







This is to certify that the

dissertation entitled

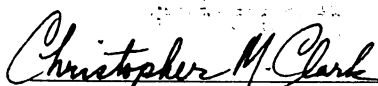
Good Students, Good Daughters:  
Girls and Women Struggling with Voice and Silence  
to Meet Social and Cultural Expectations

presented by

Sheryl Lyn Welte

has been accepted towards fulfillment  
of the requirements for

PhD degree in Education

  
Major professor

Date May 1, 1997

**LIBRARY**  
Michigan State  
University

PLACE IN RETURN BOX to remove this checkout from your record.  
TO AVOID FINES return on or before date due.

DATE DUE	DATE DUE	DATE DUE
JAN 16 1999 100700		
JAN 07 2001 100700		
JUL 05 2005 030205		
AUG 30 2005		

MSU is An Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Institution

ct/circdateadun.pm3-p.1





GOOD STUDENTS, GOOD DAUGHTERS:  
GIRLS AND WOMEN STRUGGLING WITH VOICE AND SILENCE  
TO MEET SOCIAL AND CULTURAL EXPECTATIONS

By

Sheryl Lyn Welte

A DISSERTATION

Submitted to  
Michigan State University  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Department of Counseling, Educational Psychology, and Special Education

1997

Copyright by  
Sheryl Lyn Welte  
1997

## ABSTRACT

### GOOD STUDENTS, GOOD DAUGHTERS: GIRLS AND WOMEN STRUGGLING WITH VOICE AND SILENCE TO MEET SOCIAL AND CULTURAL EXPECTATIONS

By

Sheryl Lyn Welte

The purposes of this study are to expand the discourse on women's ways of knowing and to improve the quality of college teaching. In particular, this study highlights how women college students struggle with voice and silence, self and other, public and private, as they strive to meet both the social expectations of teachers and the cultural demands of family and religion. By qualitatively and biographically describing one woman college student's ways of knowing the author attempts to understand and represent how women college students make sense of: their ways of knowing, the influences of social and cultural factors on their ways of knowing, and their developing sense of self (i.e., how students relate what is happening to their ways of knowing to their sense of self). Primary data consists of in-depth interviews of college students and teachers, classroom observations, and ongoing personal reflection journals collected over a one and one-half year period at a private university in Bangladesh. One woman's story is the primary focus of the study and is told in particularistic detail.

While this study was conducted in Dhaka, Bangladesh, this is not a study of Bangladesh, Bengali culture, or the Muslim religion as practiced in Bangladesh. Situating the research in Bangladesh, however, provides us with new perspectives and insights about women's ways of knowing. The implicitly comparative nature of this



study contributes to knowledge about the ways in which various social and cultural contexts shape women college students' ways of knowing in both Bangladesh and the United States. Contrary to the existing literature on college students' ways of knowing, which suggests that ways of knowing are stagelike and developmentally sequenced, this study indicates that women college students simultaneously possess and demonstrate multiple ways of knowing which are dynamic and situational. This finding has important implications for educational practice and research.



To Chris Clark,  
For helping me to understand and navigate  
my own struggles with voice and silence,  
self and other as I tried to meet social and  
cultural expectations. Thank you for being  
the most caring, thoughtful, and empowering  
teacher I could have hoped for. You have  
made it possible for my voice to be heard.



To my  
when I  
To my  
in being  
remind  
To my  
my when  
times of  
To my  
about this  
To all my  
and being  
To my  
support and  
love  
To all of my  
laughter and  
encouraging

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

To my husband, Dutch, for believing in me and my ability to write this dissertation even when I didn't, and loving me through it all; you are my inspiration and my optimism.

To my family, for supporting me in every way throughout years and years of school, and for being proud of me for taking the road less traveled; you keep me grounded, always reminding me of what is really important.

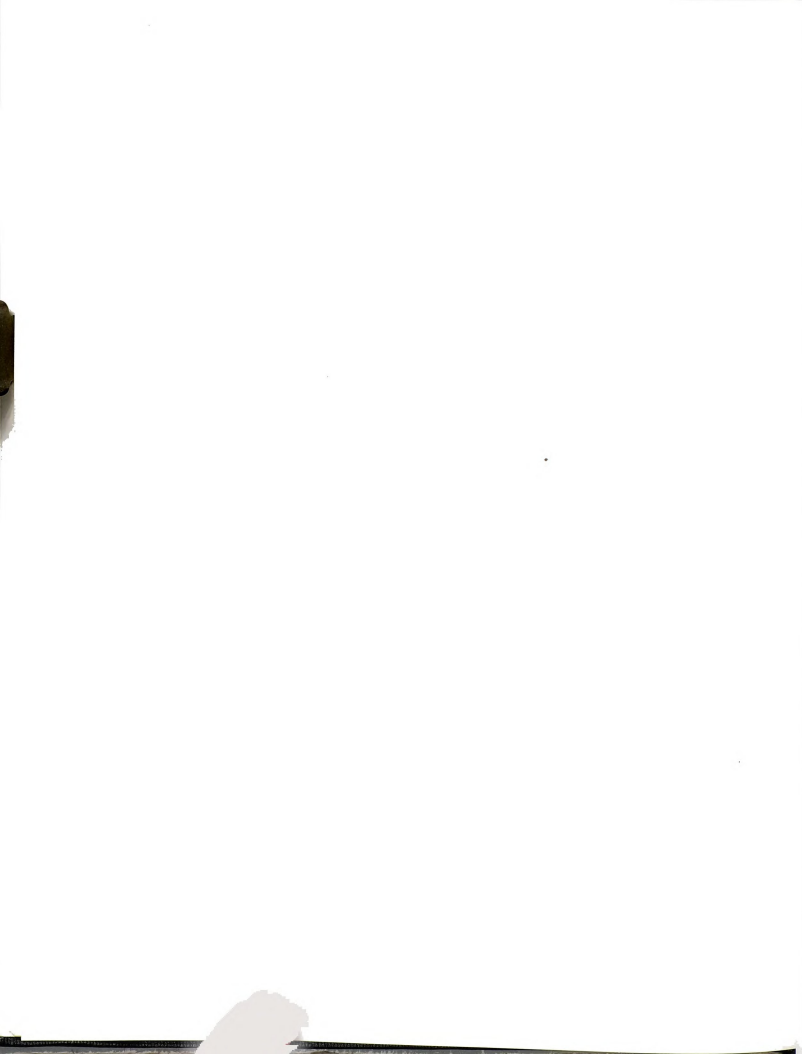
To my writing/support group, Cindy Helman and Greg Merritt, for helping me to figure out what I wanted to say, how to say it, and laughing a lot along the way; you are the truest of friends and colleagues.

To my friend and writing partner, Jim Bowker, for passionately discussing everything about this process, and for caring about me and my work as only a great friend can.

To all my friends, for listening to and helping me through all my fears and worries about not being able to write this dissertation.

To my dissertation director and chair, Christopher Clark, for providing unconditional support and guidance throughout every phase of my dissertation, no matter how far away I was.

To all of my committee members, Lynn Paine, Jack Smith, and Steve Weiland, for your thoughtful and thought-provoking insights and suggestions, and for allowing and encouraging me to write a dissertation that is truly mine.





To Rahnuma, whose story is told here, for allowing me to enter her world and for helping me and others to understand it and learn from it.

To all the women who told me their stories, for having the courage and strength to use their voice.

Thank you!

PART ONE: DEFINING SITUATION

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION: DEFINING SITUATION

Definition of Terms and Concepts.....	
Overview of Contents.....	

CHAPTER 2: INFORMED BY OTHERS

Existing Frameworks.....	
Perry: College Students' Intellectual Development.....	
Gilligan: Listening to the Voices of Women.....	
Clinchy and Zimmerman: Using Clinical Inquiry.....	
Beletky, Clinchy, Goldberger, and Tarule: Studying Women's Development.....	
Baxter Magolda: Studying Women's Development.....	
Summary and Limitations of Existing Frameworks.....	

Ways of Knowing as Socially Constructed.....	
The First Study: Paying Attention to Women's Ways of Knowing.....	
Weber's 1995 Relational Framework.....	

Ways of Knowing as Culturally Constructed.....	
The Second Study: Paying Attention to Women's Ways of Knowing.....	

CHAPTER 3: HEARING WOMEN'S VOICES

Qualitative Inquiry.....	
Data Collection.....	
Finding Participants.....	
Interviewing the Women Students.....	
Interviewing the Teachers.....	
Other Sources of Information and Methods.....	

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### PART ONE: DEFINING, SITUATING, AND CONDUCTING THE RESEARCH

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION: DEFINING THE RESEARCH.....	1
Definition of Terms and Concepts.....	4
Overview of Contents.....	9
CHAPTER 2: INFORMED BY OTHERS: SITUATING THE RESEARCH.....	11
Existing Frameworks.....	12
Perry: College Students' Intellectual Development.....	12
Gilligan: Listening to the Voices of Women.....	14
Clinchy and Zimmerman: Using Perry's Framework with Women.....	15
Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, and Tarule: Women's Ways of Knowing.....	17
Baxter Magolda: Studying Women and Men's Ways of Knowing.....	19
Summary and Limitations of Existing Frameworks.....	19
Ways of Knowing as Socially Constructed.....	22
The First Study: Paying Attention to Social Context.....	25
Wetle's 1995 Relational Framework.....	31
Ways of Knowing as Culturally Constructed.....	33
The Second Study: Paying Attention to Social and Cultural Contexts.....	36
CHAPTER 3: HEARING WOMEN'S VOICES: CONDUCTING THE RESEARCH....	38
Naturalistic Inquiry.....	40
Data Collection.....	43
Finding Participants.....	44
Interviewing the Women Students.....	52
Interviewing the Teachers.....	57
Other Sources of Information and Meaning.....	58

Finding My Story: Data Analysis.....	
Organizing the Data.....	
Developing Reasonable Concl.....	

Limitations of the Methodology.....	
Representation.....	
Cross-Cultural Definitions.....	
Interviewing.....	
Time Constraints.....	

The Contexts: Bangladesh and Gulshan.....	
Bangladesh: A South Asian M.....	
Gulshan University: Private Hi.....	

## PART TWO: LEARNING FROM THE

### CHAPTER 4: THE GOOD STUDENT SILENCE TO MEET SC

Rahnuma at GU.....	
1a. What did Rahnuma bring to	

Rahnuma in Her Environment Class.....	
1b. What did Rahnuma bring to	
2. What did Rahnuma's teacher	
3. How did Rahnuma interpret h	
4. How did Rahnuma respond to	

Rahnuma in Her Mathematics Class.....	
1b. What did Rahnuma bring to	
2. What did Rahnuma's teacher	
3. How did Rahnuma interpret h	
4. How did Rahnuma respond to	

Summary and Reflections.....	
------------------------------	--

### CHAPTER 5: THE GOOD DAUGHTER SILENCE TO MEET CUL

Unconsciously Meeting Expectations: Sil	
Manifestations in Elementary and S	

Finding My Story: Data Analysis.....	59
Organizing the Data.....	60
Developing Reasonable Conclusions.....	61
Limitations of the Methodology.....	63
Representation.....	63
Cross-Cultural Definitions.....	65
Interviewing.....	67
Time Constraints.....	68
The Contexts: Bangladesh and Gulshan University.....	69
Bangladesh: A South Asian Muslim Country.....	69
Gulshan University: Private Higher Education.....	72

## PART TWO: LEARNING FROM THE PARTICULARS: ONE WOMAN'S STORY

### CHAPTER 4: THE GOOD STUDENT: STRUGGLING WITH VOICE AND SILENCE TO MEET SOCIAL EXPECTATIONS.....82

Rahnuma at GU.....	85
1a. What did Rahnuma bring to the situation?.....	85

Rahnuma in Her Environment Class.....	99
1b. What did Rahnuma bring to her environment class?.....	100
2. What did Rahnuma's teacher bring to the environment class?.....	103
3. How did Rahnuma interpret her teacher's instructional practices?.....	111
4. How did Rahnuma respond to her teacher's instructional practices?.....	113

Rahnuma in Her Mathematics Class.....	115
1b. What did Rahnuma bring to her mathematics class?.....	116
2. What did Rahnuma's teacher bring to the mathematics class?.....	118
3. How did Rahnuma interpret her teacher's instructional practices?.....	124
4. How did Rahnuma respond to her teacher's instructional practices?.....	126

Summary and Reflections.....	132
------------------------------	-----

### CHAPTER 5: THE GOOD DAUGHTER: STRUGGLING WITH VOICE AND SILENCE TO MEET CULTURAL EXPECTATIONS.....137

Unconsciously Meeting Expectations: Silent and Voiceless.....	137
Manifestations in Elementary and Secondary School.....	141

Becoming Aware: Discovering Her Self  
 Awareness of Self.....  
 Awareness of Other Religions.....  
 Awareness of Gender.....

Conflict with Others: The Struggle Begins  
 Manifestations with Family.....  
 Manifestations with Religion.....  
 Manifestations at School.....

Being Given Up: Privately Knowing, Publicly  
 Resigned to Meet Religious Expectations.....  
 Resigned to Meet Religious Expectations.....  
 Publicly Resigned, Privately Struggling.....

Summary and Reflections.....

### PART THREE: LESSONS LEARNED REFLECTIONS

#### CHAPTER 6: LESSONS LEARNED: PRACTICE IMPLICATIONS

Lessons Learned: Paying Attention to Social  
 Good Students: Struggling to Meet Expectations.....  
 Good Daughters: Struggling to Meet Expectations.....  
 Good Students, Good Daughters: Struggling to Meet Expectations.....  
 Knowing is Not Enough.....  
 Supports and Extends Belenky et al. (1986).....

Implications for Practice: A Debate with  
 Questioning Ourselves, Our Courses.....  
 A Debate with Myself.....  
 Summary.....

Implications for Research.....  
 Studies in Higher Education.....  
 Studies in Public Schools.....  
 Studies of Educational Transitions.....  
 Informed and Inspired.....

Becoming Aware: Discovering Her Self and Voice.....	143
Awareness of Self.....	143
Awareness of Other Religions.....	144
Awareness of Gender.....	145
Conflict with Others: The Struggle Begins.....	146
Manifestations with Family.....	147
Manifestations with Religion.....	148
Manifestations at School.....	149
Being Grown Up: Privately Knowing, Publicly Silent.....	150
Resigned to Meet Familial Expectations.....	151
Resigned to Meet Religious Expectations.....	155
Publicly Resigned, Privately Struggling.....	157
Summary and Reflections.....	160

### PART THREE: LESSONS LEARNED AND LIVED: SUMMARY AND REFLECTIONS

#### CHAPTER 6: LESSONS LEARNED: FINDINGS, CLAIMS, AND IMPLICATIONS.....165

Lessons Learned: Paying Attention to Social and Cultural Contexts.....	166
Good Students: Struggling to Meet Social Expectations.....	170
Good Daughters: Struggling to Meet Cultural Expectations.....	172
Good Students, Good Daughters: Conflicting Expectations.....	176
Knowing is Not Enough.....	178
Supports and Extends Belenky et al.'s Framework.....	178
Implications for Practice: A Debate with Myself.....	183
Questioning Ourselves, Our Courses, and Our Students.....	185
A Debate with Myself.....	197
Summary.....	198
Implications for Research.....	200
Studies in Higher Education.....	200
Studies in Public Schools.....	201
Studies of Educational Transitions.....	203
Informed and Inspired.....	204

EPilogue: LESSONS LIVED: "T

Conscious of My Gender.....
Struggles with Voice and Silence, Self.....
Meeting Expectations.....
Words We Live By.....

LIST OF REFERENCES.....
-------------------------



EPILOGUE: LESSONS LIVED: "THE VULNERABLE OBSERVER" .....	206
Conscious of My Gender.....	208
Struggles with Voice and Silence, Self and Other.....	210
Meeting Expectations.....	211
Words We Live By.....	211
LIST OF REFERENCES.....	213

PAL

DEFINING, S  
CONDUCTING

There is no sh

Helmut

**PART ONE**

**DEFINING, SITUATING, AND  
CONDUCTING THE RESEARCH**

“There is no shortcut to meaning.”

Helmut Sell, 1995

## INTRODUCTION:

While there is an "ongoing dialogue" which has "spanned the sociology, and education (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarule, 1986; Chodorow, 1978; Collins, 1983; Emeké, 1983; Levesque-Lopman, 1983; Lurie, 1989; Smith, 1987)...very little research on women's diversity as knowers or descriptors of different women claim and construct knowledge."

Lurie's (1989) study of working women's knowledge of two adult basic education programs, Lurie's (1993) study claims that "the influence of gender, race, and class on the construction of gender, knowledge, and power is a central theme" (p. 536). This finding supports the idea of "changing contexts within and across knowledge" (p. 536).

## Chapter 1

### INTRODUCTION: DEFINING THE RESEARCH

While there is an "ongoing dialogue about how gender shapes what and how women know" which has "spanned the disciplines, including philosophy, psychology, sociology, and education (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarule, 1986; Bordo & Jaggar, 1989; Chodorow, 1978; Collins, 1990; Gilligan, 1982, 1988, 1990; Harding & Hintikka, 1983; Levesque-Lopman, 1988; Lloyd, 1984; McMillan, 1982; Martin, 1985; Ruddick, 1989; Smith, 1987)...very little empirical work has been done that either maps out women's diversity as knowers or describes the varied and changing conditions under which different women claim and construct knowledge" (Luttrell, 1993, p. 506).

Luttrell's (1989) study of working women's ways of knowing and her (1993) comparative ethnography of two adult basic education programs begin to fill this gap by highlighting the influence of gender, race, and class on women's ways of knowing. In addition, Luttrell's (1993) study claims that "women understand and negotiate the twisted relations of gender, knowledge, and power differently according to school organization and mission" (p. 536). This finding supports her contention that we must not ignore "the varied and changing contexts within and against which women construct and claim knowledge" (p. 536).

This naturalistic study considers how the varied and changing cultural and construct knowledge. Specifically, ethnographically describes and explores Goldhar University (GU) in Bangladesh and social and cultural contexts influence and the questions guided my research:

- (1) What ways of knowing do
- (2) What happens to these ways of knowing in the context of their teachers' instruction? do these women's ways of knowing change in these contexts?
- (3) In what ways do other social contexts influence women students' ways of knowing?

Living in Bangladesh provided me with a different perspective on students' ways of knowing in an unfamiliar American culture is often ignored by researchers and the participants. While this study is a first step in understanding the experience in a new and different context, it also highlights the role that culture plays in influencing students' ways of knowing and reinforced this distinction by explaining.

The locus of study is not the object of study (villages, tribes, towns, neighborhoods) but the study of different things in different places.

This naturalistic study considers not only the varied and changing social contexts, but also the varied and changing cultural contexts within which different women claim and construct knowledge. Specifically, this study qualitatively, biographically, and ethnographically describes and explores the learning experience of one woman at Gulshan University (GU) in Bangladesh with the specific intent of understanding how social and cultural contexts influence and shape her ways of knowing. The following three questions guided my research:

- (1) **What ways of knowing do women bring to GU?**
- (2) **What happens to these women's ways of knowing in the social context of their teachers' instructional practices? In other words, how do these women's ways of knowing evolve over time in their classroom contexts?**
- (3) **In what ways do other social and cultural contexts influence these women students' ways of knowing?**

Living in Bangladesh provided me with the opportunity to study women college students' ways of knowing in an unfamiliar context; that is, to make the familiar unfamiliar. American culture is often ignored or invisible because of its familiarity to the researcher and the participants. While this is not a study of culture, studying this phenomenon in a new and different context helped to improve my understanding of the role that culture plays in influencing students' ways of knowing. Geertz (1973) articulated this distinction by explaining,

The locus of study is not the object of study. Anthropologists don't study villages (tribes, towns, neighborhoods...); they study in villages. You can study different things in different places, and some things...you can best

study in confined localities. But  
are studying. (p. 22)

Simply put, the locus of this study, Bar  
naly was women college students' wa  
naly of Bangladesh; I studied in Bar  
knowing in the confined locality of Bar

Coming to an understanding of  
completely unfamiliar, setting of a new Bar  
comes) to knowledge about the ways  
naly's ways of knowing in American

Properly done, comparative education  
own education and society [italics]  
policymakers and administrators  
the education of teachers. Express  
can help us to understand better  
exactly in the present, and discern  
educational future may be [italics]  
made via work that is primarily di  
seeks to be analytic or explanatory  
one, or a very few, nations, as we  
scope; through work that relies on  
data and methods; and through w  
formulated science paradigms in  
manner. (Noah, 1984, p. 154)

This study is about women's ways  
nents which influence and shape those  
the ongoing dialogue about how women  
naly. Good students, good daughters  
close to meet social and cultural expectations  
naly how her ways of knowing have developed



study in confined localities. But that doesn't make the place what it is you are studying. (p. 22)

Simply put, the locus of this study, Bangladesh, is not the object of study. The object of study was women college students' ways of knowing. I didn't study the country or culture of Bangladesh; I studied in Bangladesh. I studied women college students' ways of knowing in the confined locality of Dhaka, Bangladesh.

Coming to an understanding of women's experiences in the somewhat exotic, and certainly unfamiliar, setting of a new Bangladeshi university will also contribute (by contrast) to knowledge about the ways that various social and cultural contexts shape students' ways of knowing in American universities.

Properly done, comparative education can deepen understanding of our own education and society [italics added]; it can be of assistance to policymakers and administrators; and it can form a most valuable part of the education of teachers. Expressed another way, comparative education can help us to understand better our own past, locate ourselves more exactly in the present, and discern a little more clearly what our educational future may be [italics added]. These contributions can be made via work that is primarily descriptive as well as through work that seeks to be analytic or explanatory; through work that is limited to just one, or a very few, nations, as well as through work that embraces a wider scope; through work that relies on non-quantitative as well as quantitative data and methods; and through work that proceeds with explicitly formulated science paradigms in mind as well as in a less formalized manner. (Noah, 1984, p. 154)

This study is about women's ways of knowing and the various social and cultural contexts which influence and shape those ways of knowing. It is an attempt to contribute to the ongoing dialogue about how women see themselves as knowers, and how they act as knowers. Good students, good daughters: Girls and women struggling with voice and silence to meet social and cultural expectations, tells the story of one woman, Rahnuma, and how her ways of knowing have developed and changed over time and across



contexts. By paying such close attention to one woman's story, in a culture which was unfamiliar to me, I was able to see and hear things I might not otherwise have been able to see and hear. Rahnuma let me be a part of what are usually private conversations with herself. And thus, I was able to see how she came to know and express things, through voice and silence, as she struggled to meet social and cultural expectations. Hearing her experiences, and the sense she makes of them, has enhanced my understanding of how particular contexts, and their particular messages (in particular about ways of knowing), affect the way individuals see themselves and act as knowers.

To further our understanding of women's ways of knowing, it is essential that we listen to how women make meaning of their experience (Baxter Magolda, 1992; Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarule, 1986; Perry, 1970). Listening is difficult work, however, because we bring our own biases to the process and interpret what we hear through our own experiences. Listening to learn about ways of knowing is especially difficult because epistemologies are not easily defined or categorized. Rather, women's ways of knowing are part of larger stories about their views of themselves and their views about learning. There are many ways to hear each woman's story, for each woman's life is a story about many things. This particular story is about ways of knowing; it is about how Rahnuma sees herself as coming to know and specifically the struggles she faces with voice and silence, self and other, as she tries to express what she knows.

### **Definition of Terms and Concepts**

Although there is an increased interest in exploring the relational and interactional nature of cognition, context, and culture (Jacob, 1992), the task is still a challenging one, largely because of the elusiveness of these concepts. Thus, definitions of these terms are

in order. Since the main focus of this  
While cognition can be conceptualized  
students' ways of knowing. As the liter  
conceptualized and defined in a variety  
referring to the students', as well as the  
about themselves as knowers; and, more  
to ways students actually come to know  
supported and rewarded by teachers' in  
sometimes used interchangeably with w  
research. I believe it more narrowly mea  
to account how students actually come  
that thus, I try to use the term epistemol  
students' beliefs about knowledge; other  
ways of knowing.

Informed by Belenky et al.'s (1986)  
of voice and silence when studying wom  
(1986), "While the concept of voice has  
and can be found in the literature of litera  
has reemerged in recent years as a centra  
broadly defines voice more narrowly than  
voice, voice refers to the act of literal sp  
case; and in turn, I will use silence to me

in order. Since the main focus of this study is students' cognition, I will begin here. While cognition can be conceptualized in a variety of ways I am referring specifically to students' ways of knowing. As the literature indicates, ways of knowing can also be conceptualized and defined in a variety of ways. For the purposes of this study, I am referring to the students', as well as the teachers', (1) beliefs about knowledge; (2) beliefs about themselves as knowers; and, more specifically, (3) enactment of these beliefs (i.e., the ways students actually come to know things, and the ways of knowing encouraged, supported, and rewarded by teachers' instructional practices). The term epistemologies is sometimes used interchangeably with ways of knowing, but throughout the course of this research, I believe it more narrowly means beliefs about knowledge, and does not take into account how students actually come to know things, i.e., their actions as knowers. And thus, I try to use the term epistemologies only when referring to the students' and teachers' beliefs about knowledge; otherwise, I use it as one of the defining features of ways of knowing.

Informed by Belenky et al.'s (1986) study, it is essential to consider the concepts of voice and silence when studying women's ways of knowing. According to Richert (1992), "While the concept of voice has long been a part of the discourse of the academy and can be found in the literature of literary criticism and psychology, for example, it has also reemerged in recent years as a central construct in feminist theory" (p. 189). Richert herself defines voice more narrowly than it is typically defined in the feminist work. For Richert, voice refers to the act of literal speaking. I, too, will use voice in this most literal sense; and in turn, I will use silence to mean the act of literally not speaking.

Because of this study's focus on  
define voice more broadly. Voice is co  
person's point of view (Belenky et al.,  
discussion of voice helps to both bring  
expressing a personal point of view.

[Voice is] an ability to express  
respond to and become engaged  
students in the classroom, and the  
participation in...the academic a  
desire to express ideas in a clear

With these definitions of voice i  
can also be defined more broadly. Tha  
are so personal point of view, or they  
because they have chosen (or feel comp  
Thus there seems to be a public voice, v  
a personal voice, which is the actual p  
voices are certainly not mutually exclusi  
take their personal voice public, but the

The concepts of context and culture  
often and easily, are more difficult to def  
and (Cohen & Siegel, 1991; Jacob, 1992  
and elusive (e.g., Heath, 1982; Holland &  
The word context can be conceptu  
(1981), Swidler (1995), and Young (1987  
most of everything in the immediate en

Because of this study's focus on ways of knowing, however, it is also important to define voice more broadly. Voice is commonly used as an academic shorthand for a person's point of view (Belenky et al., 1986, p. 18). McElroy-Johnson's (1993) discussion of voice helps to both bring together and distinguish between having and expressing a personal point of view.

[Voice is] an ability to express a personal point view...[the ability] to respond to and become engaged with the material being studied, the other students in the classroom, and the teacher....Voice is the student's participation in...the academic and intellectual process. It is the student's desire to express ideas in a clear, coherent way...." (p. 85)

With these definitions of voice in mind, it becomes clear that the notion of silence must also be defined more broadly. That is, women may be literally silent because they have no personal point of view, or they may be figuratively or metaphorically silent because they have chosen (or feel compelled) to not speak their personal point of view. Thus, there seems to be a public voice, which includes the actual act of speaking, as well as a personal voice, which is the actual possession of a personal point of view. These voices are certainly not mutually exclusive, nor do they always coexist. Women can make their personal voice public, but their public voice is not always personal.

The concepts of context and culture, despite the fact that these terms are used often and easily, are more difficult to define. Useful definitions are surprisingly hard to find (Cohen & Siegel, 1991; Jacob, 1992). In much research, the definitions are vague and elusive (e.g., Heath, 1982; Holland & Eisenhart, 1990).

The word context can be conceptualized in many ways. As Cohen and Siegel (1991), Swidler (1995), and Young (1987) point out, context does not, or should not, consist of everything in the immediate environment of the phenomenon under study. In

particular, Young makes an important  
'context' by saying that. "A surround  
est or not a context is whatever bear  
only is not all of the surround context,

surround...Context is a matter of relevance  
helpful in focusing the study, and in  
what is happening to, and what has happen  
focus, however, is still needed to prevent

necessary to further identify and distinguish  
types of contexts, within which many

Largely based on my study of two  
writing (Walte, 1995), it is clear that the  
facing the social context as Neumann  
ring, within which human interaction,

consistent with established cultural patterns  
defined, the social context is the specific  
not student, her classmates, and teacher

and gender are identified as part of this co  
to larger social setting of the university;  
peak of the social context, however, I am

settings that are relevant to the participant  
only in the United States found to be part  
ance of the discipline and how one comes



particular, Young makes an important distinction between the concepts of "surround" and "context" by saying that, "A surround is whatever is contiguous whether it bears on the event or not; a context is whatever bears on an event whether it is contiguous or not. Not only is not all of the surround context, but also not all of the contexts are in the surround....Context is a matter of relevance, not proximity" (p. 70). Young's distinction was helpful in focusing the study, and its subsequent analysis, on those things relevant to what is happening to, and what has happened to, the participants' ways of knowing. More focus, however, is still needed to prevent this study from becoming unwieldy; and thus, it is necessary to further identify and distinguish possible contexts. I have broadly defined two types of contexts, within which many other possible sub-contexts exist.

Largely based on my study of two American women college students' ways of knowing (Welte, 1995), it is clear that the social context is critical. Specifically, I am defining the social context as Neumann (1995) does; that is, as "the human, relational setting, within which human interaction, and thereby, human cognition, occur, whether consistent with established cultural patterns or not" (p. 3). In this study, more narrowly defined, the social context is the specific teaching/learning classroom context in which each student, her classmates, and teacher come together. Each teacher's national identity and gender are identified as part of this context. In addition, however, I also attended to the larger social setting of the university; i.e., the institutional context of GU. When I speak of the social context, however, I am only referring to those things in these social settings that are relevant to the participants' experiences. Some of the things that my study in the United States found to be part of the classroom context include: (1) the nature of the discipline and how one comes to know the discipline as construed by the

student and the teacher, (2) the expectations of the teacher and understood by the student, and (3) the student's effort to meet the understood expectations.

The cross-cultural nature of this study and the cultural context is also critical for understanding my experience. I became aware that Black and Latino culture is different from White and GLB's culture. What does it mean by culture? This is perhaps the question that Geertz (1973) is trying to answer. Geertz (1973), I am conceptualizing culture as a system of ideas or beliefs in order to operate in a particular social context. Geertz explained that culture is "a system of ideas through which the members of a society interpret their knowledge about and attitudes toward the world, including the inherited beliefs about what is elementary, secondary, and higher, and the particular attention to gender. Neumann (1995) points out that the research context is a prominent temporal quality, capturing particular events within a social setting" (Neumann, 1995).

Finally, there is the research context. Neumann (1995) points out that the research study is a process. While it is important to take time to understand the story, it has been difficult to understand Rahnuma's ways of knowing.

student and the teacher, (2) the expectations and rewards as created and communicated by the teacher and understood by the student, (3) the expectations, motivations, and ability of the student to meet the understood expectations.

The cross-cultural nature of this study made it immediately apparent that the cultural context is also critical for understanding women's ways of knowing. From first-hand experience I became aware that Bangladeshi culture is very different from American culture, and GU's culture is different from Michigan State University's culture. But what do I mean by culture? This is perhaps the most elusive concept of all to define. Informed by Geertz (1973), I am conceptualizing and defining culture as "whatever it is one has to know or believe in order to operate in a manner acceptable to its members" (p. 11). Geertz explained that culture is "a system of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic forms" through which the members of a community "communicate, perpetuate, and develop their knowledge about and attitudes toward life" (p. 89). In particular, I am referring to the inherited beliefs about ways of knowing reflected by and in institutions such as elementary, secondary, and higher education, family, and religion, paying particular attention to gender. Neumann points out that, "Viewed this way, culture has a prominent temporal quality, capturing patterns of knowing (cognition) constructed over time within a social setting" (Neumann, 1995, p. 2).

Finally, there is the research context. Cohen and Siegel (1991) and Swidler (1995) point out that the research study itself is a context of which the participants and I are a part. While it is important to take this context into consideration when interpreting Rahnuma's story, it has been difficult determining in what ways this context actually influenced Rahnuma's ways of knowing. As I will discuss in Chapter Three, this is one

of the limitations of the study. In addition, I discuss the contexts and cultures of which I am a part, and I have written an epilogue to tell more about the

## Overview

For several years, I have been listening to women's stories. This study, while it is a retelling of just one of these stories, is part of a larger study. Chapter Two reviews the literature on knowing and the design of this study. I discuss ways of knowing, literature about how we know, literature about how ways of knowing are shaped, and how to help situate this study in the larger discourse. I describe the methods I used to come to know the cultural context on women's ways of knowing, and the larger contexts of the study, specifically highlighting relevant aspects of the cultural context.

Part Two of this dissertation is a retelling of Rahmuna's story, largely in her own words. I begin by discussing her strengths and weaknesses, and ways of knowing. While the existing framework of Rahmuna's story, I stayed as close to her story as possible. Given the unfamiliar context

of the limitations of the study. In addition, it is important to describe and explore the contexts and cultures of which I am a part, and to consider their bearing on the study; and thus, I have written an epilogue to tell my story.

### **Overview of the Contents**

For several years, I have been listening, informally and formally, to many women's stories. This study, while it is informed and inspired by these other stories, is the telling of just one of these stories. Part One of this dissertation defines and situates this study. Chapter Two reviews the literature on ways of knowing informing my thinking and the design of this study. I pay particular attention to existing frameworks of ways of knowing, literature about how ways of knowing are socially constructed, and literature about how ways of knowing are culturally constructed. This section is intended to help situate this study in the larger discourse on ways of knowing. Chapter Three describes the methods I used to come to know and understand the influences of social and cultural context on women's ways of knowing. In addition, this chapter discusses the larger contexts of the study, specifically Bangladesh and Gulshan University (GU), highlighting relevant aspects of the culture learned from all of my interviews of women at GU.

Part Two of this dissertation is the heart of it; it is the telling of one woman's story, largely in her own words. I begin with an introduction to the nature of stories, their inherent strengths and weaknesses, and ask readers to read this as a story of Rahnuma's ways of knowing. While the existing frameworks informed and guided my organization and telling of Rahnuma's story, I stayed as close to Rahnuma's words and interpretations as possible. Given the unfamiliar context of Bangladesh in which this study takes place,

13 all the more important that we allow  
understanding of ways of knowing as op  
North American frameworks. Chapters  
ing, organized as a story about the soci  
at shaped her ways of knowing. Chapt  
and provides a detailed look at how the  
in university classes influenced her way  
understanding of Rahnuma's experience  
knowing how the cultural messages an  
region, and her elementary and second

Part Three of this dissertation is  
briely. In Chapter Six, I provide a  
as well as a discussion of the implication  
conclude with an Epilogue that reflects  
view of self in the social context of GU

it is all the more important that we allow the student's experiences to guide our understanding of ways of knowing as opposed to forcing Rahnuma's story into existing North American frameworks. Chapters Four and Five are the re-telling of Rahnuma's story, organized as a story about the social and cultural contexts which have influenced and shaped her ways of knowing. Chapter Four introduces you to Rahnuma the student, and provides a detailed look at how the immediate and bounded social contexts of two of her university classes influenced her ways of knowing. Chapter Five enlarges our understanding of Rahnuma's experience and ways of knowing in the classroom by discussing how the cultural messages and expectations communicated by her family, her religion, and her elementary and secondary education influenced her ways of knowing.

Part Three of this dissertation is where I enter the story more explicitly and deliberately. In Chapter Six, I provide a summary of and reflection on Rahnuma's story, as well as a discussion of the implications of this study, both for practice and research. I conclude with an Epilogue that reflects on what happened to my ways of knowing and sense of self in the social context of GU and the cultural context of Bangladesh.

## INFORMED BY OTHER

On my first day of class as a graduate student, I was nervous. I was not exactly clear. He said, "I want to hear your words scared me. My voice...he was not!" Oh, I knew I there were times when I was not. But where did the words come from? Were they my feelings? Did I know what I would say? What would I write? What would be heard?

This was my first introduction to the world of women. I have spent much time, as a graduate student, understanding ways of knowing, learning. The following section, by providing a framework for thought about, will help you to begin to understand women's ways of knowing. I discuss the importance of paying particular attention to the issue of women's ways of knowing in the context of the field. I discuss literature on epistemology.



## Chapter 2

### INFORMED BY OTHERS: SITUATING THE RESEARCH

On my first day of class as a graduate student, the Professor, Robert Nash, was perfectly clear. He said, "I want to hear your distinct voice in your papers." And oh, how those words scared me. My voice...he wanted to hear my voice. I didn't know what my voice was!?! Oh, I knew I there were times when I had spoken loudly, and certainly passionately. But where did the words come from? Were they my words? Were they my ideas? Were they my feelings? Did I know why I was espousing such beliefs and values? What would I say? What would I write? What if no words came? What if there was no voice to be heard?

This was my first introduction to the concept of ways of knowing. Over the past ten years I have been spent much time, as both a student and a teacher, trying to further my understanding of ways of knowing, and in particular women students' ways of knowing. The following section, by providing you a glimpse of what I have read and thought about, will help you to begin to situate this research. First, because this is a study of women's ways of knowing, I discuss the predominant theories about ways of knowing, paying particular attention to the issue of gender. Second, since I am interested in what happens to students' ways of knowing in the social context of their teachers' instructional practices, I discuss literature on epistemologies as relational contexts. Third, because I

we studied women's ways of knowing  
consider the literature on ways of knowing

## Existing

There are several existing frameworks  
women college students' ways of knowing  
male college students' intellectual development  
study of women college students  
Lindberger and Tarule's (1986) work on  
Nagata's (1992) study of knowing and  
understanding and to the design of this study  
ways of students' ways of knowing.

## Women College Students' Intellectual Development

William Perry's (1968) work on the  
course of their college experience was  
known. According to Robert White (1982),  
intellectual and ethical development in the college years  
received little attention with respect to intellectual  
growth ended at age eighteen  
happening in the minds of students over  
a conventional (at the time) methodology  
doing their own time, doing it in their own  
terms." (p. vi).

have studied women's ways of knowing in the unfamiliar cultural context of Bangladesh, I consider the literature on ways of knowing as culturally constructed.

### **Existing Frameworks**

There are several existing frameworks which have influenced my thinking about women college students' ways of knowing. In particular, Perry's (1968) pioneering study on male college students' intellectual development, Clinchy and Zimmerman's (1982) parallel study of women college students' intellectual development, Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, and Tarule's (1986) work on women's ways of knowing, and Baxter Magolda's (1992) study of knowing and reasoning in college, have been central to my understanding and to the design of this study. They provide important insights into the nature of students' ways of knowing.

#### Perry: College Students' Intellectual Development

William Perry's (1968) work on students' ways of thinking and knowing during the course of their college experience was certainly groundbreaking both in method and substance. According to Robert White (who wrote the forward of Perry's book, Forms of intellectual and ethical development in the college years), prior to 1968, the college years received little attention with respect to intellectual growth. Perry, not convinced that intellectual growth ended at age eighteen, attempted to know and understand what was happening in the minds of students over their four years of college. And he did so using an unconventional (at the time) methodology; that is, Perry "invites the students to think, taking their own time, doing it in their own way, choosing their own topics. And he listens..." (p. vi).

By listening to these students, Perry  
ways of thinking, in their ways of ways of  
separations of their lives, during the  
assignment we trace takes place in the  
stories than in the particular or 'content' of  
stopping development in the forms of se  
"transcendence over content" (Perry, p. ix)  
you will use a variety of forms in con  
per time. However, we made the assu  
course of the study] that within this va  
tential tendency among the forms) in wh  
experience" (p. 3).

Perry focused on the transcendent  
well as the progressive development of t  
move through a particular sequence of ep  
identifying a more complex conception of  
begins with simplistic notions of absolut  
stage in which opinions are seen as equiva  
with the view that knowledge is context  
frames of reference (contextualism). Fur  
commitment. Students who are reasonin  
that all thought is contingent upon conte

By listening to these students, Perry found that there *was* development in students' ways of thinking, in their ways of ways of knowing, and in particular in students' interpretations of their lives, during the course of their college experience. "The development we trace takes place in the forms in which a person perceives his world rather than in the particular or 'content' of his attitudes and concerns. The advantage in mapping development in the forms of seeing, knowing, and caring lies precisely in their transcendence over content" (Perry, p. ix). Although Perry agreed that, "Of course a person will use a variety of forms in construing different areas of his experience at any given time. However, we made the assumption in this study [which was validated by the outcome of the study] that within this variety it is possible to identify a dominant form (or central tendency among the forms) in which the person is currently interpreting his experience" (p. 3).

Perry focused on the transcendence of students' ways of knowing over content, as well as the progressive development of these ways of knowing. He found that students move through a particular sequence of epistemological positions, each new position reflecting a more complex conception of knowledge, truth, and value. The sequence begins with simplistic notions of absolute right and wrong (dualism), moving through a stage in which opinions are seen as equally valid personal truths (multiplism), and ending with the view that knowledge is contextual, that is, that truth must be evaluated within a frame of reference (contextualism). Further development consists of the evolution of commitment. Students who are reasoning at the most advanced contextual level assume that all thought is contingent upon context.

While Perry's research led the way in the field of knowing, it became evident, at least in the 1980s, that theories of development were based solely on the lives of males. It was important to hear the voices of women. It was important to hear the experiences of women as knowers.

#### Gilligan: Listening to the Voices of Women

After listening to both men and women for over 25 years, Gilligan (1982) "began to see women's development and to connect this to the critical theory-building studies of the 1970s. She realized that men and women have different modes of development. These differences accounted for "the failure of previous theories to account for women's development." While identifying an important distinction between these different modes of development, Gilligan characterized the association with women as an empirical association, rather than an absolute, and the contrasts between male and female development. She highlighted a distinction between two modes of development: a process of negotiation rather than to represent a fixed state.

Particularly relevant to my study was her emphasis on the importance of how women and men develop.

The move toward tolerance that characterizes the transition to adulthood is considered by Gilligan. She argues that intellectual and ethical development for both sexes move away from absolutes. In women's development,

While Perry's research led the way in furthering our understanding of students' ways of knowing, it became evident, at least to Carol Gilligan (1982), that Perry's findings, based solely on the lives of male participants, did not generally apply to the lives of women. It was important to hear the voices of women so that we could make sense of their experiences as knowers.

#### Gilligan: Listening to the Voices of Women

After listening to both men and women talk about morality and themselves for over ten years, Gilligan (1982) "began to notice the recurrent problems in interpreting women's development and to connect these problems to the repeated exclusion of women from the critical theory-building studies of psychological research" (p. 1). Gilligan found that men and women have different modes of thinking about relationships, and that these differences accounted for "the failure of women to fit existing models of human growth" (p. 2). While identifying an important difference between men and women, Gilligan characterized these different modes of thinking by theme and not by gender. The "association with women is an empirical observation....But this association is not absolute, and the contrasts between male and females voices are presented here to highlight a distinction between two modes of thought and to focus a problem of interpretation rather than to represent a generalization about either sex" (p. 2).

Particularly relevant to my study of women's ways of knowing is Gilligan's discussion of how women and men develop tolerance.

The move toward tolerance that accompanies the abandonment of absolutes is considered by William Perry (1968) to chart the course of intellectual and ethical development during the early adult years....Though both sexes move away from absolutes in this time, the absolutes differ for each. In women's development, the absolute of care, defined initially as

not hurting others, becomes central  
for personal integrity. This recognition  
embodied in the concept of right  
relationships and transforms the  
of truth and fairness, defined by  
are called into question by exposing  
differences between other and self

In view of the evidence that women  
differently from men and that the  
of attachment and separation, life  
experiences can be expected to in  
171)

Gilligan concluded her work by

the experience of their adult life"

women's development based on their ab

The problem is not with women's develo

conception of the human condition, an o

Clinchy and Zimmerman: Using Perry's

By the Clinchy and Claire Zimm

brought together the interests and work

1979). Valuing Perry's intellectual and

view, as Gilligan noted in her work, v

Zimmerman extended Perry's framewor

was divided by gender, both of the stud

naires. Perry's participants were from

Zimmerman's participants were from W

The results of their work, while

with some important, albeit subtle, theo



not hurting others, becomes complicated through a recognition of the need for personal integrity. This recognition gives rise to the claim for equality embodied in the concept of rights, which changes the understanding of relationships and transforms the definition of care. For men, the absolutes of truth and fairness, defined by the concepts of equality and reciprocity, are called into question by experiences that demonstrate the existence of differences between other and self. (p. 166)

In view of the evidence that women perceive and construe social reality differently from men and that these differences center around experiences of attachment and separation, life transitions that invariably engage these experiences can be expected to involve women in a distinctive way. (p. 171)

Gilligan concluded her work by identifying the need to "delineate in women's own terms the experience of their adult life" (p. 173). For it is essential that we not judge women's development based on their ability to fit existing male models of human growth. The problem is not with women's development, but rather with "a limitation in the conception of the human condition, an omission of certain truths about life" (p. 2).

#### Clinchy and Zimmerman: Using Perry's Framework with Women

Blythe Clinchy and Claire Zimmerman's (1982) study of intellectual development brought together the interests and work of Perry (1968, 1970) and Gilligan (1977, 1978, 1979). Valuing Perry's intellectual and epistemological framework, but recognizing that women, as Gilligan noted in her work, were excluded from his study, Clinchy and Zimmerman extended Perry's framework to a sample of women. Although the studies were divided by gender, both of the studies involved an educationally privileged group of students. Perry's participants were from Harvard University, and Clinchy and Zimmerman's participants were from Wellesley College.

