logic that 'we are all the same'; arguing that it not only denies the 'difference' of indigenous cultures and belief systems, but also tacitly reduces Indigenous peoples to the status of whites-without-technology" (p. 64). She continues, "American Indians are not like other subjugated groups struggling to define their place within the larger democratic project. Specifically, they do not seek greater 'inclusion'; rather, they are engaged in a perpetual struggle to have their legal and moral claims to sovereignty recognized" (p. 107).

If some groups reject dominant goals and purposes and do not seek access to the very institutions that sit at the belly of dominant goals or do not seek to "sit next to our oppressors" (personal communication, Jones, New Zealand, 2001), questions arise about how discrimination is enacted and corrected—how "difference" can be built into remedy. This question of "difference" looms large and clumsy, often silenced, in conversations for universal access to education, health care, housing, work, or even marriage rights, especially as researchers seek to document exclusion and policy makers/advocates seek remedy for all. It is not easy to hold the notion of "difference" in your head while trying to measure or "correct" injustice systematically. This is why civil rights lawyers often rely on extremely problematic standardized test scores to "prove" persistent inequity, even

though they know well the racial and class biases of these tests. At the Global Rights workshop, we were situated squarely at the center of this dynamic.

The task of the workshop was to interrogate educational opportunity as (mal)distributed across and within nations. National and international statistics on literacy, the ratio of students to teachers, the rates of qualified teachers, and the percentage of boys and girls attending school, dropping out, and graduating offer metrics of access applicable across nations and communities. These statistics provide "firm" grounds for comparison and judgments of (in)equity but dangerous grounds for thinking through remedies (see Chawla et al., 2005, on the complexities of inquiring deeply across sites to public authorities).

To create a survey to be implemented in each participant's home community on issues of injustice in education, our large group split into three groups, each tackling a set of issues. The small groups had a hard task in front of them because time was limited and because the larger group had decided to keep the survey to just a few pages, there was space for only five or so survey items for each small group, and group members wanted to be sure that each of their questions gathered as much information as possible.

Eve met with the group that was working on creating survey questions that got at the things that kept students from completing school. The group began by listing the reasons that, from their own lives or siblings' or friends' lives, students might not finish their studies. They quite easily arrived at consensus on issues of access and generated this list: It wasn't safe for students to attend or travel to school, family issues and home issues prevented students from attending, there was no reason or benefit or incentive for students to complete their schooling, economic issues kept students working rather than attending school, the school language was different from the student's home language, the student or her or his family had health or mental health issues, the student's culture clashed with the school culture, religious issues prevented students from attending, and the schools did not meet the students'

needs (including needs having to do with language, gender, age, and ability).

However, the group had generated too many reasons to ask individual questions about and needed to figure out a way to ask questions that had breadth, speaking to the wide variety of reasons students did not complete their schooling, but also depth, speaking to the intimacy of politics of injustice. Linda Kayseas, a Saulteaux woman from Fishing Lake First Nation, suggested that we go around and rate the top three issues for each of us, so that we might know better around which issues to dig deep and which to merely skim the surface.

Each person took a moment to prioritize the issues for his or her home communities, and this is where difference emerged. As each person listed his or her top three, Eve ticked a 1, 2, or 3 by each issue. There were no issues not in someone's top three, several issues were 3s for many participants, several were 2s for many participants, and several were a 1 for only one or two participants. The group laughed together at the tricky knot they had just created: Should they focus on the issues that received the most ticks? On the issues that had the most 1s? All the issues had at least one 1. A lively, educative discussion ensued, and it was here that the complexities of designing a global survey that was meaningful both across the globe and in the local communities were felt.

In the end, still needing to complete their task of creating a portion of the global survey, yet wanting to honor both the rich discussion and the differences that emerged through trying to prioritize, group members decided to pose the questions on the survey so that the ones being surveyed had the opportunity to prioritize the issues that kept them from completion.

Given the distinct histories, politics, and desires of each community, conversations about "difference" deserve to be aired, not suffocated, at the global-local nexus. Demands for "access" cannot mute noisy, contentious, sometimes divisive discussions of "difference." Damage is done when remedies to injustice are universalized. Oppression is fortified when the knowledge for solutions is homogenized. Commitments to access must always be welded to equally strong commitments

to difference. Participatory cross-site work must always hold a "space" open for difference and rely on local knowledge to fill in.

▣ MAPPING PRIVILEGE AND PAIN

Everyone in the training knew that oppression lives in the systems and bodies and cells of deprivation and abundance. Most had traveled, attended university with elite students, and sat with nongovernmental organization (NGO) representatives of privilege. They recognized that the effects of global oppression are grossly uneven, but the system thrives across settings. This is why we wanted to study privilege as well as those who have been denied. Unless the very classed, gendered, ethnic, and racialized formations of accumulated capital are documented—not just the "damage" of those who pay the dearest price for globalized injustice—social analyses run the risk of obscuring the architecture and mechanisms of social oppression; we collude in the presumption that "merit" and privilege are trouble free. And, so we asked, how do we map the geography and distribution of pain and privilege—who has it? What does it look like? How is it reproduced? Where is it hidden? Whose sacred knowledge deserves to be protected, and whose deserves to be exposed?

In the framework of global human rights, the design and these questions made perfect sense. Each young person would travel back home, with a translated survey instrument to be administered to 50 males and females from the "dominant" group and 50 from the "marginalized." But on the ground, the constructs of *privileged* and *marginalized* (like *discrimination*) splintered:

We asked, "What does privilege look like in the Dominican Republic?"

> Ivrance Martinez, born in Haiti, now living in the Dominican Republic: "They think they are white in their minds."

> Varshaa Ayyar: "But I'm having trouble with the other side of this idea—how do we identify who is marginalized in India? There are so many layers?"