The results of their work, while not radically different from Perry's, provide us with some important, albeit subtle, theoretical developments. Clinchy and Zimmerman

themselves describe their study as a "full  
on as real divergences at some points  
in Zimmerman's study seemed to come  
objectively; that is, the knowledge carried  
one's own experiences as opposed to  
ties. In addition, women students seen  
showing example of Perry's and Clinch  
illustrate the differences in men's and  
philosophic knowers, the students are of  
imposing standards. The male studen  
themselves and whether or not the know  
more concerned with maintaining

Perry reports that some of his stu  
[and maintain that a teacher has  
personal opinion]...very few of [the  
respond in this way]...The studen  
environment, she had better figure  
268)

This focus on maintaining relation  
epistemological position of contextualis  
out of figuring out what the teacher wa  
"stuff[ing] out what the guy wants and g  
Zimmerman explain that some female s  
their voices, to meet their teachers' exp  
[Students] begin by writing paper  
teachers' views: "It's safer if I r

themselves describe their study as a "fuller and more precise articulation of Perry's, but there are real divergences at some points" (p. 163). In particular, the women in Clinchy and Zimmerman's study seemed to come to know things more personally and subjectively; that is, the knowledge came from, or was at least made sense of, within the women's own experiences as opposed to being defined objectively and externally by others. In addition, women students seemed to come to know things relationally. The following example of Perry's and Clinchy and Zimmerman's multiplicitic knowers helps to illustrate the differences in men's and women's ways of knowing. In both cases, as multiplicitic knowers, the students are often frustrated by teachers who evaluate their work by imposing standards. The male students, however, seem to be more concerned with themselves and whether or not the knowledge is "right," while the female students seem to be more concerned with maintaining relationships.

Perry reports that some of his students dig in their heels at this position [and maintain that a teacher has no criteria with which to judge his personal opinion]...very few of [Clinchy and Zimmerman's students respond in this way]...The student realizes that if she is to survive in this environment, she had better figure out what 'they' [the teachers] want. (p. 268)

This focus on maintaining relationships becomes even more evident in the next epistemological position of contextualism, when students become preoccupied with the task of figuring out what the teacher wants. One student described her situation as "find[ing] out what the guy wants and giv[ing] it to him" (p. 268). Clinchy and Zimmerman explain that some female students are willing to give up their own ideas, their voices, to meet their teachers' expectations and to avoid negative consequences.

[Students] begin by writing papers that are slavish imitations of her teachers' views: "It's safer if I repeat exactly what she said." But this is

not always possible, nor does it see  
this position believe that each teach  
of thinking. The professors' appro  
simpler styles. Teachers try to infl  
Many students feel angry and help  
please a teacher...." Many student  
teachers do, and it scares them....  
voice and is beginning to speak in  
to sacrifice. If you really want a g  
teacher wants, sometimes you hav  
266-269)

While using the same framework  
at Zimmerman identify important exper  
tise students. In particular, their conc  
size will become central in future studi  
Wendy Clinchy, Goldberger, and Tarule

Inspired and informed by these p  
Nancy Goldberger, and Jill Tarule (1986)  
1960s and coming from a variety of et  
backgrounds and life situations (e.g., ma  
Women's ways of knowing: The develo  
of voice and self and relationship are hig  
Wendy and Gilligan, "have tried to ho  
presenting them as [they] heard them" (C  
While sense of women's epistemologic  
opposed to defining and/or categorizing  
framework.

not always possible, nor does it seem to be what is wanted....Students at this position believe that each teacher has an arbitrary, idiosyncratic way of thinking. The professors' approaches have no objective value; they are simply styles. Teachers try to inflict their personal styles on students. Many students feel angry and helpless. "It's a case of writing a paper to please a teacher...." Many students do find themselves thinking as their teachers do, and it scares them....The student feels she has lost her own voice and is beginning to speak in teachers' voices. "Sometimes you have to sacrifice. If you really want a good grade, and you know what the teacher wants, sometimes you have to sacrifice your own thoughts." (pp. 268-269)

While using the same framework which Perry used for his male students, Clinchy and Zimmerman identify important experiential and interpretive difference amongst their female students. In particular, their concern with relationship and their struggle with voice will become central in future studies, including my own.

Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, and Tarule: Women's Ways of Knowing

Inspired and informed by these previous studies, Mary Belenky, Blythe Clinchy, Nancy Goldberger, and Jill Tarule (1986) interviewed 135 women, ranging in age from 16 to 65 and coming from a variety of ethnic, class, educational, and religious backgrounds and life situations (e.g., marital status). It is in their well-known study, Women's ways of knowing: The development of self, voice, and mind, that the notions of voice and self and relationship are highlighted and explored further. Belenky et al., like Perry and Gilligan, "have tried to honor and give voice to [the women's words] by presenting them as [they] heard them" (preface). Furthermore, they attempted to provide a fuller sense of women's epistemological development by telling the women's stories as opposed to defining and/or categorizing their ways of knowing according to Perry's framework.

Based on the women's stories, Ben-  
jamin that is selfless and voiceless (silence)  
highly on external voices and authorities (silence)  
of procedural knowing), to a position where  
this because they view knowledge as personal  
highly to a belief that knowing involves  
knowledge they have learned from others  
and. "In a sense, each perspective can be  
ground in which problems of self and other  
can be worked through" (p. 134).

While there are some similarities  
between silent/received knowing and  
scientificity, constructed knowing and co-  
knowing are significant. Most important  
starting on conceptions of knowledge,  
knowing involved reflecting on concepts  
of voice and silence. For the students  
struggles with issues of self and other, of  
Hendy et al. study, however, knowing  
trying to please others and measuring up  
trying to please oneself and measuring up  
described as a struggle between one's own  
voices (speaking the truth of others), and

Based on the women's stories, Belenky et al. described women as moving from a position that is selfless and voiceless (silent knowers), to a position where women rely solely on external voices and authorities to define themselves and their world (received and procedural knowing), to a position where women rely solely on their own internal voices because they view knowledge as private and personal (subjective knowing), and finally to a belief that knowing involves integrating their personal knowledge with the knowledge they have learned from others (constructed knowers). According to Belenky et al., "In a sense, each perspective can be thought of as providing a new, unique training ground in which problems of self and other, inner and outer authority, voice and silence can be worked through" (p. 134).

While there are some similarities to Perry's schema, (e.g., comparisons can be made between silent/received knowing and dualism, between subjective knowing and multiplicity, constructed knowing and contextualism), the differences between the two frameworks are significant. Most importantly, the men's ways of knowing involved reflecting on conceptions of knowledge, truth, and values, whereas women's ways of knowing involved reflecting on conceptions of self and other, inner and outer authority, and voice and silence. For the students in Perry's study, there did not appear to be struggles with issues of self and other, or voice and silence. For the women in the Belenky et al. study, however, knowing was a constant struggle between, on the one hand, trying to please others and measuring up to external standards, and on the other hand, trying to please oneself and measuring up to one's own standards. This struggle was described as a struggle between one's own voice (speaking one's own truth), others' voices (speaking the truth of others), and silence (not speaking at all).

Marcia Baxter Magolda (1992) provides a framework for understanding how women's ways of knowing develop in a four-year longitudinal study. Her research focuses on epistemological development during college. She examines epistemological perspectives and the possible influences of specific academic experiences. She identifies four main ways of knowing: *simple* (absolute knowers), *strategic* (transitional knowers), *relativist* (transitional knowers), and finally to a belief that knowledge is *contextual* (knowers).

Strengths and Limitations of Existing Frameworks

While there are some variations in the ways researchers claim that there are qualitatively different ways of knowing leads to particular learning contexts, as well as to particular learning outcomes, all of these learning should be evaluated. All of these outcomes of the development of ways of knowing should be explored. In exploring the ways in which context influences learning, these studies seem to characterize students as manifesting one or more ways of knowing that are becoming increasingly complex epistemological.



### Baxter Magolda: Studying Women and Men's Ways of Knowing

Marcia Baxter Magolda (1992) provides another perspective on students' ways of knowing developed in a four-year longitudinal study of both women's and men's epistemological development during college. The study explored 101 students' epistemological perspectives and the possibility of gender differences, and their perceptions of specific academic experiences. Baxter Magolda found that both male and female students' ways of knowing reflected different conceptions of the nature, limits, and certainty of knowledge. She describes students as moving from viewing knowledge as certain (absolute knowers), to viewing knowledge as partially certain and partially uncertain (transitional knowers), to viewing knowledge as uncertain (independent knowers), and finally to a belief that knowledge depends on evidence in context (contextual knowers).

### Summary and Limitations of Existing Frameworks

While there are some variations in these theoretical perspectives, each of these authors claim that there are qualitatively different ways of knowing for students. Each of these ways of knowing leads to particular expectations of the learner, peers, and instructor in classroom contexts, as well as to particular understandings of the subject matter and how learning should be evaluated. All of these studies allude to the context-dependent nature of the development of ways of knowing, yet spend little time actually describing and exploring the ways in which contexts influence and shape women's ways of knowing. Instead, these studies seem to characterize students as different types of knowers; that is, they describe students as manifesting one way of knowing at a time. The students develop increasingly complex epistemological perspectives ontogenetically (over the

...of a lifespan). This characterization  
...context. In particular, these epis  
...the students' epistemological beliefs  
...independent. That is, they do not take  
...the people (e.g., teachers and peers) and  
...to consider the larger cultural contexts  
...unique community). In other words, stu  
...inadequately depicted as being affected

My criticism of the existing frame  
...not one of the criticisms leveled agains  
...et al.'s (1986) work in more detail, and w  
...and findings. I believe it is necess  
...visions of their framework. The follo  
...the charge of essentialism, which clai  
...knowing are enduring, distinctive, and  
...Belen-Martin & Marecek, 1990; Bordo,  
...lation," which claims that the experie  
...who are marginalized by race or class are  
...framework of much of feminist theory, in  
...Brown, 1990; Collins, 1991; Green  
...building reason, which claims that Bel  
...essentialist, subjectivist epistemologic  
...stage, which I have made, of presenting

course of a lifespan). This characterization suggests that students' ways of knowing transcend context. In particular, these epistemological theories and frameworks do not view the students' epistemological beliefs and practices as interactive, intersubjective, or interdependent. That is, they do not take into account the students' relationships with other people (e.g., teachers and peers) and with knowledge (e.g., subject matter); nor do they consider the larger cultural contexts of which the student is a part (e.g., family and religious community). In other words, students' epistemological beliefs and practices are not adequately depicted as being affected by their social or cultural contexts.

My criticism of the existing frameworks being stagelike and context-independent is just one of the criticisms leveled against these authors. Because I later discuss Belenky et al.'s (1986) work in more detail, and want to provide you with the ability to critique my claims and findings, I believe it is necessary for me to provide an overview of the limitations of their framework. The following are the five major criticisms of their work: (1) the charge of essentialism, which claims that the five categories/perspectives for ways of knowing are enduring, distinctive, and possibly biologically based sex differences (Hare-Mustin & Marecek, 1990; Bordo, 1990; Morawski, 1994); (2) the charge of "white feminism," which claims that the experiences and perspectives of members of society who are marginalized by race or class are not well represented in the conceptual framework of much of feminist theory, including Belenky et al.'s framework (Boyd, 1990; Brown, 1990; Collins, 1991; Greene, 1994; Reid & Kelly, 1994); (3) the charge of devaluing reason, which claims that Belenky et al. believe and endorse the superiority of antirationalist, subjectivist epistemologies (Code, 1991; Patai & Koertge, 1994); (4) the charge, which I have made, of presenting ways of knowing as developmental, which

izes the Belenky et al.'s five knowledge

developmental sequence (Debold, Tolman,

1984) (5) the related charge of idealizing

Belenky et al. believe and present construc

tionology (Code, 1991; Harding, 1996)

It is important to note that while G

raze of the charges against their work, the

use or misinterpretation of their original

inspire their lack of attention to the large

of women's lives.

Looking back now on what motivated  
clear that we believed (and still do)  
historical, and political category th  
in all communities and cultures....  
societies, we allowed the larger cultur  
individual lives (now called "posi  
instead on, and made central in th  
we believed captured some of the  
race, or ethnic background) think  
life options. We did not discuss o  
ethnic differences among the wom  
the time, given our relatively sma  
qualitative research methodology  
statements and conclusions. Let  
we thought, to hear what they say  
before we move to generalization  
related to class, race, ethnicity, or

fortunately, many educators, including m

beliefs, despite the criticisms and limita

the strengths and weaknesses of others'

ness's ways of knowing in thoughtful

claims that Belenky et al.'s five knowledge perspectives represent a stagelike developmental sequence (Debold, Tolman, & Brown, 1996; Goldberger, 1996; Ruddick, 1996); (5) the related charge of idealizing constructed knowing, which claims that Belenky et al. believe and present constructed knowing to be a superior or ideal epistemology (Code, 1991; Harding, 1996; Ruddick, 1996).

It is important to note that while Goldberger and her colleagues (1996) agree with some of the charges against their work, they disagree with others, believing that they are based on misinterpretation of their original work. In particular, Goldberger et al. (1996) recognize their lack of attention to the larger cultural, social, and political context of individual women's lives.

Looking back now on what motivated our work in the mid-1980s, it is clear that we believed (and still do) that gender is a major social, historical, and political category that affects the life choices of all women in all communities and cultures....Thus, in our analysis of women's life stories, we allowed the larger cultural, social, and political context of individual lives (now called "positionality") to recede as we focused instead on, and made central in the text, five knowledge perspectives that we believed captured some of the major ways women (regardless of class, race, or ethnic background) think about themselves, authorities, truth, and life options. We did not discuss our findings in terms of class, racial or ethnic differences among the women, a decision that seemed reasonable at the time, given our relatively small and nonrepresentative sample and qualitative research methodology that does not lend itself to comparative statements and conclusions. Let us listen to the voices of diverse women, we thought, to hear what they say about the varieties of female experience before we move to generalizations about differences among them that are related to class, race, ethnicity, or other social distinctions. (p. 4)

Fortunately, many educators, including myself, have learned much from Belenky et al.'s findings, despite the criticisms and limitations of their work. We must recognize both the strengths and weaknesses of others' work if we hope to expand the discourse on women's ways of knowing in thoughtful and thought-provoking ways.

Nona Lyons helps us expand the dis-  
 cussion to the interaction of students' and teachers' ways of knowing. It is imperative in our continuing studies to explore and explore the "coming together" of students' and teachers' ways of knowing. Lyons's contention that this coming together is a process of negotiating students' epistemological development of a relationship, or relationships, between students' epistemological development, and not necessarily a set of dynamic objects that are interacting in its own right, students and teachers, having a clear epistemological basis, is a different epistemological configurations of ways coming together (e.g., a received student with a multiplicitous student with a dualist teacher in terms of student learning and teaching). Lyons's idea that teachers are more than just teachers, as Baxter Magolda claims; on the other hand, in a teaching context, are very much co-constructed. The work of Howard Becker, Blanche French, and Cohen (1985), as well as others, further informed my thinking about ways of knowing. Becker et al. de-

### Ways of Knowing as Socially Constructed

Nona Lyons helps us expand the discourse on women's ways of knowing with her work on the interaction of students' and teachers' epistemologies. Lyons (1990) contends that it is imperative in our continuing studies of epistemological development that we recognize and explore the "coming together" of students' and teachers' ways of knowing. It is Lyon's contention that this coming together of ways of knowing is at the heart of understanding students' epistemological development. In other words, it is the development of a relationship, or relationships, that is at the heart of students' epistemological development, and not necessarily, or solely, ontogenetic development. "Like a set of dynamic objects that are interacting with one another, although each is distinct in its own right, students and teachers come together in a special relationship in learning, having a clear epistemological basis" (Lyons, p.173). Lyons also points out that the different epistemological configurations created by students' and teachers' ways of knowing coming together (e.g., a received student knower with a constructed teacher knower; a multiplistic student with a dualistic teacher) will result in many different outcomes in terms of student learning and teacher pedagogy (p. 174). In essence, Lyons introduced the idea that teachers are more than just "responsive" to their students' ways of knowing as Baxter Magolda claims; on the contrary, teachers, by the very nature of the teaching/learning context, are very much co-creators of their students' ways of knowing.

The work of Howard Becker, Blanche Geer, and Everett Hughes (1968) and Powell, Farrar, and Cohen (1985), as well as my own experiences as a teacher and a student, further informed my thinking about the relational, and thus context-dependent, nature of ways of knowing. Becker et al. describe the teaching-learning situation, or

...as the "exchange of rewards for  
cultural process" (p. 63). The goal of the  
...what the professor wants so that the  
...grade. This is made more difficult to  
...:

The culture of any classroom indicates  
much they should talk, what kinds of  
should say them, and what the consequences  
otherwise...The demands for knowledge  
from class to class. Different kinds of  
of knowledge, even when the subject is  
(1973, p. 75)

This interpretation of what is happening  
...ability that students are performing  
...the rewards they desire. Powell et al.  
...negotiation" whereby students and  
...to which they will engage in or avoid  
...consider that students and teachers can  
...the ways of knowing that students  
...In general, the work of these authors  
...use particular ways of knowing or  
...the student is as a knower depends  
...who wants her to know it and how  
...questions such as, "I don't know what  
...get a good grade?," are more the norm  
...that students try to get the grades they



relationship, as the "exchange of rewards for performance, rather than as some kind of educational process" (p. 63). The goal of the students, according to Becker et al., is to discover what the professor wants so that they can do what is necessary to achieve the desired grade. This is made more difficult because of the uniqueness of each classroom's culture.

The culture of any classroom indicates to students who should talk, how much they should talk, what kinds of things they should say, how they should say them, and what the consequences of behaving appropriately or otherwise....The demands for knowledge vary, as do the other demands, from class to class. Different kinds of assignments call for different kinds of knowledge, even when the subject matter is the same. (Becker et al., 1975, p. 75)

This interpretation of what is happening in the classroom helped me to consider the possibility that students are performing particular ways of knowing in an attempt to receive the rewards they desire. Powell et al. (1985) describe the classroom interaction as a "treaty negotiation" whereby students and teachers negotiate, implicitly or explicitly, the degree to which they will engage in or avoid learning. Similarly, this concept helped me to consider that students and teachers can and probably do negotiate, implicitly or explicitly, the ways of knowing that students should use.

In general, the work of these authors helped me to consider the possibility that students use particular ways of knowing only in particular contexts. It occurred to me that who the student is as a knower depends on not only what she is coming to know, but also on who wants her to know it and how they want her to know it. Student comments and questions such as, "I don't know what you (teacher) want," and, "What do I need to do to get a good grade?," are more the norm than the exception. Becker et al. (1968) explain that students try to get the grades they desire "by fulfilling in one way or another

and a one or another level of proficiency

more...The more proficient his performance.

This theory about the teacher-student

question: As students negotiate different

different times with the same teacher.

particular ways of knowing to meet the

Lyn Brown and Carol Gilligan

women may adopt develop the ways of

instructional practices. According to

becoming women, girls and women seek

to be silenced by others, in an effort to

While connection and responsiveness  
psychological development and  
[et al.] have described, continuing  
and adult women silence themselves  
than risk open conflict and dis-  
violence. (p. 3)

For girls at adolescence to say  
means to risk...losing their relationship  
and all alone. (p. 217)

Brown and Gilligan describe this phenomenon

women consciously giving up relationship

with others.

The central paradox we will encounter  
sake of "Relationships" -- is not  
aware. Psychologically, girls  
to know, in part because they

and at one or another level of proficiency the requirements the instructor sets for the course....The more proficient his performance, the higher the resulting grade" (p. 63).

This theory about the teacher-student relationship prompted me to ask the following question: As students negotiate different treaties with different teachers, and even at different times with the same teacher, are these students using (and possibly developing) particular ways of knowing to meet their interpretations of each teacher's expectations?

Lyn Brown and Carol Gilligan (1992) posed another theory to explain why women may adopt/develop the ways of knowing supported and accepted by their teachers' instructional practices. According to Brown and Gilligan's study of adolescent girls becoming women, girls and women sometimes silence themselves, or allow themselves to be silenced by others, in an effort to maintain relationships with others.

While connection and responsive relationships are central to women's psychological development and to women's ways of knowing, as Belenky [et al.] have described, continuing observations suggest that adolescent and adult women silence themselves or are silenced in relationships rather than risk open conflict and disagreement that might lead to isolation or to violence. (p. 3)

For girls at adolescence to say what they are feeling and thinking often means to risk...losing their relationships and finding themselves powerless and all alone. (p. 217)

Brown and Gilligan describe this phenomenon as a paradox, for it involves girls and women consciously giving up relationships with themselves to maintain "Relationships" with others.

The central paradox we will explore -- the giving up of relationship for the sake of "Relationships" -- is a paradox of which girls themselves are aware. Psychologically, girls know what they are doing and then need not to know, in part because they can see no alternative. (p. 7)

In the chapter entitled, "Noura,"  
described how Noura's struggles about

If Noura says what she feels and  
ridiculed, talked about, and rejected.  
thinks, she colludes in behavior  
people and is unreal or false. In  
relationship and about knowing  
be in connection with other people  
for the sake of "relationships"?  
measured tones, sometimes quietly  
disagreeing with them totally."  
thinks under the guise of not know  
just to cover it up." In this way  
thinking one thing and saying a  
sense, two people -- one private  
But while Noura finally comes  
to stay with herself privately with  
friends -- "I would tell them," she  
always -- "going along with" to  
close to disconnecting from her  
thinks...And so, although Noura  
thinks, she capitulates to the pressure  
to speak...she removes herself from  
relationship. (pp. 112-113)

Do undergraduate women perceive  
belonging and thinking mean risking the  
teachers, and finding themselves powerful  
statistical/personal ways of knowing, and  
construction of knowledge to maintain  
they will be academically successful?  
others, as Brown and Gilligan claim, in  
*The First Study: Paying Attention to Sex*

Together these theories prompt  
was happening to two American female

In the chapter entitled, "Noura: Knowing and Not Knowing," Brown and Gilligan described how Noura's struggles about relationships are also struggles about knowing.

If Noura says what she feels and disagrees with her friends, she risks being ridiculed, talked about, and rejected; if she holds back what she feels and thinks, she colludes in behavior she knows from experience will hurt people and is unreal or false. In the deepest sense this is a struggle about relationship and about knowing -- what can Noura know and say and still be in connection with other people? What should she ignore or not know for the sake of "relationships"?...Noura avoids these risks by speaking in measured tones, sometimes qualifying her thoughts and feelings -- "not disagreeing with them totally" -- and sometimes hiding what she feels and thinks under the guise of not knowing -- "Sometimes I say, 'I don't know,' just to cover it up." In this way, Noura finds she can protect herself by thinking one thing and saying another, by doubling her voice, being, in a sense, two people -- one private and honest, one public and acceptable. But while Noura finally comes to a precarious compromise that allows her to stay with herself privately without jeopardizing herself in the eyes of her friends -- "I would tell them," she says, "sometimes it's true, but not always" -- "going along with" those friends brings Noura dangerously close to disconnecting from herself and what she really feels and thinks...And so, although Noura feels what she feels and knows what she thinks, she capitulates to the pressure from her friends not to know and not to speak...she removes herself from the relationship for the sake of relationship. (pp. 112-113)

Do undergraduate women perceive a similar risk? Does saying what they are feeling and thinking mean risking the loss of their relationships, in particular with their teachers, and finding themselves powerless and all alone? Do these women give up their relational/personal ways of knowing and their beliefs in themselves as knowers and constructors of knowledge to maintain a positive relationship with their teachers so that they will be academically successful? Or is this desire to maintain a relationship with others, as Brown and Gilligan claim, about being connected and cared for?

#### The First Study: Paying Attention to Social Context

Together these theories prompted me to conduct research of my own about what was happening to two American female college students' ways of knowing in interaction

in the ways of knowing encouraged a  
practices (Wells, 1995).

Both students, named Julia and  
(middle, middle to upper middle class  
secondary education and minoring in  
this was happening to their way of know  
education). I also interviewed each of  
context, especially in terms of what was  
of reward, intentionally and unintentionally.

While the following three claim  
imposed to these students' ways of know  
instructional practices is greatly intertwined

#### (1) College students should be of knowing as opposed to being char

prevailing view that a student becomes  
college career, my pilot research supports  
demonstrate more than one way of know  
evidence of several different ways of know  
including receiving knowledge from her  
teacher education class, relying on her  
(observations, and intuitions) about teach  
interpretations of history and education  
professional sources. The story of Kri  
Kris's repertoire of ways of knowing  
professor, relying on her own personal  
making personal connections with other

with the ways of knowing encouraged and rewarded by their teachers' instructional practices (Welte, 1995).

Both students, named Julia and Kristin, were twenty years-old, American, Caucasian, middle to upper middle class women. They were both juniors majoring in elementary education and minoring in history. I met with each student weekly to discuss what was happening to their way of knowing in two of their classes (history and teacher education). I also interviewed each of their teachers to better understand each classroom context, especially in terms of what ways of knowing were being supported, encouraged, and rewarded, intentionally and unintentionally.

While the following three claims are listed separately, the reality of what happened to these students' ways of knowing in the context of each of their teachers' instructional practices is greatly intertwined.

(1) **College students should be characterized as having a set of potential ways of knowing as opposed to being characterized as one type of knower.** Contrary to the prevailing view that a student becomes a different type of knower at each stage of her college career, my pilot research supports the claim that a college student can possess and demonstrate more than one way of knowing at the same time. Julia, for example, showed evidence of several different ways of knowing both within and across classroom contexts, including receiving knowledge from her history professor, adopting others' ideas in her teacher education class, relying on her own personal knowledge (e.g., experiences, observations, and intuitions) about teaching and learning, and constructing her own interpretations of history and education by drawing on knowledge from both personal and professional sources. The story of Kristin also provided evidence to support this claim. Kristin's repertoire of ways of knowing included receiving knowledge from her history professor, relying on her own personal knowledge as well as using relational knowing (making personal connections with others' ideas and experiences) in her teacher





education class, and trying to construct her own interpretations of history and education by drawing on knowledge from both personal and professional sources.

(2) **College students' ways of knowing are highly context-dependent.** The variation asserted in the first claim resulted from particular ways of knowing emerging across classroom contexts, as well as different ways of knowing emerging within one classroom context. Both Julia and Kristin described the subject matter, and the process of coming to know that subject matter, as different in history versus education. Both students believed they were much more able to think independently, and to develop their own understandings of the course ideas, in teacher education as compared to history.

Julia, for example, described education as "very personalized" knowledge. This belief, in combination with her experience as a student, resulted in her feeling confident in her ability to develop her own ideas about teaching and learning. Julia's epistemological beliefs about knowing about teaching and learning support Lortie's (1975) theory that students learn how to teach through an "apprenticeship of observation." In other words, Julia believed that knowing about teaching and learning involves knowing her personal experiences as a student and observer of teachers. The readings may have helped her to develop a more extensive vocabulary for talking about the discipline, but most, if not all, of the ideas in the readings seemed familiar to her.

In contrast, Julia believed that learning history required possessing knowledge and vocabulary not familiar to her. Julia viewed history as a body of knowledge (i.e., information and vocabulary) that she must get from others who are more knowledgeable. Julia saw the knowledge of the discipline of history as being defined by others; it was not something she could derive from her own experiences and/or observations as she could in education. So, unlike in teacher education where she wanted to, and believed she could, rely on her own personal knowledge, in history, Julia wanted to acquire all the knowledge from external sources, experts in the field, such as her teachers, books, study sheets, etc.; it was from these outside sources that she developed her own understandings of history.



This example highlights the role that subject matter can play in defining the context, and thus in influencing students' ways of knowing, both in terms of beliefs and practices.

**(3) College students demonstrate, and possibly develop, particular ways of knowing in response to the ways of knowing encouraged and rewarded by each of their teacher's instructional practices.** While Julia's story alone may suggest disciplinary or subject-based differences in students' learning, the comparative case of Kristin suggest that teachers' instructional practices may also represent powerful contexts for students' learning. An examination of Julia's and Kristin's stories show the importance of pedagogical practices as context. Teachers' instructional practices, and their underlying epistemological assumptions, can be seen as contexts within which students shift in their ways of knowing. More specifically, Julia's and Kristin's stories suggest that students attempt to meet each teacher's expectations "by fulfilling in one way or another and at one or another level of proficiency the requirements the instructor sets for the course" (Becker et al., 1968, p. 63). Thus, different teachers' instructional practices, even within the same discipline or subject, may engender different ways of knowing.

One history teacher, for example, may present history as a body of absolute facts that exists separate of the student/knower, thus requiring students to receive this knowledge as the truth. Another history teacher, however, may view history as interpretive and socially constructed, and thus require students to discuss and develop their own interpretations of historical events. This is just the case with Julia's and Kristin's history teachers. Julia's history professor, Carla, viewed her introductory history

258

solvents

234

1985

TABLE 1

2000

200

2001

10

151

五

77

100

7.

2001

10

100

1

20

1

5

class as the foundation of historical knowledge and thinking, and thus she wanted her students to receive this foundation from her and the texts she provided. In turn, over the course of the semester, Julia came to view history as a discipline in which she first needed a body of knowledge and vocabulary. Unfamiliar with the basic information and vocabulary, Julia tried to acquire, or receive, this foundation of knowledge from outside authorities such as her teacher and her texts.

Kristin's history professor, George, however, believed that history was producing interpretations of what happened in the past by using the sources that gave rise to historical myths. George did not see teaching history as providing his students with historical information. He believed that 99% of his students were not history majors, and thus he approached this introductory course as an opportunity to help his students to develop critical thinking skills. While George rewarded those students who learned to think critically and constructively, it was possible for students who just received and adopted his ideas to pass the class. Consequently, Kristin, who was only interested in getting a passing grade, focused on just receiving the knowledge from George. By meeting her teacher's expectations at a low level of proficiency (Becker et al., 1968), she was rewarded accordingly with a low grade of a 2.0.

Similarly, Julia's and Kristin's teacher education professors held different beliefs about teacher education and about learning teacher education, and thus Julia and Kristin were rewarded for using different ways of knowing. Julia's teacher education professor, Susan, believed that learning about teaching involved trying on others' ideas. Consequently, she taught her class by requiring her students to try on the language and ideas of others. In turn, over the course of the semester, Julia became increasingly

prudent a

rise and v

In a

div react

mental mo

eretic, ob

to studen

knowledge

experience

observati

sources o

teachers'

students

analysis

mainline

(1960),

specific

In part

less in

each of

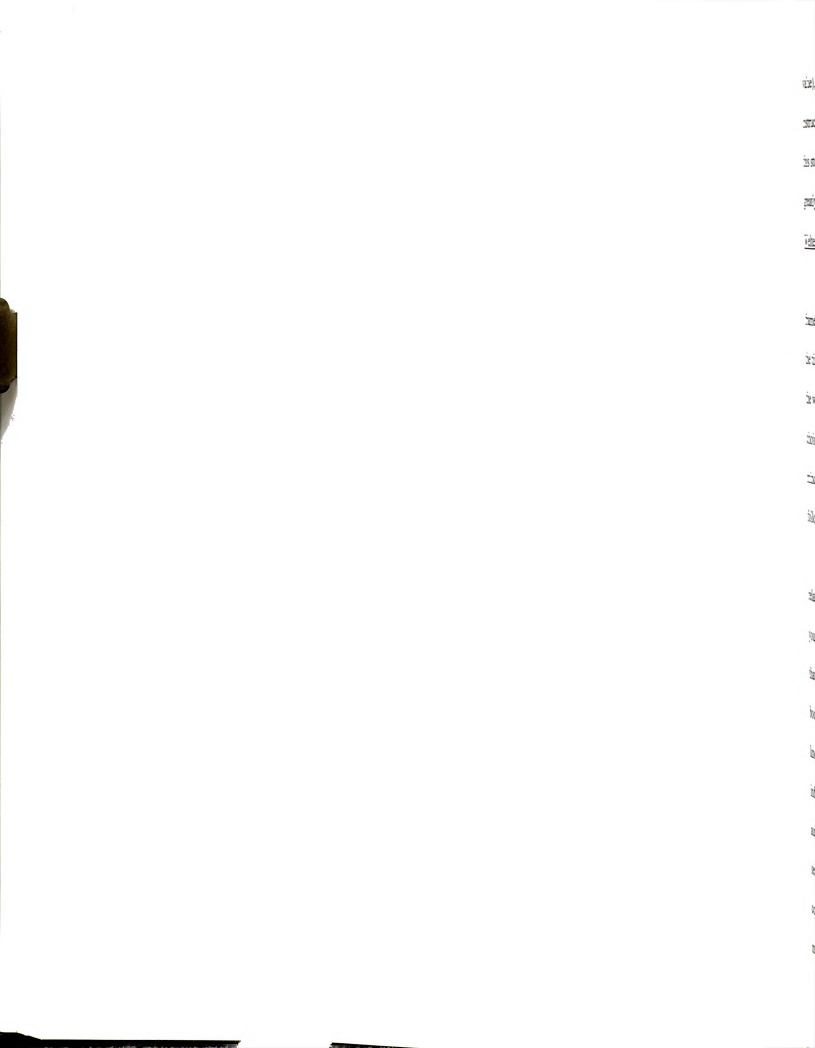
Conse

proficient at thinking and writing about teaching by interpreting her ideas through the ideas and vocabulary of others (social voice).

In contrast, Kristin's teacher education professor, Matthew, believed that learning about teaching involved "making sense of our own experiences and fitting them into our mental model of the world." He believed that evidence was derived from students' careful observations and insights. Consequently, Matthew taught his class by focusing on the students' personal knowledge, asking his students to see themselves as sources of knowledge and to use this personal knowledge to make connections with others' experiences. In turn, Kristin relied almost solely on her own subjective experiences, observations, and intuitions to learn about teaching, as opposed to relying on outside sources as Julia did.

These interactions between teachers' discipline and epistemology suggest that teachers' instructional practices are an important influence on the ways of knowing that students develop in diverse disciplines.

Together these claims, derived from interviews, classroom observations, and analysis of course materials, suggest that students' ways of knowing are created and maintained within changing, interactive, and relational contexts. Just as Becker et al. (1968), Powell, Farrar, and Cohen (1985), and Goodnow (1990) suggested, cognition, and specifically ways of knowing, are socialized through expectations, treaties, and rewards. In particular, each teacher's instructional practices influence students' ways of knowing, at least in practice (and possibly as espoused), because students are rewarded for meeting each of their teachers' expectations in certain ways and at certain levels of proficiency. Consequently, sometimes students adopt (practice), and may even develop (believe and





value), the particular ways of knowing encouraged and rewarded by each of their teacher's instructional practices because they want to get good grades. If this is indeed the case, as this study suggested, then it is not surprising that college students' ways of knowing are greatly affected by the course-specific social contexts in which they participate.

### Welte's 1995 Relational Framework

Informed by the aforementioned frameworks and 1995 study, I developed a framework for thinking about students' ways of knowing that made more sense to me at the time. These two women's stories about their ways of knowing, or more specifically the way that I heard their stories at the time, highlighted tensions between self and other, choice and expectation, inside and outside knowledge, internal and external authorities, mind and body, knowing and doing, reason and emotion, reflective and unreflective. The following categories/perspectives emerged:

Relationship with other(s). One way of knowing involves an objective relationship with others and things outside of yourself. The knowledge exists outside yourself, and is defined by others. The way to come to know is to distance yourself from that which you wish to know, and to receive and absorb or acquire that externally defined body of knowledge. This is similar to Belenky et al.'s (1986) category of received knowledge, and Freire's (1983) "banking" concept of education in which the information/knowledge is deposited into students heads by the all-knowing authority/teacher. Knowledge is consensual and communal and defined, and there is no sense that you are a knowing subject, i.e., that you know things too. The self would be considered a "contaminant" to knowing. Knowing is equivalent to acquisition and memorization.

Relationship with self. One way  
knowledge exists inside of yourself, and  
understanding of those experiences. The  
highly intuitive, etc. This is a very s  
highly individualistic and personal. The  
act of knowing is not communal. This  
range of subjective knowledge.

Relationship with self and other.  
knowing involves both the self and other  
knowledge. While I described the focus  
important central aspect of this way of  
through your self as opposed to outside  
this sense to you as opposed to being  
yourself. So, I don't see this "integrate  
of other outside knowing" (focus on o  
with self) "self/inside knowing" (focus o  
others). The integration of inside and o  
This is also communal, and if not cons  
most integrated knowers use knowle  
use of, to better understand, knowle  
inside themselves to make more sense  
themselves. Knowledge derived intern  
multiple sources of knowing and unde

Relationship with self. One way of knowing involves only the self. The knowledge exists inside of yourself, and is solely defined by one's experiences and understanding of those experiences. The way to come to know is through your feelings, thoughts, intuitions, etc. This is a very subjective or relativistic way of knowing. It is totally individualistic and personal. There is no relationship with knowledge outside your self for knowing is not communal. This way of knowing parallels Belenky et al.'s (1986) category of subjective knowledge.

Relationship with self and other: An integrated way of knowing. A third way of knowing involves both the self and others, or both inside knowledge and outside knowledge. While I described the focus as integration, which I believe is an important/central aspect of this way of knowing, you still ultimately come to know through your self, as opposed to outside your self. That is, the knowledge is defined as it makes sense to you as opposed to being defined as it makes sense to someone outside your self. So, I don't see this "integrated knowing" as a simple, or equal, coming together of "other/outside knowing" (focus on other/outside sources of knowledge/exclusion of the self) and "self/inside knowing" (focus on self/inside sources of knowledge/exclusion of others). The integration of inside and outside knowledge is personal and individualistic, yet it is also communal, and if not consensual, then at least connected to others. In other words, integrated knowers use knowledge originating outside themselves to make more sense of, to better understand, knowledge inside themselves, and they use knowledge inside themselves to make more sense of, and better understand, knowledge outside themselves. Knowledge derived internally and externally both count as valid and valuable sources of knowing and understanding.

## Ways of Knowing

There is also a great deal of research that suggests that cultural contexts influence learning. For example, how does the larger cultural context influence the way that students learn? (Andrew, 1990; Hollingsworth, 1993; Kohn, 1990; Tierney, 1993). These authors emphasize that we need to understand cultural phenomena and institutions in order to understand learning. For example, Jacqueline Goodnow (1990) introduces the idea that "We do not simply learn to solve problems; we learn to solve problems considered worth solving, and what counts as a problem is culturally determined" (p. 259). Similarly, I believe that we need to understand how we learn what ways of knowing are valued in our culture. For example, we often think in terms of knowledge and ways of knowing, but we do not think of higher education through the curriculum as a place where oppositional discourses may be used to challenge the dominant academic knowledge...conflict often takes place over what counts for knowledge" (p. 40). The mode of knowing that dominates the curriculum is one of objectivity, objectivism, and consequently, student objectivity. Students are taught to be objective. They have always been taught to be objective. They have always been taught to be objective, divorced from their personal lives and emotions. They are taught to be "objective," "analytical," and "experim-

### Ways of Knowing as Culturally Constructed

There is also a great deal of research that helps me to consider that not only do the immediate relational contexts influence a student's epistemological beliefs and practices, but so too does the larger cultural context of which the student is a part (Freire, 1989; Goodnow, 1990; Hollingsworth, 1993; Labouvie-Vief, 1990; O'Loughlin, 1990; Palmer, 1987; Tierney, 1989). These authors emphasize the importance of considering the range of cultural phenomena and institutions when making sense of students' ways of knowing.

Jacqueline Goodnow (1990) introduced me to the idea that cognition is socialized; that is, "We do not simply learn to solve problems. We learn also what problems are considered worth solving, and what counts as an elegant rather than simply an acceptable solution" (p. 259). Similarly, I believe that ways of knowing are socialized as well; that is, we learn what ways of knowing are worth using. William Tierney (1989) suggests that culture, in terms of knowledge and ways of knowing, gets expressed in organizations of higher education through the curriculum. And thus, "the curriculum may be viewed as a site where oppositional discourses [may] take place about the nature and content of academic knowledge...conflict often takes place because of competing cultural definitions of what counts for knowledge" (p. 40). Parker Palmer (1987), for example, claims that, "The mode of knowing that dominates higher education [in the United States is] objectivism," and consequently, students are taught to "look at reality through objectivist lenses. They have always been taught about a world out there somewhere apart from them, divorced from their personal lives" (p. 22). In other words, students learn "objective," "analytical," and "experimental" ways of knowing through schooling; they

are to distance themselves from that v

just, analyze, and manipulate the obj

(Gisela Labovvie-Vief (1990) sit

Western intellectual tradition, [cogn

ference to outer, objective, and logica

objective, and organismic ones" (p. 52

examining these different modes of k

There is a tendency to value one mode

of knowing that results in exclusion of

epistemic. Labovvie-Vief describes

Throughout the course of our [considerable controversy over mature cognitive functioning, a longstanding tendency to adopt a re [objective knowing] provides a mythos [subjective knowing] over version of logos. (p. 56)

Sandra Hollingsworth (1993) o

and exclusion of particular ways of kn

epistemic, are "judged as less valuable t

they are unexperienced by the domina

While their study does not focus on cu

his position by claiming that women's

disregarded by the dominant intellectu

(1991) discussed how the objectivist v

commitment to knowing, dominates th

knowing as grounded in the self. She

learn to distance themselves from that which they are coming to know so that they can dissect, analyze, and manipulate the objectified pieces of knowledge.

Gisela Labouvie-Vief (1990) situates Palmer's claim historically by noting that, "In Western intellectual tradition, [cognitive] functions have been described primarily by reference to outer, objective, and logical forms of processing and contrasted with inner, subjective, and organismic ones" (p. 52). For Labouvie-Vief, differentiating and categorizing these different modes of knowing is not in and of itself a problem; however, there is a tendency to value one mode of knowing over others. It is this hierarchy of ways of knowing that results in exclusion of particular groups, such as women, which is problematic. Labouvie-Vief describes the situation as follows:

Throughout the course of our [Western] intellectual history, there has been considerable controversy over which mode of thinking better represents mature cognitive functioning. In that debate, there has been a long-standing tendency to adopt a reductionist solution by asserting that logos [objective knowing] provides a better way of thinking and being, whereas mythos [subjective knowing] only constitutes an immature and degraded version of logos. (p. 56)

Sandra Hollingsworth (1993) contends that there is evidence of this devaluation and exclusion of particular ways of knowing. Women's views of reality, Hollingsworth explains, are "judged as less valuable than the dominant societal views simply because they are unexperienced by the dominant group, not because they lack authority" (p. 11). While their study does not focus on cultural context, Belenky et al. (1986) also support this position by claiming that women's ways of knowing have been "neglected and denigrated by the dominant intellectual ethos of our time" (preface). Similarly, Krieger (1991) discussed how the objectivist view of knowing, which views the self as a contaminant to knowing, dominates the subjectivist view of knowing, which views knowing as grounded in the self. She explains that the message she has received about

ing is that, "if we cannot be object  
ation to our subjectivity" (p. 1).

Michael O'Loughlin's (1990) res  
ological systems also supports the vi  
kinds and practices are culturally cons  
Jean Freire's (1989) insights about en  
How our ways of knowing and being

O'Loughlin,

Freire argues that traditional di  
as he terms it -- is designed to t  
become willing to conform with  
only vision of reality that is pro  
never having been allowed the  
knowledge is socially construc  
state of transformation, accept  
reality, and become passive. de  
persons, therefore, are deprived  
sense-making or knowledge co  
they are not even made aware  
that any version of reality repr  
they are fundamentally depriv  
enable them to think or them  
identify and work toward achie

More specifically, O'Loughlin  
students' understandings develop in th  
seemed particularly important to exa  
these contexts" (p.8). Similarly, I be  
epistemological beliefs and practices  
In particular the epistemologies they  
understand students' ways of knowin  
beliefs and practices in interaction w  
O'Loughlin wondered "what effec



knowing is that, "If we cannot be objective, at least we should not call too much attention to our subjectivity" (p. 1).

Michael O'Loughlin's (1990) research on teachers' beliefs as culturally constructed ideological systems also supports the view that students' developing epistemological beliefs and practices are culturally constructed. O'Loughlin's work draws heavily on Paulo Freire's (1989) insights about enculturation processes, and highlights the dynamics of how our ways of knowing and being are inextricably intertwined. According to O'Loughlin,

Freire argues that traditional didactic education -- or "banking education," as he terms it -- is designed to reinforce student passivity so that students become willing to conform without question to the received view -- the only vision of reality that is presented to them. Freire suggests that people, never having been allowed the opportunity to become aware that knowledge is socially constructed and that reality is a process in a constant state of transformation, accept the received view fatalistically as known reality, and become passive, dependent, alienated and hopeless. Oppressed persons, therefore, are deprived not only of the opportunity to engage in sense-making or knowledge construction activities for themselves, but they are not even made aware that knowledge is socially constructed and that any version of reality represents an ideological construction. Thus they are fundamentally deprived of the sense of agency which would enable them to think for themselves, to examine their own lives, and to identify and work toward achieving imagined possibilities. (p. 7)

More specifically, O'Loughlin (1991) introduced the idea that since "student teachers' understandings develop in the contexts of specific teacher education programs, it seemed particularly important to examine the evolution of their views in interaction with these contexts" (p.8). Similarly, I believe that we must examine the evolution of students' epistemological beliefs and practices in the contexts of organizations of higher education (in particular the epistemologies they support and encourage). In other words, to truly understand students' ways of knowing, it is essential to examine students' epistemological beliefs and practices in interaction with these other social and cultural contexts. For just as O'Loughlin wondered "what effect the epistemological messages of the program had

the prospective teachers'] own evolution. I consider what effects the epistemological and cultural institutions have on students' e

Linda McNeil's (1986) study highlights the importance of paying attention to the discourses by drawing attention to the discourses. Loughlin (1989) summarizes McNeil's

As part of her research, McNeil interviewed students in classes which were obviously based on a particular model. In subsequent interviews with the students, she found that McNeil was surprised to find that many of the students were people who had interesting ideas about teaching and were knowledgeable about their subject. In fact, many of the many public school students had a great deal of personal knowledge. They left their personal knowledge behind when they entered the classroom. No more was expected or permitted. The students' notions of teaching in a detached manner were consistent with Sigel's model. One could say that the students were being taught to detach one portion of their knowledge from the practice of teaching -- and to keep it separate from it around it in order to enable them to teach in a manner inconsistent with their own knowledge.