> Tano added, "Are the Turkish immigrants in Bulgaria part of the dominant . . . since they too discriminate against us, the Roma?"

> Sandra Carolina Rojas Hooker, a lawyer from Nicaragua, a creole of African descent, acknowledged what so many in the room were thinking: "But really, so many of us are mixed, no?"

> Elvia Duque, an Afro-Colombia lawyer and president of the Regional Coalition in Health for African Descendants in the Americas, insisted that we think about how we ask people about race/ethnicity because so many deny their African heritage in "self-reports."

And then someone whispered, loud enough for us to hear but not notice who spoke, "What about those among us who are collaborators; are they dominants or marginalized?"

The young women from the United States and Canada asked that we extend the "age range" we are looking at in the survey, because access to rigorous (e.g., advanced placement [AP]) courses in high school and access to financial aid for college are a problem in the United States and Canada. So true, and yet it was so hard for that concern to sit next to communities in Indonesia where there are no schools or teachers to be found.

We eventually (unfortunately) walked away from trying to survey youth of privilege to track the institutional and personal accumulation and embodiment of capital. Most of the young people believed that privileged people would not stay in the room long enough to have a conversation about the geography of wealth, privilege, entitlement, and the false construction of merit (Burns, 2004). And as you can see, we had a hard time "operationalizing" privilege.

And yet we agree fervently with Susan George (2005) that "those who genuinely want to help the

movement should study the rich and the powerful, not the 'poor and the powerless' because the 'poor and powerless already know what is wrong with their lives' and we need analyses of the transnational forces that marginalize particular populations in the West and non-West" (p. 8).

Social scientists do not have easy methods for documenting the material, social, and psychological circuits of privilege—policies and practices of hidden/denied/outsourced ownership, accumulation, exploitation, embodiment, and reproduction of privilege (see Burns, 2004; Low, 2003). To gather up this evidence about privilege requires far more than simple self-report: digging deep, investigating behind, and lifting the skirts of privilege to view beneath and under dominants' coattails, families, bank accounts, stock portfolios, sexual liaisons, pornographic Web sites, drug use, and "cleaned" police records (for excellent examples of research that reveals the material, social, and psychological elements of privilege, see April Burns's [2004] work on privileged youth theorizing structures of injustice, Neil Smith's [1987] work on gentrification, Setha Low's [2003] writings on gated communities, Bernard Lefkowitz's [1997] book on wealthy boys and rape, Melvin Oliver and Thomas Shapiro's [1997] writings on Black wealth/White wealth, Peter Cookson and Caroline Hodges Persell's [1985] work on elite boarding schools, and James Scott's [1990] writings on hidden transcripts of power and resistance).

Documenting the geography of pain, the shameful twin of privilege, may appear to be a somewhat easier task, but here we bump into issues of personal and community ethics and vulnerability. While the global human rights documents from which we launched our work were extremely articulate about what discrimination looks like from a legal, transnational view, the local indicia may curdle into self-doubt, drug and alcohol abuse, violence in the kitchen, and bruises on the soul.

Bhaba Bahadur Thami, born in a highly marginalized indigenous community in Nepal, spoke about the alienation of attending an elite university in Kathmandu. "Marginalized, indigenous students, in order to feel like they fit in, they hung with the Royal Family crowd. I didn't. Fortunately I was a nerd? Geek? Good at computers and kept to myself. But those who stayed with the Royal Family, many of them got into drugs and alcohol and had to return home."

Many, in their maps and stories, mentioned casually incidents of family illness, death of a sibling or a father, or a parent needing an operation. Health tragedies were spray painted all over the biographic journeys of poor youth trying to get educated. They detailed their inevitable return home, for a bit, to nurse a family—the world—back to health. Michelle commented on the emotion in the room, how many lives, cultures, communities, and responsibilities they were carrying in their hearts and souls, in their backpacks, as they traveled off to college, how heavy a burden, how joyous the support, they transported in their bellies.

These young people, in their lives and their work, carry the ashes of global capitalism, racism, sexism, and colonialism and now are imbued with the responsibility to carry hope.

Varshaa spoke up, again. She, more than anyone, had, for two days, carried and voiced the pain in the room, in the world, in the micropolitics of everyday life: "Please, I am not in the circle but I would like to present my map; I think it will tell you much about my community." Her map tells the story of family violence within her Dalit community.

Her map illuminated how the slow, toxic drip feed of discrimination seeps into homes, families, peer relations, and bodies and transforms. This is how reproduction works—through bodies, families, communities, networks, and relations. There is not always an empirical lineage to "discrimination" (Marston, 2000). And yet the young people would say, "Does this count as discrimination?"

The global policies and structures that lie at the source are camouflaged and twisted, with only split lips and bruised mother-bodies visible. And yet the work of critical scholars (see Fine & Weis, 2005) is precisely to document the classed, raced, gendered, and sexualized turns that local oppression can take, to make visible the strings that connect global imperialism, racism, political economy, and patriarchy to everyday life (see Anyon, 2005; Appelbaum & Robinson, 2005; Bhavnani, Foran, & Talcott, 2005; Ormond, 2004).

This knowledge task, in documenting the pain of oppression, is, however, "tricky" (L. T. Smith, 2005). It may be (relatively) easy for researchers to document the quantitative indicators of raw deprivation—in illness and mortality rates; access to hospitals, medical personnel, and insurance; number of teachers; schools; books; and literacy rates. But questions of *intimate subjectivities of deprivation* and the *collateral damage of psychic violence* are harder and more consequential to capture and, in some audiences, more likely to be resisted, too painful to hear, too costly to speak.