McNeil's study reminds me to pay close attention to the teacher's practice and beliefs. Similar to the study of the teacher's practice and beliefs, I am interested in the discrepancies between a student's practice and beliefs.

The Second Study: Paying Attention

After reviewing the aforementioned studies, I am interested in trying to understand the influences of the cultural and institutional contexts on students' ways of knowing. Having taught in a public school, I know that the University provided me with a great deal of knowledge about the ways of knowing. It afforded me the opportunity to

on [the prospective teachers'] own evolving understandings" (p.8), it is critical that I consider what effects the epistemological messages of the university and other social and cultural institutions, have on students' evolving epistemologies.

Linda McNeil's (1986) study highlighted the influence of institutional culture on teaching by drawing attention to the dissonance between teachers' practices and beliefs.

O'Loughlin (1989) summarizes McNeil's discussion of institutional constraints:

As part of her research, McNeil observed a number of traditional, didactic classes which were obviously boring and sterile for students. In subsequent interviews with the teachers who had taught these classes, McNeil was surprised to find that many of them were bright, articulate people who had interesting ideas, and who were enthusiastic and knowledgeable about their subjects. They had, however, learned, just as many public school students have learned, to play the game of school. They left their personal knowledge and interests at the gate, and, because no more was expected or permitted by the system, went through the motions of teaching in a detached and alienated manner. In terms of Sigel's model, one could say that contextual forces compelled these teachers to detach one portion of their belief system -- that pertaining to the practice of teaching -- and to construct an impermeable boundary around it in order to enable them to cope with the dissonance of having to act in a manner inconsistent with their overall belief system. (p. 13)

McNeil's study reminds me to pay close attention to signs of dissonance between a teacher's practice and beliefs. Similarly, it is a reminder that I must also attend to disparities between a student's practices and her beliefs.

### The Second Study: Paying Attention to Social and Cultural Contexts

After reviewing the aforementioned literature, it seemed imperative to consider and try to understand the influences of both social and cultural context on women college students' ways of knowing. Having the opportunity to work with women students at Gulshan University provided me with the opportunity to further my understanding of women's ways of knowing. It afforded me the opportunity to pay attention to not only

social contexts of teachers' instructi

regardless. As Geertz (1973) expla

ness but they take up where the others

whether conceptualized, they plunge n

or chapter is a discussion of the ways

step into the study of women's ways o

the social contexts of teachers' instructional practices, but also the larger cultural context of Bangladesh. As Geertz (1973) explained, "Studies do build on other studies, not in the sense that they take up where the others leave off, but in the sense that, better informed and better conceptualized, they plunge more deeply into the same things" (p. 25). The next chapter is a discussion of the ways in which I conceptualized and plunged more deeply into the study of women's ways of knowing.

## HEARING WOMEN'S VOICES

The research on ways of knowing has been a mixed bag of voices, both female and male. I believe that this research, as well, and consequently has generated a new way of thinking about women's ways of knowing. The literature, however, is that their findings are often overgeneralized. Baxter Magolda (1991) recognized the inherent challenge of generalization and prescription. "Recognizing a variety of ways of knowing things, I was aware that other researchers have criticized for overgeneralizing (her findings)." (p. 10)

While this problem may be related to the biases and limitations of the research, the substance of their findings, it seems to me that the problem is related to the goal of the research. The goal is telling more complete stories. The research is particular in the existing literature, but the incompleteness to the participant is a result of the research.

### Chapter 3

#### HEARING WOMEN'S VOICES: CONDUCTING THE RESEARCH

The research on ways of knowing reflects a commitment to hearing students' voices, both female and male. I believe that the existing research has listened carefully and well, and consequently has generated thoughtful and thought-provoking frameworks for thinking about women's ways of knowing. What is problematic about the current literature, however, is that their findings, at the very least, appear static and overgeneralized. Baxter Magolda (1992), as she struggled to avoid being misinterpreted, recognized the inherent challenge in constructing patterns that avoided oversimplification and prescription. "Recognizing a challenge and being able to meet it are two different things. I was aware that other researchers, whose ideas were similar to mine, had been criticized for overgeneralizing (however unintentionally)" (p. 18).

While this problem may be more rooted in the limitations of reporting, or possibly in the biases and limitations of the readers (including my own), than in the actual substance of their findings, it seems to be a problem nonetheless. At least some of the problem is related to the goal of finding themes and constructing patterns, as opposed to telling more complete stories. The result is that the balance between patterns and particulars in the existing literature is tilted toward patterns, and thus, there is an incompleteness to the participants' stories. This can be further explained by looking at

to methodology of these studies, space  
to number of interviewees. Most of  
Immenman, 1982; Perry, 1968) we  
induced no more than a few inter-  
and, which was a six-year longitudi-  
ist thus, these studies tell parts of  
ible, more complete accounts of ju-

Related to this issue of breadth  
participants' social and cultural con-  
importance of social and cultural co-  
description or exploration of the inf-  
knowing. Hence, the focus of this s-  
possible, the fluid and evolving way  
shaped by the social and cultural co-

In this study, achieving com-  
a wide diversity of experiences. It  
developmental, situation-sensitive,  
or types; this calls for continuous in-  
principles of naturalistic inquiry. I  
experiential meanings about her wo-  
and evolving social and cultural m-  
nalden's ways of knowing, although  
and maintained within a changing



the methodology of these studies, specifically at the number of interviews conducted and the number of interviewees. Most of the studies (e.g., Belenky et al., 1986; Clinchy & Zimmerman, 1982; Perry, 1968) were based on hundreds of interviews; the researchers conducted no more than a few interviews with each individual. Even Baxter Magolda's study, which was a six-year longitudinal study, relied on only one interview each year. And thus, these studies tell parts of many people's stories, as opposed to developing fuller, more complete accounts of just a few.

Related to this issue of breadth over depth is the insufficient attention paid to the participants' social and cultural contexts. While some of these researchers mention the importance of social and cultural context, none of the studies provide an in-depth description or exploration of the influence of these contexts on women's ways of knowing. Hence, the focus of this study: to describe and interpret, in as much detail as possible, the fluid and evolving ways that women's ways of knowing are influenced and shaped by the social and cultural contexts in which they live and know.

In this study, achieving completeness and depth are more important than including a wide diversity of experiences. It is critical to treat women's ways of knowing as a developmental, situation-sensitive, fluid phenomenon rather than as static stages, styles, or types; this calls for continuous interaction with the participants. Guided by the principles of naturalistic inquiry, I attempted to access and understand one woman's experiential meanings about her ways of knowing as unfolding in her personal life history and evolving social and cultural milieux. In addition, I attempted to describe how students' ways of knowing, although never finished or absolute, are nonetheless created and maintained within a changing experiential world.

Viewing ways of knowing as  
to the assumption that these  
principles of naturalistic inq  
richness of the students' stor  
quantified. (p. 21)

More specifically, doing na-  
tural setting, as opposed to an ex-  
perimental setting, is not the  
researcher, as the data-gathering in-  
strument, but rather the social  
relations of understanding, meaning,  
and action that constitute the  
law-like relationships among varia-  
bles. In other words, the  
ways of knowing cannot be under-  
stood in isolation from the  
contexts in which they are a part, for women's  
experiences. According to Lincoln and

### Naturalistic Inquiry

The task of describing and understanding women students' ways of knowing is more difficult than it might seem at first glance. It requires understanding each immediate teaching/learning classroom context, as well as the long-established cultural contexts of family, religion, and education, and paying attention to the gendered nature of each of these contexts. The choice of an appropriate and productive method is critical. A good methodological approach has to be sensitive to the complex interactional, developmental, and contextual nature of students' ways of knowing. Naturalistic and narrative inquiry, which allows us to come to know women students' unique stories within the context of everyday events, seemed most appropriate. As Baxter Magolda (1992) stated,

Viewing ways of knowing as complex, socially constructed entities leads to the assumption that these processes can best be understood through the principles of naturalistic inquiry....Naturalistic methods maintain the richness of the students' stories that is lost to a degree when the stories are quantified. (p. 21)

More specifically, doing naturalistic inquiry means conducting the research in the natural setting, as opposed to an experimentally-created setting, and using yourself, the researcher, as the data-gathering instrument. This approach emphasizes the interpretive notions of understanding, meaning, and action, rather than the discovery and testing of law-like relationships among variables. According to the naturalistic paradigm, women's ways of knowing cannot be understood separate from the social and cultural contexts of which they are a part, for women's meanings and actions make sense within these contexts. According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), "...realities are wholes that cannot be

method in isolation from their co

*of its parts* (the whole is more than

In addition, interpretive acco

standing, but also the range an

in these accounts extend our cap

1986). In this case, the actions of in

teacher's instructional practices (in

guided by the these practices), as

rules.

While I initially designed m

United States (Wehr, 1995) as wel

Wehr, 1993). I used this research

It was essential that I be able to adj

with the naturalistic paradigm's be

as opposed to being specified a pri

...because it is inconceivab

about the many multiple re

what emerges as a function

phenomenon is largely unpr

cannot know sufficiently w

to exist... (Lincoln & Gub

Related to an emergent des

sampling as opposed to random sa

purposive sampling "increases the

understood in isolation from their contexts, nor can they be fragmented for separate study of the parts (the whole is more than the sum of the parts)..." (p. 39).

In addition, interpretive accounts provide opportunities to extend not only understanding, but also the range and sophistication of language for describing action; thus, these accounts extend our capacity to communicate about action (Carr & Kemmis, 1986). In this case, the actions of interest are the students' ways of knowing, each teacher's instructional practices (in particular, the ways of knowing encouraged and rewarded by these practices), as well as the cultural messages as interpreted by the students.

While I initially designed my methods based on my preliminary research in the United States (Welte, 1995) as well as my previous research with women in Bangladesh (Welte, 1993), I used this research only as a guide as opposed to a strictly followed plan. It was essential that I be able to adjust my research plan as necessary. This is consistent with the naturalistic paradigm's beliefs that design emerges during the course of a study, as opposed to being specified a priori.

...because it is inconceivable that enough could be known ahead of time about the many multiple realities to devise the design adequately; because what emerges as a function of the interaction between inquirer and phenomenon is largely unpredictable in advance; because the inquirer cannot know sufficiently well the patterns of mutual shaping that are likely to exist.... (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 41)

Related to an emergent design is naturalistic inquiry's preference for purposive sampling as opposed to random sampling. According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), purposive sampling "increases the scope or range of data exposed (random or

representative sampling is likely to s

in the full array of multiple realities

Specifically, I use a case study

because my goal in this project was

an analysis of one woman's ways of

Smith, 1992; Lincoln & Guba, 1991

study reporting mode because as Lin

...it is more adapted to a des

demonstrating the investigator's

biases that may result (reflexive

individual "naturalistic genera

to other sites (thick description

of mutually shaping influences

positions of investigator, subject

and local contextual values.

For these reasons, the case study rep

for complexity and dynamics of wh

is the more immediate and bounded

more general cultural contexts of ho

Each case of a phenomenon

provides access to understanding.

one to make statistical inferences, it

generalizations; that is, to recognize

(Lincoln, 1986; Stake, 1978). In a

thoughtfully constructed case study

opportunity to contemplate the exte

representative sampling is likely to suppress more deviant cases) as well as the likelihood that the full array of multiple realities will be uncovered" (p. 40).

Specifically, I use a case study reporting mode as a framework for this study because my goal in this project was to provide a holistic and particularistic description and analysis of one woman's ways of knowing (e.g., Bogdan & Biklen, 1992; Erickson & Schultz, 1992; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Merriam, 1988; Stake, 1978). I prefer the case study reporting mode because as Lincoln and Guba explain,

...it is more adapted to a description of multiple realities...it is adaptable to demonstrating the investigator's interaction with the site and consequent biases that may result (reflexive reporting)...it provides the basis for both individual "naturalistic generalizations" (Stake, 1980) and transferability to other sites (thick description)...it is suited to demonstrating the variety of mutually shaping influences present...and it can picture the value positions of investigator, substantive theory, methodological paradigm, and local contextual values. (pp. 41-42)

For these reasons, the case study reporting method is most conducive to communicating the complexity and dynamics of what happens to one woman student's ways of knowing in the more immediate and bounded social contexts of the classroom, as well as in the more general cultural contexts of her life.

Each case of a phenomenon, with its focus on the particulars of one's experience, provides access to understanding. While this knowledge of the particulars does not allow me to make statistical inferences, it does enable me and others to make naturalistic generalizations; that is, to recognize similarities in similar and different contexts (Erickson, 1986; Stake, 1978). In addition, as Erickson and Schultz (1992) contend, a thoughtfully constructed case study is valuable for readers because it gives them an opportunity to contemplate the extent to which the case can inform their own experiences.





### **Data Collection**

My initial data collection plan involved doing as many pilot interviews and observations at GU as possible prior to the official start of the study in January 1996. I had hoped these interviews would engage participants in the types of conversation that I was interested in having during the study; that is, they would be biographical and focused on ways of knowing. I wanted to work with two first-year women who were taking two of the same classes, and these classes would support different ways of knowing. This would enable me to consider how different students interpret the same teacher's instructional practices differently. In addition, I wanted to choose subject matter with which I was familiar to help me to focus on what was happening to the students' ways of knowing without distraction. I hoped that two such cases would provide useful comparisons, highlighting things I might otherwise overlook.

I intentionally wanted to limit my research to two students and four of their teachers (i.e., no more than two teachers for each student) to ensure the development of rich and useful biographical case studies about what happened to these women's ways of knowing in the immediate social context of their teachers' instructional practices and within the larger cultural contexts of family, religion, and education. In addition, I hoped that by limiting the number of participants I would be better able to probe below the surface of "obvious" meanings to describe the experience as "lived" rather than just as the participants have come to explain or articulate it themselves (van Manen, 1990).

I chose to study only women because most of the literature on women's and men's epistemologies in the United States supports the need to look at each gender separately. I decided that it would be inappropriate to try to interpret the stories of Bangladeshi men

of women together; their family, community, and social situations are simply too dissimilar. The most interesting point in their lives, even if it is in transition, is the point at which the students are aware of the social determinants in their continued lives.

### Finding Participants

Finding participants turned out to be a challenge. I share with you the challenges I faced, and second, because they provide a context for the focus of this research.

First semester. My initial plan was to go to GU, that GU was an English-major university with approximately 100 students. In early September, however, this was not the case. Approximately 200 more students, mostly men, were enrolled. While the majority of whom were men. While the majority of the students were business majors, and professional courses, few of the students were business majors. With liberal arts material, I immediately began my study? How would I come to find interested women? What kinds of

and women together; their family, community, and religious roles and their historical situations are simply too dissimilar. I chose to study first-year women because they are at an interesting point in their lives, entering a new setting and academic culture for the first time. In turn, this state of transition should make more visible the social and cultural contexts of which the students are a part. In addition, students' first-year experience are critical determinants in their continued participation and achievement at college (Gardner, 1989).

### Finding Participants

Finding participants turned out to be considerably more difficult than I had anticipated. I share with you the challenges I faced for two reasons: first, because they are related to the focus of this research, specifically women's struggles with voice and silence; and second, because they provide some important information about the context.

First semester. My initial plan was based on my understanding, communicated to me by GU, that GU was an English-medium school (i.e., all classes were taught only in English) with approximately 100 students, half of whom were women. When I arrived in early September, however, this was no longer the case. The university had admitted approximately 200 more students, most of whom spoke little or no English, and the majority of whom were men. While the course catalogues included a number of liberal arts and professional courses, few of the liberal arts courses had ever been offered; 75% of the students were business majors. Since I speak no Bengali, and am most familiar with liberal arts material, I immediately became concerned. Would it be possible for me to do my study? How would I communicate with these women? Would there be enough interested women? What kinds of courses would these women be taking?

While my experienced dissertation supervisor, who had done qualitative research, I admit, I was not a native English speaker. My high-medium school was little more than a place to have a simple conversation. It was not a place to have a simple conversation, let alone challenging conversation. I was in Bangladesh from September through December 2001. I was in Bangladesh with students and faculty, with whom I was not a participant-observer. I was not a participant-observer who would not only communicate about their ways of knowing, but also about their ways of speaking English. It would be difficult to say that we meant the same thing, let alone that we made any sense to the other person.

Since I had no formal contact with the students, I had to rely on the recruitment and selection of the students. I was reviewing all the first-year students who had attended Bengali-medium schools. Bengali was the sole medium of instruction in these schools. English communication classes, as required by the government, were supposed to assess the students' ability to speak English. I was not sure if students spoke little or no English.

Of the nearly fifty students who had attended secondary schools, half were women. Most of them were from countries other than Bangladesh at the time of the study.

While my experienced dissertation committee had prepared me for the surprises of international research, I admit, I was a little more surprised than I would have liked. An English-medium school was little more than a misleading label at this point. I would not be able to have a simple conversation with the majority of students and many of the faculty, let alone challenging conversations about ways of knowing. Most of the first semester (September through December 1995) was spent trying to find participants, both students and faculty, with whom I would be able to communicate. While still trying to find participants who would not only be willing, but also able to reflect upon and communicate about their ways of knowing, I was most concerned about finding people who spoke English. It would be difficult enough determining whether or not the words we use meant the same thing, let alone having to worry about whether the words we were using made any sense to the other person.

Since I had no formal contact with the first-year students, I decided to approach the recruitment and selection of the participants somewhat systematically. I began by reviewing all the first-year students' files. I discovered that approximately 150 of the students had attended Bengali-medium elementary and secondary schools (i.e., where Bengali was the sole medium of instruction). Based on enrollment in the introductory English communication classes, as well as discussions with the admissions interviewers who were supposed to assess the students' language ability, I determined that this group of students spoke little or no English. Only fifteen of these students were women.

Of the nearly fifty students who had attended English-medium elementary and secondary schools, half were women. And almost half of these women were educated in countries other than Bangladesh at some point. Many were the daughters of diplomats

ambassadors and had spent a significant amount of time at American International Schools.

an additional complication factor to consider was the fact that many of the women who had completed their elementary and secondary education in Bangladesh were currently in the United States.

While this group is currently in the United States, many of them are attending English-medium schools and departments. This was a significant factor in ensuring that the women spoke English fluently.

For these university students would be able to communicate with me. I believed this would allow me to overcome the language barrier and ensure that the women were able to understand the information I was providing.

The majority of the women at GU had completed their undergraduate education in Bangladesh. This group of women seems most representative of the target population. I was encouraged to pursue, high school and college education, and to encourage them to pursue higher education.

I sent a note to each of the women at GU. I explained that I was interested in their experiences and that I would like to meet with them. I explained that I was interested in their experiences and that I would like to meet with them.

Some women were willing to meet with me. Some women were willing to meet with me. Some women were willing to meet with me. Some women were willing to meet with me.

Some women were willing to meet with me. Some women were willing to meet with me. Some women were willing to meet with me. Some women were willing to meet with me.

GU had not hired me to do this research. I was hired by the University of Maryland. I was hired by the University of Maryland. I was hired by the University of Maryland.

and ambassadors and had spent a significant amount of time abroad, often being educated at American International Schools. I believed their international education to be an additional complication/factor to consider in my study. Thus, I decided to try to work with the Bangladeshi women who had been educated solely in Bangladesh throughout their elementary and secondary education, but who studied at English-medium schools. While this group is currently in the minority, the country is trying to increase the number of English medium schools and decrease the number of Bengali medium schools. This criterion ensured that the women spoke English fluently, and also eliminated the concern that these university students would be studying at an English-medium school for the first time. I believed this would allow me to focus on their ways of knowing, with as little interference from language barriers as possible. In addition, I think it is worth noting that the majority of the women at GU had attended English-medium schools, and thus this group of women seems most representative of Bangladeshi women who are allowed to pursue, higher education, at least at private universities.

I sent a note to each of the fifteen women who had been educated at elementary and secondary English-medium schools asking them to meet with me. Only eight of the women were willing to meet with me. Some of these women sought me out independently, others arrived in groups. I discussed the project with each of them, explaining that there were possibilities for meeting individually and in groups, depending on their preferences as well as the goals of the study. All of the women were very concerned about who would see this research. They were visibly relieved to find out that I had not hired me to do this research, but rather that I was conducting it for my dissertation with the hope of learning about women college students' ways of knowing. I

to explain that ultimately I hoped  
teaching and learning at GU. I  
had with anyone at GU without  
identified in any way. I suggested  
six to me by the end of the week.

A few of the women who sa  
review or to tell me that they we  
who had initially expressed interest  
meeting as a group, but the day t  
they were no longer interested. At  
meeting as a group was related to c  
women were only interested in mee

Based on reports by the stud  
observations, it appeared that the w  
to public and social; i.e., the wom  
decisions as a group and thus it is v  
approve of and are participating in  
The student was confident and ope  
individually because she would no  
was present. This private level al  
the great amount of competition ar

Based on my experience in  
and Bangladesh, I expected all of



did explain that ultimately I hoped that what I learned would help improve the quality of the teaching and learning at GU. I assured them, however, that no information would be shared with anyone at GU without their consent, and that none of them would be identified in any way. I suggested that the women think about what I had said and get back to me by the end of the week.

A few of the women who said they were interested never returned to schedule an interview or to tell me that they were not interested. I did try to contact all the women who had initially expressed interest. There were several women who were only interested in meeting as a group, but the day the group interview was scheduled the women decided they were no longer interested. At the time, I thought that the women's interest in meeting as a group was related to cultural norms and preferences, but the fact that several women were only interested in meeting individually provided evidence to the contrary.

Based on reports by the students themselves, as well as from my own observations, it appeared that the women functioned at two levels. One level seemed to be public and social; i.e., the women, especially the first-year women, travel in and make decisions as a group and thus it is very important for them to do things that their peers approve of and are participating in. The second level seemed to be private and individual. One student was confident and open enough to say that she would want to meet individually because she would not be able to say what she really thought if her friends were present. This private level also seemed related to the students' own description of a great amount of competition among students and the people of Bangladesh.

Based on my experience in the U.S., as well as my 1993 work with women in Bangladesh, I expected all of the women students to be willing and eager to talk

...time. Although I am only a novice  
developing strong rapport with my participants  
quite rather quickly. These experiences  
surprised and frustrated at my inability  
women, however, agreed to participate  
talking with me about their experiences  
women was thrilled because she felt  
would later lose interest, or turn out  
experiences. I asked these women to  
expressed some interest, but none agreed  
because they wanted to be doing  
followed up on their own.

Since I had no relationship  
proposed research project, the students  
they did not know me, and were not  
expressed great concern about not  
or a university employee, was always  
relationships, their whereabouts, etc.  
about what they did and wore and  
privacy, and were concerned about  
to the women in the village who I  
total isolation and who were paid

with me. Although I am only a novice researcher, I have always been successful at developing strong rapport with my participants; and I was always able to develop this rapport rather quickly. These experiences and expectations resulted in me feeling surprised and frustrated at my inability to connect with these women. Three of the eight women, however, agreed to participate in the study, expressing a genuine interest in talking with me about their experiences at GU and about their lives in general. One of the women was thrilled because she felt like she was "getting a friend." For fear that they could later lose interest, or turn out to be unwilling or unable to reflect upon their experiences, I asked these women to ask their friends if they were interested. A few expressed some interest, but none agreed to be interviewed. I think the friends only agreed because they wanted to be doing what their friends were doing. None of them followed up on their own.

Since I had no relationship with these students outside of the context of my proposed research project, the students may have been reluctant to work with me because they did not know me, and were not sure they could trust me. All of the women expressed great concern about not having any privacy. Someone, be it a family member or a university employee, was always monitoring their behavior, their dress, their relationships, their whereabouts, etc. And their reputations depended on what people said about what they did and wore and said. Thus, these women wanted anonymity and privacy, and were concerned about how others perceived them. This was in stark contrast to the women in the village who I had interviewed two years earlier who lived in almost total isolation and who were paid very little attention. They had been eager to tell their

girls eager to have someone listen

(The students were reluctant to partici

In addition, school in Bangl

hish and away from their parents

ayed until five in the evening. As

for freedom and their fun. Perhaps

rough, is that the students were s

about forty hours each week at sch

was spent in class.

Although the three women

interested (i.e., they kept telling me

interview times), they were not ver

did not show for scheduled interv

difficult to know for sure whether

they didn't show for other reasons

and tried to figure out what was go

interested in working with me, and

to interview each of the women or

beginning was a huge source of fr

like all my participants.

While I was struggling to

relationships with four sophomores

mostly abroad, mostly in Americ

stories, eager to have someone listen. I think this is an important explanation for why the GU students were reluctant to participate.

In addition, school in Bangladesh is a place where students can be with their friends, and away from their parents. Most students arrived at eight in the morning and stayed until five in the evening. Any time away from their friends was seen as a cost to their freedom and their fun. Perhaps a simpler explanation, although not one I support strongly, is that the students were simply too busy to participate. The students spent about forty hours each week at school, and only twelve to fifteen of those hours (if that) were spent in class.

Although the three women who agreed to be in the study seemed genuinely interested (i.e., they kept telling me they wanted to participate and continued to set up interview times), they were not very reliable or dependable. On several occasions they did not show for scheduled interviews, or they canceled at the last minute. This made it difficult to know for sure whether the students were really interested in participating, or if they didn't show for other reasons. After each missed interview, I sought out the student and tried to figure out what was going on. I always asked if the student was still interested in working with me, and each time she assured me that she was. I did manage to interview each of the women once before the end of the first semester. This shaky beginning was a huge source of frustration and anxiety for me, for I feared that I would lose all my participants.

While I was struggling to find participants, I was also developing strong relationships with four sophomore and junior women who had been educated almost entirely abroad, mostly in America and England. They helped me to understand how I

us being perceived by the majority as being from America who only besides were not immediately or suddenly, I drew further attention to clothes was not unacceptable. (mar clothing), it seemed to enhance my person at GU during the F- educated women, however, I was a who sought me out as a friend, and other oppressive situations. The ones. They all had been "kidnap Bangladesh after years of living in families, their religion, their culture, time I was a possible way out; thus, these women were not ideal participants. Their stories helped to me further understand Bangali Muslim culture.

Second semester. At the start of the semester, I returned to find out that a friend had been in a terrible car accident in which her friend had been seriously injured. She had been returning to Bangladesh anytime soon to talk with me about anything.

as being perceived by the majority of students at GU. As a white woman with light curly hair from America who only spoke English, I was definitely seen as an outsider; and outsiders were not immediately or easily trusted. By dressing in western attire, albeit modestly, I drew further attention to myself as an outsider. While wearing western clothes was not unacceptable, (many of the English-medium students wore western clothing), it seemed to enhance my outsider status, perhaps because I was the only western person at GU during the Fall semester. To this handful of internationally educated women, however, I was a bit of a haven. They did not speak Bengali either and they sought me out as a friend, as a confidante, as someone who could help them out of their oppressive situations. They saw me as someone who would understand their stories. They all had been "kidnapped" by their families and forced to return to live in Bangladesh after years of living in England or America. They all felt silenced by their families, their religion, their culture. I represented something that they wanted, and for me I was a possible way out; thus they spent hours telling me about their lives. While these women were not ideal participants for the study, for the reasons I discussed earlier, their stories helped to me further my understanding of the students at GU as well as of the Bengali Muslim culture.

Second semester. At the start of the Spring (1996) semester (after a 6-week break), I returned to find out that my most interested and eager participant had been in a terrible car accident in which her husband of only two weeks had died and in which she had been seriously injured. She had been air-lifted to Singapore and would not be returning to Bangladesh anytime soon. Obviously, she would have been in no condition to talk with me about anything.

Because the registration process was so chaotic, many students did not know their schedules for several weeks. Some students had not made major changes to their plans until the last minute, less than a week prior to the first day of class. It was impossible. I arrived very early to the first day of class, and I saw that whatever classes they attended. On the first day, only a few other women attended only two or three classes. In the next two days of classes, the count went up to about 100. I determined who would become the first group of students. As the strikes continued and class cancellations increased, many faculty and students traveled to the strike zone.

Classes resumed about three weeks later. At this time, one of my two remaining students, a woman named "Interviewed." She was very concerned about the situation. I asked her a specific question about her own topics of interest. She represented a typical English-medium student. She would be unable, or unwilling, to attend the classes.

I believe she dropped out of the program. She was with her friends, and our weekly meetings were uncomfortable with me and the other students. She was nervous during our meetings, and



Because the registration process was so disorganized, my remaining two students did not know their schedules for several days after the start of Spring semester. They had both made major changes to their pre-registration schedules. I did the best to contact them prior to the first day of class, but the unreliable phone system in Bangladesh made this impossible. I arrived very early the first day of classes and followed them to whatever classes they attended. One of the students only attended one of her classes, and the other women attended only two. I actually sat in on more classes than they did! After only two days of classes, the country went on strike due to the upcoming political election to determine who would become the country's next prime minister. For nearly three weeks the strikes continued and classes were postponed because it was impossible for the faculty and students to travel to the university without risking their lives.

Classes resumed about three weeks later during the first week of March. During this time, one of my two remaining participants decided she "just wasn't up to being interviewed." She was very concerned about what she was saying, and constantly asked me if she was talking about the right things. She only seemed to be able to talk about things if I asked her a specific question. She was unable to initiate a conversation or pursue her own topics of interest. I was sad to see her drop out since I thought she represented a typical English-medium student at GU; however, I had been concerned that she would be unable, or unwilling, to reflect upon her experiences at any depth.

I believe she dropped out for two main reasons: first, she wanted to spend more time with her friends, and our weekly meetings interfered with that; and second, I believe she was uncomfortable with me asking probing "why" questions. She seemed visibly nervous during our meetings, and verbally responded to my questions by saying things

said: "What do you want me to s  
had ever asked her why before.  
things and experiences. Other stu  
themselves. They seemed unable to  
ing asked questions such as "Why  
ness to the fact that these student  
teachers. They have little experien  
to used to speaking when they ar  
Bengali culture will also not eat  
for women not to eat until a man ac

I again sought out participa  
classes as my remaining participan  
they were taking the same classes.  
being able to see how different stu  
practices. I was relieved to find on  
participate in the study. Fortunatel  
hardly, she had an extremely inte  
exceptionally bright, reflective, an

#### Interviewing the Women Students

Erickson and Schultz (1992)  
from the recent research literature.  
before Erickson and Schultz publi  
knowing had been listening to and

such as, "What do you want me to say" and "I don't know what to say." It was as if no one had ever asked her why before, and she was unable or afraid to explain her thoughts, feelings, and experiences. Other students were also reluctant to being asked to think for themselves. They seemed unable to explore things in depth because they were not used to being asked questions such as "Why?" and "What do you mean by...?" I think this is related to the fact that these students rarely discuss things with family, friends, or teachers. They have little experience with independent thinking or analysis, and they are only used to speaking when they are asked or invited to speak. Interestingly, women in the Bengali culture will also not eat without being invited to do so. It is quite common for women not to eat until a man actually offers the food.

I again sought out participants, this time by directly asking students in the same classes as my remaining participant in the hope that I would have at least two participants who were taking the same classes. This would allow me to meet my original goal of being able to see how different students interpret the same teacher's instructional practices. I was relieved to find one more woman, Rahnuma, who was willing to participate in the study. Fortunately for me, it was her first year at GU, she spoke English fluently, she had an extremely interesting and poignant story to tell, and she was an exceptionally bright, reflective, and articulate young woman.

#### Interviewing the Women Students

Erickson and Schultz (1992) assert that "what has been most conspicuously absent from the recent research literature...is the first-person voice of the student" (p. 480). Even before Erickson and Schultz published this assertion, researchers studying ways of knowing had been listening to and writing about the first-person voice of the student. My

ment is committed to hearing stu-  
dents' data collection approach was  
the best means to illuminate and  
understand knowing, learning, and teaching  
from the perspective of the partici-  
pant researchers (King, 1994).  
As naturalistic inquirers (Lincoln &  
Guba, 1985), we sought to gain infor-  
mation about understandings.  
We transcribed all the interviews to ensure  
accuracy. The participants said:

Since the students and I lived on campus,  
we conducted interviews away from the campus (in  
off-campus buildings). This left us with few  
options. The off-campus buildings were easily  
accessible and ensured privacy. When  
they were available, as well as when they  
were both centrally located in the campus  
community hierarchy in place in Bangladesh.  
As a student, I do not think that I would have  
chosen these interview sites. Ideally, I would have  
chosen a site where, however, the students were not  
on campus.

Developing rapport is widely  
acknowledged (Lincoln, 1990; Hammersley &  
Trumbull, 1992). As an insider, I worked very

earch is committed to hearing students' voices, and thus follows this tradition. The primary data collection approach was in-depth focused individual interviews because they are the best means to illuminate and describe the meanings held by students and teachers about knowing, learning, and teaching. The interview is viewed by both cognitive development researchers (King, 1990; Loevinger & Wessler, 1970; Perry, 1970, 1988) and naturalistic inquirers (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) as providing the most accurate information about understandings, meanings, and actions. I audiotaped and personally transcribed all the interviews to ensure that I had a complete record of what the participants said.

Since the students and I lived far from the university it was difficult to hold the interviews away from the campus (which consists of four very disconnected and spread out buildings). This left us with few options for good interview sites; i.e., sites that were easily accessible and ensured privacy. We used both a variety of university offices, if and when they were available, as well as empty classrooms. Neither site was ideal because they were both centrally located in the campus building and quite noisy. Given the strong gender hierarchy in place in Bangladesh, and the poor relationships most students have with their parents, I do not think that the students' homes would have been better interview sites. Ideally, I would have chosen my home or some other private location; however, the students were not willing, nor allowed, to meet me outside of the GU campus.

Developing rapport is widely discussed in the qualitative literature (Connelly & Lounsbury, 1990; Hammersley & Atkinson, 1983; Spradley, 1979). Especially because of my outsider status, I worked very hard to develop rapport with all of the participants. I

get to make them feel comfortable  
ness, and I did not probe as deep  
as I figured that I would return  
developed more rapport. While all  
cing to share personal information  
sidents, I always felt that there was  
reviewer, and the student, the yo  
specially at first, rarely initiated o  
question. In addition, all the studen  
more respect of an elder, despite m  
This is rooted in the strong hierarch  
of the Bengali culture. Young, unbr  
hierarchy, so I was not surprised by  
not unfamiliar to me since my rela  
participants, in the United States ha  
Ultimately, as I have said, the form  
being open and honest about diffic  
this gave me privileges to ask per  
comfortable asking.

I conducted biographical in  
twice during the Fall semester. I u  
developed by Burt Bargerstock and  
understanding the cultural context

and to make them feel comfortable by making the initial interviews very informal and friendly, and I did not probe as deeply as I would have liked for fear of overwhelming them. I figured that I would return to topics of interest at a later time once we had developed more rapport. While all of the women seemed comfortable with me and were willing to share personal information (especially the woman who was injured in the car accident), I always felt that there was an insurmountable gap between myself, the older interviewer, and the student, the younger, less experienced person. The students, especially at first, rarely initiated or continued discussion without being asked a direct question. In addition, all the students called me "Madame," which is the term used to denote respect of an elder, despite my efforts to get them to call me by my first name. This is rooted in the strong hierarchy system which is pervasive throughout GU, as well as the Bengali culture. Young, unmarried women have especially low status in the hierarchy, so I was not surprised by their somewhat formal interactions with me. It was unfamiliar to me since my relationships with my students, and especially my research participants, in the United States have tended to be much more equal and very informal. Ultimately, as I have said, the formality did not seem to prevent the participants from being open and honest about difficult topics. In some ways, I believe my status as an older woman gave me privileges to ask personal questions that I would not otherwise have felt comfortable asking.

I conducted biographical interviews with all three of my original participants during the Fall semester. I used the educational biography interview protocol developed by Burt Bargerstock and Steve Weiland as a guide for the purposes of understanding the cultural contexts, and their influence, on each student's educational

periences and development. I m  
al appropriate. Despite the even  
ver useful in broadening my und  
providing useful comparisons with  
interviews, as well as from inform  
for women had many shared exp  
struggles as women.

I interviewed my one remain  
over each week throughout the Sp  
February through May 1996), payi  
was being influenced and shaped  
classes, as well as the more genera  
get. Ongoing interviews were nec  
and thus for providing a richer, ful  
woman's ways of knowing. It was  
a "partial picture" of Rahnuma's v  
provided by Perry's, Belenky et al.  
interviews.

These ongoing interviews v  
interview enables me as the researc  
topic at hand (Bogdan & Biklen, 19  
position, "Tell me about what's hap  
less acquainted, the interviews be



periences and development. I modified the protocol as needed to be culturally sensitive and appropriate. Despite the eventual loss of all my original participants, these interviews were useful in broadening my understanding of women's experiences in Bangladesh, and providing useful comparisons with my remaining participant. From these initial interviews, as well as from informal conversations with other women, it was clear that these women had many shared experiences, especially concerning their treatment and struggles as women.

I interviewed my one remaining participant, Rahnuma, for approximately 1 1/2 hours each week throughout the Spring semester (approximately sixteen weeks, from February through May 1996), paying particular attention to how her ways of knowing were being influenced and shaped by the immediate and bounded social contexts of her experiences, as well as the more general and pervasive cultural contexts of which she was a part. Ongoing interviews were necessary for understanding what can happen over time, and thus for providing a richer, fuller, more representative picture of what happens to a woman's ways of knowing. It was my hope that weekly interviews would indeed provide a "motion picture" of Rahnuma's ways of knowing, as opposed to the "snapshots" provided by Perry's, Belenky et al.'s, and Baxter Magolda's more limited number of interviews.

These ongoing interviews were unstructured and open ended because this type of interview enables me as the researcher to understand how the participant structures the data at hand (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992). Each interview began with the same general question, "Tell me about what's happening in your classes...." As Rahnuma and I became acquainted, the interviews became increasingly conversational. Some might

include some of the interviews as  
experience of the participant. Hart  
and interviews: one strength is the  
with the researcher and the particip  
however, one weakness is that the  
participant's conversation.

The interviews conversatio  
epistemological development defin  
(Lifton, 1977; Perry, 1970, 1988):

- roles of the learner
- roles of the instructor
- roles of peers
- nature of the subject matter
- evaluation
- teaching methods
- classroom environment
- power
- self-identity
- gender

Three topics were introduced direc  
participant to pursue directions and  
to you, as the learner, play in your  
come to know things?). I always a

scribe some of the interviews as dialogues, organized and focused around the experience of the participant. Hart (1981) highlighted the strengths and weaknesses of interviews: one strength is that the dialogical character of these interviews allows the researcher and the participant to continuously clarify their understandings; however, one weakness is that the researcher's presence and interests will direct the participant's conversation.

The interviews/conversations introduced the following ten topics about stemological development defined by previous research (Baxter Magolda, 1992; Lounsbury, 1977; Perry, 1970, 1988):

roles of the learner

roles of the instructor

roles of peers

nature of the subject matter

evaluation

teaching methods

classroom environment

power

self-identity

gender

the topics were introduced directly, but the questions were open-ended to allow the participant to pursue directions and stories of greatest importance to her (e.g., What role do you, as the learner, play in your own learning? What role does gender play in how you learn to know things?). I always asked for reasons supporting the perspectives that the

participant offered if they were not  
to participant's comments to ensure  
fairness. Rahnuma seemed con-  
vinced I misunderstood or misre-

### Interviewing the Teachers

In addition to interviewing  
to better understanding of each teacher  
Neither teacher knew of Rahnuma  
only. I met with each teacher three  
teaching context he was playing a role  
presented in each teacher's attention  
encourage particular ways of know-  
prior to the beginning of the semester  
e.g., from the university, elementary  
teacher was receiving (and perhaps  
teaching. The second interview took  
and the final interview took place

Both teachers were very inter-  
viewing. Rahnuma's environment  
who was born, raised, and educated  
undergraduates, as well as his first  
since a university in the U.S., and his  
Department of Education. He was

participant offered if they were not clear from the comments. Finally, I summarized orally participant's comments to ensure that I understand her intended meanings. Fortunately, Rahnuma seemed comfortable and confident enough to disagree with me whenever I misunderstood or misrepresented her meanings.

### Interviewing the Teachers

In addition to interviewing Rahnuma, I also interviewed two of her teachers to get a better understanding of each teacher's instructional practices from his point of view. Neither teacher knew of Rahnuma's or any of the other women's participation in the study. I met with each teacher three times over the course of the semester to discuss the teaching context he was playing a role in creating for the student. In particular, I was interested in each teacher's attention, intentional or unintentional, to support and encourage particular ways of knowing in their classes. The first interview took place prior to the beginning of the semester, and included questions about the cultural messages (from the university, elementary and secondary schools, families, religion) that the teacher was receiving (and perhaps intended to advocate) about knowledge, knowing, and learning. The second interview took place midway through the semester after midterms. The final interview took place during finals week.

Both teachers were very interested in discussing their teaching and their students' learning. Rahnuma's environment teacher, Dr. Markus, is a Caucasian American man who was born, raised, and educated in the United States. This was his first time teaching undergraduates, as well as his first time living abroad. He had a Doctorate in Economics from a university in the U.S., and had worked for several years for the U.S. Government Department of Education. He was eager and able to be reflective and articulate about the

was central to this study, and speaking about knowing the subject matter of

Rahnuma's mathematics textbook. Rahnuma was not educated in Dhaka, Bangladesh.

Mathematics the previous year, and

While he was very willing to speak

nothing, we experienced serious

limited ability to speak English, and

to explore the elusive and complex

problematic for me and the few stu-

important to note that this was not

interviewed since they all spoke Bengali

Madras, where I collected a tremendous

relatively short periods of time, making

to an attempt to ensure that I had

each of Mr. Zaman's answers. Because

follow, there are few direct quotations

Other Sources of Information and

What the student herself said

however, it was also important to

interpretations. The following sources

happening to her ways of knowing

was central to this study, and spoke at length about his beliefs about learning, teaching, and knowing the subject matter of environment.

Rahnuma's mathematics teacher, Mr. Zaman, is a Bangladeshi man, born, raised, and educated in Dhaka, Bangladesh. He had completed his Master's degree in mathematics the previous year, and this was also his first time teaching undergraduates. While he was very willing to speak with me, and eager to hear what I thought about his teaching, we experienced serious communication problems. The combination of his very limited ability to speak English, and my total inability to speak Bengali, made it difficult to explore the elusive and complex phenomenon of ways of knowing. While this was problematic for me and the few students in the class who did not speak Bengali, it is important to note that this was not a problem for Rahnuma or any of the other women I interviewed since they all spoke Bengali fluently. In contrast to my interviews with Dr. Markus, where I collected a tremendous amount of information about ways of knowing in relatively short periods of time, my interviews with Mr. Zaman were slow and difficult. In an attempt to ensure that I had understood him correctly, I paraphrased and repeated much of Mr. Zaman's answers. Because his English would be difficult for readers to follow, there are few direct quotations from Mr. Zaman.

#### Other Sources of Information and Meaning

What the student herself said about her experiences was central to this study; however, it was also important to consider other sources of information, and other interpretations. The following sources of data helped me to more fully describe what was meaning to her ways of knowing.





Observations. To complement these interviews, I attended two of Rahnuma's classes throughout the semester to better understand the various teaching contexts and instructional practices that she was experiencing. Through observation, I documented the teachers' instructional practices, in particular the teaching methods employed, as well as student's participation in these teaching contexts. This helped provide me with a better understanding of the relationship between the student and the teacher. The focus, however, was primarily on the student's understanding of this relationship. Attending these classes helped facilitate the conversational interviews by providing a shared experience to which we (interviewer and interviewee) could both refer.

Course materials. Throughout the study, I collected and read the student's course materials, including the syllabus, assignment guides, evaluation procedures, and the student's written work (both before and after receiving feedback from the instructor). With the student, the teacher, and on my own, I tried to make sense of these materials in respect to how they informed the student's understanding of which ways of knowing were supported and accepted by the teacher's instructional practices. This provided some information about what was happening to the student's ways of knowing and about the ways of knowing accepted and privileged by each teacher's instructional practices.

### **Finding My Story: Data Analysis**

While I have written a separate section on data analysis, it is important to note that analysis occurred throughout the data collection process. Merriam (1988) describes the process of data collection and analysis as "recursive and dynamic" (p. 123). According to Merriam,

A qualitative design is em  
what to ask, or where to lo  
collected. Hunches, work  
investigator's attention to  
one's hunches. (p. 123)

While analysis was an ongoing ad

ressive once all the data were co

g data collection was complete.

Interviewing, observing, a

participant and her teachers as we

the course of the study generated

and cultural influences on women

my research question, which fo

knowing in particular teaching/lea

students were no longer in these p

information as needed for clarific

Transcribing all the interview and

(transcription machine) was an ext

data analysis.

#### Organizing the Data

To begin, I organized all o

notes, course materials, and reflec

eight case study data reports, one

material as a case record to differ

A qualitative design is emergent: One does not know whom to interview, what to ask, or where to look next without analyzing data as they are collected. Hunches, working hypotheses, and educated guesses direct the investigator's attention to certain data and then to refining and/or verifying one's hunches. (p. 123)

While analysis was an ongoing activity throughout my research, it certainly became more intensive once all the data were collected. This section describes the analysis done after my data collection was complete.

Interviewing, observing, and analyzing course materials from the one main participant and her teachers as well as from the seven other women whom I met with over the course of the study generated a tremendous amount of information about the social and cultural influences on women's ways of knowing. My data collection was bounded by my research question, which focused on what was happening to students' ways of knowing in particular teaching/learning contexts. At the end of the semester, when the students were no longer in these particular teaching contexts, I only collected more information as needed for clarification and explication of the already existing data. Transcribing all the interview and observational data myself (without the aid of a transcription machine) was an extremely helpful, albeit slow, way of ensuring ongoing data analysis.

#### Organizing the Data

To begin, I organized all of my information -- interview transcripts, observation notes, course materials, and reflective memos -- into case study data reports. I wrote at case study data reports, one on each student. Patton (1980) refers to this organized material as a case record to differentiate it from the final case study.