Youth engaged in social inquiry can help us think about if/how/when to track the sinews of oppression in intimate and private lives, how injustice metastasizes into a rusting of the soul, local warfare, and resilience. Even as young people of poverty and their communities are resilient and organizing, living under the thumb of global domination may invite a twitch, a stutter, clogged arteries of self-worth, more violence than we wish to announce. These are the sharp fingertips on the long arm of historic and contemporary global domination. Some young people may wish to stay clear of such discussions (Ormond, 2004). Others are literally dying to tell. What constitutes "sacred knowledge" or sovereignty in one community, or by some members of one community, may indeed be the primary purpose for the research in another.

In participatory work, some of the "trickiest" (L. T. Smith, 2005) conversations circled around pain, vulnerability, and damage, asking who gets to have a private life and whose troubles are public. What can be included in the net of "evidence" of social oppression? What will be used against my community, as we document histories of colonization? Do we ever get to reveal the pathology of the rich, their drug abuse, violence against women, and corporate and environmental violence enacted by elites? These are indeed hard calls and not ones that participatory researchers should make alone. The power of global analysis is, perhaps, to be able to speak the unspeakable without vulnerability. This is yet another rub at the intersection of privilege, pain, and outrage, at the global-local nexus, where a set of important conversations with youth are waiting to be hatched.

▣ Sovereignty as Prerequisite to Democracy

The Global Rights workshop included a number of Indigenous people, whose experiences spoke to the complexity of a human rights–based campaign for the end of educational discrimination at the hands of governments that do not respect Indigenous sovereignty.

Mina Susana Setra, a member of the Pompakng peoples and who lives on the island of Borneo, told us that in 1979, Indonesia issued a law that established a uniform system of government at all levels, including the village level. This has paralyzed the Indigenous people's own government system. Local structures have been destroyed, and community leaders no longer have the power to determine local regulations. As time has gone by, community leaders have been replaced by people selected by the government. Slowly, the community has lost the right to make its own choices.

Leonard Habimana, from the Batwa (Pygmy) community of Burundi, a journalist and student at the University of Burundi, explains that since 85% of the Batwa do not have access to land, they face many different forms of poverty. Land in Burundi is the source of economic production. People with large tracts of land bring Batwa to their homes and work them like slaves, without any payments. Because the Batwa do not have money, they cannot pay for health services, education, or other basic services.

On Day 2, as we entered the room, someone whispered to Eve that the Indigenous participants often clustered together. As one who often was a clusterer and who is with Aleut ancestry herself, she was drawn to this group, interested to understand the concerns and experiences of the Indigenous people in the room. It had something to do with the urgency with which the Indigenous participants saw the unfolding plan as being severely mitigated by long histories of colonization and assumptions of equal opportunities and immunities to the

dangers of transgression. Soon this group grew to not only include Indigenous participants but many others who were low caste, low positioned in global and local social hierarchies.

Then after the training, the three of us began to discuss our dis-ease with the ways in which democracy is being commodified as the rationale for war and invasion. Actually, there was an uneasy conversation among us about the relation of PAR and democracy. While Michelle and Sarah were well worn in their use of democratic practice to describe PAR, Eve was more skeptical. Serendipity allowed for Eve to meet Sandy Grande, who put words to the disconnect between critical pedagogy and red pedagogy: "Critical pedagogy situates this glorified democracy as the central struggle on the way to freedom. But, there cannot be democracy without sovereignty" (S. Grande, personal communication).

While writing this, we kept asking each other and ourselves, who has been allowed sovereignty? Does sovereignty have something to do with the right to not be occupied? So together we dug in, allowed ourselves the writing and talking through flipping stomachs and nerves, allowing ourselves to steep in the hard disharmonies between Indigenous thought and PAR, and arrived, steel bellied, grateful, and intact, with this section.

There is a struggle being waged for terms such as *democracy* and *participation.* It is being contested around the world in countries including, but not limited to, Venezuela, Iraq, South Africa, and the United States. Some would like to release the concepts without looking back, believing that they are too tainted to be of use. Others have refused to let go and work to deepen (Appadurai, 2002) and/or thicken (Gandin & Apple, 2002) their meanings. Here, we would like to explore how respectfully learning from (not appropriating, not absorbing) Indigenous thinkers and the ways in which critical participatory research with youth can contribute to wide and deep definitions of the terms *participation* and *democracy.*

Land and language are, and historically have been, stolen and occupied so fast in the United States that it almost stops the tongue. The struggle for sovereignty is a real, experienced struggle for tribal and detribalized people in the United States. The very existence of the struggle could be perceived as a threat to the fantasies we are taught to have of ourselves: sovereignty and the self-determined political, cultural, social status that Indigenous peoples all over the world demand from the governments that have otherwise attempted to absorb or destroy them, through a coarse eye that reads as separatism. Grande (2004, p. 32) maintains that it is not only this struggle but the tribes themselves that are viewed as an inherent threat to the nation, poised to expose the great lies of U.S. democracy: that we are a nation of laws and not random power, that we are guided by reason and not faith, that we are governed by representation and not executive order, and, finally, that we stand as a self-determined citizenry and not a kingdom of blood or aristocracy.

At the opening of this chapter, we listed some terms that have been, troublingly, expanded to mean something beyond their intended meaning. It is with humility and respect for the Indigenous experience of the struggle for sovereignty that we take Sandy Grande's (2004, p. 32) assertion that sovereignty is democracy's only lifeline, seriously, allowing it to ripple fiercely into the ways that we perceive our own work. We take on sovereignty as a mentor, not metaphor.

In his memoir, Michael J Fox (2002) describes the rush of feelings he experienced as he completed his first interview in which he, 7 years after first being diagnosed, went public with having young-onset Parkinson's disease. "*Oh my god, what have I done?* I hadn't *shared* my story, *I had given it away. It was no longer mine.*" In Julia Alvarez's (1997) novel, *Yo!,* the maid's daughter, Sarita, describes reading the report about her written by Yolanda Garcia, the daughter of the family her mother worked for. "I don't know what I can compare it to. Everything was set down more or less straight, for once. But still I felt as if someone had stolen something from me." Research, interviewing, and storytelling often require those of us with less power to give up more than we planned.

In Eve's experiences as a doctoral student with Aleut ancestry, there have been many times when she has been pressed by colleagues to serve up her

grandmother's stories, sacred stories, secret stories, stories of humiliation, stories that would betray her grandmother, in order to placate her colleagues' desires to know her Aleut history. In a visit to a course taught by Joel Spring in the fall of 2005, Sandy Grande echoed this experience. For those imbibed in privilege, to know someone is to expect them to reveal themselves, to tell themselves, to give up their sovereignty, while at the same time, shielded by their privilege, never having to show their own bloodstains, track marks, piling bills, or mismatched socks.

As researchers of people's lives, there are often secrets, silences that, if revealed, make the lives of those vulnerable to institutions and governments more vulnerable. Jennifer Ayala, Latina scholar and participatory researcher, says it well in an online discussion forum we convened around the complexities of doing participatory research: "Knowing/having this is one thing; the choice how/to act on this insider knowledge is a different story altogether. For me, less energy was spent establishing trust, but more is spent with the weight of the responsibility associated with that trust. Here come the fears. Fear of the consequences of critique, fear of betraying those on whom you depend for daily functioning, fear of not asking or looking where you know you should, to avoid conflict."

Sifting through our collective, online chatting reveals a wealth of knowledge as activists/ researchers struggle with the "sacred." To respect those secrets, to respect those humming silences, those smells in the hallway, those intimacies and even abuses behind closed doors, those illegal cable boxes, the sacred stories of our ancestors, is to respect the sovereignty that is necessary for democracy. (For a discussion on the teaching of sacred materials, see Allen, 1998.)

Sovereignty, complicated yet crucial to democracy in practice, is at the heart of how we as researchers and storytellers attend to our data.

Michelle: Remember, when you are engaged in participatory work, some knowledge is sacred. Stories of lives and relations are not sitting there like low-hanging fruit, ready for the picking.

You have to work with community to determine what is sacred, what will not be documented, reported, defiled. In some communities, you will have to consult with elders, in others you may want to create an advisory group to help you identify where to find evidence of injustice, and what should remain within the group—not reported widely.

Participant: Can you give an example?

Michelle: In some communities, people prefer that instances of domestic violence not be documented because the group is already under siege and surveillance, and the information will only be used against the group.

Participant: But what if that's the reason we want to do the research? To expose how we mistreat each other in my community? How men mistreat women?

As we were reminded in the Global Rights workshop, that which is sacred cannot be relegated to the taboo or homogenized across communities. It is complicated, not to be assumed, and worth a populated discussion. Some researchers go to community elders to determine what is shared through the academy; others seek permission from key community elders.

At the heart of participatory research lies a desire to resuscitate democracy as a whole, and yet this is an important historic moment to (re)consider democracy. Democracy has been and is being waged on our bodies, in our names, as an occupying force. It has been exposed by Indigenous thinkers as an ideology that thwarts Indigenous interests and maintains the privilege of the power elite (Grande, 2004; G. H. Smith, 2000, p. 211). The practice of democratizing has been a practice of desecration, of burning down, of forgetting, of washing home-language speakers' mouths with soap, of forced removal, of denial, of deprivation, of depletion. In the United States, in schools inculcated by hegemonic

democracy, we are taught that democracy is our finest gift to ourselves and the world and our most valuable possession. It is dangerous to say that this emperor has no clothes.

Thus, the work of those involved in participatory research with youth to reclaim and reframe democracy is a vulnerable yet pivotal endeavor. What, then, does it mean for us involved in this endeavor to take sovereignty seriously as a prerequisite to democracy?

For now, for us, it means that each participant in our research has sovereign rights.

Sovereignty as a prerequisite to democracy involves the cease-and-desist of Eurocentric, colonizing power formations. This includes the rights to

resist or reject Eurocentric theory (Battiste, 2000; Henderson, 2000),

resist or reject versions of themselves that are fantasies of the power elite (Mihesuah, 1998),

resist or reject cognitive imperialism (Battiste, 2000),

explore epistemological differences (Marker, 2006),

reclaim that which has been stolen from them (Marker, 2006),

question democratic models of one person, one vote, and majority rule, or the Westminster model of democracy, which reifies the goals of dominant groups and squashes the rights of those in numeric minority (G. H. Smith, 2000).

Sovereignty as a prerequisite to democracy also calls for us to mind what is sacred. This includes the rights to

keep what is sacred sacred and to make/mark new spaces and knowledges as sacred,

choose what is and what is not on the table for documentation,

seek the blessings or permission of their own communities of peers and elders to reveal significant information.