The case record pulls together a comprehensive primary source of the major information that a study. Information is edited together, and the case record is chronologically [or] topically manageable. (p. 313)

In an attempt to keep parts from being considered out of context, I have tried to show how the temporal organization helped to influence and shape these women's experiences. Not only do the data reports involve basic secondary analysis. In other words, they include, and how things are interpreted and represent the sense of what is my own interpretation of what

#### Developing Reasonable Conclusions

It is extremely difficult to know directly through observation intensive analysis. Intensive analysis comes up with reasonable conclusions from the data" (p. 139). Specifically the data (Merriam, 1988).

I began my analysis by reviewing attention to my original research data actually addressed these ques

The case record pulls together and organizes the voluminous case data into a comprehensive primary resource package. The case record includes all the major information that will be used in doing the case analysis and case study. Information is edited, redundancies are sorted out, parts are fitted together, and the case record is organized for ready access either chronologically [or] topically. The case record must be complete but manageable. (p. 313)

In an attempt to keep particular events, interactions, and interpretations from being considered out of context, I organized my case study data reports chronologically. This temporal organization helped me to see the social and cultural contexts that influence and shape these women's ways of knowing. The development of these case study data reports involve basic sorting of all the data, and thus required some preliminary analysis. In other words, I needed to make decisions about what to include, exclude, and how things are related and communicated. In addition, I began to interpret and represent the sense my students were making of their experiences, and to offer my own interpretation of what these students were experiencing.

#### Developing Reasonable Conclusions

It is extremely difficult to access, let alone make sense of, students' ways of knowing directly through observation and interviews, and thus I needed to do more intensive analysis. Intensive analysis, according to Taylor and Bogdan (1984), is "to come up with reasonable conclusions and generalizations based on a preponderance of data" (p. 139). Specifically this involves consolidating, reducing, and interpreting my data (Merriam, 1988).

I began my analysis by reviewing the research proposal, paying particular attention to my original research questions. It was important to consider how well my data actually addressed these questions, and to consider the possibility of developing new

begin since my ideas about w  
our record data reports several ti  
ues, comments, observations, an  
up of the analysis process as "th  
coming with my data. I also kn  
in. "The notes taken while sear  
extracting, integrating, and synth  
ties what they have seen" (Goe

Deriving reasonable conc  
Guer and Strauss (1967) describ  
established categories from early  
and constantly revising them to a  
collected was informed by, yet no  
one) of students' ways of knowin  
guided by the principles of natura  
from -- be grounded in -- the data

...because no a priori theo  
realities that are likely to  
to be based on a priori ge  
sense, may nevertheless p  
encountered...and because  
to contextual values (and

Developing reasonable co  
constructing a general understand  
experiences from which this und

estions since my ideas about ways of knowing were changing. Next, I read through my  
 se record data reports several times from beginning to end. While reading, I made  
 tes, comments, observations, and questions, in the margins. Merriam describes this  
 ge of the analysis process as "holding a conversation with the data" (p. 131). While  
 nversing with my data, I also kept a running list of major ideas that emerged from my  
 a. "The notes taken while scanning constitute the beginning stages of organizing,  
 stracting, integrating, and synthesizing, which ultimately permit investigators to tell  
 ers what they have seen" (Goetz & LeCompte, 1984, p. 191).

Deriving reasonable conclusions involves being both intuitive and systematic.  
 ser and Strauss (1967) described this process of analysis as beginning with inductively  
 ublished categories from early responses, comparing new responses to those categories,  
 constantly revising them to account for the data. Using this process, the data I  
 ected was informed by, yet not limited to, previous conceptualizations (including my  
 ) of students' ways of knowing. According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), researchers  
 led by the principles of naturalistic inquiry prefer to have the guiding theory emerge  
 n -- be grounded in -- the data,

...because a priori theory could possibly encompass the multiple  
 realities that are likely to be encountered...because a priori theory is likely  
 to be based on a priori generalizations, which, while they make nomothetic  
 sense, may nevertheless provide a poor idiographic fit to the situation  
 encountered...and because grounded theory is more likely to be responsive  
 to contextual values (and not merely to investigator values). (p. 41)

Developing reasonable conclusions required continually moving between  
 ructing a general understanding of the data and testing that against the specific  
 iences from which this understanding was generalized. This involved carefully

...considering and reconsidering the  
relationships to one another. Cre  
...necessity to reconsider (again and  
...initially rework the theory into  
...consistent way. As Geertz (1973)

...guessing at meanings, ass  
...conclusions from the bette  
Meaning and mapping ou

...the essential task of theo  
...regularities but to make th  
cases but to generalize wi

## Limit

While I have tried to disc  
throughout this chapter on metho  
...representation of the ways in  
...one woman's ways of knowing.  
...terms and concepts employed in  
...human instrument, and the time o

## Representation

Mitchell (1990) contends  
representation exacts some cost.  
...form of a gap between intention a  
...minimize the possibility of misre  
...acts of the participants to have s  
...by interpretation. All of the par



considering and reconsidering the specifics of the student's accounts in terms of their relationships to one another. Creating a theoretical explanation of the data makes it necessary to reconsider (again and again) the specifics in light of this theory, and to continually rework the theory until it makes sense of the specifics in a supported and consistent way. As Geertz (1973) explained, the stage of analysis involves:

guessing at meanings, assessing the guesses, and drawing explanatory conclusions from the better guesses, not discovering the Continent of Meaning and mapping out its bodiless landscape. (p. 20)

...the essential task of theory building here is not to codify abstract regularities but to make thick description possible, not to generalize across cases but to generalize within them. (p. 26)

### **Limitations of the Methodology**

While I have tried to discuss the limitations of this naturalistic research study throughout this chapter on methodology, I am most concerned about the authenticity of my representation of the ways in which social and cultural contexts influence and shape the woman's ways of knowing. In addition, I discuss the cultural appropriateness of terms and concepts employed in this study, the limitations inherent in using myself as the human instrument, and the time constraints I encountered.

#### **Representation**

Mitchell (1990) contends that representation is problematic because "every representation exacts some cost, in the form of lost immediacy, presence, or truth, in the form of a gap between intention and realization, of original and copy..." (p. 21). To minimize the possibility of misrepresentation, I constantly paraphrased what I understood each of the participants to have said and asked for confirmation or disconfirmation about my interpretation. All of the participants let me know when my words did not accurately

what they had said, thus in-  
vite students' own stories.

I realize that even with the  
and accounts, and inclusion of the  
Davis & Harre, 1991 1992), the  
presentation of her experien-  
it, will still be my telling of the  
times, my selection of the word  
whose story have I really told

Anna Neumann, in her (1  
telling: A post-holocaust (auto-  
presentation and its relation to  
author's intended meaning throu-

While I reached for his story  
because I cannot (nor do I  
discern that story only on  
where and when I am, what  
his story, what I remember  
as such. Rather, it is what  
understandings, imagine I  
and what I felt, then as I  
him than of myself. Search  
own. What I tell you here

My experiences helped shape not  
findings. My limited understand-  
well as the limited time I knew R

fect what they had said, thus increasing my confidence in the consistency of my story  
th the students' own stories.

I realize that even with the use of multiple data sources, heavy emphasis on first-  
nd accounts, and inclusion of the "messiness" and "contradictions" of lived experiences  
avies & Harre, 1991/1992), the representation of this woman's experiences will still be  
representation of her experiences. The final report, even in narrative and biographical  
m, will still be my telling of this woman's story, my sense of her beliefs and her  
ions, my selection of the words to tell, and my choice of how to express those words.  
whose story have I really told? Rahnuma's or my own?

Anna Neumann, in her (1992) paper entitled, "On experience, memory, and  
wing: A post-holocaust (auto)biography," eloquently addressed this issue of  
resentation and its relation to self. She explained that we can only understand  
ther's intended meaning through our own experience.

While I reached for his story -- accessible to me only in partial form  
because I cannot (nor do I want to) reenter his world -- I have been able to  
discern that story only on my own terms -- only in the image of who I am,  
where and when I am, what I know, and what I seek out. What I discern of  
his story, what I remember of it, and what I then retell is not his experience  
as such. Rather, it is what I, with my inclinations and needs and  
understandings, imagine his experience to be. What I heard, what I saw,  
and what I felt, then as I listened, were about him. But they were less of  
him than of myself. Searching for his story, I created the beginnings of my  
own. What I tell you here and now is less of him than of me. (p. 10)

xperiences helped shape not only the focus of this work, but my interpretation of the  
ngs. My limited understanding of Bangladeshi culture and the Muslim religion, as  
as the limited time I knew Rahnuma and the other women whom I interviewed,

admittedly affected my ability to

is my I tell you here and now

Based on a reading of the

rules who feel I have imposed

eight than Rahnuma's, while ot

degree to which I have been c

rice, allowing her words to stan

Discussion of the role of self in o

since between self and other in

raising the self" (p. 6). I hope a

between self and other.

#### Cross-Cultural Definitions

In an attempt to understand

concepts that may be culturally b

and silence and self and other ma

from North America, meanings th

Bangladesh. This supports Wenc

Ashkenazi women at the Univer

value-laden and culturally differ

discover the participants' own me

concepts and interpretations to cr

imposing concepts on the study.

This study relies significantly on

undoubtedly affected my ability to tell her story. And so, perhaps, as Neumann suggests, the story I tell you here and now is less of Rahnuma than of me.

Based on a reading of the first draft of this study, there will no doubt be some readers who feel I have imposed my voice too much, giving my interpretation more weight than Rahnuma's, while other readers will be frustrated by the ways in which and the degree to which I have been careful not too overpower or overwhelm Rahnuma's voice, allowing her words to stand on their own. I am comforted by Krieger's (1991) discussion of the role of self in one's research. She wrote, "In my view, there is no right balance between self and other in a study. There are simply different ways of expressing, or using, the self" (p. 6). I hope as readers you will find value in the balance I have found between self and other.

#### Cross-Cultural Definitions

In an attempt to understand Rahnuma's ways of knowing, I have used terms and concepts that may be culturally bound. In particular, terms and concepts such as voice and silence and self and other may have particular meanings and values to those of us from North America, meanings that may be different in other cultures such as Bangladesh. This supports Wendy Rosen Esmailka's finding, in her 1994 study of Athabascan women at the University of Alaska, that concepts and their meanings are value-laden and culturally different. In an attempt to be culturally sensitive, and to discover the participants' own meanings and values, I deliberately tried to allow the concepts and interpretations to emerge from the participants' stories, as opposed to imposing concepts on the study. Despite this effort, however, the interpretive nature of this study relies significantly on my interpretation of the women's words and experiences,

of these interpretations are guiding  
pages.

The value I attach to not only  
sely. As I explored how women  
ed others as knowers became ce  
about the tension between  
knowing what was best for them.  
women's development helped m  
repute their sense of self from  
power and identity (Baker Miller  
1985), while differences in self-c  
is clear that many more women t  
ed connections to others, while  
ed autonomy. And perhaps mo  
ering, as opposed to men's conc  
traditional theories of psychology.

Markus and Nurius (1986)  
represent "individuals' ideas of v  
become, and what they are afraid  
Markus (1991) extend this conce  
ed Markus suggest that possible  
instrumental in motivating and d

and these interpretations are guided, and certainly limited, by my cultural background and cases.

The value I attach to notions of self and other, for example, are central to this study. As I explored how women come to know, the question of how they see themselves and others as knowers became central. Rahnuma and the other women, for example, talked about the tension between knowing what was best for themselves versus others knowing what was best for them. Gilligan's (1982) work on psychological theory and women's development helped me to consider the ways in which women often cannot separate their sense of self from their concern for others. According to research on gender and identity (Baker Miller, 1976; Chodorow, 1978; Gilligan, 1977, 1982; Lyons, 1983), while differences in self-definition do not necessarily divide along gender lines, it is clear that many more women than men define themselves in terms of their relationships and connections to others, while many more men define themselves in terms of separation and autonomy. And perhaps most importantly, women's concern with relationship and caring, as opposed to men's concerns with rights and fairness, have been devalued in traditional theories of psychological development (Gilligan, 1982).

Markus and Nurius (1986) introduce the concept of "possible selves" that represent "individuals' ideas of what they might become, what they would like to become, and what they are afraid of becoming" (p. 954). Ryff (1991) and Cross and Markus (1991) extend this concept by studying possible selves across the lifespan. Cross and Markus suggest that possible selves are "psychological resources that are instrumental in motivating and defending the self in the course of adult development" (p. ).

While I found these various women's experiences and struggles, I consider that these notions of selfhood (Boime 1984), the answer to the question of whether or not a culture is an authentic "yes." In the aforementioned studies were important for us to consider alternative ways of thinking about culture that are more culturally appropriate and more reflective of the experiences.

#### Interviewing

Related to my concerns about the interview process, it is my concern about how I, as the researcher, interview myself, but also the interviewee, with my status as an older person. Ratuema's thinking (as I discussed in the previous section) and did. While my outsider status was a concern, in some ways, I believe it was also a strength. Ratuema felt no vulnerability in my presence, and I was aware of the effect I had on Ratuema. I am certain that there was an effect. Ratuema answered them, often with a smile. I imagine how these questions and answers (1990).



While I found these various conceptions of self useful for thinking about these women's experiences and struggles, based on the stories I heard, it is important for me to consider that these notions of self may be culturally bound. According to Shweder and Bourne (1984), the answer to the question, does the concept of the person vary cross-culturally is an emphatic "yes." Taking this into consideration, it is important to note that the aforementioned studies were of North American women and men, and thus, it is important for us to consider alternative notions of self and other, notions which may be more culturally appropriate and relevant, when analyzing and evaluating Rahnuma's experiences.

#### Interviewing

Related to my concerns about whose story I have told and how culturally bound it is, is my concern about how I, as the human instrument, have not only influenced the interview itself, but also the interviewee. The very nature of our conversations, combined with my status as an older person (relative to Rahnuma), may have influenced not only Rahnuma's thinking (as I discussed in the section on interviewing) but also what she said and did. While my outsider status may be viewed as a potential limitation, at least in some ways, I believe it was also advantageous. I was so much of an outsider that Rahnuma felt no vulnerability in being open to me, either at home or at school. While unsure of the effect I had on Rahnuma, despite my attempts to discuss this with her, I am certain that there was an effect. The questions I asked, the way I asked them, and the way Rahnuma answered them, often left me feeling unsettled and disoriented. I can only imagine how these questions and answers affected Rahnuma. According to Patton (1990),

Interviews are interventions  
open thoughts, feelings,  
interviewer but also to the  
through a directed, reflexive  
and leaves them knowing  
or at least were not aware  
thoughtfully reflecting on  
change-inducing. Yet the  
foremost to gather data.

I hope that the effect has been positive

may not be positive in Rahnuma's

this study may have induced.

#### The Constraints

Other limitations included

possible due to the political pro-

students spent in classes each day

understanding had we had more

her story and allow her to critique

authentic cultural interpretation

interpretations of her story. When

distance, I also had concerns about

non-traditional and controversial

tempted to edit her ideas, not be-

them, but rather because she was

Despite the challenges and

shared I have been by Rahnuma

points out, "it is not necessary

Interviews are interventions. They affect people. A good interview lays open thoughts, feelings, knowledge, and experience not only to the interviewer but also to the interviewee. The process of being taken through a directed, reflective process affects the persons being interviewed and leaves them knowing things about themselves that they didn't know -- or at least were not aware of -- before the interview. Two hours or more of thoughtfully reflecting on an experience, a program, or one's life can be change-inducing. Yet the purpose of a research interview is first and foremost to gather data, not change people. (pp. 353-354)

I hope that the effect has been positive in some ways; but what is positive in my world may not be positive in Rahnuma's. And thus I worry about the changes and/or struggles this study may have induced.

### Time Constraints

Other limitations include the pressure I felt to complete as many interviews as possible due to the political problems that shortened the semester and lengthened the time students spent in classes each day. Perhaps I could have developed a richer and fuller understanding had we had more time to discuss things. I did not give Rahnuma a draft of her story and allow her to critique it. Her reactions to the story may have provided a more authentic cultural interpretation and decreased the possibility of my own ethnocentric interpretations of her story. While the reason I did not do this was related to time and distance, I also had concerns about how Rahnuma would react to seeing some of her very non-traditional and controversial thoughts and feelings on paper. She may have been tempted to edit her ideas, not because she felt that I had misunderstood or misrepresented them, but rather because she was fearful of negative repercussions.

Despite the challenges and limitations of this study, I know how profoundly moved I have been by Rahnuma's and the other women's stories. As Geertz (1973) points out, "it is not necessary to know everything in order to understand something" (p.

So, I can only hope that others v  
ways of knowing, specifically ab  
nd other, because they have reac

### The Contexts:

Just as Rahnuma's story is  
ethnology I used, her story wa  
pet to school. This discussion o  
titled for two reasons: first, the  
least no literature directly relat  
Bangladeshi culture or the cu  
allow Rahnuma's story to info  
them

### Bangladesh: A South Asian Mu

The cultural context for th  
Asian country with a population  
countries in the world. Of partic  
treatment of girls and women. A  
women in this study were all mic

According to a recent stu  
are treated as being of lesser valu  
boy is always greeted with joy...  
Boys represent wealth, but girls s  
to be given in marriage" (p. 50).

20). I can only hope that others will come to understand something more about women's ways of knowing, specifically about women's struggles with voice and silence, and self and other, because they have read Rahnuma's story.

### **The Contexts: Bangladesh and Gulshan University**

Just as Rahnuma's story is influenced by my ways of knowing, specifically the methodology I used, her story was also influenced by the contexts in which she lives and goes to school. This discussion of Bangladesh and of Gulshan University is brief and limited for two reasons: first, there is very little literature on either of these contexts, and almost no literature directly related to this study; and second, since this is not a study of the Bangladeshi culture or the culture of Gulshan University, I believe it is more valuable to allow Rahnuma's story to inform you about these cultures as she understands and lives in them.

#### Bangladesh: A South Asian Muslim Country

The cultural context for this study is Bangladesh, a predominantly Muslim South Asian country with a population of over 120 million people; it is one of the poorest countries in the world. Of particular interest and relevance to my study is the status and treatment of girls and women. As you read about the context, keep in mind that the women in this study were all middle to upper class

According to a recent study on childhood in Bangladesh by Blanchet (1996), girls are treated as being of lesser value than boys from the time of their birth. "The birth of a boy is always greeted with joy....The birth of a girl is often received with resentment. Boys represent wealth, but girls are seen as a cumbersome responsibility. They are born to be given in marriage" (p. 50). Even the birthing practices themselves exhibit a

evaluation of girls, and an

everything they should be a

girls' lives into adulthood v

silence when they are hung

infanticide is a common oc

Blanchet also found that gir

higher mortality rates than

likely to be abandoned, offe

Bangladesh society). All of

from the women at GU.

Middle and upper cl

Bangladesh in that they atte

"programmed and pressured

children are not servants or

According to Blanchet, mid

competitive.

Prestigious and lucra

maintenance or impr

requires a great deal

invested in children

through their childre

lucrative and prestige

the order of priority

(p. 147)

Education is highly v

to think and understand, but

devaluation of girls, and are rooted in Islamic beliefs that "boys should live longer and in everything they should be ahead of girls" (p. 51). This devaluation continues throughout girls' lives into adulthood when women are expected "to be quiet and subdued...to wait in silence when they are hungry...to serve their husbands" (p. 51). The practice of infanticide is a common occurrence with girl babies according to the daily newspapers. Blanchet also found that girls who are not killed as infants suffer greater malnutrition and higher mortality rates than boys under the age of five. In addition, girls are much more likely to be abandoned, offered for adoption, or sold into prostitution (an integral part of Bangladesh society). All of Blanchet's findings are consistent with the stories I heard from the women at GU.

Middle and upper class children are different than the majority of children in Bangladesh in that they attend the best schools that their parents can afford, and then are "programmed and pressured to achieve excellence" (Blanchet, p. 145). While these children are not servants or prostitutes, their families certainly employ domestic servants. According to Blanchet, middle and upper class parents perceive the world as highly competitive.

Prestigious and lucrative jobs are seen to be scarce and, therefore, the maintenance or improvement of one's social and economic position requires a great deal of clever manoeuvres. A great deal of ambition is invested in children since parents' social worth is largely confirmed through their children's success. School results should eventually lead to lucrative and prestigious jobs and good marriages. A job and marriage is the order of priority for boys, while for girls a good marriage comes first. (p. 147)

Education is highly valued by these families, not because it improves one's ability to think and understand, but rather because it provides status and opportunities.

According to Blanchet, there is  
secondary school to get the high  
students is on "memorization of  
intelligence" (p. 151). The teach  
students are expected to show "  
the guru-disciple relationship" (

Outside school, however  
children (p. 154). Much more s  
and upper class are brought up  
title and choose their own path  
determination" because these pe  
is especially common method  
messages of Islam and "frighten

Most middle and upper  
rickshaws or in private cars. Th  
own, or to travel to other destina  
crossing a wall separating 'insid  
of Bengali culture and society"  
practice of secluding women in  
(Kanti Paul, 1992, p. 2). Schoo  
work hard to "present an image

Parents also restrict their  
make the "right kind of choice"



According to Blanchet, there is a great deal of pressure throughout elementary and secondary school to get the highest possible grades, and thus the focus for teachers and students is on "memorization of the finite knowledge contained in books....Memory is intelligence" (p. 151). The teacher/student relationship is very hierarchical, whereby students are expected to show "deep respect and devotion" towards their teachers "as in the guru/disciple relationship" (p. 152).

Outside school, however, parents are believed to know what is best for their children (p. 154). Much more so than with lower class families, children of the middle and upper class are brought up accepting what parents decide for them. Some openly rebel and choose their own paths, but this is uncommon and "takes force and determination" because these parents have "many strings to tie their children" (p. 154). An especially common method by which parents maintain obedience is to resort to the messages of Islam and "frighten disobedient children with the fire of hell" (pp. 155-156).

Most middle and upper class children are moved between home and school in rickshaws or in private cars. These children are rarely, if ever, allowed to travel on their own, or to travel to other destinations. Blanchet explains that, "The importance of erecting a wall separating 'inside' and 'outside', the home and the world, is a core value of Bengali culture and society" (p. 156). This wall is similar to purdah, the Islamic practice of secluding women in their homes to exclude them from public male space (Kanti Paul, 1992, p. 2). Schools are generally viewed as "relatively safe islands" which work hard to "present an image of moral and social purity" (p. 157).

Parents also restrict their children's friendships; they do not trust their children to make the "right kind of choice" of friends (Blanchet, p. 159). Some parents limit their

children's interactions to  
trustworthiness. Even ph

Of particular inte

openly rebel against pare

keeping secrets. Blanche

learn to be guarded and r

study said that, faced wit

regularly and systematica

private and public person

It is remarkable ho  
correct personage,  
their doings. This  
socialization as m  
by parents or not.  
manipulate and tel  
both adaptive and

Gulshan University: Private

Stromquist's (1989)

indicates that in South Asi

complete their degrees in h

percent of the population c

fourth of those degrees bei

of careful study of higher e

educational development in

established in January 1992

children's interactions to members of their own family for reasons of convenience and trustworthiness. Even phone calls between friends are known to be censored.

Of particular interest to my study is Blanchet's finding that children who do not openly rebel against parents protest silently by not revealing their inner thoughts and by keeping secrets. Blanchet's study revealed that from the age of eleven or twelve, children learn to be guarded and reserved with their parents. Most children interviewed in the study said that, faced with parents' suspicion and lack of trust, they learn to tell lies regularly and systematically. These children seem to be socialized into developing private and public personas.

It is remarkable how children themselves soon learn the art of fabricating a correct personage, putting on a mask hiding their thoughts, feelings and their doings. This skill constitutes an important aspect of children's socialization as members of the middle and upper class, whether intended by parents or not. Children hiding their thoughts and feelings, learning to manipulate and tell lies, can thus be seen employing a mechanism which is both adaptive and reactive. (p. 162)

#### Gulshan University: Private Higher Education

Stromquist's (1989) study of women and education in developing countries indicates that in South Asia there are more than twice as many men than women who complete their degrees in higher education. In Bangladesh, less than one-half of one percent of the population completes their degrees in higher education, with less than one-fourth of those degrees being conferred on women (UNESCO, 1992). After several years of careful study of higher education in the developed world and of recent trends in educational development in newly industrialized countries, Gulshan University (GU) was established in January 1993 "with a view to integrating the goal of higher education with

to process of national develop

university with approximately

According to GU, the

"seriously fallen behind" throu

and political problems. This s

both for study and for jobs. It

majority of those who pursue

is widely believed that the priv

workforce, economy, and qual

(1988). In particular, many co

so that the country can solve its

(overpopulation, and illiteracy).

(1984). GU's ultimate goal is

sets with marketable skills for

According to the major

pe" as opposed to a place to lea

place to go as opposed to a place

more interested in whether emp

hours, than in whether or not th

seems to be more interested in b

includes learning. Students do

what they are learning in their c

break. The president and man

the process of national development" (Ali, 1993, p. 7). As of 1996, GU is a small, private university with approximately 300 students, one-fourth of whom are women.

According to GU, the public higher education system in Bangladesh has "seriously fallen behind" through lack of resources, a tremendous increase in enrollment, and political problems. This situation has "forced" many students to leave the country both for study and for jobs. It is important to keep in mind, however, that the vast majority of those who pursue higher education are unable to afford international study. It is widely believed that the private university is the country's best hope for improving its workforce, economy, and quality of life (Choudhury, 1990; UNESCO, 1983, 1988a, 1988b). In particular, many contend that Bangladesh needs to educate its local population so that the country can solve its own problems (e.g., poverty, unemployment, overpopulation, and illiteracy), as opposed to relying solely on foreign aid (UNESCO, 1988a). GU's ultimate goal is to produce graduates who are well-grounded in the liberal arts with marketable skills for economic growth.

According to the majority of the students to whom I spoke, school is "a place to go" as opposed to a place to learn. Similarly, for faculty and staff, the university is a place to go as opposed to a place to accomplish work. The president of GU seems much more interested in whether employees are sitting at their desks during the specified work hours, than in whether or not they are being productive. Similarly, most of the students seem to be more interested in being at school than in doing anything at school, and that includes learning. Students do not sit in the common room, or anywhere else, and discuss what they are learning in their classes; rather they are socializing and smoking with their friends. The president and many of the faculty are also more interested in the number of

classes they offer, and the number of students are doing and learning.

While there is a lot of discussion about who can be responsible for and to whom, it is not clear how to extend the semester schedule. The current schedule of classes until 8:00 P.M. (in the evening) focuses on coverage and attendance, rather than on the students' ability to learn. A more flexible schedule would allow the university to collect the high tuition fees for students who have completed high school and college (per semester) would be admitted.

In terms of pedagogy, the university should transform knowledge into practical knowledge. As the dean said, "We [the faculty] know what we know, but we want to transfer our knowledge to the students. Relationships are very important. The current situation usually revealed overcrowded classrooms and a transmission oriented. At the same time, the low student-teacher ratio.

According to the university, the quality of higher education from the United Kingdom is better than the United Kingdom (e.g.,

classes they offer, and the number of classes the students attend, rather than in what the students are doing and learning.

While there is a lot of rhetoric about the students acquiring knowledge so that they can be responsible for and to the average citizens of Bangladesh, the president's decision to extend the semester schedule to classes six days a week, fifty percent longer classes, and classes until 8:00 P.M. (instead of until 5:00 P.M.) demonstrates the University's focus on coverage and attendance as opposed to learning. There was no discussion about the students' ability to learn under these new conditions. This revised schedule, however, would allow the university to continue to hold three academic sessions per year, and to collect the high tuition fees for each of those sessions. Basically, any student who had completed high school and could afford to pay the tuition fees (approx. \$1000-1500 U.S. per semester) would be admitted to GU.

In terms of pedagogy, the rhetoric at commencement by the president was to "transform knowledge into practice....Memorization is forbidden." But in the next breath he said, "We [the faculty] know a lot, but how much can we transfer to the students? We want to transfer our knowledge for the continuity of our culture. Student/faculty relationships are very important." My observations of the actual practice of pedagogy usually revealed overcrowded classrooms in which teaching was very didactic and transmission oriented. At the time of the study, there were not enough faculty to have a low student-teacher ratio.

According to the university president, GU is a combination of components of higher education from the United States (e.g., semester system, grading, course selection), from the United Kingdom (e.g., concentration), and from Germany (e.g., focus on

applied/practical components).

knowledge's sake; knowledge

U is certainly not a liberal art

s liberal compared to the Briti

ying to raise the basic level o

iversity of liberal arts courses, n

According to several m

being "very noninteractive" in

hesitant to stand up and speak

what they think. In general, all

ended to just listen to what the

These descriptions are n

held among the faculty, staff,

teachers, and all elders in gener

teachers are older and more que

minor students expect to be treat

supposed to question teachers b

If they must question their prof

and will not be offensive to the

students should be very concern

because it will affect their grade

In summary, students, es

religion, and educational institu



applied/practical components). He explained that, "GU is not set-up for knowledge for knowledge's sake; knowledge must lead to personal and economic betterment." While GU is certainly not a liberal arts institution in comparison with American universities, it is liberal compared to the British and German universities. The president claims to be trying to raise the basic level of education to become more liberal. Presently, it lists a variety of liberal arts courses, most of which are not now, nor ever have been, offered.

According to several members of the faculty, the women students are described as being "very noninteractive" in class. The women tend to let the men speak. They are hesitant to stand up and speak themselves, and only speak when they are directly asked what they think. In general, all the students were described as not very participatory; they tended to just listen to what their professors had to say.

These descriptions are not surprising, however, given the general attitude and belief among the faculty, staff, and students that students must respect and revere their teachers, and all elders in general. This is based on age as well as qualifications; that is, teachers are older and more qualified than students, and thus deserve respect. Even senior students expect to be treated with respect by the junior students. Students are not supposed to question teachers because teachers are of a much higher status than students. If they must question their professors, they should only do so in a way that is deferential and will not be offensive to the teacher. In particular, faculty and students believe that students should be very concerned with making a good impression with their teachers because it will affect their grades, and grades are very important.

In summary, students, especially girls, receive messages from their family, religion, and educational institutions that they are of lesser value and lower status than

ides, in particular men and c

out speaking up and particip

is more consistently one of sil

and out of school to help fun

operations influence girls' an

others, in particular men and elders. At the university, women receive mixed messages about speaking up and participating in the learning process; outside school, the message is more consistently one of silence and submission. Part Two tells Rahnuma's story both in and out of school to help further our understanding of how such messages and expectations influence girls' and women's ways of knowing.

## LEARNING ON

"Making sense of one's life  
exists in this space of questi  
in order to have a sense of  
we have become and where

## **PART TWO**

### **LEARNING FROM THE PARTICULARS: ONE WOMAN'S STORY**

"Making sense of one's life as a story is...not an optional extra...our lives exist in this space of questions which only a coherent narrative can answer. In order to have a sense of who we are, we have to have a notion of how we have become and where we are going."

Taylor, 1989

Rocky slowly got up from the moment and thought. The most was being held, es weak. He considered his strong but he thought he would have to be perfect early roughness that he severely from his point the pressure had been g unmercifully. Rocky w make his move. He kn what he did in the next (Goetz, 1977)

How did you interpret t  
perhaps something else? When  
are almost as many interpreta  
described this as a story about  
behavior. They are preservice  
thinking and expected to think  
be surprising. The exercise is a  
be interpreted in multiple ways  
knowledge, different interests,  
According to Smith (1975),  
comprehension is relative  
cognitive questions that  
logical consistency or n  
from one who attends  
reading the book "prop  
not of fact. (p. 46)

Rocky slowly got up from the mat, planning his escape. He hesitated a moment and thought. Things were not going well. What bothered him most was being held, especially since the charge against him had been weak. He considered his present situation. The lock that held him was strong but he thought he could break it. He knew, however, that his timing would have to be perfect. Rocky was aware that it was because of his early roughness that he had been penalized so severely -- much too severely from his point of view. The situation was becoming frustrating; the pressure had been grinding on him for too long. He was being ridden unmercifully. Rocky was getting angry now. He felt he was ready to make his move. He knew that his success or failure would depend on what he did in the next few seconds. (Anderson, Reynolds, Schallert, & Goetz, 1977)

How did you interpret this story? As a story about a wrestler? A prisoner? Or

perhaps something else? When I read this story to the students in my class on learning, I

hear almost as many interpretations as I have students. Many of my students have

described this as a story about a small child who has been given a "time-out" for bad

behavior. They are preservice teachers in an education course who are interested in

thinking, and expected to think about, teaching and learning, so this interpretation is not

surprising. The exercise is an effective way for us to see that each story can and will

be interpreted in multiple ways because each of us brings different things (e.g., different

knowledge, different interests, and different questions) to the reading of each story.

According to Smith (1975),

comprehension is relative -- it depends on what we know already and the cognitive questions that we ask. The individual who reads a novel for its logical consistency or narrative power will comprehend it quite differently from one who attends primarily to its poetic qualities. Which one is reading the book "properly"? The answer is in the realm of value judgment, not of fact. (p. 46)

The next two chapters are  
reflect and support Rahnuma's

aim to communicate what I have

thought

Stories capture, more than  
richness and indeterminacy,  
complexity, specificity, and  
which we deal with. The know-  
reduced to abstract rules and  
scientific explanation. In  
interpretations. Story as a  
figures or themes. (Carter, 1992)

I agree with Carter's claim

likely probable that each reader

at different times, am likely to read

reading of the story, is an expression

interests, experiences, and what

According to Neumann (1992),

What I hear of another I  
know. And as I retell the  
through my eyes and ears  
story I tell of the other is  
this knowing, and what  
casts who I am, what I  
tell. (pp. 14-15)

While I am comfortable

believe it is important for me to

body's story can be read as a



The next two chapters are the story of one woman, Rahnuma, organized and told to reflect and support Rahnuma's own telling of her story as much as possible. I have chosen to communicate what I learned about this woman's life in the form of a story to use:

Stories capture, more than scores or mathematical formulae ever can, the richness and indeterminacy of our experiences....[They capture] the complexity, specificity, and interconnectedness of the phenomenon with which we deal....The knowledge represented in story cannot, therefore, be reduced to abstract rules, logical propositions, or the covering laws of scientific explanation. Indeed, stories seem to resist such singular interpretations....Story accommodates ambiguity and dilemma as central figures or themes. (Carter, 1993, pp. 5-6)

I agree with Carter's claim that stories resist singular interpretations, and thus it is highly probable that each reader will make a different interpretation of the story. Even I, at different times, am likely to make different interpretations. For each telling, and each interpretation, of the story, is an expression of the self (Krieger, 1991), shaped by our own interests, experiences, and what we want to know more about ourselves (Peshkin, 1985). According to Neumann (1992),

What I hear of another I can only know in terms of who I am and what I know. And as I retell the experiences of others, I am there as well. It is through my eyes and ears and mind and heart that the story has sifted. The story I tell of the other is as much -- maybe more -- a story of me....It is this knowing, and what I've learned from it about how people know, that casts who I am, what I do, what I reach for, what I remember, and what I tell. (pp. 14-15)

While I am comfortable with these multiple interpretations in some ways, I believe it is important for me to provide some guidance for reading this story. For just as Rahnuma's story can be read as a story about a prisoner or about a wrestler, Rahnuma's story

could also be read as a story about  
development, about students at  
university, about Bangladesh. What  
is asking you to read Rahnuma  
about her beliefs about herself  
as a knower. More specifically  
about voice and silence, self and other  
obligations, themes which were

(1992) work on women and col

Telling you that these st  
is intended to guide but not lim  
that identifying these themes w  
about ways of knowing. Of co  
understanding of girls' and wo  
"all lives have meaning to the

so that others can observe, take  
expression of narrators" (p. 59).

find meaning in and to learn fr  
knowing, in ways that capture

I have chosen to tell Ra  
story from which we can learn

self and other, public and priva

can also be read as a story about many things: for example, about adolescent development, about students at Gulshan University, about women in a developing country, about Bangladesh. While all these issues and foci are part of Rahnuma's story, I am asking you to read Rahnuma's story as a story about a woman's ways of knowing, about her beliefs about herself as a knower, her beliefs about knowledge, and her actions as a knower. More specifically, I am asking you to pay attention to her struggles with voice and silence, self and other, public and private, and choice and expectations/obligations, themes which were central in Belenky et al.'s (1986) and Baxter Magolda's (1992) work on women and college students' ways of knowing respectively.

Telling you that these struggles are central to the development of ways of knowing is intended to guide but not limit your reading of Rahnuma's story. In other words, I hope that identifying these themes will provide a lens for reading Rahnuma's story as a story about ways of knowing. Of course, multiple interpretations are welcome in furthering our understanding of girls' and women's lives more generally. As Weiland (1995) states, "All lives have meaning to the people living them. Finding or supplying meaning to lives so that others can observe, take pleasure in, and perhaps even learn from them is the inspiration of narrators" (p. 59). I hope that in my role as narrator I am able to help you find meaning in and to learn from Rahnuma's story, especially in regard to her ways of knowing, in ways that capture the complexity and contradictions inherent in her life.

I have chosen to tell Rahnuma's story for three reasons: First, I believe it is a story from which we can learn about girls' and women's struggles with voice and silence, self and other, public and private. Rahnuma's story, and others like it, often remain

would because these people have  
keep them silent. Second, Rahnuma  
told. Her particular life story, her  
culture, enabled her to be thought  
culture, in ways that most people  
teaching school in India for two  
The familiar became unfamiliar  
Rahnuma to pay attention to me  
where Rahnuma's story, while  
struggles I heard in the other w  
classroom. Rahnuma, like all the  
silent and silenced, with having  
and others' expectations.

Chapter Four introduces  
classroom, and explores how two  
knowing. I detail her general b  
what each of her teachers brought  
interpretation of each of her tea  
within this social context. Cha  
classroom, specifically to the c  
family and religion, which help  
of knowing in the classroom. I

old because these people have chosen to meet familial and cultural expectations which  
 p them silent. Second, Rahnuma's was the most reflective and articulate story that I  
 rd. Her particular life story, specifically the opportunities she had living in another  
 ure, enabled her to be thoughtful and critical about her life, her learning, and her  
 ure, in ways that most people can never be. Living at a predominantly Hindu  
 rding school in India for two years created a natural basis for comparison and contrast.  
 familiar became unfamiliar, the comfortable became uncomfortable, thus allowing  
 numa to pay attention to matters she would have otherwise been unaware of. Third, I  
 eve Rahnuma's story, while exceptional in many ways, mirrors many of the issues and  
 ggles I heard in the other women's stories. While she certainly stood out in the  
 sroom, Rahnuma, like all the women with whom I spoke, also struggled with being  
 t and silenced, with having a voice and expressing that voice, with meeting her own  
 others' expectations.

Chapter Four introduces you to Rahnuma as I was introduced to her, in the  
 sroom, and explores how two of her social classroom contexts influence her ways of  
 wing. I detail her general beliefs about knowing and learning, provide an overview of  
 t each of her teachers brought to the classroom context, describe Rahnuma's  
 pretation of each of her teacher's expectations, and detail her actions as a knower  
 in this social context. Chapter Five introduces you to Rahnuma's life outside the  
 sroom, specifically to the cultural expectations and obligations communicated by her  
 ly and religion, which helps us to better understand Rahnuma's experiences and ways  
 owing in the classroom. I provide an overview of Rahnuma's life prior to and

outside of the university thro  
voice and silence, self and ot  
classroom. Both of these cha  
much as possible to allow yo  
male about girls' and women

It is important to not  
chapters, in school and out o  
the social and cultural influe  
we remember that these diff  
dynamic ways. Similarly, m  
these chapters is influenced  
that you read and re-read the  
interdependent and interacti  
accurate and authentic unde  
by both social and cultural e

tside of the university throughout which Rahnuma herself highlights her struggles with  
 ice and silence, self and other, public and private, struggles she also faces in the  
 ssroom. Both of these chapters rely on the words of Rahnuma and her teachers as  
 uch as possible to allow you, the reader, to better understand and critique the claims I  
 ke about girls' and women's ways of knowing.

It is important to note that my decision to tell Rahnuma's story in these two  
 apers, in school and out of school, was intended to highlight and distinguish between  
 social and cultural influences on Rahnuma's ways of knowing. It is imperative that  
 remember that these different contexts influence and shape each other in recursive and  
 namic ways. Similarly, my ability to understand and tell Rahnuma's story in each of  
 se chapters is influenced by my understanding of the whole story. Ideally, I suggest  
 t you read and re-read these two chapters so that you can better understand their  
 erdependent and interactive relationship. Such a re-reading should help provide a more  
 urate and authentic understanding of how Rahnuma's ways of knowing are influenced  
 both social and cultural expectations.

## STRUCTURE TO

I didn't even know her name. Rahnuma immediately caught my eye in her traditional Bengali dress, her thoughtful and thought-provoking mix of contradictory ideas of class, and I was sitting in the same room as the instructor and the students, the same context. This woman was so different from the classes I had observed before. She did so intelligently and calmly, listening to the teacher's lecture without being silent, nor did she appear to be so quiet that she had her own opinion and publicly. I soon learned

While Rahnuma is lauded for her (which will be discussed in detail) her desire to earn a university



## Chapter 4

### THE GOOD STUDENT: STRUGGLING WITH VOICE AND SILENCE TO MEET SOCIAL EXPECTATIONS

I didn't even know her name, or anything about her. But I knew I wanted to. Rahnuma immediately caught my attention with her non-traditionally cut short hair, traditional Bengali dress, her expressive smile, and most importantly, with her frequent thoughtful and thought-provoking questions and comments. She was visually an interesting mix of contradictions, both traditional and non-traditional. It was the first day of class, and I was sitting in the back row of her environment class, observing the instructor and the students, trying to learn about this particular teaching and learning context. This woman was so unlike the other students in the environment class, or in any of the classes I had observed. This woman asked questions, she shared her opinion, and she did so intelligently and confidently. She was not just sitting at her desk quietly listening to the teacher's lecture and unquestioningly taking notes. She was not being silent, nor did she appear to be silencing herself. She had a voice, both figuratively, in that she had her own opinions, and literally, in that she expressed those opinions aloud publicly. I soon learned her name: Rahnuma.

While Rahnuma is largely resigned to her fate as a Bengali Muslim woman (which will be discussed in detail in Chapter Five), she continues to believe and act upon her desire to earn a university degree. In contrast to her community's patronizing attitude

about women pursuing higher education, she is  
self-sufficient. She says that her husband is not her  
husband. On the contrary, she says that her husband's  
care of herself should she need it.

I'm going to university. I  
always say that, "O  
and live with us." I  
patronizing way that  
get my degree before  
happens to my husband  
my studies will be com  
get a job. I mean, I

While Rahnuma wants to work, she has not yet  
explained that she will only work if she has a job that is  
not a really serious job. I'll be a housewife. I'll be a  
sort of thing."

This is Rahnuma's story. She is a woman who  
spent her first year at Baridhara University. She is a woman  
leave Baridhara University. She is a woman who is a woman  
Specifically, there were only a few women who were  
Her father discovered the problem. She is a woman who  
meeting and liking the director. She is a woman who  
she enrolled at GU as an enrollee. She is a woman who  
research study period, Rahnuma is a woman who is a woman  
population, and French.

out women pursuing higher education, Rahnuma believes that she needs a degree to be self-sufficient. She says that she is not like most women who attend university to find a husband. On the contrary, she is going to university so that she will be prepared to take care of herself should she need to.

I'm going to university because I need a degree. A boy's family will always say that, "Oh, she can study after she gets married, after she comes and live with us." But I know that they will always see it in a very patronizing way that, "Oh, she wants to study, how cute." So, I want to get my degree before I get married. The thing is, what if something happens to my husband? I mean, what if he dies or something? And then my studies will be completely disrupted. And what if I need to go out and get a job. I mean, I won't have a degree.

While Rahnuma wants to work and earn her own money, as a married woman she explained that she will only be allowed to have a trivial job. "I'll be allowed to work, but not a really serious job. I'll probably be in a small little job. I'll earn my pocket money out of thing."

This is Rahnuma's first year at GU, and her second year of university studies. She spent her first year at Baridhara University, GU's rival private university. She chose to leave Baridhara University because she felt limited by her academic choices there. Specifically, there were only two environment majors, neither of which interested her. Her father discovered the program at GU and encouraged Rahnuma to transfer. After meeting and liking the director, Dr. Sarker, and the program at the environment school, she enrolled at GU as an environment major. During the Spring semester of 1996, the research study period, Rahnuma was enrolled in four classes: environment, mathematics, population, and French.

To help organize and  
categories and their subcategories  
college students' ways of knowing  
Rahuma brings to each class  
cultural influences.

**(1) What the student**

(a) the student's general beliefs  
different models for being  
particular class, her beliefs  
matter/discipline, and her

**(2) What the teacher**

ways of knowing. This course  
role of the learner, role of  
discipline, and the role of

**(3) How the student**

expected ways of knowing  
role of the instructor, role  
subject matter/discipline,  
teacher was encouraging

**(4) What ways of**

includes the ways in which  
and the ways in which the

To help organize and tell Rahnuma's story, I use a modification of the four broad categories and their subcategories that emerged from the data in my study of American college students' ways of knowing (Welte, 1995). Some of the information about what Rahnuma brings to each classroom context will become evident in the next chapter on cultural influences.

(1) **What the student brings to the classroom context.** This category includes:

(a) the student's general beliefs about and practices of learning and knowing and different models for being a student; and (b) the student's more specific expectations of a particular class, her beliefs about learning and knowing the particular subject matter/discipline, and her abilities to learn and know this subject matter.

(2) **What the teacher brings to the classroom context, especially as related to ways of knowing.** This category includes the teacher's view of the role of the instructor, role of the learner, role of peers, the nature of the knowledge of the subject matter/discipline, and the role of evaluation.

(3) **How the student interprets the classroom context, especially related to expected ways of knowing.** This category includes the student's interpretation of the role of the instructor, role of the learner, role of peers, the nature of the knowledge of the subject matter/discipline, and the role of evaluation, all as related to ways of knowing the teacher was encouraging and rewarding.