Finally, sovereignty as a prerequisite to democracy involves what Avery Gordon (1997) has called the right to complex personhood. Grande (2004)

highlights that sovereignty is not a separatist discourse. On the contrary, it is a restorative process. As Warrior suggests, Indigenous peoples must learn to "withdraw without becoming separatists"; we must be "willing to reach out for the contradictions within our experience and open ourselves to the pain and the joy of others" (Warrior, 1995, p. 124, as quoted by Grande, 2004, p. 57). Gordon has called this willingness to reach for contradiction *complex personhood*. Gordon says,

It has always baffled me why those most interested in understanding and changing the barbaric domination that characterizes our modernity often not always withhold from the very people they are most concerned with the right to complex personhood. . . . Complex personhood means that all people (albeit in specific forms whose specificity is sometimes everything) remember and forget, are beset by contradiction, and recognize and misrecognize themselves and others. At the very least, complex personhood is about conferring the respect on others that comes from presuming that life and people's lives are simultaneously straightforward and full of enormously subtle meaning. (p. 4)

The rights to complex personhood include the rights to

work and learn and exist in wholeness and to thrive in their relations with other peoples (Grande, 2004, p. 171);

be the sources of their own healing and renewal (Daes, 2000, p. 5);

work and learn and exist in ways that are proactive, not only reactive;

resist or reject propaganda carefully aimed at convincing them that they are backward, ignorant, weak, or insignificant (Daes, 2000, p. 7);

make together a research community that, as Grande (2004, p. 54) cites as the key components of meaningfully sovereign governments, provides stable institutions and policies, fair and effective processes of dispute resolution, effective separation of politics from business management, a competent bureaucracy, and cultural match.

Marker (2006, pp. 3, 5), in his discussion of the Makeh whale hunt as an effort to reclaim stolen cultural space and autonomy in the shadow of colonial and corporate hegemony and the political backlash of local White people on Makeh people, contends that the expression of local Indigenous culture becomes contentious whenever claims on land and resources from tribal representatives are constituted from claims about historic cultural identity. The Makeh people's very rights to complex personhood are being undermined by revisionary history and whitestream Eurocentric culture, which, with law and reason on its side, makes the colonizer capable of sleeping at night or reaching across the dinner or communion table without recoiling from the sense of the blood of the other on his or her hands (Findlay, 2000, p. x). Sovereignty with a commitment to the rights of complex personhood does not defy democracy; it is a requirement.

▣ OBLIGATIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES OF JUMPING SCALE

A bit deeper into the training, ethical questions about participatory research and indebtedness, loyalty, and betrayal began to fester, under the table, outside in the hallways, in quiet voices. We all understand that participatory work is tethered to political obligation. That is, PAR is undertaken with and for local community to incite protest, to insist on change. PAR with youth self-consciously challenges existing power relations in a place, an institution, for a group of marginalized youth, through a social movement, toward change. Messy audiences, confrontations with power, and tensions across boardroom tables are the stuff of PAR in local soil. This was easy to imagine in the Dominican Republic, Thailand, Colombia, Los Angeles, India. . . .

When we shifted our focus to Geneva, however, asking the youth researchers to "jump scale" (Marston, 2000) to document global circuits of hegemony and resistance, the question of obligation to whom, accountability for what, and being grounded where grew more diffuse. As local

projects coagulated toward a vague sense of the global, images of audience and purpose blurred. To whom, for what, with whom, and toward what end do we create materials, products, scholarly documents, performances, exhibitions, and/or protests for global analysis? And so we launched a conversation about the obligations to the ground when jumping scale in participatory work.

The distinct aims of work designed *in/for* place and work designed *across* places occupied the core of this dilemma. Vine Deloria (1994) writes that "most Americans raised in a society in which history is all encompassing . . . have very little idea of how radically their values would shift if they took the idea of place, both sacred and secular, seriously" (pp. 76–77). Sandy Grande (2004) extends the point when she argues that "the centrality of place in the indigenous thought-world is explicitly conveyed through tradition and language and implicitly through the relationship between human beings and the rest of nature" (p. 172). Many of the young people were committed to changes at home. Geneva was a distant romance.

And yet, as much as *place* is central to PAR, we were equally compelled by the idea of youth inquiry as cross-site *movement* of youth resistance, a challenge to the mainstream as Marker (2006) suggests when he writes, "Research on indigenous education is often framed as a glance into an ethnic community rather than a *deep challenge to the mainstream* values and goals of schooling. Indigenous knowledge and approaches to the natural world should become centerpieces for a much broader and substantive discussion rather than simply studying the Other" (p. 22).

While some have argued that human rights discourses have been misused by countries such as the United States as a guise for preemptive wars and/or economic leverage, and therefore are not useful tools for social justice (Chow, 2002), others engaged in transnational politics maintain that "whatever its theoretical weaknesses the polemical power of the rights language as an expression of aspirations for justice across widely different cultures and political-economic conditions cannot easily be dismissed" (Correa & Petchesky, 2003). We sat firmly (and squeamishly) in the latter camp.

Thus, in this section, we pencil in some thoughts about what we are calling the obligations of scale. We even have the audacity to try to tie these notions to the stuffy idea of generalizability, reinvigorating the concept with the radical potential to connect these waves of resistance and scars of oppression that dot the earth, on the heels of colonialism. And yet, jumping scales comes with a series of obligations.

First and foremost, we caution that it is necessary for those of us who desire to leap between local participatory and global analysis build, self-consciously and transparently, mechanisms of participation so that our work remains situated, even if multisituated, and accountable to place. Global or cross-site work must remain nonhierarchical and have integrity with home spaces. Global research must remember, always, that the local is its mother.

Perhaps those doing deep local work would not be bound by a reciprocal obligation to think globally. Not clear. But the strings of participation should grow taut, not severed, when social analyses bungee across terrain. Work riding on the heights of global topographies cannot upstage but instead must move sovereign struggles forward in ways that are clear and palpable to those experiencing oppression on the ground.

The need to guard the sovereign demands for one's home struggle and the desire to create a unified coalition were ever present among the young people at Global Rights: Partners for Justice. The young people worked diligently at the nexus of global-local struggles, finding themselves negotiating between "the political quest for sovereignty and the socioeconomic urgency to build transnational coalitions" (Grande, 2004, p. 118).

As facilitators creating research in the service of transnational coalition building, we need to be listening for the whispers over coffee breaks, in informal spaces, that speak to the fear that local demands are being passed over for concepts far more grandiose and unclear. And, at the same time, we appreciate Saskia Sassen's (2005) distinction between global work that enables "trans-boundary political practices" (p. 163) and global work that is self-consciously about appeals to

global actors, treaties, or conventions. These two projects are related, but perhaps important to distinguish. Participatory work ground in local settings may engage in cross-site coalition *and* may organize for/against global entities, but the obligation of accountability sits, we suggest, in the relation between these projects.

A second obligation of jumping scale concerns the tempting and treacherous slide toward homogenization, in the name of solidarity. For those who choose to engage PAR at the local-global juncture, beware the seduction of the universal, the slide toward "the same." Sandy Grande (2004) probes us to think that working across nations, like "multiculturalism," may operate in a homogenizing way. Cindi Katz (2001), too, contends that "homogenization is not the script of globalization so much as differentiation and even fragmentation." (p. 1215). As we anticipate that local struggles around issues that affect young people are simultaneously becoming more intertwined and more contradictory (Katz, 2001), we have an obligation to guard against silencing dissent/difference as we work to raise social issues in the service of transnational action.

A third obligation suggested by critical geographer Cindi Katz (2003), in her book *Growing Up Global,* and Parameswaran (Chapter 20, this volume) is to focus analytic energies on the *interrelations of youth struggles* in very different places. To this point, Katz's writing on topographies, countertopographies, and contour lines that map situated struggles and histories is useful. Katz encourages analysts to "recognize [that one site] . . . is connected analytically to other places along contour lines that represent not elevation but particular relations to a process (e.g., globalizing capitalist relations of production). This offers a multifaceted way of theorizing the connectedness of vastly different places made artifactually discrete by virtue of history and geography but which also reproduce themselves differently amidst the common political-economic and socio-cultural processes they experience" (p. 1229).

Theorizing the interrelations across place allows us to reveal the ways in which deprivation and privilege are codependent, where racism and global capital join, how patriarchy and homophobia slap

each other on the back, how nationalism and colonialism feed each other, how youth bodies are exploited or discarded in the circuits of global power, and/or how resistance movements speak across continents (Winant, 2005).

Our last obligation of scale surfaced in an online discussion group constructed by the authors to push our thinking about participatory action research with young people even further via input from researchers across the globe. In this small corner of cyberspace, we were able to listen to and interact with people deeply embedded in facilitating youth research/activism in places such as Peru, Hawaii, and New Jersey. Although each person's work focused around issues of local importance, a fourth basket of obligations surfaced concerning the delicate ethics and responsibilities of PAR researchers—having access to and responsibility for local knowledge and action. Jennifer Ayala, Latina scholar and participatory researcher, speaks her biography and her research praxis:

> I learned the codes appropriate to each group and could slip and slide between them if/when I chose to. But I wonder. . . .

> Am I like

> fading footprints in the snow

> that melt and transform

> to a still water

> who changes shape

> according to what holds me,

> what surrounds me?

> I also discovered thin lines of intersection, spaces where bridges could be forged between the worlds I kept separate (Anzaldúa, 1987). Sometimes I danced around that thin line, sometimes I felt I was that thin line between. (Ayala, 2006, p. 5)

Ayala's reflection on her position "between" and responsibilities with and for knowledge and action is echoed in the online conversation. We invite you to eavesdrop on dialogue that represents a small

portion of the learning that was exchanged in this brief coming together:

Carlos Alza Barco (Peru): I work incorporating participatory methodologies in young people in Peru. We are not having a vertical approach of a learning process, but an active and participatory one. They identify their own "participatory practices," thinking about what they do in their participation process. But . . . once you have all the information given, I usually ask myself, *who is called to make the interpretation* of the given experiences?

Caitlin Cahill (NYC): Carlos, your question about who is called to make an interpretation of a given experience raises for me a related dilemma, "how to write about participatory work?" . . . *Representation comes with responsibility.* When I decided that my primary responsibility as a writer/academic researcher in a PAR process should be to the values and concerns of the research team (the collective), I think it made it easier for me to proceed in my own writing. In this regard, I think the PAR project provided for me a blueprint for me as an academic researcher to orient my work. . . . And, while I take seriously my particular contribution as a researcher to develop the analysis, to make connections to wider social and political processes and situate the project in the critical social science literature, I ground my project in collectively produced knowledge.

Renee Louis (Hawaii): My question revolves around personal experiences. I am Hawaiian working with Hawaiians from another part of the island. At first

I thought this would provide me more opportunity to view my research from an insider's perspective, and though it has for the most part, it has also provided me with an even larger responsibility.

In relating with the community participants, or "partners in theorizing," I've learned there are subtle tests of character and skill. Once passed, in-depth knowledge is shared but cannot be corroborated because the learning/sharing process is one-on-one. I've been told not to tape anything, to remember everything, and share little to nothing with others.

What I thought would be my opportunity to garner benign information has become a research puzzle as I can only share the tip of the iceberg . . . all the while knowing the information being shared with me is but the tip of another greater iceberg.

Has anyone else ever dealt with such community confidence and responsibility? How do you reconcile that with academic or research imperatives?