(4) **What ways of knowing emerge in this classroom context.** This category includes the ways in which the student actually came to know things in each classroom, and the ways in which the student believed she should be able to come to know things in

each classroom. The student  
with her enacted ways of kn

#### 1a. What did Rahnuma bri

To begin to underst  
social contexts of each of h  
what beliefs, abilities, expe  
to domain-specific beliefs,  
be discussed in section 1b)  
expectations about learning  
and voice in learning and k  
learner and knower; and vi

Beliefs about know  
secondary education, where  
teachers (discussed in Cha  
knowledge is everywhere  
learning as coming to kno  
items from others, includ  
specifically, Rahnuma exp  
individual genetic make-u  
differently because of the  
make-up.

ch classroom. The student's preferred ways of knowing may or may not be congruent with her enacted ways of knowing.

### **Rahnuma at GU**

#### . What did Rahnuma bring to the situation?

To begin to understand how Rahnuma's ways of knowing are influenced by the social contexts of each of her teacher's instructional practices, it is important to determine what beliefs, abilities, experiences, and expectations she brings to her classes. In addition to domain-specific beliefs, abilities, knowledge, expectations, and experience (which will be discussed in section 1b), Rahnuma enters each of her classes with general beliefs and expectations about learning, knowing, and knowledge; beliefs about the role of authority and voice in learning and knowing; models for being a student; views of herself as a learner and knower; and views of GU as an institution of higher learning.

Beliefs about knowing and learning. In contrast with Rahnuma's elementary and secondary education, where she relied solely on the external voices and truths of her teachers (discussed in Chapter Five), as a university student Rahnuma believes that knowledge is everywhere because everyone knows something. In turn, Rahnuma defines learning as coming to know as much as she can from others and then filtering what she learns from others, including people and books, through her her own experiences. More specifically, Rahnuma explained that knowledge comes from books, experiences, and our individual genetic make-up. She claimed that individuals interpret the same things differently because of their different experiences and their unique individual genetic make-up.

I tend to think of knowledge starts with everybody don't know. And I say. Because I'm not going to books. It's like when dollhouses, somebody different. We have a was a very important things differently. I and that's because of exactly the same, no

Rahnuma's definition

memorizing and understand

challenging, questioning, m

contrast, memorizing just in

to repeat it back when neces

related in that when she und

And understanding is impor

important to Rahnuma.

Well, when you memorize, you just memorize, you just memorize, uh, better cars. "Obviously fuel taxes, you never challenge facts. But when you with it. I mean, you facts, challenge them with much longer, make sense of what the graphs and tables mean, you understand floating around. You what the connection remember the numbers mean. It's say, nuclear power i



I tend to think of knowledge as everywhere. I mean, it starts with you, it starts with everybody. I mean, everybody has, knows something that I don't know. And I see it as my life's goal to learn as much as I can. Because I'm not going to stop studying....We get knowledge from different books. It's like when we were kids, I would rather have played with dollhouses, somebody else would have played with airplanes. It's just different. We have different experiences. Like going to boarding school was a very important part of my growing up. And it makes me look at things differently. I mean, we all mold the same book in different ways, and that's because of our individual differences. No two people are exactly the same, not even twins.

Rahnuma's definition of learning involves an important distinction between memorizing and understanding. Rahnuma explained that understanding involves challenging, questioning, making sense of, and having opinions about information. In contrast, memorizing just involves accepting information, remembering it, and being able to repeat it back when necessary. Rahnuma added that memorizing and understanding are related in that when she understands something, she can actually remember it longer. Understanding is important because it will improve your grades which is very important to Rahnuma.

Well, when you memorize, you don't challenge any of it. When you memorize, you just accept the things. And you're like, okay, "Raise fuel taxes, uh, better cars, blah, blah, blah..." you know, whatever. You're like, "Obviously fuel taxes, obviously better cars, obviously whatever...." And you never challenge any of it. I mean, you don't have to wrestle with the facts. But when you are trying to understand something, you have to deal with it. I mean, you have to understand it. You have to wrestle with the facts, challenge them. And I think if you understand it, it actually stays with you much longer....Challenging information, uh, it means trying to make sense of what [your teacher] is saying. And trying to like translate the graphs and tables into some meaning. You need to compare things. I mean, you understand something with all these numbers that are sort of floating around. You try to establish a pattern here. Like, okay, let me see what the connection is. Let me see what this means. It's not necessary to remember the numbers, it's what the numbers tell you. It's what the numbers mean. It's not just remembering. It's just memorizing when you say, nuclear power is eight and hydropower is nine. If you understood it,

you would say that hyc  
opinion about the num  
individual level that m  
understands the same t

#### Sources of knowledge.

and perspectives on knowledge

information," i.e., information

other students are possible sou

provide her with reliable infor

don't think they understand w

You see, if I ask another  
person is just as confus  
this has happened a lot  
was this formula, and I  
myself, this is quite ea  
But I was the one who  
huge, but I just hadn't  
it. So, if I go and ask  
she might say, this is n

Based on these beliefs

her most reliable source of inf

the information than other stu

know everything and may not

teachers, she double-checks th

knowledge, the books themsel

so that they could explain wh

and me, however, where the au

right.

you would say that hydropower is better. You would be able to have an opinion about the numbers, about the information. And I think on an individual level that makes a world of difference. I mean everyone understands the same things in a different kind of way.

Sources of knowledge. While Rahnuma believes and values individual's opinions

and perspectives on knowledge, she is also concerned about getting the "right information;" i.e., information she needs to know for her exams. She recognizes that other students are possible sources of knowledge; however, she does not trust her peers to provide her with reliable information. She explained that students, including herself, often think they understand when they are really confused.

You see, if I ask another student, there's a very good chance that that person is just as confused as I am, but just doesn't know it yet. You know, this has happened a lot of times. It has happened to me. One time there was this formula, and nobody could figure it out. And I was thinking to myself, this is quite easy. I don't know why everyone is going on about it. But I was the one who was wrong. Because actually this formula was huge, but I just hadn't seen it. So I was really confused, but I didn't know it. So, if I go and ask another student, what do you think of this formula, she might say, this is really easy.

Based on these beliefs and experiences, Rahnuma explained that her teachers are her most reliable source of information; they are much less likely to be confused about the information than other students. Rahnuma does realize, however, that teachers do not know everything and may not always be correct. When she occasionally doubts her teachers, she double-checks the information by checking the source of her teachers' knowledge, the books themselves. Ideally, she would contact the authors of these books so that they could explain whatever information she is confused about. She was unable to tell me, however, where the authors got their information, and on what basis she found it reliable.

But if I had gone to the  
this, this, and this in it  
confused....Sometimes  
to books. I check whe  
information, from. Bu  
doubt one of my teach  
authors of these books  
the graph like this? R

#### Role of questioning.

other is important and valuab  
can from each other. We all  
and challenging each other he  
Western culture and its acc  
South Asia, things are starting  
Bangladesh. While Rahnuma

with, nor does it want, any m

Because of this increas  
challenge and questio  
something that is high  
our society cannot dea  
respectful as they wer  
challenge your elders.  
person is a little older  
There are things that I  
things that I know mo  
each other enough to

Rahnuma often quest

written by "the establishment

imperialists). She realizes th

to hear, and tell you what the

But if I had gone to the teacher, he would have told me, the formula has this, this, and this in it. So, you know, at least hopefully the teacher is not confused.... Sometimes, I mean, because they are fallible people, I back up to books. I check where they are getting their stuff, you know, their information, from. But that rarely happens. I mean, I rarely seriously doubt one of my teachers. If it were up to me, I would be calling up the authors of these books, and asking them, you know, explain to me, why is the graph like this? Really, tell me, I really want to know.

Role of questioning. Rahnuma believes that questioning and challenging each

other is important and valuable not only to get better grades, but also because we can all learn from each other. We all know something that others do not know, and questioning and challenging each other helps us to learn what others know. According to Rahnuma, as Western culture and its acceptance of questioning become more prevalent throughout South Asia, things are starting to change, or are at least becoming more complicated in Bangladesh. While Rahnuma is clear in her belief that Bangladeshi society cannot deal with, nor does it want, any more questioning, she certainly does.

Because of this increasing influx of Western culture, where people challenge and question things, this [fearing and respecting and revering something that is higher than us] is changing. And this is something that our society cannot deal with. And that's why they say that we are not as respectful as they were when they were our age. I think that you should challenge your elders. Because it's not necessary that just because this person is a little older than you, that they know more about everything. There are things that he knows more about than me, and there are certain things that I know more about than him. And I think we should respect each other enough to acknowledge this. But this is not the way things are.

Rahnuma often questions and disbelieves what she reads, especially when it is

written by "the establishment" (i.e., the Bangladeshi government or the white western imperialists). She realizes that people, including herself, tend to believe what they want to hear, and tell you what they want you to believe. Consequently, Rahnuma believes that

you should not rely on others

is out yourself.

That's the establishment  
the facts, and if you go  
thing about vested interests  
you to believe because  
necessarily the truth.  
know, and that's to me

According to Rahnuma  
questions the common man's  
critique not only others' ideas  
you realize that there's a re  
view. I mean, when you stud  
people are messed up. It's no

Role of voice. Rahnu  
accurately, her inclination, to  
experience in personal relation  
recognizes the importance of  
to herself, unless she cares en  
about what she shares. This  
classroom. She only question  
Dr. Sarkar, Sir," and when the  
relationships.

I think (my ability to  
outside of school. It's  
important to look beyond  
honest relationships w

and not rely on others to learn the truth; you can only learn the truth by searching yourself.

That's the establishment thing. That's what they do. They just give you the facts, and if you go along with it, that's good for them. But there's this thing about vested interest. I mean, people always tell you what they want you to believe because that would make them happier, which is not necessarily the truth. There's just one way of finding out the truth, you know, and that's to move your own butt, to find out things for yourself.

According to Rahnuma, she not only questions the established viewpoint, she also questions the common man's position. In other words, Rahnuma is able to challenge and question not only others' ideas but also her own. She explained that, "If you really look, you realize that there's a remarkable amount of bullshit in the people's [and her own] world. I mean, when you study what they say, you realize that in a lot of the cases, the people are messed up. It's not just the fault of the establishment."

Role of voice. Rahnuma explained that her willingness, and perhaps more accurately, her inclination, to disbelieve and question things, stems largely from her experience in personal relationships which are rarely "really honest." While she recognizes the importance of questioning in her learning, she tends to keep her opinions to herself, unless she cares enough about the other person. And even then she is selective about what she shares. This applies to her relationships both outside and inside the classroom. She only questions her teachers whom she feels "really comfortable with, like Mr. Barker, Sir," and when there's no threat of negative consequences, to herself or to her relationships.

I think [my ability to question things] has a lot to do with my relationships outside of school. It's like, people tend to bullshit a lot. And it's very important to look beneath the surface. Because I, I have very few really honest relationships where the other person is not bullshitting me. I mean,

most people are definitely  
don't care. And I'm just  
really dumb, but you're  
uh-huh, uh-huh... The teacher  
care enough to correct  
And when other people  
lying? I don't care. Good  
feel better.

Ideally, Rahnuma believes

knowledge as well as internal

discussed and questioned public

integrating these different sources

practice, however, Rahnuma

there are consequences related

often keeping her opinions to

While Rahnuma recognizes

voice, helps her learning because

specifically, saying things also

but also to the contradictions

Talking definitely helps

my mind is suddenly

am paying more attention

what he's saying.... And

I'm thinking isn't right

to think about it some

Rahnuma went on to

class is not because it develops

the information for the exams



most people are definitely bullshitting me. And with most of them I really don't care. And I'm just like, uh-huh, uh-huh, go ahead. You think I'm really dumb, but you're even dumber to think I believe you. But I'm like, uh-huh, uh-huh...The thing is, I can take a lot of bullshit because I don't care enough to correct that person. You know, I'm like, uh-huh, uh-huh. And when other people are like, why don't you start, you know she's lying? I don't care. Go ahead, she can lie if she wants to, if it makes her feel better.

Ideally, Rahnuma believes that knowledge is constructed from external sources of knowledge as well as internal and personal sources of knowledge, and should be discussed and questioned publicly. She described learning and knowing as a process of integrating these different sources and thus coming to know things in particular ways. In practice, however, Rahnuma seems to struggle with expressing what she knows because there are consequences related to making her opinions public, and thus she often remains silent, keeping her opinions to herself.

While Rahnuma recognizes that saying things aloud, the act of having a literal voice, helps her learning because she develops her ideas as she says them aloud. More specifically, saying things aloud helps her to pay more attention not only to her teachers, but also to the contradictions and problems in her own thinking.

Talking definitely helps me to understand things. See, if I ask a question, my mind is suddenly more alert. So, when the teacher explains things, I am paying more attention. And that helps because I'm thinking about what he's saying....And sometimes as I'm saying things, I realize that what I'm thinking isn't right. You know, it doesn't make sense. So, then I have to think about it some more.

Rahnuma went on to explain, however, that the reason she usually speaks up in class is not because it develops her thinking, but rather because it helps her to remember information for the exams, which in turn means better grades.

The thing is, when I  
learning. You know,  
business, right. And  
have thought, well, I  
remember it. And I  
I'm really scared. I'll

Rahnuma explained

consciousness, part of her lo

comment, she believes that

Because it shifts, it  
my consciousness.

You know, when we  
which is why we do  
in our short-term me  
long-term memory.

Models for being a

brings a variety of models

relationships with her teach

willingness to be a good st

ways of being a student, ar

much wants to be a good s

grades.

Seeking approval.

teachers. It is not enough

and understand her, and ev

to be an invisible or silent

The thing is, when I participate in class, that's when I'm doing most of my learning. You know, I mean, I knew about this anticline and syncline business, right. And I could have just kept my mouth shut. And I could have thought, well, I know this. But, because I said it out loud, I'll remember it. And I really will. And even on a really hard midterm, when I'm really scared, I'll at least remember this.

Rahnuma explained that talking causes the information to become part of her consciousness, part of her long-term memory. If she asks a question or makes a statement, she believes that she is unlikely to forget the information.

Because it shifts, it basically shifts stuff from my semi-consciousness to my consciousness. You know, that short-term, long-term memory thing. You know, when we read something we pay attention for half a second which is why we don't remember it, if we pay attention for 10 seconds it's in our short-term memory, and if we pay attention for a minute it's in our long-term memory. Or something like that.

Models for being a student. Based on past academic experiences, Rahnuma things a variety of models for being a student to GU. In particular, Rahnuma's relationships with her teachers is very important, significantly influencing her ability and willingness to be a good student and to learn. Different relationships result in different ways of being a student, and thus different ways of knowing. In turn, Rahnuma very much wants to be a good student, meeting her teachers' expectations and getting good grades.

Seeking approval. Rahnuma very much wants the approval of most of her teachers. It is not enough that she like her teachers, she also wants her teachers to like and understand her, and even approve of her in a quasi-parental way. She does not want to be an invisible or silent student. She wants her teacher to know who she is and how

and what she thinks. Consequently,

relationships.

It's very important for me to want to know my teachers, want them to understand me. I can say this for all my teachers. Markus, he's going to know me very well. I started with [my friend] around after him [with me]. I've done this. Do you mean, oh look, this is me. "You run around after him." "Yeah, that's right." "You run around after him daddy. He is even

Rahnuma, however,

only those who she likes, can be particular, she only wants to spend time with her to think what they discuss." In turn, the teachers are willing to challenge and explain.

Rahnuma's desire/norm of a formal, hierarchical nature of the education system in Bangladesh and elders." In particular, discussed in the terminology of teachers are referred to as "the influence on the Bangladeshi

d what she thinks. Consequently, Rahnuma does what she can to develop these relationships.

It's very important for me to like the person who is going to teach me. I want to know my teachers, and I want them to really know me as well. I want them to understand my position, you know, what I'm thinking. And I can say this for all my teachers, I mean you can go talk to Dr. Stan Markus, he's going to tell you, Yeah, I know her. And Dr. Sarker, he knows me very well. I mean, I call him "Daddy," but not to his face. It started with [my friend] Zareen because last semester I was running around after him [with this report], saying "Look! Look! Look at this! I've done this. Do you think it's good? I mean, don't you approve? I mean, oh look, this is my report, don't you approve?" And Zareen said, "You run around after him like, Daddy, Daddy, look at me." And I said, "Yeah, that's right. That is so right, you are so right." So I started calling him daddy. He is everything I would want my father to be.

Rahnuma, however, does not seek this kind of approval from all of her teachers, only those who she likes, cares about, respects, and doesn't think are "scum." In particular, she only wants approval from teachers who let her think for herself and don't force her to think what they think. It's very important that teachers "leave room open for discussion." In turn, the teachers she cares about are the ones with whom she's more willing to challenge and express her thoughts and opinions.

Rahnuma's desire/need for approval by her teachers is interesting given the formal, hierarchical nature of education in Bangladesh. Even Rahnuma describes the education system in Bangladesh as "formal...so you need to differentiate between peers and elders." In particular, distinguishing between teacher and student is essential, and reflected in the terminology students use to address their teachers. Consequently, all teachers are referred to as "Sir" or "Miss." Rahnuma thinks this is a result of the British influence on the Bangladeshi educational system. She explains that Bengali is like

fresh where they use to and

very upset when young people

### Mutual relationships.

teachers. She explained that

be "greatest outlet." She ha

academic and personal, and

without any fear of embarrass

Well, the professors

"Oh, I'm doing this.

working on, or do I n

they maybe refer me

you really must read.

them without being e

to have a different op

like, they know what

their lives, academic

we really know each

For Rahnuma the key

things to her. "If you have a

sympathetic, it's much easie

with somebody who is symp

### Avoiding negative co

mind, she does not feel free

must be careful about with v

there can be negative consec

be loved and her relations

community may be jeopardi

where they use tu and vous. According to Rahnuma, parents, and other elders, get upset when young people use the informal language with elders.

Mutual relationships. Rahnuma also sought more mutual relationships with her teachers. She explained that the teachers at Baridhara University (her first university) are her greatest outlet." She has developed a relationship with these teachers which is both academic and personal, and this allows her to discuss the course material more freely and without any fear of embarrassment.

Well, the professors at Baridhara are a major outlet for me. I tell them, "Oh, I'm doing this, or whatever." And they ask me, in fact, what I'm working on, or do I need any help, or do I need some material. And then they maybe refer me to a book. They say, "Oh, I've got this new book that you really must read." They give me a lot of basic information. I can ask them without being embarrassed. I can say, "What is this?" And it's okay to have a different opinion than them. That happens quite frequently. It's like, they know what's going on in my life, and I know what's going on in their lives, academically and also in terms of their personal lives. I mean, we really know each other well.

For Rahnuma the key is having a relationship with the person who is explaining to her. "If you have a compassionate person, someone who knows you and who's sympathetic, it's much easier to learn stuff." Rahnuma said that she needs to be alone with somebody who is sympathetic so that she can ask the questions that she does have.

Avoiding negative consequences. While Rahnuma ideally wants to speak her mind, she does not feel free to share her opinions with all her teachers. She believes she must be careful about with which teachers she shares her opinion because she believes there can be negative consequences, both in and out of the classroom (i.e., her grade may be lowered and her relationship with her teachers, peers, family, and/or religious community may be jeopardized).

Rahnuma is "very, very  
not. Many of the teachers know  
that Rahnuma says. Even when  
selective about whom she talks  
and when to be silent. She  
teachers. I'm careful about what  
teachers." These struggles with  
should become clearer after

According to Rahnuma,  
require unquestioning deference  
independent or constructed to  
just so arrogant. They're like  
don't care about the students  
we're awake and in class. That  
With teachers like this, Rahnuma  
give it back to them on the  
good grade.

Not only is she careful about  
circumstances under which she  
classes where she understands  
she is afraid of asking "really



Rahnuma is "very, very suspicious" about her teachers, unsure of whom she can trust. Many of the teachers know her parents and would "report back to them" about what Rahnuma says. Even with teachers who don't know her parents, she is very selective about whom she talks to openly. Using her intuition, she decides when to speak and when to be silent. She said, "I get these good vibes and bad vibes about the teachers. I'm careful about who I tell my opinion to. I don't tell my opinion to all my teachers." These struggles with voice and silence, self and other, public and private, would become clearer after reading Chapter Five.

According to Rahnuma, some teachers are not concerned about her learning, require unquestioning deference to their authority, and provide no opportunities for independent or constructed thinking. "Some teachers are just scum. They're, ooh, they're just so arrogant. They're like, here, you have to believe this because I said so. They don't care about the students. They don't care if we're enjoying it, if we're learning, or if we're awake and in class. They just come to class, and they lecture us, and that's it." With teachers like this, Rahnuma said, "I just write down what they say and, you know, give it back to them on the exam." This is Rahnuma's way of ensuring that she gets a good grade.

Not only is she careful about to whom she speaks, she is also particular about the circumstances under which she will do so. She is most comfortable speaking up in small classes where she understands the material. When she doesn't understand the material, she is afraid of asking "really stupid questions." She doesn't want to embarrass herself in

front of her teacher or her pe

silent.

It's like, if it's a real small class, it's all right. Really large class, and tend to shut up. I mean I don't say anything, it's easier to ask questions, where I have classes, because I know

Relying on teachers'

everywhere, including in her

her teachers' knowledge. We

learning and understanding.

questions is because "I need

particular, Rahnuma believe

by the teacher, either in or a

up and ask questions in clas

disrupt the class for no reason

Well, you see, if I do basic right to have the teacher to take like that I would go too. But I don't think stuff like that. I mean

Rahnuma wants to have thir

is getting the information th

is important to get the inform

front of her teacher or her peers, so she doesn't ask any questions. She chooses to be

silent.

It's like, if it's a really large class, I tend not to say anything. But if it's a small class, it's all right, and you can ask questions and stuff. But if it's a really large class, and if I don't understand most of the material, then I tend to shut up. I mean, because then I ask really stupid questions, so then I don't say anything. I don't want to embarrass myself....In small classes, it's easier to ask questions and get to know each other....And in some classes, where I have a grasp of the material, then I do ask the questions in class, because I know they're not dumb questions.

Relying on teachers' knowledge. Although Rahnuma believes that knowledge is everywhere, including in herself, her desire to be a good student focuses her attention on her teachers' knowledge. While she believes that asking questions will further her learning and understanding, Rahnuma explains that her primary reason for asking questions is because "I need to have things clear so that I can get good marks." In particular, Rahnuma believes that she has a "basic right" to have things explained to her by the teacher, either in or after class. Rahnuma said that this right entitles her to speak up and ask questions in class. She was quick to add that students do not have the right to disrupt the class for no reason; it must be related to learning the material.

Well, you see, if I don't understand something in class, I think it is my basic right to have that thing cleared [explained]. It's not like I'm asking the teacher to take like fifteen minutes solely to me. If I had a problem like that I would go to the teacher after the class. And I have a right to that too. But I don't think a person has the right to just crack up the class, or stuff like that. I mean, that is not nice.

Rahnuma wants to have things explained by the teacher because this way she knows she is getting the information that she needs to know to get good grades. Rahnuma believes it is important to get the information from the prime source (or as she puts it "from the

ure's mouth"), and at school

nered ways of knowing.

I've seen that if I ask  
clarify anything. I me  
professor. So that wa  
basically. That's good

Being a good student

poor grades. She has resigned

or feel that she has any other

she would probably do things

accepted that she must do this

pole, which she does.

Well, [getting good g  
you have to do what t  
nothing else I can do,  
certain date, or the te  
than I do what he wa  
If it were up to me, y  
probably be different  
day's notes. And tha  
we did in the last clas

Relving on subjective

expectations, however, does

saying what the teacher think

she is thinking. In these case

information. She can think f

is graded highly for doing so

experience for information.

e's mouth"), and at school, the prime sources are her teachers; she is using her  
 ived ways of knowing.

I've seen that if I ask someone else [another student] that doesn't really  
 clarify anything. I mean, I'm much more comfortable asking the  
 professor. So that way, I know that I got it from the horse's mouth,  
 basically. That's good. That helps me get good grades.

Being a good student means meeting each of her teachers' expectations to get  
 grades. She has resigned herself to doing what the teacher wants because she does  
 feel that she has any other choice. She admits that if she was in charge of her classes,  
 would probably do things differently. But she's not in charge, and thus she has  
 opted that she must do things the way her teacher want if she wants to get a good  
 e, which she does.

Well, [getting good grades] means doing what the teacher wants. I mean,  
 you have to do what the teacher wants to get a good grade. There's  
 nothing else I can do, really. I mean, if the teacher wants the report by a  
 certain date, or the teacher wants the report to have these certain points,  
 than I do what he wants. I mean, that's just the way it is, and that's fine.  
 If it were up to me, you know, how I could lay the report out, it would  
 probably be different. But it's not up to me...So, I try to go through each  
 day's notes. And that really helps because in the next class I'm up on what  
 we did in the last class. So, it's much easier to follow.

Relying on subjective and constructed knowledge. Meeting her teachers'

ctations, however, does not always mean relying on the teacher's information and  
 g what the teacher thinks. Rahnuma believes that some teachers want to know what  
 s thinking. In these cases, she does not feel a need to rely on the teacher for the  
 mation. She can think for herself. So, when she is allowed to think for herself, and  
 ded highly for doing so, she shares her own ideas, and relies on herself and her  
 ience for information. However, when she is graded highly for giving the teacher's

moment, she does not think

thinks

Sometimes teachers ask  
my point of view, for  
teacher] thinks. And  
And we're marked on  
variables, and stuff like  
rationale, do we take  
teachers ask for a cert  
want.

Being an honest student

is essential that Rahnuma get

cheating is not her definition

the expense of doing so honest

get it honestly. Being honest

cheat, including those on the

students are cheating, she wi

attention. She knows that sh

thus, she only concerns herse

in this regard.

To be a good student  
more important to be  
president's list are re  
know that. And I wo  
with yourself. And e  
the way I had to do i  
night, anyway. I mea  
gets an A. It makes  
change their behavior  
the kind of person w

ewpoint, she does not think for herself, and instead she relies only on what the teacher  
inks.

Sometimes teachers ask me what I think. You know, they are asking for my point of view, for what I think. That does not have to be what he [the teacher] thinks. And I'm sure his thoughts are quite different than mine. And we're marked on our pattern of thought. I mean, had we put in all the variables, and stuff like that. They just want to see that as we make up a rationale, do we take in all the things we learned in this course. But some teachers ask for a certain point of view, and then I just write what they want.

Being an honest student. While getting good grades are "very, very important," it  
essential that Rahnuma gets these good grades honestly. Getting a good grade by  
cheating is not her definition of being a good student. She must not get good grades at  
the expense of doing so honestly. She would rather have a lower grade and know that she  
got it honestly. Being honest is a critical issue because so many of the students at GU  
cheat, including those on the president's list. Despite the fact that she knows which  
students are cheating, she will not confront the students or bring it to anyone else's  
attention. She knows that she cannot change anyone else's behavior but her own. And  
thus, she only concerns herself with living up to her own, and her teachers', expectations  
in this regard.

To be a good student for me is to have a good CGPA. And I think it's more important to be an honest student. I mean, a lot of people on the president's list are renowned cheaters. And the office does not necessarily know that. And I would say that it is much more important to be honest with yourself. And even if I get a B because I did not cheat, and I did it the way I had to do it, I think I would be much more, I can sleep better at night, anyway. I mean, I'm really pissed off, yeah, if somebody cheats and gets an A. It makes me really mad. But I know there is nothing I can do to change their behavior. But at least I know I am right. And then I am not the kind of person who will go and try and convince the other person.

#### View of self as learner

at high school, she does not  
Rahma's exceptional performance  
environment teachers, Rahma  
These perceptions, however,  
women as unintelligent. Also  
Rahma tends to take responsibility  
feels guilty that she is "not good"  
the other top students. Instead  
harder than everyone else to  
and smart enough, like the students  
she needs to work hard, and  
teachers or with the other students  
resigned herself to her situation  
not really agree with them.

#### Views of GLU

Accountability  
where it is even possible for  
sometimes allowed, and even  
someone may want to hear,  
believes this is because of the  
also due to the institutional  
particular American, university



View of self as learner. Perhaps because Rahnuma learned so little in elementary and high school, she does not see herself as a “superachiever” academically. Given Rahnuma’s exceptional performance, as confirmed by both her mathematics and environment teachers, Rahnuma’s perceptions of herself as a learner seem quite distorted. These perceptions, however, are certainly consistent with Bangladeshi society’s view of women as unintelligent. Also consistent with society’s view and expectation of women, Rahnuma tends to take responsibility for most of the problems in her classes because she feels guilty that she is “not good enough.” Rahnuma does not believe she is as good as the other top students. Instead, she sees herself as someone who has to, and does, work harder than everyone else to get good grades. She explained that if she were good enough and smart enough, like the superachievers, she would not need to work hard at all. But she needs to work hard, and thus she feels responsible for any problems she has with her teachers or with the other students. Throughout Rahnuma’s story, Rahnuma often assigned herself to her situation, living up to other people’s standards, even when she did not really agree with them.

Views of GU. According to Rahnuma, school is the only place in Rahnuma’s life where it is even possible for her to share her opinions. It is the only place where she is sometimes allowed, and even encouraged, to have a voice. It is the only place where someone may want to hear, and may actually listen to, what she has to say. Rahnuma believes this is because of the growing western influence on GU. I would add that it is also due to the institutional desires of the GU administration to be like a western, in particular American, university, specifically in its desire to provide a liberal education.

Attending classes at  
her parents. According to R  
her parents, except to ask fo  
about her parents' lack of a  
friends' parents were more

My parents couldn't  
Basically, the only  
for 45 grand. [45.0  
semester. This is a  
income is about \$1  
their homework and  
anything like that.  
never sat down wit  
went out and I play

A closer look at Ra  
light on her learning and k  
and other, public and priva  
different ways of knowing  
teachers. In addition, her  
of her teacher's expectatio  
with her classmates.

As I mentioned, I  
started at 8:00 A.M., not a  
net three times each week  
class, twelve of whom we

Attending classes at GU is the only time in Rahnuma's life when she is away from her parents. According to Rahnuma, she never discusses what she is doing at school with her parents, except to ask for money to pay her tuition. Rahnuma sounded a bit distressed about her parents' lack of attention to her learning, especially since she believes her friends' parents were more attentive and helpful.

My parents couldn't care less what I do in school. They just don't care. Basically, the only time I talk to them about school is when I need a check for 45 grand. [45,000 taka is approximately \$1000, the cost of GU per semester. This is a large amount of money in Bangladesh as the per capita income is about \$150].... You know, other girls' parents helped them with their homework and talked to them about stuff. My parents never did anything like that. They just left me alone. Like as to studies, my parents never sat down with me or anything. Which was sort of good because I went out and I played. I had a real nice time. But I learned a lot less.

A closer look at Rahnuma in her environment and math classes will shed more light on her learning and knowing, especially on her struggles with voice and silence, self and other, public and private. Over the course of the semester, Rahnuma practiced different ways of knowing, largely because of her changing relationships with her teachers. In addition, her learning was also influenced by her understanding of each teacher's expectations and her relationship, and familiarity, with the material and with her classmates.

### **Rahnuma in Her Environment Class**

As I mentioned, I met Rahnuma on the first day of her environment course. Class started at 8:00 A.M., not a preferred time for most students, including Rahnuma. Class met three times each week, for one hour each time. There were sixteen students in the class, twelve of whom were women. The room was small, with approximately thirty

chairs squeezed into a space  
were in rows, with the teach  
Rahnuma was sitting in the  
students. Despite the early  
up straight in her chair, taki  
She was always on time, pr

1b. What did Rahnuma bri

Rahnuma's reason f  
she likes the people in the e  
of her business interest in m  
the end. Her only interest  
quite candid about her lack

I think it's the kinds  
businessman, and I  
really care about the  
care. The reason I r  
somebody has to cle  
going to have to pay  
money. And I want

In addition to her ca  
to really like the environme  
addition to this class being  
time reading and talking ab  
believes she knows a lot ab

I read a lot [about en  
boring research paper  
the library and from

s squeezed into a space not quite big enough for that many chairs. All the chairs in rows, with the teacher's podium and blackboard at the front of the room. Rahnuma was sitting in the second row surrounded on both sides by other women students. Despite the early hour, she was physically attentive throughout the class, sitting straight in her chair, taking notes diligently, and making eye contact with the teacher. She was always on time, prepared, and ready for class to begin.

What did Rahnuma bring to her environment class?

Rahnuma's reason for studying environment was quite surprising to me. While most people in the environment field, she decided to study environment because of her business interest in making money, and she saw environment as a way to achieve her goal. Her only interest in learning about the environment is to make money. She is candid about her lack of interest in the environment itself.

I think it's the kinds of people it attracts. Basically, you see, my father is a businessman, and I am a capitalist at heart. To tell you the truth, I don't really care about the environment. As long as I get my money, I don't care. The reason I'm here is because there's all this pollution, and somebody has to clean it up, right? And at the end of it, somebody is going to have to pay a huge bill. And somebody is going to make a lot of money. And I want to be that person, basically.

In addition to her capitalistic reasons for studying environment, Rahnuma seems to like the environment material because it is "interesting" and "really relevant." In addition to this class being Rahnuma's third environment class, she spends a good deal of time reading and talking about environmental issues outside of class. Consequently, she knows a lot about the environment, more than most of the other students.

I read a lot [about environment] outside of class. I mean I read a lot of boring research papers that are around that nobody reads, you know, from the library and from the newspaper. I must be a really boring person. I'm

such a nerd. I act  
interesting. That'

She definitely thin

particular, she brings her

help but react to certain th

bringing together what sh

using her own perspective

own opinion.

I think my backgrou  
items, like what's  
make a difference  
just generally very  
read to come up w  
learned before. So  
with that.

#### Beliefs about learn

environment requires her

of view to consider. Spec

Southern countries take o

environmental problems.

considering both of these

The thing about er  
the Northern coun  
Canadian textbook  
Indonesian textboo  
blame each other.  
world is screwing  
textbooks will be l  
pollution that the  
know, you have to

such a nerd. I actually go through these papers. I actually find them interesting. That's what's frightening.

She definitely thinks that she brings knowledge to her environment class. In particular, she brings her "stuck-in-the-mud kind of opinions" which is why she "can't help but react to certain things." Rahnuma explained that she develops these opinions by bringing together what she has read with what she has learned from her other classes, and using her own perspective (e.g., it's smart to make money) she then comes up with her own opinion.

I think my background reading helps a lot. Plus, I pay attention to news items, like what's happening to countries now. These little things really make a difference, and you can't get this information in a textbook. I'm just generally very alert to what's happening [in the world]....I use what I read to come up with what I think, and then I correlate that with what I've learned before. Sometimes I'm like wait a minute, this doesn't make sense with that.

Beliefs about learning environment. Rahnuma explains that learning about environment requires her to "read between the lines" because there are always two points of view to consider. Specifically, Rahnuma believes that the Northern countries and the Southern countries take opposite positions and are always blaming each other for environmental problems. It is up to her to figure out what she thinks for herself by considering both of these positions, as well as her own perspective and investigation.

The thing about environment is that there are two points of view, one from the Northern countries and one from the Southern countries. If it's a Canadian textbook, they'll have a Northern perspective. If it's an Indonesian textbook, they'll have a Southern perspective. It's like they all blame each other. All these Northern textbooks talk about the developing world is screwing us up, that's what they'll say. And the Southern textbooks will be like, well we can't develop ourselves with all this pollution that the Northern countries have done. So, it's interesting. You know, you have to read between the lines. It's funny actually.

It quickly became c  
just neutrally or objectively  
grown up in one of the leas  
outside agencies, like the W  
Bangladesh. She explained  
no idea what the common  
specifically seeing where th  
her to believe otherwise. A  
own interpretations over th  
anything she reads without  
know what they're talking  
first-hand. She says people  
"establishment," because it  
necessarily the truth. For R  
want to know for yourself.

That's the establish  
the facts, and if you  
thing about vested i  
you to believe beca  
necessarily the truth  
know, and that's to

It became increasing  
the common man. She see  
position. Not only does she  
their position for herself on



It quickly became clear that Rahnuma has strong feelings about things. She is not neutral or objectively considering the Northern and Southern viewpoints. Having grown up in one of the least developed countries in the world, she is quite angry about outside agencies, like the World Bank, imposing their views on the "common man" of Bangladesh. She explained that these World Bank people live in ivory towers and have no idea what the common man wants. She explained that her own experience, specifically seeing where the farmers lived and what political views they espoused, lead her to believe otherwise. And she clearly valued and trusted her own experience and her own interpretations over those of the World Bank. Rahnuma said that she never believes anything she reads without "double-checking everything" because "oftentimes texts don't tell you what they're talking about." And double-checking involves getting information from both sides. She says people tell you what they want you to believe, especially the establishment, because it serves their own interests. And their interests are not necessarily the truth. For Rahnuma, finding out the truth involves discovering what you need to know for yourself.

That's the establishment thing. That's what they do. They just give you the facts, and if you go along with it, that's good for them. But there's this thing about vested interest. I mean, people always tell you what they want you to believe because that would make them happier, which is not necessarily the truth. There's just one way of finding out the truth, you know, and that's to move your own butt, to find out things for yourself.

It became increasingly clear over the semester that Rahnuma is concerned about the common man. She seemed to be drawn to the "controversy" of the common man's position. Not only does she feel connected to the common man because she has seen her position for herself on her father's land, she actually sees herself as the common

man, at least as opposed to  
family, is not literally one  
man because she, too, feels  
held as if she is not respect  
common man needs to be  
everywhere, but no one is

There's always a lot  
this is what I have  
people. We own the  
use it for agriculture  
there is a problem  
always us and them  
for these people. The  
establishment is ve  
wouldn't listen to t  
the establishment.  
And somebody nee  
like the lyrics by P  
lyrics go, "Us and t

Despite her interest  
that simply speaking up for  
makes no difference at all.  
change. "I mean, if you do  
make some impact."

1. What did Rahnuma's te

Based on analysis of  
this section discusses what  
class. More specifically, D

, at least as opposed to the establishment. While Rahnuma, from an upper class  
 ly, is not literally one of the common people, she associates herself with the common  
 because she, too, feels silenced and treated unfairly by the establishment. She, too,  
 as if she is not respected by the establishment. Consequently, she believes that the  
 mon man needs to be heard. She believes that the establishment is heard by everyone  
 vwhere, but no one is speaking up for the common man.

There's always a lot of controversy with the common man. And basically  
 this is what I have seen myself. I mean, my father employs some of these  
 people. We own this plot of land in the country, and he lets these people  
 use it for agriculture...When I actually saw things for myself, I thought,  
 there is a problem here. It's really unfair for these people...I mean, it's  
 always us and them. I think someone needs to talk about what's going on  
 for these people. That's the difference between us and them. I mean, the  
 establishment is very, very hopeful. Because no one would say they  
 wouldn't listen to the establishment. I mean, we sit all day and listen to  
 the establishment. But nobody is listening to the common man, to us.  
 And somebody needs to listen to the common man. You know, it's just  
 like the lyrics by Pink Floyd. You know, the song Us and them. The  
 lyrics go, "Us and them, and after all, we are just ordinary men."

Despite her interest in remedying the common man's situation, she does not think  
 simply speaking up for the common man can change anything. "Nah. What I say  
 is no difference at all." She believes that many people are necessary to effect some  
 ge. "I mean, if you do it in a big way. If there are 10,000 people like me, then it will  
 some impact."

What did Rahnuma's teacher bring to the environment class?

Based on analysis of interviews, classroom observations, and course materials,  
 section discusses what Rahnuma's environment teacher, Dr. Markus, brought to the  
 More specifically, Dr. Markus designed the course, consciously and unconsciously,

with certain expectations about teaching and learning, the knowledge of environments students come to know and about evaluating students' were discussed during our insight after the course

Dr. Markus was very "you guys." On the first day, students a little about him: Government Department of teaching undergraduates, adventure, and it's been pro

Although Dr. Markus also wanted them to be part of encourage discussion and a series of questions, including "Where does it live?" Where does it live? He told the students that he is also knows a little about of about your country (Bangladesh) communicated that he saw

with certain expectations and a particular reward system in mind. He had certain views about teaching and learning the subject of environment, including views of the nature of the knowledge of environment, beliefs about how to teach environment, views of how his students come to know and learn environment, beliefs about the role of peers, and beliefs about evaluating students' learning. The majority of the comments I have included here were discussed during our third interview. Thus, Dr. Markus made these comments in hindsight after the course was completed.

Dr. Markus was very friendly and informal with his students, referring to them as "you guys." On the first day of class, he introduced himself as Dr. Markus and told the students a little about himself. He described his experience working for the U.S. Government Department of Energy, and informed the students that this was his first time teaching undergraduates. He explained that he "thought it would be a good time for an adventure, and it's been pretty exciting so far."

Although Dr. Markus did most of the talking initially, he told his students that he wanted them to be participating. "We all need to be talking, not just me." To encourage discussion and assess his students' knowledge of environment, he asked them a series of questions, including: What other environment courses have you taken at GU elsewhere? Where does energy come from? How do you consume electricity? He told the students that he is most knowledgeable about energy in the United States, but he knows a little about other countries. He added that he was "trying to learn quickly about your country [Bangladesh], so you students can teach me too." These comments communicated that he saw both himself and his students as teachers and learners. He

recognized and valued wh

would "build on what you

Course design. Dr.

labeled it a "tentative outl

The syllabus provided an

specific information about

classes. Unable to find a

perspective, Dr. Markus h

excerpts are included to h

specially the expectation

## I. Course Descrip

This course will ex

energy, in Banglades

effects of this supp

basic types of ener

environmental pro

interactions betwe

associated environ

addressed....Emph

headed, where we

course from one to

## II. Course Require

The class will be c

therefore students

coming to class an

semester, students

be prepared to deb

Students will be re

of an analysis of a

environmental imp

it can be a compar

cognized and valued what students brought to the class and was clear that this class could "build on what you already know."

Course design. Dr. Markus prepared a syllabus for the course, but explained and labeled it a "tentative outline" because he was unsure of how the class would progress. The syllabus provided an overview of the topic of energy and environment, as well as specific information about course requirements, grading, course readings, and outline of classes. Unable to find a textbook that focused on energy and environment from a policy perspective, Dr. Markus had "pieced together the material" for the class. The following excerpts are included to help provide you a better understanding of the social context, especially the expectations communicated explicitly to the students.

### I. Course Description: Energy and Environment

This course will explore the present and future supply and consumption of energy, in Bangladesh as well as world-wide, and explore the potential effects of this supply and its use on the environment. After covering the basic types of energy and energy technologies...and the basic types of environmental problems and impacts, the class will then consider the interactions between economic development, energy supply, and associated environmental impacts -- and how resulting conflicts can be addressed....Emphasis will be placed on assessing where we are now headed, where we should be headed, and how policy makers can chart a course from one to the other of these futures.

### II. Course Requirements and Grading

The class will be conducted with both lectures and in-class discussions, therefore students are expected to have done all assigned readings before coming to class and be prepared to discuss them. Once or twice during the semester, students will be assigned to take a position on a question...and be prepared to debate the question with other students in class.

Students will be required to participate in one group project. It will consist of an analysis of a particular topic relating to energy use and/or environmental impacts within Bangladesh or other developing country (or it can be a comparison across countries).

There will be a m  
synthesize the inf  
and make statemen  
developing count

After going over

thing to get out of univer

look up facts and figures

explaining that he attempt

concepts than about men

ability to achieve this enc

When I designed  
just a bunch of tri  
a test. And, so fa  
anyway, I was hop  
them to think, get

### Role of instructor

his goal of having studen

"tactoids," he explained t

discrete pieces of inform

conceptually; instead, the

I have tried to seiz  
conceptual elemen  
makes people trav  
affect the decision  
we use them, and  
of vehicles, they'r  
they create this m  
been very good at  
them into discussi  
numbers, and feel



There will be a mid-term and a final exam...designed to test your ability to synthesize the information covered in the course, use information sources, and make statements about problems and solution regarding energy in developing countries.

After going over the syllabus, Dr. Markus emphasized that "the most important thing to get out of university is how to think analytically and creatively.... You can always look up facts and figures." During our interview, Dr. Markus echoed these sentiments, explaining that he attempted to design the course so that it would be more about learning concepts than about memorizing facts. He is reflective and critical, however, about his ability to achieve this end.

When I designed the course, I tried to think of how to keep it from being just a bunch of trivia, a bunch of factoids, that they then spit back at me on a test. And, so far, I don't know how successful I've been at that. But anyway, I was hoping to design it in a way to get them to participate, get them to think, get them to reason and learn concepts, not just numbers.

Role of instructor and learner. When I asked Dr. Markus how he tried to achieve his goal of having students think and reason, as opposed to memorizing a bunch of factoids," he explained that he made an effort to focus on concepts as opposed to more discrete pieces of information. He was frustrated by the students' resistance to thinking conceptually; instead, they tended to receive all information without question.

I have tried to seize upon the elements of any particular topic that are conceptual elements. Like today, I began to talk about what is it that makes people travel, and what are the forces in our lives that are going to affect the decisions about what kinds of vehicles we choose to use, how we use them, and that kind of thing. Not just, well, there are these kinds of vehicles, they're used this much, they have this efficiency, and therefore they create this much pollution. This has definitely been an issue, I haven't been very good at, I haven't quite figured out the techniques for drawing them into discussions. They just copy down what I say, especially any numbers, and feel like they've done their job.

While Dr. Marku

analytically and creatively

background knowledge i

more traditional approach

"how you came at the co

terms of raw facts." But

most importantly, he bel

basic information" about

thinking. He talked at le

environment, and the str

I think that you sh  
them to think, to  
memorize....But,  
there are just too  
luxury of really fig  
and demonstrating  
part of it is just a  
They're just not the  
kind of course the  
think it would be  
talk. But there ha  
up to a level where  
similar courses, b  
enter into a semin  
talking about thin  
throwing out info  
do think that it ma  
the analytical thin  
fourth year, after  
is, when they get  
these facts and fig  
need to know for

While Dr. Markus talked about his desire to have students think and reason analytically and creatively, he attributed the students' resistance to their limited background knowledge in environment. It soon became evident that he believes in a more traditional approach to learning environment. He explained that depending on how you came at the course, there would be different things the students would need in terms of raw facts." But in all cases, there are basic things students need to know. And most importantly, he believes that undergraduate students need to first "receive and digest basic information" about environment before they can do analytical and scientific thinking. He talked at length about his beliefs about an ideal learning and teaching environment, and the struggles inherent in achieving his goals.

I think that you should always give students a few assignments that require them to think, to be analytical, to think creatively, and not just memorize....But, in an undergraduate situation, the first couple of years there are just too many things to learn for you [the teacher] to have the luxury of really focusing on their [the students] sort of stepping forward and demonstrating, you know, their thinking abilities.... Well, I think that part of it is just a need to accept the fact that this is just a 200-level course. They're just not that far along with their studies yet. It's not really the kind of course that's intended to be say a seminar. There are times when I think it would be neat to just draw all the desks in a circle and sit around talk. But there haven't been too many subjects where I feel that anybody's up to a level where they could do that....After this course is over, and similar courses, by the third and fourth year they'll be more prepared to enter into a seminar type environment, where people are sitting around talking about things in much more complex ways, and you're not just throwing out information, you're working through problems together....I do think that it makes sense to wait, or at least to begin to really emphasize the analytical thinking skills and the writing skills, um, in the third or fourth year, after they've gotten through a lot of the basic stuff. The thing is, when they get out there in the real world, they will be able to look up all these facts and figures. They'll get to relearn the parts that they really need to know for whatever position they're in.

As he struggled

critiqued his instruction

You know, I think  
inexperience, but  
greater involvement  
that can be done  
material that I was  
being too many  
you know, if I'm  
think about why  
students will and  
cover everything  
things to try to get

Despite Dr. Mar

thinking, he has adjusted

knowledge of the basic

away from some of the

effort to ensure that stu

that he is determined to

Evaluation. Dr

information, synthesizing

ultimately trying to exp

students with informat

students to review and

to react to the articles,

changed or affected th

on a given issue. Idea

As he struggled with the kind of teaching and learning he valued, Dr. Markus critiqued his instructional practices in relation to the "coverage versus depth" dilemma.

You know, I think probably my weakness, and a feature of my inexperience, but if there were some way to combine the content with greater involvement, I'd love to do it. I just haven't quite figured out how that can be done. So, I'm finding I'm having to even cut out some of the material that I would like to have covered...because there just ends up being too many basic things that I need to cover. I try to ask them a lot, if, you know, if I'm creating a list on the blackboard. Or if I'm wanting to think about why something is, I'll throw out a question. But only a few students will answer....So, then you have the question of, do you try to cover everything, but you don't cover it well, or do you try to pick out things to try to go into more detail? So, I'm trying to compromise.

Despite Dr. Markus' espoused preference for developing students' analytic thinking, he has adjusted his teaching to accommodate for his students' limited knowledge of the basics. Specifically, he has "ratcheted down the level and is staying away from some of the complexity." He has resorted to "relying more on lectures" in an effort to ensure that students know "the givens, the basic understanding." He explained that he is determined to "spend more time to pound it in."

Evaluation. Dr. Markus designed his assignments to focus on "taking information, synthesizing it, summarizing it, um, and seeing two points of view, and ultimately trying to express themselves, where they stood on an issue." He provided the students with informative and diverse articles about nuclear power, and asked the students to review and analyze the articles. In particular, Dr. Markus wanted the students to react to the articles, to see if they had opinions; and he wanted to know if the articles changed or affected their opinions. Ideally, Dr. Markus wanted students to take a position on a given issue. Ideally, he was trying to support, encourage, and reward more

constructed ways of kn

clarity about his beliefs

wrong thing," which su

They're going t

I don't think th

actually fairly..

I'm quite happy

as long as it's v

that very well.

been another w

position, even

make a stab at

some of the as

of being on the

Similarly, Dr.

synthesize and integra

about issues. In partic

would encourage ther

it "helped focus their

tended to regurgitate

In most cases

over. But it a

they had this

were several

think they un

over the plac

something, an

back, and...T

to tell everyth

For the final

exam consist of a qu

constructed ways of knowing. In practice, however, Dr. Markus believes that his lack of clarity about his beliefs, expectations, and goals may have left students "afraid to say the wrong thing," which supported and encouraged received ways of knowing.

They're going to be afraid to say the wrong thing. They don't know really, I don't think they quite know where I come from on this issue. And I'm actually fairly...well, I'm not really neutral, but I'm able to see both sides. I'm quite happy to get either a strong pro-nuke or strong anti-nuke essay, as long as it's well reasoned. And I don't think they, maybe I didn't say that very well. I should've. I should have made that point. That would've been another way to do this assignment, would be to tell them to take a position, even if it's not totally in your heart. But just see, you know, make a stab at it. That might be something I'd do in the future, is to give some of the assignment of being on one side, and some of the assignment of being on the other side.

Similarly, Dr. Markus had hoped that the midterm would encourage students to synthesize and integrate information, as well as develop and express their own opinions about issues. In particular, he hoped that giving students the essay questions in advance would encourage them to be thoughtful and thorough in their answers. While he believes it "helped focus their thinking," it also had some negative repercussions. The students tended to regurgitate as much information as possible.

In most cases, I think they wrote them out ahead of time and just copied it over. But it also seemed to make them go into a data frenzy. They felt they had this obligation to spout numbers all over the place. And there were several papers, it was disappointing to see, they hadn't, I don't even think they understood what they were writing. Their thoughts were all over the place. And they just told me about one number, or one aspect of something, and they jumped over to something else, and then they came back, and...They weren't organized in their thinking. They were just trying to tell everything they could think of.

For the final exam, Dr. Markus tried to avoid this problem by having part of the exam consist of a quote that the students had never seen before. It was an attempt to

"encourage creative th

preferred goal and his

The course end  
question on the  
we never talked  
about, and say  
forcing them to  
not just regurg  
need to make s  
think you can  
thinking eleme

In a discussion

very aware of how he

provide some general

assignment was differ

being graded. Much t

about this, although th

always deferred to wh

question. He quickly

very concerned about

concerned about their

actual individual grac

Well, first of  
concerned abo  
them. And so  
grade, the mo  
stuck fairly cl  
formally curv  
grief about [n  
concerned ab  
grades. They



"encourage creative thinking." Dr. Markus struggled with his desire to achieve this preferred goal and his concern for evaluating mastery of basic knowledge.

The course ended up having quite a bit of just information. But my last question on the final was an attempt to get them to talk about something we never talked about in class, but pull together lots of ideas we had talked about, and say something intelligent. Uh, forcing them to, hopefully, also forcing them to piece together things that they've learned on the spot, and not just regurgitate...There are some basic things they need to know, and I need to make sure that they're learning it. So you have to have that too. I think you can go too far the other way. It's tricky to get that creative thinking element into the course, especially at this level.

In a discussion about grading, Dr. Markus explained that the students were not very aware of how he was grading assignments until after they were completed. He did provide some general information about grading in the syllabus; however, each assignment was different so it was a challenge for students to determine how they were being graded. Much to Dr. Markus' surprise, the students were largely unconcerned about this, although they did "try to figure out what he wanted." Ultimately, the students always deferred to whatever grade Dr. Markus gave them, always accepting it without question. He quickly came to believe that the students at GU, like most students, were very concerned about and motivated by grades. But the students seemed much more concerned about their grades relative to the other students in the class than about their actual individual grade.

Well, first of all, these kids are probably typical in that they were very concerned about their grades. Grades seem to be highly motivational for them. And so the more you link everything to a certain aspect of the grade, the more they're going to react to it and give you a response. I stuck fairly closely to a numerical system that added up to 100. I didn't formally curve the class at all....I was wondering if I was going to get any grief about [not being clear about how I graded]. I mean, they were very concerned about their grades, but I had very few complaints about specific grades. They just sort of accepted it. They were very deferring to me on

the way I graduated  
asked how did I  
fit in compared  
poorly on some  
they didn't see

### 3. How did Rahnuma

Early in the s

comfortable enough

he's a foreigner." R

before because they

Despite her d

immediately liked hi

communicated what

Dr. Markus provided

exams.

He has a good  
doesn't take  
Because it re  
He, I think, is  
more flexible  
I'll know wh  
flips from top  
And most of  
need to know  
the trends."

### Opportunities

someone who is "ve

speak up, to say wh

Markus' ability to ac

the way I graded them. It's funny, I think they're more, several of them asked how did other people do. They were more concerned with how they fit in compared to other students than their absolute grade. And if they did poorly on something, but found out that a lot of people did poorly, then they didn't seem to mind so much.

### 3. How did Rahnuma interpret her teacher's instructional practices?

Early in the semester (during the second week of classes), Rahnuma didn't feel comfortable enough with Dr. Markus to share her opinions; this was "mainly because he's a foreigner." Rahnuma explained that she has had bad experiences with foreigners before because they are so unwilling or unable to appreciate Bangladesh.

Despite her discomfort with Dr. Markus because he is a foreigner, she immediately liked him because he is "really nice" and "really human," and because he communicated what he wants from his students on the exams. According to Rahnuma, Dr. Markus provided important cues that helped her to know what he wanted on his exams.

He has a good sense of humor. He's not an uptight person, you know, he doesn't take himself too seriously. That's what I really like about him. Because it really bores me, all these professor types. They are so boring. He, I think, improvises a lot as he goes along which makes things a lot more flexible. Another thing is, when he asks me a question on the exam, I'll know what he's looking for, what he wants. Because of the way he flips from topic to topic, I can sort of predict what he wants me to know. And most of the time I'm right. It's very helpful when he says, "You don't need to know this..." or "This is important..." or "You only need to know the trends." These are the most important things that teachers give out.

Opportunities for voice. Rahnuma also described her teacher, Dr. Markus, as someone who is "very open to questions...a real person." This encouraged Rahnuma to speak up, to say what she was thinking. In particular, Rahnuma is impressed with Dr. Markus' ability to admit he does not know everything; it helped her to feel more

comfortable when she  
extremely uncommon.

students, and consequ

I mean, Dr. M.  
doesn't. It hel  
really uncomm  
Most teachers  
teacher would

Rahnuma's re

After knowing Dr. M.

could not challenge h

"really knows him...I

He's seen me ecstatic

have a fair idea of wh

to feel comfortable an

questions, safe enoug

She felt that D

about the environmer

the studies might not

not believe that there

"He [Dr. Markus] wo

his."

Rahnuma thir

from different culture

comfortable when she does not know something. According to Rahnuma, this is extremely uncommon. Most teachers do not think aloud either in front of or with their students, and consequently these teachers distance themselves from the students.

I mean, Dr. Markus, Sir, he says he doesn't know something when he doesn't. It helps me to feel all right about not knowing something....It's really uncommon for a teacher here to say they don't know everything.... Most teachers here, including my math teacher, are so pompous. My math teacher would rather shoot himself than admit he didn't know something.

Rahnuma's relationship with Dr. Markus changed over the course of the semester. After knowing Dr. Markus for approximately six weeks, Rahnuma no longer felt like she could not challenge him merely because he was "a foreigner." She now felt that she "really knows him...I mean, he's seen me panic. He's seen me, like, lose my marbles. He's seen me ecstatic over a good grade. So, he really knows what I'm all about. And I have a fair idea of what he's all about." And knowing each other is critical for Rahnuma to feel comfortable and safe enough to risk sharing her opinions and to risk asking questions, safe enough to have a voice.

She felt that Dr. Markus was "very open-minded" about the diversity of opinions about the environmental issues she was studying; "he was open enough to understand that the studies might not be working." Even more to the point, however, is that Rahnuma did not believe that there would be any negative consequences if she offered her opinions. "He [Dr. Markus] wouldn't give me a low grade because my opinion was different than his."

Rahnuma thinks that it took longer to get to know Dr. Markus because they come from different cultural backgrounds. But over the course of the semester, Rahnuma

learned that her negative  
Rahnuma said that she  
understand our culture  
understand the Bengali  
comfortable sharing her  
his

Students are known

that he was expecting  
is very much in agreement  
something. Teachers  
things that their students  
know. Thus, she was  
that he does not know  
about. In addition, she  
other students because

I'm comfortable  
doesn't know  
when I didn't  
And I think it  
have a clue why

4. How did Rahnuma

Demonstrates

emphasis on students  
sharing her subjectivity

learned that her negative stereotypes about foreigners did not apply to Dr. Markus.

Rahnuma said that she has had “really bad experiences with foreigners who don’t try to understand our culture.” In contrast, she learned that Dr. Markus was trying to understand the Bengali culture. Because Rahnuma found Dr. Markus “so open” she felt comfortable sharing her ideas and opinions with him, even when they are different from his.

Students are knowers. It was not uncommon for Dr. Markus to tell his students that he was expecting them to know more about something than he himself knows. This is very much in agreement with Rahnuma’s views about knowledge, that everyone knows something. Teachers do not necessarily know more than their students; they know some things that their students don’t know, and their students know some things that they don’t know. Thus, she was comfortable with Dr. Markus expecting her to know some things that he does not know. Throughout the class, she had always known what he was talking about. In addition, she felt that this expectation put her at an advantage relative to the other students because she knew so much more than them in this class.

I’m comfortable with [Dr. Markus expecting me to know things that he doesn’t know], because so far I haven’t, I mean, it hasn’t come to that when I didn’t know what he’s talking about. So, I’m comfortable with it. And I think it gives me an edge because the rest of the class really doesn’t have a clue what he’s talking about.

#### 4. How did Rahnuma respond to her teacher’s instructional practices?

Demonstrates subjective and constructed knowing. Encouraged by Dr. Markus’ emphasis on students’ opinions and exploration of ideas, Rahnuma felt comfortable sharing her subjective and constructed knowledge during class discussions, and did so

quite often. Based on h  
expressed an opinion d  
problem writing her ow

#### Demonstrates r

was open to new and d  
wanted to hear on the  
know. And I still writ  
conceptual questions  
explained that Dr. Ma  
Bangladesh?" While  
believes that Dr. Mar  
you know that this is  
you know what the re  
appropriate for Bangl

When Rahnuma  
hear, she says that sh  
would write, "From  
between what she th  
wanted to say.

#### Silencing her

only challenged Dr.  
Rahnuma was partic



quite often. Based on her belief that Dr. Markus would not lower her grade if she expressed an opinion different than his, Rahnuma explained that she did not have any problem writing her own ideas for the environment project.

Demonstrates received knowing. Even though Rahnuma believed that Dr. Markus was open to new and different ideas, she still felt like she had to say what she thought he wanted to hear on the exams. She explained that she “can still tell what he wants to know. And I still write that down.” Rahnuma explained that Dr. Markus asked conceptual questions “which ask you for your point of view.” For example, Rahnuma explained that Dr. Markus asks them, “Do you think nuclear power is appropriate for Bangladesh?” While Rahnuma says that the question asks her for her opinion, she believes that Dr. Markus really wants her to take a particular position. “Basically, I mean, you know that this is grossly inappropriate. It’s like, what he really wants to know is, do you know what the reasons are? He wants you to tell him why nuclear power is not appropriate for Bangladesh. So that’s what I say.”

When Rahnuma strongly disagrees with what she thinks Dr. Markus wants to hear, she says that she will try to show both sides. Specifically, Rahnuma said that she would write, “From my perspective, there are benefits and costs...” It was a compromise between what she thought that Dr. Markus really wanted to hear, and what she really wanted to say.

Silencing herself: Fear of negative consequences. Rahnuma explained that she only challenged Dr. Markus if there were no negative consequences. In particular, Rahnuma was particularly worried about sharing a different position if there was the

possibility that her graduation  
jeopardy, Rahnuma kept  
students in the U.S. pil  
to keeping her voice pr

It [saying what  
challenge him.  
going to be pol  
But, I mean, he  
challenge him  
all this stuff, a

Rahnuma's m  
of one hour. There we  
The room was consid  
were so many chairs  
All the chairs were in  
room. Rahnuma alw  
Zareen.

As in her env  
sitting up straight in  
and as she became in  
concerned with mak  
and ready to begin.

Unlike in he  
For most of the sem

possibility that her grade would be lowered. When she believed that her grade was in jeopardy, Rahnuma kept her opinions to herself. Similar to the American women students in the U.S. pilot study (Welte, 1995), Rahnuma resigned herself to being silent, to keeping her voice private, to ensure a high grade point average.

It [saying what I think] depends what we're doing. Sometimes I do challenge him. Like, [I say], what about this then? But these things are going to be polluting? But these things are going to be ugly? You know. But, I mean, he is the professor. And he's going to grade me. So, I only challenge him when he can't lower my grade. But it's okay, I'll memorize all this stuff, and say what he wants.

### **Rahnuma in Her Mathematics Class**

Rahnuma's math class started at noon. It met three times each week for a period of one hour. There were twenty-eight students in the class, ten of whom were women. The room was considerably larger than her environment classroom, but similarly, there were so many chairs squeezed into the room that it was hard to maneuver comfortably. All the chairs were in rows, with the teacher's podium and blackboard at the front of the room. Rahnuma always sat in either the first or second row, and always next to her friend Zareen.

As in her environment class, she was physically attentive throughout the class, sitting up straight in her chair, and taking notes diligently. As the semester progressed, and as she became increasingly comfortable with her teacher, she became more and more concerned with making eye contact with the teacher. She was always on time, prepared, and ready to begin. She and the other students called him "Sir," or "the Math Sir."

Unlike in her environment class, however, it was rare to hear Rahnuma's voice. For most of the semester, she remained silent, not even asking clarification questions. At

the end of the semester

She was not forthright

class provided a striking

learning.

1b. What did Rahnuma

Rahnuma ente

attributed many of her

her mind that "math s

before, but dropped it

because she has such

not pay any attention

thinks she needs to k

When I was a

interested in

high school y

think I misse

Also, Rahnu

both of her parents

Consequently, she c

described herself as

is just laziness, but

developed in that a

And, I don'

always been

lazy...You s

That is whe

the end of the semester, Rahnuma began to speak up, asking questions about the material. She was not forthright in sharing her opinions about mathematical concepts, and thus this class provided a striking contrast in which to observe Rahnuma's ways of knowing and learning.

1b. What did Rahnuma bring to her mathematics class?

Rahnuma entered her math class knowing that she hates math. Rahnuma attributed many of her problems in math to the discipline of math itself. It was clear in her mind that "math sucks" because it is "so boring." She had started to take this class before, but dropped it because she did not like the teacher. She said she hates math because she has such a poor foundation for the subject. When she was younger, she did not pay any attention in her classes, and now knows very little of the math basics she thinks she needs to know. Rahnuma explained,

When I was a lot younger, I was not into classes at all. I was only interested in passing my classes. Basically I started studying in my late high school years. Before that, I was like, yeah, just hanging out. So I think I missed out on a lot of classes. I just had other things to do.

Also, Rahnuma was not surprised that she was struggling to learn math because both of her parents were history majors and "only developed that part of their brain." Consequently, she does not think of herself as good with sciences or math. Instead, she described herself as "a liberal arts kind of person." She wondered if part of her problem is just laziness, but then attributed her deficiency in math to not having a brain that is developed in that area.

And, I don't know. I've never been good with sciences or math. I've always been a liberal arts kind of person. I don't know, maybe I'm just lazy...You see, I didn't learn anything new in math after the fifth grade. That is where my learning disability kicked in. After that, I just sort of

like zoned out.  
are from arts ba  
boring. So basi  
then when thes  
happen...I mean

Prior to univer

information she needed

spoonfed." She does

it is university, and she

spoonfed. But she sa

There are some  
sharp minds,  
get what they  
spoonfed. act  
think is the w  
this isn't scho

Unlike the str

intimidated when she

solve it. She explain

and she always choo

is unable to see the

Well, [the st  
intimidated.  
ohmygod, I  
with this. A  
with math, v  
or the wron  
And there i  
And the per  
plug in that  
different fo

like zoned out. Math is not my high point, nope...I mean both my parents are from arts background. They're both history majors. I mean, God, how boring. So basically they just underuse their brains all their lives. And then when these two hook up together...oh, God, I mean this was bound to happen...I mean I abhor math. I bombed math.

Prior to university, Rahnuma explained that she had always been spoon-fed the information she needed to know for the exams. "So now it's really difficult not being spoonfed." She does not think the teacher is supposed to spoon-feed her, especially since it is university, and she knows that the students who are good in math do not need to be spoonfed. But she said that she "requires a lot more attention" to learn math.

There are some students who can do math easily, because they have very sharp minds, and they can really place things in such a way that they can get what they want out of the formulas. But I'm not that type. I need to be spoonfed, actually. I realize that this is too late for that. But the way that I think is the way that you think in school [elementary and secondary]. But this isn't school, this is university.

Unlike the students who Rahnuma described as "good in math," Rahnuma gets intimidated when she sees a math problem, and is unable to think clearly about how to solve it. She explained that in math there are right and wrong ways to solve a problem, and she always chooses the wrong way, the "more difficult route." She believed that she is unable to see the obvious assumptions that she needs to see.

Well, [the students who are good in math] they usually don't get intimidated. Like when I look at a math problem, I'm like, ohmygod, ohmygod, I can't do this. And they're like, hmm, let me see what I can do with this. And they usually have the right approach to thinking. It's like, with math, they give you a problem, and you can either take the right way or the wrong way. I always take the wrong way, the more difficult route. And there is always this easy, obvious assumption that I will never see. And the person with the sharp mind will be like, oh, this is easy. I'll just plug in that so-and-so formula. And I'll probably have a completely different formula for it.

## 2. What did Rahnuma?

Based on analysis

this section discusses various

class. More specifically,

with certain expectations

about teaching and learning

the knowledge of mathematics

students come to know

about evaluating student

were discussed during

hindsight after the course

Mr. Zaman b

numbers on the board

Dhaka University. A

asking the students to

a response, he then

read aloud what he

then added, both verbal

example of a set on

both verbally and in

To illustrate his po

are used. Mr. Zam



## 2. What did Rahnuma's teacher bring to the mathematics class?

Based on analysis of interviews, classroom observations, and course materials, this section discusses what Rahnuma's mathematics teacher, Mr. Zaman, brought to the class. More specifically, Mr. Zaman designed the course, consciously and unconsciously, with certain expectations and a particular reward system in mind. He had certain views about teaching and learning the subject of mathematics, including views of the nature of the knowledge of mathematics, beliefs about how to teach mathematics, views of how his students come to know and learn mathematics, beliefs about the role of peers, and beliefs about evaluating students' learning. The majority of the comments I have included here were discussed during our third interview. Thus, Mr. Zaman made these comments in hindsight after the course was completed.

Mr. Zaman began the first class by writing his name, the course and section numbers on the board, as well as information about other classes he was teaching at Dhaka University. After writing this information on the board, he began immediately by asking the students the following question: What is a set? Without getting or waiting for a response, he then proceeded to write the answer to his question on the board. He then read aloud what he had just written on the board, "A set is a collection of objects." He then added, both verbally and in writing, the adjective "well-defined." He then wrote an example of a set on the board,  $\{1,2,3\}$ , and said the example aloud. He then explained, both verbally and in writing, that we denote sets by capital letters, namely A, B, X, and Y. To illustrate his point, he wrote,  $A=\{1,2,3\}$ , on the board. A student asked why brackets are used. Mr. Zaman responded by saying that "brackets are the set notation." He then

wrote the following on

to fill in the answer to

Each class ses

second, he would rea

he would provide a p

to come to the board

problems at their des

Course design

describing the course

University), and gra

better sense of what

I. Course De

This is one o

requirements

class is requ

prerequisite

other studen

At the end o

based on the

to come to t

later than 10

their assign

who will fai

II. Descript

1. Set Theo

a) S

2. Coordin

wrote the following on the board: The set of first five alphabet,  $A =$ , and asked a student to fill in the answer to A.

Each class session proceeded in this way: first, he would write a definition; second, he would read the definition aloud; third, he would provide an example; fourth, he would provide a problem for the students to solve. Sometimes the students were asked to come to the board to solve the problems, other times the students were told to solve the problems at their desk.

Course design. At the end of the first class session, he passed out a syllabus describing the course requirements, topics (which Mr. Zaman said were required by the University), and grading system. The following excerpts are included to give you a better sense of what expectations were explicitly communicated.

#### I. Course Description: Basic University Mathematics

This is one of the courses offered by the University which fulfills the requirements of "Basic Sciences" for graduation from the University. This class is required for all the students of this University. There is no prerequisite for the students who have science background, but for the other students Remedial Mathematics is a prerequisite.

At the end of the course a letter grade will be awarded to the students based on their performance throughout the semester. Students are required to come to the class on time. No students will be allowed to enter the class later than 10 minutes from the start of class. Students are expected to do their assignments individually. No extra tests will be arranged for students who will fail to take their test on prescribed dates.

#### II. Description of Course Material: Total 44 Lectures

1. Set Theory and Theory of Numbers: 8 lectures
  - a) Sets, Notations, Finite and infinite sets...
2. Coordinate Geometry: 11 lectures

3. Calculus: 1

4. Matrices: 4

5. Vector: 4

During our int

hopes and expectation

communicated explic

have a desire to learn

something about mat

office hours, but rath

know that students c

help students unders

He explained

he believes that bas

When I asked him

he told me that "to

mathematics (will

thinks about math

somewhat due to l

questions I asked.

He thinks

believed this; i.e.,

believes that mat

3. Calculus: 17 lectures

4. Matrices: 4 lectures

5. Vector: 4 lectures

During our interview, Mr. Zaman explained that while he had written some of his hopes and expectations in the syllabus, there were some things which he had not communicated explicitly to his students. In particular, he said "I want [my students] to have a desire to learn mathematics....And I am ready to help anyone if they want to know something about mathematics." Due to a heavy teaching load, he was not having regular office hours, but rather just meeting his students in between and after classes. He let me know that students can meet with him whenever he is free because he is "always ready to help students understand math."

He explained that this course is a basic math course, and went on to explain that he believes that basic math is needed "basic math is needed for every field, every field." When I asked him why, however, he wasn't as clear about what he believed. Eventually, he told me that "to have a sharp brain you need mathematics. The practice of mathematics [will develop] a sharp brain." He was even less able to tell me how he thinks about math as a discipline. He just said, "I don't know." This may have been somewhat due to language barriers, although he did not even attempt to answer any of the questions I asked.

He thinks that basic math is very easy, although he couldn't explain why he believed this; i.e., he couldn't articulate what makes math easy. He did say that he believes that math ability comes from natural ability and practice. Some of the students,

however, don't find that  
either a poor or no match  
placement test to determine  
Unfortunately, this year  
students ended up in  
to Zaman, "the office

Ideally, he thought  
semester. He explained  
Four months is not enough  
makes it difficult for  
much material." He  
and the students have  
situation seriously  
cut in half.

#### Role of learning

learn math. First, he  
concepts. "They need  
students need to learn  
students need to "p  
important that the  
students just memorize

however, don't find the class easy. According to Mr. Zaman, this is because they have either a poor or no math background. The administration is supposed to give students a placement test to determine which students must take the remedial math class. Unfortunately, this year they did not give the placement test, and consequently many students ended up in this basic math class who were not adequately prepared. According to Zaman, "the office made too many mistakes."

Ideally, he thinks that the course should be taught over one year, instead of just a semester. He explained that one semester "isn't enough time for so much material." Four months is not enough time to practice and understand the material. The limited time makes it difficult for both him and the students, especially because he "has to cover so much material." He was frustrated by not having enough time to explain things in depth, and the students have difficulty understanding the concepts in so little time. The political situation seriously aggravated this problem because the course meeting time was nearly cut in half.

Role of learner. Mr. Zaman shared some thoughts about how he believes students learn math. First, he said, that the students need to understand the definitions of the concepts. "They need to learn what the basic things are. First learn what it is." Then the students need to learn how to use these concepts, "the process of the sums." Finally, the students need to "practice" using the concepts. Mr. Zaman explained that it was very important that the students understand the concepts and not just memorize them. Some students just memorize, but that doesn't work. He said, "First you have to understand,

then you can memorize  
points must be there."

He gave me an  
explained the topic of  
paraphrased what he

First, the student  
must understand  
objects. Student  
understand the  
sets; i.e., to have  
practice using  
ability to use

Zaman said that

good students. Most  
few students who would  
learn, but these students  
that Rahnuma stood  
identified and discussed  
was a participant in  
She was very interested  
know all the exceptions  
get an A- "because

Role of instructor

definitions and examples  
and practice the concepts



then you can memorize. It's okay to write the definition in your own language, but all the points must be there."

He gave me an example to show me how he believed that students learn math. He explained the topic of set theory (which I provided an example of earlier), and I have paraphrased what he said as close to his own telling as possible.

First, the students must understand that a set is a collection of objects; they must understand the definitions of collection, objects, and well-defined objects. Students should be able to give examples of sets to show that they understand the definition of a set. Then students must learn how to use sets; i.e., to have union and intersection of sets. Finally, students must practice using sets. And then they are tested on their understanding of and ability to use sets.

Zaman said that only a few students ask any questions, and these are usually the good students. Most of the questions are about the exams. He is very pleased with the few students who want to learn. He says that it is difficult to tell which students want to learn, but these students tend to ask different kinds of questions. In particular, he said that Rahnuma stood out as one of the few students who really wants to learn. (He identified and discussed Rahnuma's learning and performance without knowing that she was a participant in the study). She asks a lot of questions that show she wants to learn. She was very interested in knowing all the possible ways to solve a sum; she wanted to know all the exceptions. But, he said, that she will probably not get an A; she will only get an A- "because she needed more practice."

Role of instructor. Mr. Zaman sees his role as providing students with the definitions and examples of the mathematical concepts, giving them opportunities to use and practice the concepts, answering their questions, and testing their understanding. He

explained that it's un-  
he tells them that "so  
need to just know this  
students ask question  
believes his students  
process to the good a

#### Evaluation.

on exams. Mr. Zaman  
makes four or five d  
different numbers in  
makes the exams "e  
of the exam is very  
get an A, A-, B+, "I  
easy."

Mr. Zaman  
but after "so many  
class assignments a  
any cheating/copyi  
a big cheating prob  
cheat, they will."  
proctors to be very

explained that it's unusual for students to question the givens in math. But when they do, he tells them that "some things we cannot explain. It is just part of a definition and we need to just know this." He explained that he does his best to explain things when students ask questions. When students stop asking questions, and say "I understand," he believes his students have learned the material. He explained that he teaches the same process to the good and the poor students so that they can all understand it.

Evaluation. Seventy percent of a student's grade was based on their performance on exams. Mr. Zaman explained that it was very important that tests are "fair." Thus, he makes four or five different tests for each class. They are basically the same, but he uses different numbers in the sums, and orders the questions differently. He said that he makes the exams "easy enough so the students can pass." Specifically, he said that 60% of the exam is very easy so that "the maximum [number of students] will pass." But to get an A, A-, B+, "the students need to work hard because the rest of the test isn't so easy."

Mr. Zaman said that he assigned the students practice problems for homework, but after "so many students cheated...everyone copied," he limited the number of out of class assignments and administered more tests. This was to ensure that there wouldn't be any cheating/copying because he is very concerned about being fair. He said that there is a big cheating problem in Bangladesh, including at GU. "If students get a chance to cheat, they will." So he does what he can to make sure they don't cheat, requiring the proctors to be very strict during the exams.

Although he  
great deal of time du  
silly mistakes." He  
exams, but wants to  
give them the answe

While he ho  
just want a good gra  
not interested in un  
they will do well or  
do the required wor  
"Students need to v

When he gr  
answers. If the pro  
credit. If the answe  
he says that the stu  
for other procedur

### 3. How did Rabin

By the sec  
all it involved wa  
thinking required  
write everything

Although he is very concerned about students cheating during exams, he spends a great deal of time during the exams helping the students himself by “pointing out their silly mistakes.” He is somewhat worried about this practice of helping students during exams, but wants to help his students do as well as possible. He explained that he doesn’t give them the answers, but does want them to correct their careless errors.

While he hopes his students learned some math, he believes that most students just want a good grade. Some students even ask him for the grade they want. They are not interested in understanding the sums, but rather just want to memorize them so that they will do well on the exams. Mr. Zaman won’t just give out grades unless the students do the required work. Students must do all the required assignments to pass. He said, “Students need to work for their grades.”

When he grades the students’ exams, he reads the entire exam, not just the answers. If the process is right, but the answer is wrong, he said he gives the student 50% credit. If the answer is right, and the process is wrong, the student gets no credit. While he says that the students can write their answers any way they like and he will give credit for other procedures, he also acknowledged that he “prefers his procedure.”

### 3. How did Rahnuma interpret her teacher’s instructional practices?

By the second week of classes, Rahnuma was bored with her math class because all it involved was memorizing whatever her teacher said; there was no independent thinking required or allowed. She explained that “There’s nothing to think about. Just write everything down and live with it.” According to Rahnuma, Mr. Zaman was

satisfied when she p

Rahuma knew that

Product vers

only gave credit for

credit. Once, I made

problem right. I jus

frustrated with hers

mistake," she adde

she was also frustr

that she had solve

indeed solved it co

helpful. "I was lik

like; (said with sar

Silenced b

teacher was racin

and some of the c

much material in

much new materi

no time to actual

introducing new

choice but to "ta

He was j

Vegas. I

Just leav

satisfied when she plugged the numbers in the formula and got the right answer. But Rahnuma knew that she had not learned the formula.

Product versus process. When evaluating his students' performance, Mr. Zaman only gave credit for right answers. "If you don't get the answer right, you don't get any credit. Once, I made this really silly mistake, and he gave me a zero. I mean, I solved the problem right, I just thought my marking was a minus sign." Rahnuma was mostly frustrated with herself about this. After telling me that she had only made a "really silly mistake," she added, "Can you imagine? I am so dumb." She did tell me, however, that she was also frustrated with Mr. Zaman. She tried to explain her mistake to him, saying that she had solved the problem correctly, but all he did was acknowledge that she had indeed solved it correctly. Rahnuma did not find this acknowledgment particularly helpful. "I was like, Sir, but I did it correctly." And he was like, "I know." And I was like, (said with sarcasm) "Great, it's really a big comfort that you know."

Silenced by others. Rahnuma's last math class was unlike the other classes. Her teacher was racing through the material since the semester was about to end. Rahnuma, and some of the other students, tried to voice their concerns about him giving them so much material in such a short period of time. They were very concerned about how so much new material would affect their performance on the final exam because there was no time to actually learn the material. Despite the students' protests, Mr. Zaman kept introducing new material. Rahnuma explained that she and the other students had no choice but to "take whatever he gives us."

He was just going on and on. He was on a roll. It was like get him to Las Vegas. I mean, if he wants to be on a roll, he can go be on a roll there. Just leave us alone. He kept giving us new sums, and saying they were

practice sum  
want to do a  
them at hom  
was like, ye  
entire chapte  
to do all of  
so intelligen  
the entire ch  
mean very l  
went on. H  
anyway. I

#### 4. How did Rahnu

##### Demonstra

Rahnuma, Mr. Zar

interest in actually

...what he  
you have t  
2 minutes  
like ohmy  
and that so  
formula.  
my mind  
pressed fo

##### Self-silen

Rahnuma was re

it makes me feel

questions in clas

"really dumb and

discouraged her

discouraged Ra

his face, like, ho



practice sums. So everyone was moaning, shouting actually, that we don't want to do all of this. And he just said, They're practice sums, you do them at home. One guy said, "Can we go home now and do them?" And I was like, yeah, can we go home now please. Oh, God. I think he did the entire chapter on integration on one day. Now, people usually take 2 years to do all of this. And we just did it in one day. [sarcastically says] We are so intelligent. Ooh, we are, we are. I mean, he wanted to make sure he did the entire chapter. It was so frustrating. I mean, I understood very little, I mean very little. Basically we were just protesting everything. But he just went on. He knew us. He knew we would scream a lot, but just take it anyway. I mean, we just take whatever he gives us.

#### 4. How did Rahnuma respond to her teacher's instructional practices?

Demonstrates received knowing: Plugging in the numbers. According to

Rahnuma, Mr. Zaman's emphasis on just getting the right answer caused her to lose interest in actually understanding the formula.

...what he does is he gives us a formula, and then he gives us a sum which you have to use the formula with. But he has just given the formula to us 2 minutes before. And I haven't even come to terms with the formula. I'm like ohmygod. And then I just plug in the values and give him the answer, and that satisfies him. But I really don't understand...I haven't learned the formula. I mean, I know what it looks like. But, you know, that just turns my mind off, and I never go back and really learn anything....I mean, he's pressed for time because the class is really big, but still.

Self-silencing: Fear of jeopardizing relationships. For most of the semester

Rahnuma was reluctant to get help from Mr. Zaman either during or after class "because it makes me feel really dumb." She thought she did not know enough to ask any questions in class, or she thought that the only questions she was capable of asking were "really dumb and stupid." The negative reactions on the part of the other students further discouraged her from trying to get the help she wanted and needed. Mr. Zaman also discouraged Rahnuma from asking questions in class because "he gets this expression on his face, like, how come you don't know this." In addition, Rahnuma described the

atmosphere in class

students knew more

for not knowing en

for getting upset wi

I can't reall

done more

to ask any c

dumb. And

"oof" [she

her questio

really stupi

questions.

him why h

sign, and i

that is so c

someone v

Public voi

Rahnuma started

material, such as

herself as "having

confidence she n

questions about t

Even wit

asking Mr. Zama

knows me." He

relationship with

reason the earlie

not developed a

atmosphere in class as “kind of intimidating.” Rahnuma believed that most of the other students knew more than her, and that she was the exception. Thus, she blamed herself for not knowing enough math, and did not find fault with Mr. Zaman or her classmates for getting upset with her questions.

I can't really blame them for looking at me like that. I mean, I should have done more math when I was younger....I mean, I don't even know enough to ask any questions in class. And the questions that I do ask are really dumb. And the people in front of me, who really know math, go like “oof” [she makes a sound to show that the other students are frustrated by her questions]. And so I just stop asking questions, because they're like really stupid questions. And I'm the only one who asks dumb questions...Like the other day, Sir put a formula on the board and I asked him why he did something. He said that's because he's taken the minus sign, and it's a common thing. And the rest of the class was like, “But that is so obvious, you don't even have to ask that question.” And someone went, “Oof.”

Public voice, but no public opinions. During the last three weeks of the semester, Rahnuma started to feel more comfortable in her math class. She had studied some of the material, such as matrices, before and believed she understood it well. She described herself as “having an easier time with this material.” Knowing the material gave her the confidence she needed to ask “smart questions.” She started to speak up and ask questions about the material.

Even with the new material on limits and functions, she still felt comfortable asking Mr. Zaman questions about the material because she said, “He knows me now. He knows me.” Her confidence was clearly growing as she felt she had developed a relationship with her teacher, and she said so. She even went so far as to say that the reason the earlier material, such as straight lines, was so difficult was because they had not developed a relationship.

Even though  
problem. I'm  
now. Straight  
wasn't com  
fact, straight

During this

questions and to tal

she had been partic

behavior in her ma

the material becau

she had begun to c

having a personal

with Rahnuma th

give her the oppo

Having a

felt that her teach

things increased

material more co

about being emb

was no longer in

anymore. She w

a relationship w

silent; she chose

Well, I c

Another

him (the

Even though functions and limits are a new topic for me, it's not a problem. I'm still asking questions. I think I'm more confident in class now. Straight lines were really bad because he didn't really know me. I wasn't comfortable. Because now I think straight lines are really easy. In fact, straight lines are easy, functions are much more complicated really.

During this time when Rahnuma understood the material, she began to ask a lot of questions and to talk with her math teacher quite a bit. This was very different than how she had been participating in her math class until now. Rahnuma described her different behavior in her math class as the result of two things: one, she was more confident about the material because she felt that she understood; and two, and perhaps most importantly, she had begun to develop her relationship with her teacher, and she felt that she was now having a personal conversation with him. She believed Mr. Zaman was communicating with Rahnuma throughout the class to make sure that she understood the material, and to give her the opportunity to ask questions when she did not understand.

Having a relationship with Mr. Zaman was essential for Rahnuma's learning: She felt that her teacher now understood how she was making sense of math. Together these things increased Rahnuma's confidence and enabled her to ask questions and discuss the material more comfortably. This relationship with her teacher overpowered her concerns about being embarrassed, and she no longer kept her questions to herself. In addition, she was no longer intimidated by the other students; she just did not care about them anymore. She was more concerned about herself and her learning than about maintaining a relationship with her classmates. In this case, she had not resigned herself to staying silent; she chose not to keep her mouth shut.

Well, I am more confident now because I understand this material. Another thing was that, well for the past few weeks, I've been going to him [the teacher] a lot after class and stuff. Saying stuff like, explain this

to me, and I  
more confid  
clarifies cer  
"This is so  
it? And I n  
with him at  
a damn wh  
I am. Yeah  
he understa  
basically n  
anymore.

#### Self-silence

better understandi

what she was doi

least privately an

I mean, w  
thing? Y  
invented  
Why?! L

Rahnuma

problems. She v

significant way

words, she accep

correctly, but sh

where the given

Well, I  
solve th  
the righ  
don't se  
given.

to me, and I can't do circles or something. And basically that gave me more confidence, now I have better eye contact with him. And so like he clarifies certain things while he's looking at me. Like, you know, he says, "This is so because this is this..." And he looks at me like, have you got it? And I'm like, uh-huh, I got that. I mean, I can have a conversation with him about the material. You know, I know him better, so I don't give a damn what the rest of the class thinks because they're even stupider than I am. Yeah. So, like I'm more free to ask him questions because I know he understands my position. You know? And the rest of the class is basically not there. I'm not intimidated anymore. I mean, I just don't care anymore. They're just idiots [the other students].

Self-silencing: Private subjective knowing. Feeling more comfortable with and better understanding the material gave Rahnuma time to think about why she was doing what she was doing, instead of just trying to get the answers. She began to question, at least privately and with me, the givens in the math formulas and equations.

I mean, why do we have to believe this, that we have to multiply the whole thing? You know, why do we have to believe this?...I mean, who invented this, anyway? I mean, yes, let's have numbers that run around. Why?! Like, why not have numbers that sit in chairs or something?

Rahnuma realized that she was willing to accept the givens, but only to solve the problems. She was very clear, however, that she did not "really accept" the givens in any significant way because she did not understand them or see their relevance. In other words, she accepts the givens enough so that she can solve the problems on the test correctly, but she doesn't accept that they should be givens. She doesn't understand where the givens come from and why she has to accept them.

Well, I accept the givens, but I don't really accept them. I mean, I can solve the problems using the givens. I mean, I'm good at it. And I'll get the right answer. And that's important for doing well on the exams. But I don't see the relevance in all of this. And I definitely don't understand the given. I'm a really big skeptic, a really big skeptic.

Now that Ra  
opposed to just sol  
be studying such m  
having to study con  
could not tell them  
even he saw no us

I mean, the  
mean, for  
doing this  
now we ha  
started doi  
vectors are  
numbers t  
what, why  
doing with  
place in li  
[Mr. Zam  
need thes

Rahnuma

"math atheist." :

sees math as a re

believe in math,

to do so.

I don't b  
what to  
believe  
should b  
mean, w  
religion  
Adam a  
Christia  
we exer  
agree.



Now that Rahnuma had time to contemplate what she was doing and why, as opposed to just solving the problems, she thought there was “no reason” why they should be studying such mathematical concepts. She was becoming visibly frustrated about having to study concepts for which she saw no use. She exclaimed that even Mr. Zaman could not tell them why they needed to study such things, because according to Rahnuma, even he saw no use for this material either.

I mean, the thing is, you have to like get it into this echelon form, and, I mean, for no reason. I mean, why bother, really. I mean, why are we doing this? God knows. Somebody sat down and figured this out and now we have to pay for it. Anyways, that was that. And now we've started doing vectors and scalars. Now, this is even more strange. I mean, vectors are numbers basically which are running around. And scalars are numbers that stay put. Now, who needs this concept anyway? What, what, why? Where do you put this to use? I have no idea what they're doing with this. Why do we need this? I mean, I can't imagine a single place in life, you know, where I'd be required to know matrices...Even [Mr. Zaman] is not saying anything, because even he knows you don't need these things.

Rahnuma was so frustrated by the uselessness of math that she declared herself a “math atheist.” She went on to explain that she has declared herself as such because she sees math as a religion which she does not believe. She explained that it is a choice to believe in math, and she chooses not to believe in it because she does not see any reason to do so.

I don't believe in math. You see, it's like a religion. I mean, they tell you what to believe, like two plus two equals four. And you can choose to believe it, or not choose to believe it. I have chosen not to believe it. So, I should be excused from math. I think I'm going to talk to the registrar. I mean, why should I have to believe this? Look, it's like teaching any religion in school. I mean, you don't have to believe that, you know, Adam and Eve existed. And then, look, if you don't believe in Christianity, you're exempted from church, right? So, why on earth aren't we exempted from math? I just don't get this. And nobody else seems to agree. That's the problem, no one else understands this.

After a bit of  
willing to accept th  
found it useful. Bu  
particular, she que  
vectors and scalars  
concepts.

I mean, lik  
take two o  
Fine. But  
who told u  
what I'm e  
someone I  
are runnin  
zero, and  
mean, wh  
them a pr  
rational n

Rahnuma  
frustratedly, by  
wearing of cloth  
critically is impr  
university stude

You see  
started r  
who star  
understa  
need cl  
are unco  
of their  
cover it  
see, tha  
I mean,

After a bit of venting her views on math, she explained that she was actually willing to accept the basic and simple belief that two plus two equals four because she found it useful. But she was not willing, or able, to accept more complex math. In particular, she questioned the usefulness of knowing complex mathematical concepts, like vectors and scalars. She did not see or understand any practical application for such concepts.

I mean, like fine, I can still deal with two plus two equals four. I mean, take two oranges and two other oranges and it comes to four oranges. Fine. But, I mean, why do we have to do vectors and scalars? I mean, who told us to twist simple numbers into such complex forms? That is what I'm questioning. Why do we have to do this? You know...I mean, someone has decided that we need vectors and scalars, and numbers that are running around versus numbers that sit still, and numbers that include zero, and numbers that include negative 1. I mean, God, who cares? I mean, what am I going to do, I'm going to go to the grocery store and ask them a price, and then I'm going to say, "Well, now do you think that is a rational number?" That is so stupid. What are numbers anyway? Oof...