As a research collective, we not only struggle with questions of *obligation* that were thrown and returned in our cyberspace volley, but we also thrill nervously at the *opportunities* of scale:

How can each of us, in our home communities, use the spatialization of global networks and resistance to our advantage (Marston, 2000)? How can we deploy information technologies as a strategic opening in transnational space to further youth resistance . . . and still respect local elders and not further an imperialistic erosion of local leadership, community and culture? (Sassen, 2005). Can critical youth research form a counter-hegemonic shield against neo-liberal governmentality by "developing and

enhancing the capacity of citizens to share power and hence, collaboratively govern themselves?" (Tuhiwai Smith, 2006, in press). To what extent can critical youth PAR projects join, across sites and nations, to produce work that can "slow the apparent 'juggernaut of globalization' in favor of visions of development planned social transformation and redistribution?" (Bhavnani et al., 2005, p. 323)

So, with a desire to contribute to societal transformation, influenced by Grande, Katz, and PAR activists from around the globe, we approach the question of how/what may be "generalized" from the local to global. Traditional notions of generalizability are deliberately troubled in our work—as they should be. But they are not discarded. The question of generalizability is perhaps one of the most vexing and difficult questions in critical inquiry. In common use, generalizability sanctions the application of findings from one study to other settings. Social scientists have been, at once, overly concerned with the technical specificity of empirical generalizability and profoundly underconcerned with generalizability of theory of domination and movements of resistance.

In our work at the global-local hinge, we aim for what we are provisionally calling an *intersectional generalizability*—work that digs deep and respectfully with community to record the particulars of historically oppressed and colonized peoples/communities and their social movements of resistance, as well as work that tracks patterns across nations, communities, homes, and bodies to theorize the arteries of oppression and colonialism. As Battiste suggests in the opening quote, researchers should not study native communities simply to document the "other" but to understand the very constructions of nation, democracy, privilege, and what is considered the nonnative world.

Inquiry that seeks to reveal the historic and contextual specificities of place and identity can shed light on the worldly effects of domination and resistance. For instance, sovereignty struggles came of age in real places, within fierce, place-based struggles for language, dignity, autonomy, and lands under siege. The notion of sovereignty represents the sacrifices and demands of so many

peoples and places unearthed by the track marks of colonization. While the details of sovereignty demands differ greatly depending on history, place, and local politics, the broad-based struggle for sovereignty as a "personal" and "collective right" (G. H. Smith, 2000) travels well as an Indigenous demand and, in this text, swells to an obligation of method across oppressed groups. As our work spans between global and local, then, we can hold this exemplar in our head as we articulate methods that begin at home, kneading the local as the foundational base for building toward a global framework.

▣ JUSTICE IN OPEN AIR—OR FINDING HOME FAR-THERE-AWAY FROM GENEVA

Winona LaDuke (1999) tells us, "We have seen the great trees felled, the wolves taken for bounty, and the fish stacked rotting like cordwood. Those memories compel us, and the return of the descendants of these predators provoke us to stand again, stronger and hopefully with more allies. We are the ones who stand up to the land eaters, the tree eaters, the destroyers and culture eaters" (p. 3).

Linda T. Smith (1999) writes,

In the first instance indigenous communities share with other marginalized and vulnerable communities a collective and historically sustained experience of research as the Object. They share too the use of research as expert representation of who they are. It is an experience indigenous communities associate with colonialism and racism, with inequality and injustice. More importantly indigenous communities hold an alternative way of knowing about themselves and the environment that has managed to survive the assaults of colonization and its impacts. This alternative way of knowing may be different from what was known several years ago by a community but it is still a way of knowing that provides a different epistemology, an alternative vision of society, an alternative ethics for human conduct. It is not therefore a question of whether the knowledge is "pure" and authentic but whether it has been the means

through which people have made sense of their lives and circumstances, that has sustained them and their cultural practices over time, that forms the basis for their understanding of human conduct, that enriches their creative spirit and fuels their determination to be free. (p. 27)

French theorist Erika Apfelbaum (2001) writes, "The imperative to tell—the vital urge not to forget— … contains an injunction to the 'awakening of others.' . . . While the imperative to speak is necessary in order for survivors to re-enter a humane society, stubborn deafness may be equally necessary for the inhabitants of that society as they try to keep their ethical values stable and unchallenged" (p. 31).

We like to imagine LaDuke, Smith, and Apfelbaum sharing a park bench dedicated to urgency, outrage, a long struggle, an insistence that those in power listen to those who have been denied. We join them and respectfully ask that youth be invited to the bench, knee deep in social justice inquiry, participating fully, developed rigorously, held tightly, invited to fly.

And now, as we engage PAR collectives, in and beyond the United States, we know we must create participatory research spaces furnished well to comfort young people and elders as they dialogue through the messy dialectics we have surfaced in this chapter. We recognize that for each of these dialectical relations—access/difference, privilege/pain, democracy/sovereignty, global/local—there is an ideological valence, a gendering, racializing and classing, attached to the split elements. Each prior element—access, privilege, democracy, and global—signals "modern." Each latter element—difference, pain, sovereignty, and local—embodies "backward" or conservative.

Democracy, access, privilege, and globalization are big ideas, associated with men, Whiteness, and progress. Calls for sovereignty, difference, pain, and the local weigh down people and movements. They are carried in the bodies of women, people of color, poor people who are viewed as holding back, resistant or ignorant of what is in their best interest.

We argue in this chapter that participatory work with youth must not only refuse these

binaries and the associated valences but also must aggressively trouble the splitting as a form of political (and methodological) dissociation. The dialectics can be engaged through a process of what Meghna Guhathakurta (in press) calls the "incessant social process of problem identifying dialogues." At the heart of participatory design lies a recognition that when the stubborn particulars of local context, what Patti Lather (2005) calls a "sense of acute situatedness" and struggle, are disregarded, globalized justice research becomes another act of colonization. When difference, local, sovereignty, and pain are dissociated from global movements, justice campaigns simply fly above embodied lives and burning communities. But smoldering in these dialectical relations lies the possibility for radical work to be opened up, reconceived, unleashed, or—sometimes—placed away for sacred keeping. This is where critical and indigenous work joins, even as they tip toward very different sensibilities in praxis.

Finally, a word on proof or evidence. The Global Rights project was an exercise in the critical production of radical evidence. But whether we engage with Indigenous or urban youth and elders, women in prison or mothers struggling for quality schools in the Bronx, students working on a GED or first generation in college, or teens with mothers in prison or no mothers at all, a cloud of cynicism hovers—who will listen? As Linda Smith (1999) has written,

> One of the perspectives that indigenous research brings to an understanding of this moment in the history of globalization is that it is simply another historical moment (one of the many that indigenous communities have survived) that reinscribes imperialism with new versions of old colonialism. This is not as cynical as it may sound but rather it comes from the wisdom of survival on the margins. This moment can be analyzed, understood and disrupted by holding onto and rearticulating an alternative vision of life and society. It is also not the only defining moment as other changes have occurred that make communities somewhat more prepared to act or resist. (p. 18)

The work of *proving,* long colonized to mean the work of men, of progress, of the whitestream, the work of scientists, the work of the academy, is reclaimed through participatory research. Participatory research, mentored by Indigenous concepts of "researching back," infused by a call for knowingness, analysis, and recovery (L. T. Smith, 1999), means the proof is under our fingernails, in our melting footprints, on our park benches, in our clusters, in our flights, on our backs, on our chapped lips, in our stories and the grandmothers who told them. Proof is far-there-away from Geneva.

Struggle is ongoing; global provocation is powerful, but home is where we live. Changes in the kitchen are tithed to changes in the UN. And we know, as Aliou and many others have warned, that "proof"—in numbers and stories, in performances, in cost-benefit analyses and in white papers, in the body, the ghosts, the dreams, and the nightmares—constitutes only one resource that must be brought to bear in a long, participatory march toward social justice.

▣ EPILOGUE

In March 2006, we learned that the young activists of Global Rights would not attend the Human Rights Commission in Geneva but are eager to reconvene under the Manhattan Bridge, to share stories of youth organizing and research globally. Due to the reform process at the UN, the youth did not attend the UN Commission on Human Rights but will meet with representatives of the international financial institutions (World Bank, Inter-American Development Bank) and the donor community in Washington, D.C., to ensure that when loans are provided to implement poverty reduction strategies to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, the unique circumstances of members of minority communities are considered and strategies are designed to affect them positively and not detrimentally.

Back home, the young people have initiated an array of impressive and deeply rooted social change projects with young people in their villages and communities. So, for instance, Neema Mgana was negotiating with Architects for

Humanity to build a medical center in Singida, her community in Tanzania, and, since the Global Partners session, has effectively advocated that they also build a new school in the community. Rodrigo de Paula has selected eight research team members from a college-entry preparation course he leads for mainly Afro-descendent youth living in the *flavelas,* and two additional research team members were selected from the dominant or Caucasian community. Together, they are organizing a workshop titled "Discrimination in Your Education," conducting the survey with 120 youth in different schools as well as at summer camps, football fields, the beach, malls, and capoeira classes and developing a Web site and a radio program called *Voices for Education* in conjunction with a community radio station.

James Baay from the Philippines has gathered youth leaders from different Indigenous and marginalized communities to come together to attend a focus group discussion on barriers to education and to discuss their experiences in administering the surveys in their communities.

Elvia Duque is working with Asociacion de Grupos Juveniles Libertad in Colombia and Movimiento Cultural Saya Afroboliviano in Bolivia—two organizations focused on the rights of Afro-descendents—to implement the research project, creating a particularly good opportunity to raise awareness about rights abuses against the Afro-descendent population in that country.

Linda Kayseas is conducting research on the Saulteaux Indigenous peoples from Fishing Lake First Nation in Canada (the marginalized group) and non-Aboriginal or Anglo-Canadians (the dominant group). With permission to conduct the research in the school on the Fishing Lake First Nation reserve, the research team consists of four students and two team leaders: The first leader is from the dominant group, who will lead the research in the school that is off the reserve, and the other leader is a member of the Saulteaux First Nation, who will lead the research in the school on the reserve.

And of course, new problems arise as the work takes on real meaning in real communities. As Mina Setra from Indonesia tells us,

We decide that if we really want to picture the real story, then we have to do the research in places where the problems really are. And cities are not the place where we can get pure information, since (in our opinion) it has been a bias of social life and opportunities which could influence our resource persons (or even the result of the research it self) in a "place" between "yes or no problems" in education. Got what I mean?

So, to get the better view, better information and better resource persons, peoples who really experience the origin of education problems, we have to conduct the research in villages and subdistricts. Those are places where we can really find and see how the barriers of education affect people's lives, especially when we are talking about Indigenous peoples.

The problems are, we can't conduct this research with a very small budget. . . . It is not about salary or per diem or anything like that, because my team has agreed to do this without those. But, in West Kalimantan, if you want to go to a village or subdistrict, first, you will have to spend quite much money for the transportation, since transportation facilities here are also still a problem, especially when we decide to divide the team to different villages and subdistricts. Second, with this situation, we can't come and go in one day. The team has to stay for few days, even weeks, to gather the information from peoples.

And so the struggle continues, as the work seeds itself in local places and webs across the globe. We remain privileged to play a small role in a global movement, trying to fight the undertow of global capital and launch a youth-based process for development and social justice.

▣ APPENDIX

Youth involved came from many countries and communities, including Haitians living in the Dominican Republic; people of Afro-Caribbean descent in Colombia; people in Tanzania; Roma in Bulgaria; people in Brazil; Dalit in India; Pompakng peoples, who live on the island of Borneo; peoples of Injaw descent, from Nigeria; the Batwa (Pygmy) community of Burundi; the

Dibabawon peoples, an indigenous community in the Philippines; and from varied Indigenous and marginalized communities in the United States and Canada.

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