Rahnuma continued to question the very existence of mathematics, albeit very frustratedly, by discussing people's decision to believe in things, such as religion or the wearing of clothing. Her ability to play with ideas and language so reflectively and critically is impressive and definitely exceptional, for both Bangladeshi and American university students.

You see, originally, someone started believing these things. Someone started religion. And it's basically all the people who have been converted who start believing. Same thing, why do you believe we need clothes? I understand what clothes do. Why do we need clothes? Animals don't need clothes. They have what we have basically. And you can't say they are unconscious or unaware of their genitalia. They are very much aware of their genitalia. But they don't have the overwhelming need to go and cover it. Who the hell told us this anyway? Why do we believe this? You see, that's how it started. And similarly, that's why we've accepted math. I mean, who started math anyway? I mean, some sad old man, just

because he  
know, that  
this, and th

Rahnuma's

complex, especial  
keeping her mouth  
keeps her opinion  
them, in some of  
questions and to  
desired, Banglad  
of the time, and

For Rahnuma

jeopardizing either  
relationship with  
write anything t  
she says what sh  
relationships in

Rahnuma

different from  
opinion." Rah  
bear by careful  
determine whe

because he had no life, just sat down and started counting things. You know, that's where it came from. He decided that radius should be this, this, and this.

### Summary and Reflections

Rahnuma's decisions to speak up (to have a voice) or to remain silent are complex, especially given the cultural messages she has received all her life about keeping her mouth shut (which I discuss in the following chapter). While Rahnuma often keeps her opinions to herself because she thinks it is inappropriate or problematic to share them, in some of her classes she is confident, assertive, opinionated, and willing to ask questions and to challenge things. Rahnuma is aware that she is not your typical, or desired, Bangladeshi woman or student, at least not in some ways, and at least not some of the time, and ideally, she prefers to be this non-traditional vocal student.

For Rahnuma to have a voice in her classes, she must feel that she is not jeopardizing either her relationship with her teachers (i.e., being the good student) or her relationship with her parents (i.e., being the good daughter). Rahnuma will not say or write anything that she does not think meets others' expectations and standards. Instead, she says what she thinks they want to hear, and thus, she preserves and maintains relationships important to her.

Rahnuma was concerned about teachers lowering her grade if she gives an opinion different from theirs. She "always writes the teacher's opinion if they want a certain opinion." Rahnuma explained that she figured out what opinions her teachers wanted to hear by carefully watching and listening to her teachers. She was confident that she could determine what her teachers believed, or at least wanted to hear, by "watching the way the

teacher expresses h  
Rahnuma went on  
is people who are  
tend to stereotype  
person is a softy,  
I mean, about wh  
And then she kno  
opinion.

Rahnuma  
she believes her  
they cannot, at le  
answer is all tha  
likes you or you  
you is an import  
get the sum righ  
your teachers te  
different opinio  
approach to gra  
opinion as the  
class, you kno  
love you."

teacher expresses himself. His change in voice, and stuff like that. Basically intuition.”

Rahnuma went on to say that she stereotypes her teachers as “softies” and “bastards;” that is, people who are willing to hear a different opinion, and people who are not. “I think I tend to stereotype people. I put them in pigeon holes. It’s like, I just figure like if this person is a softy, or a, you know, complete bastard, basically. And that just dictates a lot, I mean, about what his views might be. I can expect what his points of view will be.”

And then she knows whether or not there will be negative consequences if she shares her opinion.

Rahnuma made an important distinction between her environment classes, where she believes her opinions can affect her grades, and her math classes, where she believes they cannot, at least not as much. In math, according to Rahnuma, getting the right answer is all that determines your grade. It does not matter whether or not your teacher likes you or your opinions. In environment, however, whether or not your teacher likes you is an important factor in what grades you get. “Because, you know, in math, if you get the sum right, it doesn’t matter if he hates you. In other classes, like environment, your teachers tend to be more strict while they go through your paper if you have a different opinion because they think you’re being difficult.” This subjective and personal approach to grading, however, can also work in the students favor. If you have the same opinion as the teacher, this can actually improve your grade. “If you’re a goody-goody in class, you know, saying what the teacher wants, being like, ‘Yes Sir!’ Oh, the teachers love you.”

Rahnuma for  
with someone like  
made her feel more  
know something.  
wrong because she  
She did not feel in  
not knowing some  
you're wrong. Li  
relate to somebod  
look stupid." Ra  
intimidates you a

In math, I  
in front of his in  
like he's a child.  
Sarker, Rahnum  
caught dead wr  
thing," all Rahn  
on the other har  
them.

Rahnum  
and educated in  
She explained



Rahnuma found that she felt more comfortable, and more able to have a voice, with someone like Dr. Markus who was willing to say that he did not know everything. It made her feel more related to him, and thus she was more comfortable when she did not know something. She was also more comfortable about making mistakes and being wrong because she saw Dr. Markus as a resource and guide as opposed to her evaluator. She did not feel inferior to Dr. Markus because he was not going to make fun of her for not knowing something. As Rahnuma said, "I mean, he's not going to go, Ha, ha, ha, you're wrong. Like some teachers tend to intimidate you. It's more, I mean, it's easier to relate to somebody who is more human." Otherwise, Rahnuma is "afraid that [she] will look stupid." Rahnuma said that luckily Dr. Markus wasn't one of those teachers who intimidates you and makes you look stupid. "He's just not like that."

In math, however, Rahnuma said that "her teacher would rather die than be wrong in front of his inferior students." Rahnuma thought that this attitude was "so stupid. It's like he's a child." Although there were certainly exceptions, like Dr. Markus and Dr. Sarker, Rahnuma said that this behavior was "a man thing. They just can't handle being caught dead wrong." When I tried to understand why she thought this was a "man thing," all Rahnuma explained was that, "Men tend to do those sort of things." Women, on the other hand, are always assumed to be wrong or at fault, so this is not an issue for them.

Rahnuma believed that many of her teachers, especially teachers who were raised and educated in Bangladesh, including her math teacher, saw their students as inferior. She explained that by inferior she meant, "younger, more naive, less informed, you know,

inferior in that sense.  
their teaching of ig  
down at you. Like  
get that. And they  
big favor by teach  
"very patronizing  
head of the Schoo  
most of her male

In contras  
adults. Rahnuma  
students as "havi  
thought of as an  
Being thought o  
way Bangladesh

#### Chapter

ways of knowin  
Rahnuma form  
has received, an  
elders who are  
her attempt to  
seen, Rahnuma  
would like to c

Inferior in that sense.” She said that some of her teachers are condescending, and see their teaching of ignorant students as a favor to them. “You know, some teachers talk down at you. Like, they say, Oh, well, I knew, it doesn’t surprise me at all that you didn’t get that. And they sort of hold it against you. They act like they’re doing you some great big favor by teaching you.” Rahnuma gets quite upset about this because she said it is “very patronizing.” Again, she made a point of saying that Dr. Markus and Dr. Sarker (the head of the School of Environment) were exceptions to this rule; however, she said that most of her male teachers were like this.

In contrast, Rahnuma said that Dr. Markus and Dr. Sarker view their students as adults. Rahnuma said this attitude is “really nice” because it means they view their students as “having the capability of understanding.” And Rahnuma really likes being thought of as an intelligent person with her own ideas and the ability to think for herself. Being thought of as an intelligent and independent thinker, however, is contrary to the way Bangladeshi culture views women, educated or not.

Chapter Five explores the possibility that the social construction of Rahnuma’s ways of knowing are embedded in the larger cultural context in which Rahnuma lives. Rahnuma forms relationships with her teachers based largely on the cultural messages she has received, and to some degree has adopted. For example, she treats her teachers as elders who are to be respected and revered, rarely questioning or disagreeing with them in her attempt to meet their expectations and to be a good student. Privately, as we have seen, Rahnuma certainly does not always respect or revere her teachers; and ideally, she would like to disagree with and question them. Sometimes meeting her teachers’

expectations mean

encouraged and re

will Rahnuma voi

parents. And thus

and doing, are ine

classroom.

expectations means silencing her self and her ideas. Sometimes, however, she is encouraged and rewarded for thoughtfully voicing her opinions. At no time, however, will Rahnuma voice her opinions if she thinks it will jeopardize her relationship with her parents. And thus, Rahnuma's struggles with voice and silence, self and other, knowing and doing, are inextricably intertwined with her ways of knowing both in and out of the classroom.

Being in t  
experience things  
college students'  
and women's wa  
and struggles in  
understanding h  
chapter highlight  
private, choice a  
Rahnuma's fam  
child from her  
conscious-raisi  
upon her return  
situation.

U  
Rahnuma  
and raised alm

## **Chapter 5**

### **THE GOOD DAUGHTER: STRUGGLING WITH VOICE AND SILENCE TO MEET CULTURAL EXPECTATIONS**

Being in the unfamiliar culture of Bangladesh allowed me to see, hear, and experience things which I had previously ignored during my study of American women college students' ways of knowing: namely the power and influence of culture on girls' and women's ways of knowing. The following chapter is organized around pivotal points and struggles in Rahnuma's life, largely identified by her, which I believe are central to understanding her ways of knowing, both in and out of the classroom. In particular, this chapter highlights Rahnuma's struggles with voice and silence, self and other, public and private, choice and expectation, across her lifespan. I begin with a description of Rahnuma's family and the messages (as related to ways of knowing) she received as a child from her family, religion, and teachers; continue with a discussion of Rahnuma's conscious-raising experiences at a boarding school in India, and the conflicts which ensue upon her return to her family two years later; and finally explore Rahnuma's present situation.

#### **Unconsciously Meeting Expectations: Silent and Voiceless**

Rahnuma, now a twenty year-old Bangladeshi woman attending GU, was born and raised almost exclusively in Dhaka. Her father is a businessman, and her mother is

an elementary school  
sibling, a brother n  
close to anyone in  
very concerned ab

Until the a  
Bengali-medium  
students, parents  
schools because  
addition, and per  
Western...too sex  
and the other wo  
being irrelevant  
elders). In contr  
importance of th  
English, and the  
rules of gramm  
English.

Rahnuma  
English medium  
wild but not fo  
London, while  
English mediu



an elementary school teacher at a well-respected English-medium school. She has one sibling, a brother named Kazi, who is five years older than she. While she said she is not close to anyone in her family, and actually has difficulty getting along with them, she is very concerned about being a "good daughter."

Until the age of fifteen, being a good daughter included being educated at Bengali-medium schools. According to Rahnuma, and echoed by the other women students, parents believe that it is important for girls to be educated at Bengali medium schools because "as a girl, she needed to learn about Bengali language and culture." In addition, and perhaps more importantly, girls need to be protected from "becoming too Western...too sexual and wild" at the English medium schools. According to Rahnuma and the other women, being wild includes such things as drinking, taking drugs, and being irreverent and disrespectful (e.g., being assertive, outspoken, and questioning elders). In contrast, Rahnuma explained that the Bengali medium schools emphasize the importance of the traditional Bengali language and culture. They teach very little English, and the English they do teach is rather formal, focusing on written English and rules of grammar. There was almost no attention to either spoken or conversational English.

Rahnuma explained that her brother Kazi was allowed to be educated at the English medium schools "because he is a boy, and it's more permissive for boys to be wild but not for girls." For the same reason, Kazi was allowed to attend university in London, while Rahnuma was not. While Rahnuma was not allowed to study at the English medium schools or to attend university in London, she did benefit from her

brother's education  
fluently. Attracted  
read, and quickly  
by her Bengali me  
she was educated  
neglect Bengali li

In retrospe  
received as a chil  
voiceless. More  
maturation proce  
this message of l  
Everyone expect  
she gets this me  
that God wants

Everyone  
teachers  
nature fr  
hands, v  
therefor  
[as inter

For app  
standards and e  
brother were ju  
perhaps did no  
described herse

brother's education by secretly using his books to learn to read and speak English fluently. Attracted by the pictures in the English books, she read whatever her brother read, and quickly learned to read and speak English fluently. Although she was frustrated by her Bengali medium schools' poor English training, she explained that she was glad she was educated at Bengali medium schools because the English medium schools "really neglect Bengali language and culture."

In retrospect, Rahnuma is able to be reflective about the cultural messages she received as a child. Growing up, according to Rahnuma, meant being silent and voiceless. More specifically, she explained that "shutting your mouth...it's all part of this maturation process. You have to be grown up about things." Rahnuma explained that this message of keeping her mouth shut has been ingrained in her throughout her life. Everyone expects her to be silent, to be obedient. In particular, Rahnuma believes that she gets this message from her religion, from her parents, and from her teachers. She said that God wants her to live this way, and thus others expect her to live this way as well.

Everyone expects me to shut my mouth: my religion, my parents, my teachers. I mean, it's an ingrained thing. I mean, that's where we get our nature from, from our religion. I mean, we know, like the back of our hands, we know that this is how God wants us to behave, and then, therefore, it must be right. And so we base our behavior on that standard [as interpreted from the Koran], and we try to achieve those standards....

For approximately the first fifteen years of Rahnuma's life, these were the only standards and expectations she knew. Not having as much freedom or as much say as her brother were just givens. She did not question these things because she just accepted, or perhaps did not even see, the differences. Not knowing any other way of life, she described herself as content with her existence. She was happy to let her parents make all

her decisions for her  
things for herself.

bliss, albeit a silent

Up until c  
what's bes  
have anyth  
anything.

Rahnuma

teachers that Ben

to keep their mo

should be in pur

When the wom

robes and head

The custom of p

be silent, they a

Rahnuma expl

men," and thus

themselves.

I mean  
suppos  
thing.  
to stay

While Rahnum

messages whi

her decisions for her, largely because she did not know she was capable of deciding things for herself. For Rahnuma, this state of ignorance allowed her to exist in a state of bliss, albeit a silent and obedient one.

Up until class eleven, I just trusted my parents. I was like, you know what's best for me. So, I wouldn't say anything. I mean, I didn't really have anything to say. Up until then, I didn't have a problem with anything.

Rahnuma explained that she learned from her religion, her parents, and her teachers that Bengali Muslim girls, and especially women, are supposed to be timid and to keep their mouths shut. Ideally, women are supposed to be neither seen nor heard; they should be in purdah, which is the practice of secluding women from the men in society. When the women cannot be secluded they should be dressed in their burkabs, the black robes and head pieces that many Muslim women are required to wear by their husbands. The custom of purdah and wearing burkabs suggests that not only are women supposed to be silent, they are also supposed to be invisible (or as close to invisible as possible). Rahnuma explained that according to Islam, women are "created physically weaker than men," and thus women cannot, and certainly should not, think for or take care of themselves.

I mean, as a woman, I'm expected to keep my mouth shut. Women are supposed to be timid in our culture. It's a Muslim thing, and a Bengali thing. Bengali women, in general, are under burkabs, and we're supposed to stay at home, and stuff like that.

While Rahnuma is not required to be in purdah or to wear a burkabs, she still hears the messages which are associated with these practices. As a child growing up in this culture

of silence she unc

mouth shut" and l

Manifestations in

These cul

well. According

because they kno

supposed to not

are predominant

and thus studen

In eleme

listening to the

encouraged or

that there were

It was a

lecture

Thinki

green t

know

At this

questions and

to believe, an

not aware of

ask.

of silence she unconsciously and unquestioningly knew she was supposed to “keep [her] mouth shut” and be silent; thus being a good daughter.

### Manifestations in Elementary and Secondary School

These cultural messages and norms played themselves out in the classroom as well. According to Rahnuma, Islam preaches that she must respect and revere her elders because they know more than she, and even what is best for her. Thus, students are supposed to not only respect their teachers, but also revere and obey them. Teachers, who are predominantly men, are supposed to be seen as higher beings, superior to students, and thus students should never question or challenge them.

In elementary and high school, Rahnuma explained that her education consisted of listening to the teacher lecture and memorizing whatever he said. Students were not encouraged or taught how to think for themselves, especially girl students. She explained that there were no opportunities for her to develop her own ideas or opinions.

It was all very much about memorizing the information. They would lecture to us, and we would give them the information on the exams.... Thinking for yourself was definitely not encouraged. No, no. We had a green board, and chalk, and the teachers told us what they wanted us to know for the exams. And that was it.

At this age, however, Rahnuma said that she “didn’t really care” about asking questions and thinking for herself. She was willing to just believe what they wanted her to believe, and to allow others to make decisions for her. At that point, because she was not aware of her ability to ask questions, she did not have any questions she wanted to ask.

the teacher as super

that Islam teaches

Well, you  
even when  
because th  
classroom  
were taug  
much you  
obedient,  
little bit t  
fearing an  
concept c  
as higher

Accordin

education. She

enough to be ed

Thus, education

heard.

You see  
to the h  
was not  
this tab  
not sup  
how thi  
told.

Throug

as fitting this t

explained that

she did not thi



Rahnuma explains that this hierarchical teacher/student relationship, this view of the teacher as superior, stems, at least somewhat, from her religion of Islam. She believes that Islam teaches people to fear and respect things that are higher than them.

Well, you see, for certain classes, you can't say anything to your teachers, even when they are digressing. You just have to sit there and take it because they're your superiors. There's a definite hierarchy in the classroom, especially if you're from Bengali medium schools, because we were taught that teachers were right next to your parents, and that is how much you should respect them, and not challenge them, and you know, be obedient, and all that. So, all of this really rubs off. And I think it has a little bit to do with our religion. Because we have this thing about, um, fearing and respecting something that is higher than us, which is the concept of God. So, I think this is inborn in us that we identify something as higher than us, and then we, there is this aspect of reverence to it.

According to Rahnuma, there is a history of women being deprived of a liberating education. She explained that the goal of education for women who have been fortunate enough to be educated has been rote memorization, as opposed to critical thinking skills. Thus, education reinforces and supports the expectation that women be neither seen nor heard.

You see, in the old days, women had private tutors, like who would come to the home and teach them. And traditionally, our [women's] education was not analytical, it was, you know, "So, give me the first ten points of this table." It was like that. It was rote memorization basically. So, we're not supposed to think. We're not supposed to ask questions. That's not how things are done, you know. We're just supposed to do what we're told.

Throughout her elementary and secondary education Rahnuma described herself as fitting this traditional model of a female student. More specifically, Rahnuma explained that she was not the kind of student who asked questions and discussed ideas; she did not think for herself and just did what she was told. She explained that she "was

not into school at a  
my grades and tha

At the age  
boarding school i  
place for Rahnuma  
of India, unlike V  
Rahnuma, prove  
world upside do

#### Awareness of Se

While R  
aware of the im  
pressures of bei  
largely Hindu, c  
knowing: conse  
that she could t  
classmates, and  
to believe that  
especially life  
discovered the  
accordingly.  
her fate as a ti

not into school at all. I mean, I was just barely there. I wasn't into studies. I just passed my grades and that was it."

### **Becoming Aware: Discovering Her Self and Voice**

At the age of fifteen, Rahnuma's parents sent her to an elite, predominantly Hindu boarding school in India for two years. Her parents believed that this would be a safe place for Rahnuma to be educated since India was so near to Bangladesh and the people of India, unlike Westerners, were "moral people." These two years, according to Rahnuma, proved to be the most critical two years of her life for they virtually turned her world upside down.

#### Awareness of Self

While Rahnuma described her experience there as hostile and unpleasant, she is aware of the impact these two years away from home, away from the expectations and pressures of being a good daughter, had on her. Being on her own and in a non-Muslim, largely Hindu, culture introduced Rahnuma to new and different ways of being and knowing; consequently, her life was changed irrevocably. Most importantly, she learned that she could think and make decisions for herself. And her interactions with her classmates, and even some of her teachers, forced her to stand up for herself. She came to believe that others, namely her parents, did not always know what was best for her, especially life decisions like marriage and career/higher education. Instead, she discovered that she herself knew what was best for her, and she wanted to live her life accordingly. She would never be able to happily, or at least ignorantly and blindly, accept her fate as a timid, silent, and obedient Bangladeshi Muslim girl again.

Well, until  
didn't have  
studies. I j  
things. Bu  
school, the  
ohmygod,  
butt. Up u  
wouldn't h  
know, I w  
then, grad  
really cha  
you had to

#### Awareness of Ori

Accordin

India, namely Hi

another way, a c

allowed, or perh

and different wo

school. Becaus

compare differe

It was n

outside of the c

to fend for her

where students

thinking for an

up, to stand up

trust others to

everything sh

Well, until grade eleven, I was at Holy Cross, a Bengali medium school. I didn't have an opinion about anything here. I wasn't interested in my studies. I just didn't think about anything. I was too busy doing other things. But for grades eleven and twelve, I was in India, in boarding school, the Supreme Queen. It was a very swish, very snobbish, very ohmygod, kind of place. You had to have an opinion here to save your butt. Up until then, I think I was really timid. Up until class eleven, I wouldn't have a problem with the things I have a problem with now. You know, I was like, okay, okay, you just find me a husband, I trust you. But then, grades eleven and twelve, I got more exposure. Boarding school really changes a person, it really does. It was a very hostile place. I mean, you had to look after yourself.

#### Awareness of Other Religions

According to Rahnuma, it was being introduced to a new and different religion in India, namely Hinduism, which helped enable her to question things. She had seen another way, a contrasting way, of looking at the world, another way of being, and this allowed, or perhaps even forced, her to compare the world she grew up in with this new and different world. "I think most of my questions came after I came back from boarding school. Because I lived with another religion [Hinduism] basically, which made me compare different things. I learned that Islam wasn't the only way...."

It was not in the classroom, however, where Rahnuma learned to speak up. It was outside of the classroom, in her interactions with the other students, where she was forced to fend for herself. Rahnuma described the boarding school as "a very hostile place" where students tried to get each other kicked out of school. This forced Rahnuma to start thinking for and taking care of herself. She believed she had to have an opinion, to speak up, to stand up for herself, or she would not survive there. She was no longer willing to trust others to make decisions about her life. These new beliefs were the antithesis of everything she had believed up until then. She no longer believed that everyone else

knew what was be

was best for her, a

The classr  
and peopl  
have to ha  
you had to  
going to m

Awareness of Ge

As Rahnu

was female she w

wanted to go to a

so. According to

the "sexist" socie

These thi  
let the gi  
mean it's  
abroad in  
daughter  
house so

The issu

was particularly

to be bought and

she believed she

about.

Thinking  
school I  
and that  
mean I  
stuff lik  
will hav

knew what was best for her. After living on her own, she believed that she knew what was best for her, and she was willing to say so.

The classroom wasn't the problem. There were a lot of politics going on, and people were backstabbers completely. You had to be very, very, you have to have a hard skin. And you had to know when to retaliate. And you had to know when to put your foot down and say like you are not going to mess with me anymore. I just started talking back.

### Awareness of Gender

As Rahnuma approached marriageable age, she began to believe that because she was female she was treated not only differently, but also unfairly. In particular, she wanted to go to a university in London, but unlike her brother, she was not allowed to do so. According to Rahnuma, the different treatment she received was a manifestation of the "sexist" society in which she lived.

These things are very sexist things. I mean, it's in our society. They don't let the girls do these things, certain things, you know. It's not just me. I mean it's all the girls here. You'll see a lot of girls whose brothers are abroad in school, and they're here in Dhaka. Parents just like to keep their daughters with them because pretty soon they'll be married and out of the house soon, anyway....

The issue of marriage, and more specifically the practice of arranged marriages, was particularly problematic and disturbing to Rahnuma. It made her feel like an object to be bought and sold, and it terrified her. These limits on her freedom were more than she believed she could handle, and more specifically, more than she could keep quiet about.

Thinking like this, it's all pretty new...I mean, they didn't let me go to the school I wanted to go to because I'm a girl. And I was like kept in Dhaka, and that didn't go very well with me....Before this whole marriage thing, I mean I was like, all right, okay fine, I don't have as much freedom and stuff like that. But this marriage thing really hurt me when I realized that I will have to like get married to somebody and have their children. That

really both  
marriage th  
Everybody  
don't know  
him. And

Things w  
Bangladesh. Ra  
world. She was  
longer thought t  
choose her husb  
was no longer v  
there were othe  
how she wante  
own ideas abou

Being e  
what's  
things  
know.  
say, "I

Her av  
culture's, and  
wants to live  
live her life.



really bothered me. Because the other bits I could handle....But this marriage thing, it's awful. It's like being cattle in a market. It's terrible. Everybody is terrified of this [arranged marriage]. It's sort of like, you don't know a person, and then you have to spend the rest of your life with him. And if something goes wrong, it's always the girl's fault.

### **Conflict with Others: The Struggle Begins**

Things were not the same for Rahnuma upon her return to her life at home in Bangladesh. Rahnuma was not the same. She was no longer limited to one vision of the world. She was no longer content with having others make decisions for her. She no longer thought that her life was just fine. She no longer wanted to just let her parents choose her husband, arrange her marriage. She no longer wanted to remain silent. She was no longer willing to just accept what others decided for her. She was aware that there were other ways to do things, other ways to live life. She had her own ideas about how she wanted to live her life, and about with whom she wanted to live it. She had her own ideas about whom she wanted to be.

Being on my own, I learned to take care of myself. I mean, I think I know what's best for me. Even though, now, I know that I did some really dumb things in school, some really stupid things. But these things happen, you know. So, I started to think that I knew what was best for me. I started to say, "Hey, I know what's best for me, you know, so listen to me."

Her awareness of other ways of being and knowing was in conflict with her culture's, and specifically her parent's and her religion's, expectations of her. How she wants to live her life is now different than how her parents and her religion expect her to live her life.

Manifestations with

As a result

difficult thing" to

Rahnuma versus I

wanted her to be

and her society w

always act the w

Together

marriageable ag

realizes that she

marry, she strugg

her desire to tak

whom she will

have chosen, b

expect her to m

the community

"treated badly"

Well, I

won't

husbar

your f

bitch,

Rahnu

nor had she a

### Manifestations with Family

As a result of her newfound independence, Rahnuma said that “it was a very difficult thing” to get along with her parents because “there were control issues.” It was Rahnuma versus her parents. They did not want her to have any opinions; they just wanted her to be silent, to keep her mouth shut. While Rahnuma knows that her parents and her society want and expect her to keep her mouth shut, to be silent, she does not always act the way that Bangladeshi daughters or students are supposed to act.

Together, returning from her boarding school experience/awakening and being of marriageable age have created conflict and struggle for Rahnuma. While Rahnuma realizes that she does not have much, if any, say in the decision about whom she would marry, she struggles with her newfound belief that she knows what was best for her and her desire to take care of herself. She explained that she can voice her opinion about whom she will marry, i.e., she can say “no” to a prospective husband whom her parents have chosen, but there will definitely be negative consequences. Her parents definitely expect her to marry someone whom they choose and arrange for her, and they, as well as the community, will not be pleased if she defies their wishes. Subsequently, she will be “treated badly” and may even be “disowned” from her family.

Well, I can like say “no” [to my parents’ choices for my husband], but they won’t think that’s very nice of me...I mean, some people choose their own husband, but there’s a lot of bitterness, and you’re sort of estranged from your family. And like, your parents’ friends are going to think, oh, what a bitch, what an ungrateful person. Society thinks like that.

Rahnuma explained that she had not always recognized her society as a sexist one, nor had she always been at odds with her parents’ beliefs and expectations. As a young

girl, she just expected  
frustrations with her  
on her own, without  
separating herself  
just laughed and

#### Manifestations w

Question  
question. Rahn  
especially regard  
receives from her

I want to  
things in  
advance  
or they?  
They w

She is v

without question  
cannot follow

I quest  
women  
suppos  
another  
very, v  
don't  
And I  
other  
misim  
It's ve  
have  
non-to  
where

girl, she just expected and trusted that her parents would choose her husband. Despite her frustrations with her parents, Rahnuma explained that she would never choose to go off on her own, without her parents' permission or approval. She found the idea of separating herself from her family totally unfathomable. It just was not a possibility. She just laughed and said, "That's out of the question."

### Manifestations with Religion

Questioning her religion is another thing which, at least publicly, is out of the question. Rahnuma told me that privately she questions her religion all the time, especially regarding women's issues. Rahnuma struggles a bit with the messages she receives from her religion, especially the message to not question is what is being heard.

I want to be able to question things. But if you say you want to question things in Islam, they'll be like, Oh, yes, we're big ones for scientific advancement, blah, blah, blah. They'll like completely change the topic, or they'll twist it around, and never answer what you really want to know. They won't let you question Islam, basically.

She is very frustrated by the way her religion wants her to just believe things without questioning them, especially given that her religion is very contradictory. She cannot follow her religion blindly, however, when it comes to being intolerant of others.

I question Islam all the time. I mean, by myself. Especially things like women's equality, and the purdah system, and the fact that we are supposed to believe a lot of things just because someone said so. And another thing is, I mean, our religion said that, you know, I mean, it's not a very, we don't have a very good view of people of other religions, which I don't agree to. Like Jewish people. We're not supposed to like them. And I can't understand this. I mean, Islam is not very tolerant of people of other religions. But, at the same time, you see, this happens due to misinterpretation. It's like we have contradicting quotes from everywhere. It's very contradictory. I mean, sometimes it will say that, yes, you should have religious wars because you should convert other people. So that says non-tolerance. At the same time, it says that Islam has a social system where all other religions can live in peace and harmony. Now if you're

going to be  
possible.

Because R

more inclined to

questioning conti

allowed to quest

Islam cannot be

views and rules

to a certain poin

women because

You see

question

that I w

So, I m

questio

someh

questio

They h

#### Manifestations

Rahnu

is not always

Many of her r

want her to st

than men bec

them. Rahnu

And

my n

(saying

going to have a bloody war raging against them, I don't see how that is possible.

Because Rahnuma finds her religion contradictory she believes she is naturally more inclined to question things. As our conversation about her religion and her questioning continued, she became increasingly angry. She believed she should be allowed to question whatever she wants. According to Rahnuma, if the foundation of Islam cannot be questioned, she strongly believes that they have no right to impose their views and rules on her. She explained that Islam encourages some questioning, but only to a certain point and about certain things. Rahnuma said this is especially true for women because they want to keep women quiet.

You see, Islam has these really dumb sayings, things like, yes, you should question God, blah, blah, blah...And he shall answer. But the problem is that I want to question the answers some more, and that is not tolerated. So, I mean, the thing is, if I can question God, then obviously I can question my elders. And I don't see what the problem is in questioning something. Are their basics so bloody weak that they cannot tolerate my questioning?! If that is so, then they have no right to be superior to me. They have no right to tell me what to think or how to live my life.

#### Manifestations at School

Rahnuma often thinks for herself and asks questions in the classroom as well. She is not always the shy and timid female Bangladeshi student, as is evident in Chapter Four. Many of her male friends, as well as some women, are uncomfortable around her, and want her to stop talking. Rahnuma explained, however, that women have to work harder than men because women need to prove themselves in a society that does not respect them. Rahnuma is certainly one of these women who is working harder.

And since I do think and ask questions sometimes, I think I make a lot of my male friends uncomfortable. And a bunch of really cool people are [saying] like why does she talk so much [in class about the material]. I

suppose it'  
And cool p  
more hard  
our class.  
that they'r  
to do. An  
end of this  
harder.

This new

life. While in so  
problematic. Th  
about voice and  
her family, her n

Rahnuma

knowing and be  
knows what sh  
But as a grown  
For Rahnuma,

I know  
never h  
I can h  
to be g  
mature

As I d

by her religio  
the way God  
her own belie



suppose it's all right, because they're the cool people, and I'm the nerd. And cool people don't think like nerds. The thing is, women tend to be more hard working because they have something to prove. I mean, look at our class. The guys, they're all in the back, and they're all asleep. It's not that they're malicious or anything. It's how they are. It's just a guy thing to do. And I think, when you look at all the As that people will get at the end of this class, most of them will be women, because we tend to work harder.

This new awareness and inclination to question things complicated Rahnuma's life. While in some ways exciting and liberating, it proved more often than not to be problematic. The conflicting messages about ways of knowing and being, specifically about voice and silence, leave Rahnuma struggling with how to meet the expectations of her family, her religion, and her teachers, while still being true to herself.

### **Being Grown Up: Privately Knowing, Public Silent**

Rahnuma's awareness of the possibilities, her awareness of other ways of knowing and being, is causing her unhappiness and her personal struggles. Rahnuma knows what she "could" have had; she even believes it is what she "should" have had. But as a grown up, she believes that she is expected to be silent, to keep her mouth shut. For Rahnuma, keeping her mouth shut is just part of what it means to grow up.

I know what I could have had. What I should have had, actually. I can never have had it, but I should have had it. So, I've come to terms with all I can have in my life. It's all a part of this maturation process. You have to be grown up about things...It's a pity. I mean, a lot of the time, being mature basically means shutting your mouth. It's expected of me....

As I discussed earlier, Rahnuma explained that being silent was expected of her by her religion, her parents, and her teachers. She further explained that being silent is the way God wants her to be, and thus she tries to be that way, even when it is contrary to her own beliefs and desires about who she is and who she would like to be. She feels she

has no choice but

resigned herself to

It doesn't  
[the religi  
just don't

Rahnuma

as she wishes. B

her life as she ch

possibility to liv

different life. A

Resigned to Me

Rahnum

and meet her fa

great. She exp

out of her hous

Well, i  
ground  
to keep  
do wh

In gen

does not shar

she says to he

along with he

they expect t

expectations

has no choice but to meet the expectations of her family and her religion, and thus she has resigned herself to being silent.

It doesn't feel good to keep my mouth shut. But I still have to live up to [the religious expectations that women be silent]. I don't have a choice. I just don't have a choice.

Rahnuma spoke sadly, and sometimes angrily, about her inability to live her life as she wishes. But it was clear that while she still believes that she should be free to live her life as she chooses, she has accepted that she cannot. While it is in the realm of possibility to live differently, it is not within the realm of her possibilities to have a different life. As she repeated over and over again, she just doesn't have a choice.

#### Resigned to Meet Familial Expectations

Rahnuma explained that she does not have any choice but to keep her mouth shut and meet her family's expectations because the consequences of speaking up are too great. She explained that if she does not do what her parents want she will not be allowed out of her house at all.

Well, if I weren't obedient, if I didn't do what they wanted, I would be grounded for the rest of my life. I mean, I just don't have a choice. I have to keep my mouth shut. I can't tell them what I really think. I can't just do what I want. I don't have a choice. I just don't have a choice.

In general, Rahnuma does what is expected of her and keeps her mouth shut. She does not share her opinions with her parents or her brother, and is selective about what she says to her friends and teachers. Rahnuma explained that the reason she doesn't get along with her parents is because of tension between the way she wants to be and the way they expect her to be. Rahnuma has resigned herself to living up to her parents' expectations because the consequences of not meeting their expectations are just too

great. In particular  
family, treating h  
there's a bit of a  
but I don't want

Not only  
herself, she is pl  
refrigerator so th  
want to know w  
times. Rahnuma  
allowed to spend  
restricted life.  
given up hopin  
what she has.  
happy about.  
are very home  
know, it's oka  
allowed to do  
has given up  
and resigned  
In other words

Havi  
does have he

great. In particular, she is afraid that her parents will reject her as a member of the family, treating her as if she were dead. "I'm afraid my parents will disown me. As it is, there's a bit of a problem at home because I don't get along very well with my parents, but I don't want to be totally alienated."

Not only is Rahnuma silenced in that she must keep her ideas and feelings to herself, she is physically restricted as well. Her schedule is posted on the family refrigerator so that everyone knows where she is, or at least should be, at all times. They want to know where she is going, what she is doing, and with whom she is with at all times. Rahnuma is restricted to either being at school or at home. She is not even allowed to spend time at a friend's house. But Rahnuma has resigned herself to this restricted life. She is certain that she can't have anything more, and consequently has given up hoping. She even goes so far as to express contentment or satisfaction with what she has. It is a specific example of her choosing to be happy with what she is not happy about. As Rahnuma explained, "Because I don't have much freedom, my hobbies are very home oriented. It's like, I read, listen to music, and I watch a lot of TV. So, you know, it's okay now. I don't miss hanging out with my friends now [which she was allowed to do at boarding school because she lived with them]." Once again, Rahnuma has given up her personal desires, namely spending time outside the home with friends, and resigned herself to the living her life the way her parents expect and allow her to live. In other words, she has resigned herself to being the good daughter.

Having some say. While Rahnuma tries to be the good, obedient daughter, she does have her limits. While she only goes where her parents allow her to go (school and

home), and will C  
be allowed to hav  
repercussions for  
will be arranged  
does not have th  
husband if she f

Rahnuma

"kisses her pare  
toward Rahnuma  
to whomever th  
about the matt  
adult by allow  
however, they  
about whom s  
husband. Cor  
not behaving  
that she be al

In thi  
expectations  
potential hus  
whom her p

home), and will only marry someone whom her parents choose for her, she insists that she be allowed to have some say in the matter. Having any say, however, has had serious repercussions for Rahnuma. Rahnuma has resigned herself to the fact that her marriage will be arranged by her parents. She said that she will not fight them on that; she said she does not have the strength. But she will say no to any of her parents' choices for her husband if she feels she could not spend the rest of her life with that person.

Rahnuma's insistence that she have some say about who she marries, however, "pisses her parents off" and has resulted in her parents being "cruel" and "abusive" toward Rahnuma. According to Rahnuma, her parents just want and expect her to agree to whomever they choose; they certainly do not think that there should be any discussion about the matter. On the one hand, her parents seem to be trying to treat Rahnuma as an adult by allowing her to have some say in whom she will marry. On the other hand, however, they do not want, nor do they think it is right, for Rahnuma to have an opinion about whom she marries. In essence, they want Rahnuma to just accept their choice for a husband. Consequently, Rahnuma is receiving mixed messages and being punished for not behaving as her parents would ideally like, despite their acquiescence to her demand that she be allowed to voice her opinion.

In this one area of her life, Rahnuma has chosen to defy her parents' wishes and expectations on this matter by "demanding" that she at least be allowed to speak with all potential husbands "for ten minutes." While she would never choose to marry someone whom her parents did not approve her, Rahnuma explained that she has enough strength

to say "no" to a pr

spend the rest of h

So, now I'  
married to  
no, you kn  
for ten mi  
all I have

Some of

from seeing her

particular "is be

the shit out of [H

afraid [of all the

[about my fears

she has to say,

Rahnur

children. If it

herself. She is

uncommon. E

again resigned

Yeah.  
reason  
would  
sperm  
you k  
intell  
think  
them  
you c



to say "no" to a prospective husband, ruling out people with whom she would not want to spend the rest of her life. This is her attempt to have some control over her life.

So, now I've like given up. I'm like, well, now if they tell me to get married to such-and-such person, at least I have that much strength to say no, you know. I've demanded that I want to at least speak to this person for ten minutes before I said yes. Which really pisses them off. But that's all I have the strength to say. I mean, it's still my life here.

Some of Rahnuma's insistence that she have a say in whom she marries stems from seeing her friends in miserable marriages. Rahnuma believes that one friend in particular "is being made to do [sexual] things she doesn't want to do." And that "scared the shit out of [her]" because she thinks the same thing will happen to her. She said, "I'm afraid [of all the bad things she associates with being married], but I can't tell my parents [about my fears]." Rahnuma says her parents are not interested in or willing to hear what she has to say, and thus, they have silenced her.

Rahnuma explained that the only reason she wants to get married is to have children. If it was up to her she would just get some frozen sperm and have children by herself. She is afraid she will be stuck with a husband she doesn't like because divorce is uncommon. But since society doesn't accept this approach to parenthood, Rahnuma has again resigned herself, in this case to getting married.

Yeah. That is the probably the reason I want to get married. The only reason. That's it. I wish I could have kids without getting married. I would love to do that. You know, just get myself one of those frozen sperm things, and just finish it off. I don't care. I would like to choose, you know, I'd like somebody really smart, somebody really, really intelligent. I don't have a problem with [having a baby this way]. I don't think the whole world should have a problem with it. I mean, what's it to them?...Here, you don't divorce. You're just stuck with that person. And you don't divorce, I mean, for the sake of your kids.

Rahnuma  
especially men an  
equality. In esse  
resigned herself

believe in a basi  
should be equal  
Resigned to Me

While s  
predominantly  
religion that it  
Being silent w  
expected of he

She has resign

answers for he

I learn  
questi  
accep  
want  
probl  
be ab  
say.

I was

whom she sh

"Nobody...b

she felt so s

Rahnuma explained that she believes in the concept of equality for all people, especially men and women, despite the fact that her religion says there can not be such equality. In essence, while Rahnuma believes that there should be equality, she has resigned herself to the fact that there is not, and cannot be, equality in her world. "I believe in a basic sense of equality. But I do realize that we can't be equal. I mean, there should be equality, but it's not there. And I can't change that. It's part of our religion."

#### Resigned to Meet Religious Expectations

While she learned that Islam was not the only religion by living in a predominantly Hindu culture, Rahnuma continued to receive messages from her own religion that it was not all right to question things, that she should keep her mouth shut. Being silent was still the way she was "supposed to" live in her world, it is what was expected of her. And so she does not ask her questions, instead she keeps them to herself. She has resigned herself to not having them answered, at least not until she can find the answers for herself.

I learned that Islam wasn't the only way. But it still wasn't okay to question things. So I had to keep the questions in my head. I have accepted that they'll never be answered. I know that. Eventually, what I want to do is to find some of these answers for myself. But it will be a problem because you need to know Arabic to read the Koran, so I'll only be able to read the interpretations, and listen to what other people have to say.

I was struck by Rahnuma's intense anger about her religion, and I wondered with whom she shared her thoughts and feelings about this. Resignedly, she said, "Nobody...but you." She added that it was "definitely difficult" to be silent about things she felt so strongly. It is hard for her to have so many questions, and to not be allowed to

ask them. She w  
anything about h  
mouth shut, she

Rahnuma

ways that conce  
is not very often  
concerned about  
people will reac  
clothes. Howe  
responded that  
an opinion. A  
her parents in  
and angrily to

anger about th

Well,  
right,  
that w  
somet  
I have  
go cr  
wear  
the w  
not w  
shirt,  
when  
it's d  
realt  
mean  
And

ask them. She wants to speak up, to change things. But she knows that she cannot do anything about her religion. She knows, or at least believes, that she must just keep her mouth shut, she must be silent.

Rahnuma explained that a Muslim society wants women to be covered, to dress in ways that conceal their gender. When she does not dress in proper Bengali dress, which is not very often (I never saw her in anything but traditional Bengali clothing), she is concerned about how she will be treated. In particular, she is concerned about the way people will react to her. She says she is taken less seriously when she is in western clothes. However, when I pursued what it means to be taken seriously, Rahnuma sadly responded that men do not take her seriously because they do not view women as having an opinion. And nor do they think women should have an opinion. Rahnuma included her parents in this group of people who don't want her to have an opinion. She quickly and angrily told me that, "No, no. I just do whatever they [my parents] say." Despite her anger about this situation, she again resignedly said, "That's just the way it is."

Well, the thing is, in Muslim society, women are supposed to be in purdah, right, that concealment thing. So, I think that is where all this comes from, that we should dress in a particular way and stuff....The thing is, if something happens when I'm in a car, if there's some sort of accident, and I have to talk with the police, if I'm in jeans and a t-shirt, it's just going to go crazy. Basically I try not to put myself in that position. I mean, why wear something in which I won't be able to handle myself, I mean, handle the way people react to me. So, I'm like, why bother, you know. It's just not worth the hassle anymore. If I go into a shop wearing jeans and a t-shirt, the shopkeeper gets a bit flirty. It really gets on my nerves. I hate it when they do that. But if you wear a showa kamees [the local dress], then it's different. Then they take you more seriously....Well, I guess they don't really take me seriously. I mean, they don't really treat me with respect. I mean, I just don't have an opinion, in their mind. That's just the way it is. And they don't like it, either, if I have an opinion.

Rahnuma

praying five times

to do with honest

themselves, she

to accepting her

not see any other

believes that she

herself as obliging

what is expected

Coming

five times

with you

five times

good.

a lot of

mean,

student

I don't

Publicly Resigned

Rahnuma

someone with

She said that

possibility that

she thought so

herself or so

and given in

Rahnuma explained that being religious does not mean dressing a certain ways or praying five times a day. For Rahnuma, religion is about being close to God, and that has to do with honesty, integrity, and standards. So despite her conflict about the standards themselves, she has chosen to do what is expected of her. Again, she has resigned herself to accepting her fate, and meeting others' expectations and standards, because she does not see any other options. She is not happy about the way she must live her life, but she believes that she does not have a choice to live or be any other way. She described herself as obligated to be a good, obedient daughter and a good, obedient student. It is what is expected of her.

Coming near to God doesn't have anything necessarily to do with praying five times a day. I don't think it has anything to do with it. It has to do with your conscience. I think my conscience is God. I don't think praying five times a day is going to improve me...I think it has to do with being good. You know, being honest, having integrity, and basically living up to a lot of standards. Um, you know, what my expected social role is. I mean, I'm supposed to be a good, obedient daughter, and a good, obedient student... It doesn't feel good. But I still have to live up to these standards. I don't have a choice. I just don't have a choice.

#### Publicly Resigned, Privately Struggling

Rahnuma explained that she is not happy about being viewed and treated as someone without an opinion, as someone who does not, or should not, have an opinion. She said that some women are happy, but this is because they are not even aware of the possibility that they could or should have an opinion. When she was seventeen years-old, she thought she could change things. But she no longer believes that she can change herself or society. After being back in Bangladesh for two years, she has given up hope and given in; she has resigned herself to accepting that she cannot change things and that

things will not ch

wrestles, both lite

herself as happy

he, for others if s

describing herse

Well, son

maybe th

going on

not happ

mean, so

thing in

used to

society.

given in

Rahnuma

time, she belie

giving in to he

abuse, and ulti

arranged marr

strength left to

her family. T

can survive in

Rahnuma

about it. And

situation wil

resignation,



things will not change. The struggle between self and other is evident to me as Rahnuma wrestles, both literally and verbally, with being both happy and not happy. Describing herself as happy seems to be something Rahnuma believes she needs to be, or pretend to be, for others if she does not want to risk alienation from or rejection by others; describing herself as unhappy seems to be how she herself truly feels.

Well, some women are perfectly happy. They don't even realize that maybe they should have an opinion, that they should have a say in what's going on. But they're happy, so that's great...Am I happy? No, no, I'm not happy. But I know enough that I can't go out and change the world. I mean, society is not ready to change at all. All this women's liberation thing in Bangladesh is such a joke. When I was like about seventeen, I used to think that, "No, I can change myself, and hence, I can change society." But, now I know, "Hey, who am I?" I've just basically just given in.

Rahnuma sounded sad and hopeless about her decision to give in. But at the same time, she believed that giving in is the only way that she can get through each day. Not giving in to her parents' expectations would involve constant conflict, struggle, and abuse, and ultimately risk alienation and rejection from her family. In a discussion about arranged marriages (discussed earlier in this chapter), she explained that she had no strength left to stand up for what she believes in and wants, and fears such rejection from her family. Thus, giving in -- being silent and accepting -- is perhaps the only way she can survive in her family and her society.

Rahnuma explained that she can either be happy about her situation or miserable about it. And she has decided that she should be happy, at least outwardly, because her situation will not change. Choosing to be happy about giving in, while an act of resignation, is still a choice; and one of the few choices Rahnuma has within her control.

In an effort to co  
into perspective  
worse situations

Well, I r  
matter o  
pretend  
be miser  
you mig  
have no

Fortuna

silencing super  
according to R  
very, very unh  
about her stru  
would cause t  
that I was the

While

voice, she us  
Most of the t  
"You know,  
like she has  
matters. Sh  
person hear  
opinion to l  
important t

In an effort to come to terms with her decision to give in, Rahnuma tries to put her life into perspective by acknowledging that there are a lot of people in her country who are in worse situations than she; thus suggesting that she should be happy with her situation.

Well, I'm okay with it [giving in] now. [pause] I am. You know, it's a matter of attitude. I mean, this is it, either you like it, or at least you pretend to like it, and you're happy. Or you can like make up your mind to be miserable, and be miserable. So, because nothing's going to change, so you might as well be content with it, you know. I mean, a lot of people have no food and no shelter and stuff like that. And at least I have that.

Fortunately for Rahnuma, she is able to discuss her parents' restrictive and silencing supervision with her friends because they are having the same struggles. And according to Rahnuma, "They're also questioning a lot of things, you know. They're very, very unhappy." But she added that she cannot talk with even her closest friends about her struggles with religion because "they probably wouldn't agree with me and that would cause too many problems. I mean, they just wouldn't understand." She told me that I was the only person with whom she had shared these thoughts.

While Rahnuma sometimes has opportunities to act on her beliefs and express her voice, she usually keeps her opinions to herself. The reasons for this self-silencing vary. Most of the time, Rahnuma doesn't feel that she has any choice. Rahnuma explained, "You know, sometimes, it is just not allowed." Sometimes, however, Rahnuma does feel like she has a choice, but chooses not to share her opinion because she doesn't think it matters. She only wants to share her opinion if she thinks it will mean something to the person hearing it. There are also times, however, when Rahnuma chooses to keep her opinion to herself because she doesn't want to jeopardize relationships which are important to her.

Well, [I k  
choice. A  
mean, I k  
person's l  
not going  
well, som  
anybody.

As our c  
is concerned ab  
not say what sh  
"What I think is  
Rahnuma seem  
seems to feel p  
about.

Knowi  
of her. Know  
for they tell a  
world only be  
where women  
or intelligenc  
she believes  
knows that s  
or treated as

Well, [I keep my opinion to myself] because sometimes I don't have any choice. And sometimes, I just can't be bothered to because I don't care. I mean, I know my opinion is going to make absolutely no impact on that person's behavior, so why bother. I mean, they're like, I don't care. If it's not going to make any difference, then I'd rather not say anything. And, well, sometimes, I don't say anything because I don't want to upset anybody. I mean, if I care about someone, I lie a lot. I do, I really do.

As our conversation continued, it became increasingly clear that while Rahnuma is concerned about maintaining relationships she cares about, the main reason she does not say what she thinks is because she does not think it is going to make any difference. "What I think isn't going to make any difference, you know, because it's so irrelevant." Rahnuma seems to have resigned herself to having no impact on those around her. She seems to feel powerless to effect any change in her life, or in the lives of those she cares about.

### **Summary and Reflections**

Knowing Rahnuma involves more than making sense of what we can see and hear of her. Knowing Rahnuma requires gaining access to her private thoughts and feelings, for they tell another whole story about who she is. Rahnuma is a woman who lives in one world only because she feels she cannot live in another. The world she lives in is a world where women are viewed and treated as second-class citizens, as people without opinions or intelligence. Rahnuma talked about being silenced and oppressed in this world, but she believes that there are no possibilities to live in ways that are not oppressive. She knows that she is not seen by others as having an opinion. She is certainly not recognized or treated as if she is an intelligent and capable person. In addition, she is restricted

physically; her fa  
and to school, ju

As a child  
for she did not r  
think to questio  
she was capable  
but unaware th

Spending  
from the stand  
contrast, to ne  
other religions  
herself, to def  
was best for t  
society. She  
possibilities  
content with

Return  
problems an  
cultural con  
expected to  
was expecte  
supposed to

physically; her family allow her no freedoms, no mobility. She is confined to her home and to school, just waiting to be married off.

As a child, Rahnuma knew no other world. She was content with what she had, for she did not realize that there was any other way to be or to live. She did not even think to question things or to make decisions for herself because she did not know that she was capable of such questioning and decision-making. She was silent and silenced, but unaware that there was any other way to be.

Spending two years at a predominantly Hindu boarding school in India, away from the standards and expectations of her family and religion, introduced her, by contrast, to new and different ways of knowing and being. She learned that there were other religions and ways of life beside the Muslim one. She learned to stand up for herself, to define her limits and her boundaries. She began to think that she knew what was best for her, as opposed to complying blindly with her parents and the rules of society. She was no longer blinded or oppressed by ignorance. Becoming aware of other possibilities changed Rahnuma's life irrevocably. In short, Rahnuma was no longer content with her life as a Muslim woman in Bangladesh.

Returning home with this newfound independence and assertiveness was rife with problems and struggles. While she was able to speak up in the particular social and cultural context of the boarding school, when she returned to Bangladesh, she was expected to function according to her old ways of being and knowing. In particular, she was expected to be silent and timid, as all good Bengali Muslim girls and women are supposed to be. She now saw these expectations as constraining and restraining; she felt

that she was being

There was much

and certainly more

Rahnuma believ

talked about how

that she "should"

imposed upon

Rahnuma

was a painful

And thus, she

miserably. O

more honest

angry and sad

"should" hav

It app

because this

as a young v

choice but t

ways to be,

now, she ha

she will no

she tries to



that she was being oppressed. She was ready and wanted to change herself and her world. There was much conflict between her and her parents. And perhaps more importantly, and certainly more painfully, there was much inner conflict between the way that Rahnuma believed she should be and the way she believed she could be. That is, she talked about how she should have been allowed to live her life, she knew the freedoms that she "should" have had, but she was all too aware of the constraints and expectations imposed upon her by her family and her religion, she knew what she "could" have.

Rahnuma found that she alone could not effect the change she so desired. This was a painful realization for her and one that she still struggles with, at least privately. And thus, she felt that her only choice was to accept her fate happily, or to accept her fate miserably. On the surface, she has chosen to accept her fate happily. But, at a deeper, more honest level, a level which, surprisingly, she was willing to share with me, she is angry and saddened by her fate. She is angry and sad because she now knows what she "should" have had.

It appears that Rahnuma has almost come full circle. She was silent as a child because this was expected of her and she knew of no other way to be. Rahnuma is silent as a young woman because that is what is expected of her and she believes she has no choice but to be this way. The difference is that she is now aware that there are other ways to be, ways which include having a voice and being true to herself. At least for now, she has accepted her circumstances, her fate, and resigned herself to a life in which she will not be allowed to have a voice. And thus, her struggles with voice continue as she tries to meet the cultural expectations of her family and her religion, which require

her to be silent, w

up and voice her

While th

things, I believe

self and other, p

religion. She fe

set for her, ever

daughter, meet

ideas about thi

chooses not to

daughter and s

would like to

Rahnu

having a voic

obedient, and

would mean

being obedie

Rahnuma fe

estranged fr

price by bei

true self. B

her to be silent, while at the same time longing for a life which would allow her to speak up and voice her opinions.

While this story can be viewed through many lenses and be a story of many things, I believe Rahnuma's story is a case of a woman struggling with voice and silence, self and other, public and private, to meet the cultural expectations of her family and her religion. She feels committed and obligated to live up to the standards that others have set for her, even when those standards conflict with her own standards. Being a good daughter, meeting her family's expectations, almost always supersedes Rahnuma's own ideas about things. While she wishes she could express those ideas and opinions, she chooses not to because there will be negative consequences for not being the good daughter and meeting her parents' expectations. She must choose between the person she would like to be and the person she has created to meet the expectations of her family.

Rahnuma's struggle, which is more often than not an internal one, is between having a voice, agency, autonomy, and ultimately a sense of self, and being silent, obedient, and ultimately maintaining a relationship with her family. Being true to herself would mean having a voice, expressing her own ideas, but being a good daughter means being obedient, silent, and committed to maintaining the relationship above all else. Rahnuma feels she has no choice but to be the good daughter because the price of being estranged from her family is too great. She recognizes, however, that she is also paying a price by being the good daughter, by keeping her mouth shut, because she is denying her true self. Brown and Gilligan (1992) describe this phenomenon as giving up a

relationship with

further discussion

relationship with oneself to maintain a relationship with others (see Chapter Two for further discussion).



**PART THREE**

**LESSONS LEARNED AND LIVED:  
SUMMARY AND REFLECTIONS**

“...it is not necessary to know everything  
in order to understand something.”

Geertz, 1973

LESSO

Just ove  
important fram  
they introduce  
intertwined wi  
have spent cor  
knowing, in p  
attempt to fur  
of this dissert  
forced, or per  
women's way

Upon  
Bangladesh  
the work of  
gender and  
the past ten  
researchers  
Tolman, Ru



## Chapter 6

### LESSONS LEARNED: FINDINGS, CLAIMS, AND IMPLICATIONS

Just over a decade ago, Belenky and her colleagues (1986) provided us with an important framework for thinking about women's ways of knowing. More specifically, they introduced us to the notion that a woman's identity, her sense of self, is inextricably intertwined with the development of her mind and her voice. During the same ten years, I have spent considerable time thinking, talking, and writing about women's ways of knowing, in particular, women college students' ways of knowing. My most recent attempt to further my understanding of this complex and elusive phenomenon, the focus of this dissertation, took me to Dhaka, Bangladesh, a culture so unfamiliar to me that it forced, or perhaps I should say enabled, me to see, hear, and experience things related to women's ways of knowing that I had never seen, heard, or experienced before.

Upon returning to the United States after living, working, and doing research in Bangladesh for a year and a half, I found myself turning the pages of essays inspired by the work of Belenky et al. (1986), essays that expanded the original argument beyond gender and knowing to address the complicating factors of race, class, and culture. Over the past ten years, Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, Tarule, as well as other prominent researchers such as Brown, Debold, Harding, Hurtado, Mahoney, Menkel-Meadow, Tolman, Ruddick, and Schweickart, have been asking and exploring important new

questions to try t  
ty, as well as so  
pose such quest  
and culture shap  
communities of

Excited  
inspired and in  
questions abou  
I too have been  
knowing. And  
college studen  
some light on

#### Less

My fir  
(Weite, 1995)  
and neglected  
ways of know  
played in the  
faculty mem  
(i.e., we wer  
consequent

questions to try to further our understanding of ways of knowing. The essays compiled by, as well as some of them written by Goldberger, Tarule, Clinchy, and Belenky (1996), pose such questions as the following. Who is allowed to know? How do social context and culture shape strategies for knowing? How is knowledge co-constructed in communities of knowers?

Excitedly I realized that my last two research studies were yet two more essays inspired and informed by Belenky et al. (1986). I too have been asking important questions about the influence of social context and culture on women's ways of knowing. I too have been developing the original framework for thinking about women's ways of knowing. And through my ongoing conversations with and observations of women college students, in the United States and in Bangladesh, I believe my research sheds some light on the answers to these questions.

#### **Lessons Learned: Paying Attention to Social and Cultural Contexts**

My first study of women's ways of knowing with American college students (Welte, 1995), while sensitive to the social context of which students are a part, ignored and neglected the possibility that cultural context might also be influencing students' ways of knowing. I just didn't think about or consider the role that culture may have played in the development of these women's ways of knowing, nor did my advising faculty members. The two women students and I were all part of the same general culture (i.e., we were all white, upper middle-class, college educated, American women), and consequently culture seemed a non-issue.

Culture, I

continue my rese

American cultur

attention. Simp

to pay attention

students' ways

While I

study, it was no

began to under

influence on w

comfortable be

unfamiliarity e

surprising and

research, be it

otherwise not

It helps us to

It is in

is, my study

central to Be

But not beca

parts of the s

study is won

Culture, however, soon became very much an issue. Having the opportunity to continue my research on women's ways of knowing in Bangladesh, a culture quite unlike American culture, especially for women, immediately brought the notion of culture to my attention. Simply proposing to study women's ways of knowing in Bangladesh forced me to pay attention to the existence of culture, and to the possibility that culture influences students' ways of knowing.

While I acknowledged the importance of considering culture in my proposed study, it was not until I lived and worked in this new and unfamiliar culture that I actually began to understand and believe in and experienced the importance of culture as an influence on women's ways of knowing. The familiar became unfamiliar, and the comfortable became uncomfortable. I myself became uncomfortable. And my unfamiliarity and discomfort helped me to see and think about ways of knowing in surprising and eye-opening ways. This, I believe, is the value of doing comparative research, be it implicitly or explicitly comparative. It helps us to see things we would otherwise not see. It foregrounds matters that are usually quietly part of the background. It helps us to pay attention.

It is important to point out, however, that culture did not become the issue. That is, my study did not become a study about Bengali culture, about the Muslim religion so central to Bengali culture, or about Bangladesh. Yes, these things are part of my study. But not because they are the primary focus or objects of the study. They are important parts of the story of how I learned about women's ways of knowing. The focus of my study is women's ways of knowing, and more specifically, how these ways of

knowing are infl

cultural context

So, wha

about women's

I had never seen

Rahnuma's sto

our understand

that college stu

this study high

**potential way**

earlier researc

Zimmerman,

**knowing are**

knowing are i

**influence of**

Rahn

choice and es

for my claim

college stude

develop part

expectations

be "good stu

knowing are influenced and shaped by social and cultural contexts, in this case social and cultural contexts in Bangladesh, in important and profound ways.

So, what did I see in this unfamiliar world? What was I coming to understand about women's ways of knowing now that I was seeing, hearing, and experiencing things I had never seen before? What have I learned about and from these women? Listening to Rahnuma's story, and the similar, yet untold stories of the other seven women, furthers our understanding of women college students' ways of knowing. Based on my findings that college students simultaneously possess and demonstrate multiple ways of knowing, this study highlights the need to **characterize college students as having a set of potential ways of knowing** as opposed to being characterized as one type of knower as earlier research suggests (Baxter Magolda, 1992; Belenky et al., 1986; Clinchy & Zimmerman, 1982; Perry, 1968). Most broadly, I claim that **women students' ways of knowing are dynamic and situational**. In other words, women students' ways of knowing are interactive, interdependent, and intersubjective, and thus **sensitive to the influence of social and cultural contexts**.

Rahnuma's struggles with voice and silence, self and other, public and private, choice and expectation, both in and out of the classroom, provide evidence of and support for my claim. To begin, I found that the classroom social context influences women college students' ways of knowing. In particular, students adopt, practice, and may even develop particular ways of knowing in an effort to meet each of their teacher's expectations; that is, these women's ways of knowing are influenced by their attempt to be "good students." Second, Rahnuma's story, and specifically her struggles with her

family and re

of knowing.

develop part

especially th

ways of kno

evident that

ways of kno

people learn

expectation

communica

other. Four

ways of kno

social and

supportive

extends Be

categories

in influenc

and to be c

stages in v

detail, all

some clai



family and religion, enables us to see how cultural expectations influence women's ways of knowing. In particular, I claim that girls and women adopt, practice, and possibly develop particular ways of knowing in an effort to meet the larger cultural expectations, especially those communicated by their family and religion. These girls' and women's ways of knowing are influenced by their attempts to be "good daughters." It becomes evident that culture dictates, or determines to a large extent, whether or not particular ways of knowing are appropriate or acceptable, both in and out of the classroom; in turn, people learn to come to know things in particular ways. Third, I found that social expectations are embedded within the larger cultural context. The expectations communicated by different social contexts may be in agreement or in conflict with each other. Fourth, Rahnuma's story provides evidence that women being aware of particular ways of knowing is not enough to support the practice of such ways of knowing. The social and cultural contexts of which women are a part must provide conditions supportive of such ways of knowing. Finally, I found that my research supports and extends Belenky et al.'s (1986) work on women's ways of knowing. In particular, similar categories and themes emerged in my study, highlighting the powerful role gender plays in influencing students' ways of knowing. I found their categories, however, to coexist and to be context-dependent, as opposed to being unique and separate developmental stages in women's development. The following section discusses these findings in more detail, allowing you, the reader, to consider how I came to make this claim and to make some claims of your own.

## 1. Good Student

I learned  
seen in my research  
results of my study  
support for my  
shaped by the  
were influenced  
both in Bangladesh  
similar ways.  
turn, they all  
help them to  
State University  
knowing in order  
teaching-learning  
desired. In order  
expectations

Mon  
silent as the  
their own opinion  
constructed  
hear to receive

### 1. Good Students: Struggling to Meet Social Expectations

I learned many things that were strikingly and surprisingly similar to what I had seen in my research and experience with American women college students. Thus, the results of my second study of women college students' ways of knowing provide further support for my earlier finding (Welte, 1995) that ways of knowing are influenced and shaped by the social context. In particular, the women college students' ways of knowing were influenced and shaped by each of their teacher's expectations. More specifically, both in Bangladesh and America, students tried to meet their teachers' expectations in similar ways. All the students I interviewed were concerned about their grades and, in turn, they all tried to practice the particular ways of knowing that they believed would help them to obtain good grades. Just as I found with the American women at Michigan State University, the Bangladeshi women at Gulshan University used different ways of knowing in different teaching-learning contexts. That is, the students responded to each teaching-learning context in ways they felt were appropriate for achieving the ends they desired. In essence, the women tried to be meet their teachers' epistemological expectations, and thus be "good students."

More specifically, the women struggled with expressing their voices or remaining silent as they attempted to meet their teachers' expectations. While they may have had their own opinions about the class material, they tended to keep their subjective or constructed opinions to themselves and told their teachers what the teachers wanted to hear to receive the good grades they wanted; that is, they usually demonstrated received

ways of knowing  
the teacher.

While d  
was a common  
what the teacher  
wants." In Ral  
and rewarded  
ideas develop  
about her grad  
knowing, by c  
his ideas. In l  
because she b  
During our in  
constructivel  
that the socia  
women's wa  
self and othe

Also  
and their att  
wanting to r  
a good relat  
Bangladesh

ways of knowing, receiving and reproducing the information exactly as it was given by the teacher.

While different ways of knowing emerged in each of Rahnuma's classes, there was a common theme across her classes, namely that getting good grades means "doing what the teacher wants," "keeping what I think to myself," and "saying what the teacher wants." In Rahnuma's environment class, for example, where her professor encouraged and rewarded constructivist ways of knowing, she was able to publicly voice original ideas developed from both internal and external sources of knowledge. When concerned about her grades on the exam, however, Rahnuma demonstrated received ways of knowing, by choosing to say only what she thought her teacher wanted to hear, namely his ideas. In her mathematics class, Rahnuma demonstrated received ways of knowing because she believed there was no room for any of her own ideas about mathematics. During our interviews, however, Rahnuma was very willing and able to think constructively and playfully about ideas in mathematics. Both studies support the notion that the social/classroom context is a critical factor in the development (or frustration) of women's ways of knowing, especially in terms of their struggles with voice and silence, self and other.

Also central to understanding these women's ways of knowing was their desire and their attempts to maintain positive relationships with their teachers. The reasons for wanting to maintain this relationship was two-fold: one, the students believed that having a good relationship with their teacher was essential for getting high grades; and two, Bangladeshi culture expects students to respect and revere all elders, especially teachers.

Students were

relationships.

In man

women was a

the rest of the

knowing and

educated in A

did not alway

Discovering

classroom, sp

forced or hel

even inescap

2. Good Da

Whi

woman and

with a diffe

self and oth

struggles or

beliefs abo

knowing ir

more intell

Students were very concerned about the negative consequences of not maintaining these relationships.

In many ways, however, I learned that the college classroom for the Bangladeshi women was a special place, a place sometimes not only unlike, but also in conflict with the rest of their lives. The college classroom was not always a reflection of their ways of knowing and being outside the university. With American teachers and Bengali teachers educated in America and other Western countries, expectations about voice and silence did not always parallel Bangladeshi cultural expectations about voice and silence. Discovering what Rahnuma's and the other women's lives were like outside the classroom, specifically in terms of what their families and religion expected of them, forced or helped me to see that culture is, or at least can be, powerful and pervasive, and even inescapable.

## 2. Good Daughters: Struggling to Meet Cultural Expectations

While Rahnuma sometimes appeared to be a bright, articulate, and opinionated woman and student in the classroom, private conversations with Rahnuma provided me with a different and contrasting picture, a picture of her struggling with voice and silence, self and other, public and private, choice and expectations. Understanding Rahnuma's struggles outside the classroom help us to consider and better understand Rahnuma's beliefs about knowledge, beliefs about her self as a knower, and her enacted ways of knowing in the classroom. Hearing Rahnuma's story outside the classroom enables us to more intelligibly describe her ways of knowing.

Rahnuma

students referred

viewed or treated

a girl, and especially

intelligent person

opinion. Nor

For the

the way she viewed

because she

expressing the

limits to her

privately or

thought it was

whom she viewed

time, and was

Raf

when her parents

two years.

contrast, to

was exposed

that taught

Rahnuma



Rahnuma grew up in a culture, the Bengali Muslim culture as she and the other students referred to it, which encouraged and rewarded her for being silent. Not being viewed or treated as an intelligent or opinionated person was all that Rahnuma knew. As a girl, and especially as a young woman, she was not viewed as or believed to be an intelligent person. She certainly was not considered to be a person capable of having an opinion. Nor was she allowed to express any opinions she may have had.

For the first sixteen years of her life, Rahnuma described herself as "content" with the way she was viewed and treated. But it was a contentment based on ignorance because she knew of no other way to be or to know. Having an opinion, let alone expressing that opinion, was just not in the realm of what was possible. She accepted the limits to her freedom and the dictates of external authorities. She did not question, privately or publicly, the decisions her parents made, and would make, for her. She thought it was fine that her parents decided where she was allowed to go to school, with whom she was allowed to spend her time, how and where she was allowed to spend her time, and whom she would be allowed to marry.

Rahnuma's ignorant contentment and passive compliance changed, however, when her parents sent her to an elite, predominantly Hindu boarding school in India for two years. Being on her own and outside of the Bengali Muslim culture exposed her, by contrast, to new and different ways of living, being, and knowing. In particular, Rahnuma was exposed to new and different cultural messages about voice and silence, messages that taught her and encouraged her to develop and express her own voice. In particular, Rahnuma discovered that she could think for herself. She realized that she had her own

opinions about

herself and ma

Rahnuma had

predominantly

context within

to express the

Becon

messages abo

Bangladesh.

She had com

up for hersel

or been allow

ignorance, a

external aut

this day she

being and k

knows that

Rah

has her own

Agreeing to

up. She in

that she ca

opinions about how she should live her life. She learned that she could take care of herself and make important decisions on her own. She learned to speak up for herself. Rahnuma had discovered her voice. And these new social and cultural contexts (the predominantly Hindu boarding school in India), while hostile in many ways, provided a context within which she felt supported and encouraged to develop her own opinions and to express them (i.e., to use her voice and make these opinions public).

Becoming aware of new ways of being and knowing, specifically hearing new messages about silence and voice, caused much conflict for Rahnuma upon her return to Bangladesh. She was no longer content or comfortable with being silent and passive. She had come to realize that she was capable of thinking for, taking care of, and speaking up for herself. For the first time in Rahnuma's life, she was aware that she had never had, or been allowed to have, her own opinions. She had been oppressed and silenced by ignorance, and unconsciously, unknowingly, and passively submitted to the dictates of external authorities. Thus, this experience turned Rahnuma's world upside down. To this day she is struggling with how to reconcile or live with these conflicting ways of being and knowing. Rahnuma herself wonders how she can remain silent now that she knows that she could, or should, have a voice.

Rahnuma struggles with this question every day, especially at home. She clearly has her own ideas and opinions about things, but she usually keeps them to herself. Agreeing to marry someone is the one issue, however, about which she is willing to speak up. She insists that she have ten minutes with any man her parents want her to marry so that she can reserve the right to reject his proposal. Compared to contemporary American

practices, this s  
culture it is as i  
her parents' ch  
only respected  
elicits cruelty  
voice is virtua  
believe she is

As mu  
being silent.  
what she sho  
considered a  
means keepin  
feelings may  
She wants to  
consequence  
good daught  
should have  
her life acco  
is her despe  
Rahnuma I  
importantly

practices, this seems like a very small voice indeed. But by the standards of Rahnuma's culture it is as if Rahnuma is screaming. This is because questioning or disagreeing with her parents' choices and decisions is unacceptable behavior because elders are to be not only respected but also revered. Consequently, Rahnuma's expressed "small voice" elicits cruelty and abuse. Thus, it is no surprise that Rahnuma believes that having a voice is virtually impossible. Her family and her religion, inextricably intertwined, believe she is being disobedient if she speaks up and says what she wants and believes.

As much as Rahnuma can and wants to speak up, she has become resigned to being silent. She believes she must resign herself to what she can have, and not strive for what she should have. For if she doesn't resign herself to being silent, she will not be considered a "good daughter" or a "good Muslim." Rahnuma explained that "growing up means keeping your mouth shut" and "being obedient." And thus, as conflicted as her feelings may be, Rahnuma strives to meet her family's and her religion's expectations. She wants to be accepted and valued within her culture. She wants to avoid the negative consequences that would accompany any violation of cultural norms. She wants to be a good daughter. Within her world, within her culture, Rahnuma believes that what she should have is not possible, and may never be, so she is trying to resign herself to living her life according to rules and expectations of the existing culture. Having a small voice is her desperate attempt to have some semblance of her own life. The result is that Rahnuma lives in a culture where she is silenced by others, and perhaps more importantly, where she has learned to silence herself. For to meet the expectations of her

family and her

family, Rahnu

### 3. Good Stud

Based

religion, Rahr

up until she h

negative cons

seems to be t

Not all teach

certainly do.

attempts to t

teachers and

What is som

most of the

religion by

Rahnuma is

good studen

Rah

because of

The classro

silent. The

herself, an

family and her religion, to be a "good daughter" and not be isolated or rejected from her family, Rahnuma must be silent.

### 3. Good Students, Good Daughters: Conflicting Expectations

Based on her upbringing, specifically the messages from her family and her religion, Rahnuma enters each of her classes wary of the teacher. She is hesitant to speak up until she has determined it is safe to do so; that is, until she believes there will be no negative consequences of her speaking up, either at school or at home. The classroom seems to be the only place in Rahnuma's life where having a voice is even a possibility. Not all teachers at GU encourage or reward their students for having a voice, but some certainly do. My first meeting with Rahnuma was in such a classroom. Given GU's attempts to be like an American institution of higher learning, by hiring American teachers and teachers who have been educated in America, this is not a huge surprise. What is somewhat surprising is that while Rahnuma seems to be resigned to being silent most of the time, because she is trying to meet the expectations of her family and her religion by being a good daughter, when she is expected to use her voice by her teachers, Rahnuma is able and eager to express her voice to meet those expectations and thus be a good student.

Rahnuma, however, is cautious about expressing her voice in the classroom because of her sometimes conflicting concerns about being considered a good daughter. The classroom must be a safe place for Rahnuma to speak up, or else she will remain silent. That is, she will keep her subjective or constructive opinions and insights to herself, and only practice received ways of knowing whereby she relies solely on external

authorities, rec

When confron

"good student"

only received

thrives on dev

private interv

and intellectu

Rahm

ways of know

silence, self

expectations

always prese

than others

she knew sh

that she can

life she so c

encourages

family or h

The

nor anothe

never have

Rahnuma



authorities, receiving and repeating the information exactly as given by the teacher.

When confronted with making a choice between being considered a “good daughter” or a “good student” Rahnuma will choose to silence herself in the classroom and demonstrate only received ways of knowing. Ideally, however, Rahnuma very much wants to and thrives on developing and expressing her voice. In addition to some of her classes, our private interviews and conversations provided me with evidence of her independent mind and intellectual ability.

Rahnuma’s “two worlds” conflict seems to add further support for the claim that ways of knowing are context-dependent, and that students’ struggles with voice and silence, self and other, and knowing and doing revolve around their attempts to meet the expectations of others, be they teachers, parents, or religious authorities. The struggle is always present for people like Rahnuma who want something different for themselves than others want for and expect from them. Rahnuma can never return to her life before she knew she had a voice. Her identity, her sense of self, changed with her awareness that she can and does have a voice. And sadly, Rahnuma cannot move forward into the life she so desperately wants and believes she should have had, a life that permits and encourages and expects her to think and speak up for herself. For this is not the life her family or her society expects or accepts.

The result is that Rahnuma lives her life “on the boundary,” neither in one place nor another. Rahnuma is aware of what she should have had, but knows that she can never have those things. She can go neither forward nor backward. In either direction, Rahnuma does not fit, she is not comfortable, and ultimately, she struggles with voice and

silence, self an

cultural expect

#### 4. Knowing is

Much

1985; Lehrma

Rogers, 1993

become aware

that once girl

voice, they w

knowing. R

experience c

necessary fo

ways of bei

much turno

others seek

conditions

#### 5. Support

Ral

ways of kn

and unders

several dif

silence, self and other, knowing and doing, to meet the often conflicting social and cultural expectations of her teachers, family, and religion.

#### 4. Knowing is Not Enough

Much of the literature on feminist pedagogy (e.g., Finke, 1993; Higginbotham, 1985; Lehrman, 1993; Lewis & Simon, 1986; McElroy-Johnson, 1993; Richert, 1992; Rogers, 1993; Weiler, 1991) discusses the need to create opportunities for women to become aware of their own voices, their own sense of agency. The underlying premise is that once girls and women experience and understand liberation, empowerment, and voice, they would never want to return to their oppressed and silent state of being and knowing. Rahnuma's story is significant because it describes the insufficiency of the experience of consciousness-raising. Just seeing and knowing one's possibilities, while necessary for finding one's voice, one's self, is not sufficient to actually transform one's ways of being and knowing. And in Rahnuma's case, becoming aware has caused her much turmoil, both internally and with others. I hope this insight will help feminists and others seeking fundamental changes to recognize the need for post-consciousness raising conditions supportive of those changes.

#### 5. Supports and Extends Belenky et al.'s Framework

Rahnuma's story also contributes to the ongoing conversation about gender and ways of knowing by helping to clarify the framework and language we use to talk about and understand women's ways of knowing. My research was informed and guided by several different frameworks for thinking about women's ways of knowing. As I heard

and participate

with Belenky

Rahnu

perspectives t

Similar to the

to talk about

"saying what

Belenky et al

self-worth, a

development

Simi

of their inte

omnipotent

also selfles

unknowing

no struggle

private, be

voices and

the possib

should, ha

Si

capable o

and participated in these women's stories I kept coming back to and making connections with Belenky et al.'s (1986) categories and perspectives.

Rahnuma's story adds important and further support for Belenky et al.'s perspectives by recognizing their application in a new and different cultural context. Similar to the women in their study, Rahnuma also used metaphors of voice and silence to talk about her life (e.g., "keeping one's mouth shut," "speaking up," "not being heard," "saying what you're supposed to," "saying what you mean"). And, again similar to Belenky et al.'s findings, all of these metaphors, which have to do with "sense of mind, self-worth, and feelings of isolation from or connection to others," indicated that "the development of a sense of voice, mind, and self were intricately intertwined" (p. 18).

Similar to Belenky et al.'s description of silent women, who have little awareness of their intellectual capabilities, and thus live selfless and voiceless at the behest of omnipotent and omniscient external authorities, prior to boarding school, Rahnuma was also selfless and voiceless. These women, including Rahnuma, are unconsciously, unknowingly, and passively compliant because they know of no other way to be. There is no struggle between self and other, between voice and silence, between public and private, between knowing and doing, or between choice and expectations, because others' voices and external truths are all that they know to exist. They do not even contemplate the possibility of thinking for themselves because they don't know that they can, or should, have their own opinions.

Similar to Belenky et al.'s received knowers, who conceive of themselves as capable of receiving and reproducing knowledge from the all-knowing external

authorities but

roles as good s

These women

parents, and re

follow it, and

in pleasing ot

or the good st

sometimes re

knowledge o

own, but doe

negative con

demonstrate

ways of kno

knowing.

Bele

protection o

authority.

a sense of

position us

themselve

can be ass

authoritie

authorities but not capable of creating knowledge on their own, Rahnuma believes her roles as good student and good daughter are to receive information without questioning it. These women assume the information provided by external authorities, such as teachers, parents, and religious leaders, is what they need to know, and thus they memorize it, follow it, and repeat it back as necessary. All of these women seek external gratification in pleasing others or in measuring up to external standards -- in being the good daughter or the good student; they believe, do, and express what they are told. While Rahnuma sometimes relies on these external authorities and voices because she is unable to create knowledge on her own, she often believes she is capable of creating knowledge on her own, but does not believe she is allowed to do so. She believes that she will suffer severe negative consequences (such as lowered grades, isolation, or rejection) if she chooses to demonstrate any independent thinking. And thus, Rahnuma often demonstrates received ways of knowing not by choice, but because she is expected, or restricted, to such ways of knowing.

Belenky et al.'s subjective knowers, who are in search of themselves, or at least protection of a space for growth of self, often turn away from others and deny external authority. Although the belief that truth is private and subjectively known often results in a sense of private authority, there is not public voice or public authority. Women at this position usually feel strongly that they "know" but have few tools for expressing themselves or persuading others to listen. Similarly for Rahnuma, subjective knowing can be associated with liberation, albeit tentative, from the dictates and whims of external authorities, and with a consciousness and awareness she did not have before. Rahnuma

had grown bey  
questions. She  
for her. On th  
her. Once Ra  
longer oppres  
possibilities f  
that will befa  
subjective tr

Paral  
indicates tha  
struggle res  
Rahnuma an  
accordance  
others; thus  
women cho  
being, and  
relationshi  
conscious  
disconnect

Fi  
Belenky e  
knowing



had grown beyond the person who passively accepted her situation and never asked questions. She no longer believed that others have all the answers and know what is best for her. On the contrary, she believes that she has answers and knows what is best for her. Once Rahnuma believed that truth is private and subjectively known, she was no longer oppressed by ignorance. Instead, she is now conscious and aware of other possibilities for knowing, and in turn, she is struggling with the negative consequences that will befall her should she act upon and express newfound self-knowledge and subjective truths.

Paralleling Belenky et al.'s discussion of "hidden multiplists," Rahnuma's story indicates that subjective knowing can be made public or remain private. In both cases a struggle results, the former with external authorities, the latter with oneself. When Rahnuma and other girls and women like her choose to express their views and act in accordance with their own beliefs they knowingly defy the expectations and standards of others; thus, they risk disconnection, isolation, and rejection. In contrast, when girls and women choose to consciously and actively repress this subjective way of knowing and being, and choose to be silent, they are acting on their commitment to maintaining relationships with others (e.g., family, teachers, religious community). While they are consciously deciding to be good daughters and good students, however, they risk disconnection from themselves and their voices.

Finally, Rahnuma's story, both in and out of the classroom, shows evidence of Belenky et al.'s description of constructed knowing. Women demonstrating this type of knowing are trying to learn to speak in a unique and authentic voice, and thus "jump

outside" the fr

begins as an e

felt intuitively

"It involves v

integrating of

acquisition o

thinking...[b

Cons

private, and

depending o

subjective v

jeopardizes

Thus, strug

and doing,

Sim

from this s

and silence

expectatio

knowledge

express th

I :

contribut

outside" the frames and systems authorities provide and create their own frame. It often begins as an effort to reclaim the self by attempting to integrate knowledge that women felt intuitively was personally important with knowledge they had learned from others. "It involves weaving together the strands of rational and emotive thought and of integrating objective and subjective knowing. Rather than extricating the self in the acquisition of knowledge, these women use themselves in rising to a new way of thinking...[by letting] the inside out and the outside in" (p. 134).

Constructed knowing (like subjective knowing) can be made public or remain private, and declaring one's constructed knowledge may have negative consequences depending on the context in which it is made public. Any reliance on one's internal, subjective voice/authority, even in combination with external voices or authorities, jeopardizes girls' and women's ability to unquestioningly meet others' expectations. Thus, struggles with voice and silence, self and other, choice and expectation, knowing and doing, public and private, also accompany this type of knowing.

Similar to the women in Belenky et al.'s study, the ways of knowing that emerged from this study were inextricably intertwined with decisions about and evidence of voice and silence, public and private, self and other, knowing and doing, and choice and expectations. All of these types of knowing can be characterized by beliefs about where knowledge comes from, beliefs about oneself as a knower, and choices about how to express their knowing.

I suggest that the diversity of Belenky et al.'s participants is one of the contributing factors that made such parallels possible. For unlike Perry, Clinchy and

Zimmerman,

to upper-clas

study were o

Findi

extends Bele

intersubjecti

knowing. In

knower, my

that are sen

example, p

her life; fo

and demon

new ways

invaluable

A

is not to c

guarding

consultat

naturalis

voice in

value in

Zimmerman, and Baxter Magolda, whose participants were predominantly upper-middle to upper-class, white, traditional-aged college students, the women in Belenky et al.'s study were of diverse ages, ethnicities, social classes, circumstances and outlooks.

Findings one through four provide evidence for my claim that this research extends Belenky et al.'s work by recognizing the dynamic, interactive, interdependent, intersubjective, situational, context-dependent nature of women students' ways of knowing. In contrast to Belenky et al.'s characterization of women as one type of knower, my research claims that each student possesses a repertoire of ways of knowing that are sensitive to social and cultural influences and expectations. Rahnuma, for example, possesses and demonstrates more than one way of knowing at the same time in her life; for example, during the spring semester of 1996 she simultaneously possessed and demonstrated received, subjective, and constructed ways of knowing. This offers new ways of thinking about women's ways of knowing that extends Belenky et al.'s invaluable insights and categories.

#### **Implications for Practice: A Debate with Myself**

According to Geertz (1973), "The essential vocation of interpretive anthropology is not to answer our deepest questions, but to make available to us answers that others, guarding other sheep in other valleys, have given, and thus to include them in the consultable record of what man has said" (p. 30). Guided by an interpretive and naturalistic paradigm, I certainly hope that my telling of Rahnuma's story includes her voice in the consultable record of what women have experienced and said. While I find value in the telling and hearing of this woman's story because it expands the discourse on

women's ways

lessons I have

educators to c

Ultim

are influence

and possibly

students are

social and cu

religion), as

responsibilit

throughout

our instruct

necessary p

commitmen

I co

responsibil

this means

course de

perhaps e

that this p

adaptively

women's ways of knowing and enlarges my understanding of women's experiences, the lessons I have learned about good students and good daughters are also important for educators to consider in their practice.

Ultimately, I believe that my claim that women college students' ways of knowing are influenced by social and cultural contexts has important implications for improving, and possibly transforming, educational practice both in the United States and abroad. If students are indeed attempting to practice particular ways of knowing in response to social and cultural expectations (i.e., expectations communicated by teachers, family, religion), as my research suggests, then teachers have the opportunity and the responsibility to help students develop those ways of knowing that will serve them well throughout their lives, in the classroom and beyond. Being aware of the ways in which our instructional practices support, encourage, and reward particular ways of knowing is a necessary precursor to actually teaching in ways that will achieve our goals and commitments as educators.

I contend that the major implication of my study is for teachers to face up to this responsibility of taking students' ways of knowing seriously. More specifically, I suggest this means that **we need to question, deliberately and systematically, ourselves, our course designs, and our students** so that we can continually refine and revise, and perhaps even transform, our teaching and our students' learning. In turn, it is my hope that this process of interrogation will help us to make ourselves and our courses more adaptively accommodating to the variety of ways of knowing our students bring and also

take into acco

students' way

Questioning

I beli

courses will

the facets th

their opport

ways of kno

as well as a

The

emerged fr

1.
en
2.
re
3.
b
4.
8



take into account our values and commitments about the directions in which we hope students' ways of knowing will develop.

Questioning Ourselves, Our Courses, and Our Students

I believe the following four key questions and five general facets of college courses will help us to act responsibly. Asking and answering these questions of each of the facets throughout our courses will influence students' relationships with authority, their opportunities for the emergence of voice, and ultimately the development of their ways of knowing. What follows is an overview of these questions and facets of courses, as well as a more detailed discussion of their importance in educational practice.

The following four questions about teachers' and students' ways of knowing have emerged from this study of Bangladeshi women college students' ways of knowing.

FOUR KEY QUESTIONS
1. What ways of knowing do you <b>believe</b> you want to be supporting, encouraging, and rewarding in each of your courses?
2. What ways of knowing are you actually supporting, encouraging, and rewarding in each of your courses <b>in practice</b> ?
3. How congruent are your practices with the <b>ways of knowing preferred by each of your students</b> ?
4. How congruent are your practices with the <b>ways of knowing accepted and expected by the culture of each of your students</b> ?

The fol  
research on co  
knowing and  
have separate  
educators to c

1. What  
rewarding  
F  
the accor

The following five general facets of college courses were informed by my ongoing research on college student learning as well as Baxter Magolda's (1992) work on knowing and reasoning in college. While there is some overlap among these domains I have separated them to highlight specific areas that might be useful for classroom educators to consider.

FIVE GENERAL FACETS OF COURSES
Role of Instructor
Role of Learner
Role of Peers
Nature of Knowledge
Nature of Evaluation

1. What ways of knowing do you believe you want to be supporting, encouraging, and rewarding in each of your courses?

For those of us who agree to take students' ways of knowing seriously and accept the accompanying responsibility, I suggest that the best place to begin is with ourselves.

That is, we m

committed id

Voicing our l

This suggest

teaching bec

...wh

belie

visit

and

criti

our

out

year

will

cou

I ar

include the

have studi

teaching p

the nature

1996). N

on belie

developm

our belie

implicat

knowers

That is, we must be clear about the ways of knowing we value and to which we are committed ideologically. It is one thing to have beliefs, another thing to articulate them. Voicing our beliefs about the ways of knowing we value confronts us with our position. This suggestion is supportive of Clark's (1995) call for us to write our own credos of teaching because of its implications for professional development.

...what I am advocating here is that we resolve to wake up, to take our own beliefs and implicit theories seriously, and to make them more explicit and visible, at least to ourselves. Beliefs and theories that remain unconscious and implicit will not grow or become elaborated, or evolve in response to critical analysis. For our beliefs and theories to develop, we must get them out on the table where we can see them. So, I recommend that you spell out what you know and believe about teaching, in writing, once a year....And seeing your statement of belief, your own credo of teaching, will alert you to topics and questions helpful in designing your personal course of professional development. (p. 127)

I am suggesting that educators, as they write their credo of teaching, need to include their beliefs about ways of knowing in that credo. While not all researchers who have studied ways of knowing believe that students' ways of knowing are influenced by teaching practices, it is commonly agreed upon that teaching rests on assumptions about the nature of knowledge (e.g., Baxter Magolda, 1992; Belenky et al., 1986; Stanton, 1996). My research pushes this argument one step further, claiming that teaching rests on beliefs about our students as knowers; (i.e., are their ways of knowing fixed and developmental, or are they dynamic, interactive, and situational?). In turn, I contend that our beliefs about the nature of knowledge and about our students as knowers has serious implications for students' own beliefs about knowledge, beliefs about themselves as knowers, as well as their actions as knowers.

2. What ways

each of your

Basec

knowing. I a

that are actu

practices. It

practiced in

more than p

consequenc

and learnin

expect and

instruction

voices, the

can expect

At

teachers'

knowing

access to

expectat

in the cl

instructi

encoura

2. What ways of knowing are you actually supporting, encouraging, and rewarding in each of your classes in practice?

Based on my claim that the social classroom context influences students' ways of knowing, I am suggesting that we, as teachers, need to be aware of the ways of knowing that are actually being supported, encouraged, and rewarded by our instructional practices. It is imperative that we recognize how our beliefs are actually enacted and practiced in the classroom. As Clark (1995) contends, "Teachers' implicit theories are more than private matters of personal taste and opinion. They can have dramatic consequences" (p. 126). Teachers' instructional practices influence the kind of knowing and learning their students experience and strive to achieve. It is possible for teachers to expect and promote a continuum of ways of knowing for their students; for example, their instructional practices can encourage distinctive, individual student perspectives and voices, they can promote the reproduction of their own external teacher voices, or they can expect and require silence.

As my research shows, students will try to be "good students" and meet their teachers' expectations and consequently, students will try to enact the particular way(s) of knowing expected by each teacher's instructional practices. Students do not have direct access to our belief system, and thus, they interpret and make sense of our beliefs and expectations based on what we communicate, through what we say, do, write, and reward in the classroom. Thus, I encourage each educator to ask of her or himself, Are my instructional practices encouraging and rewarding the ways of knowing that I want to be encouraging?

More

throughout ea

- What doe

of the sub

of peers,

rewardin

- What do

knowlec

learner,

encoura

develop

- What d

the kno

the lea

encou

develo

- What

natur

role o

supp

pract



More specifically, I suggest we need to ask and answer the following questions throughout each course.

- What does my syllabus communicate about my beliefs about the nature of knowledge of the subject matter/discipline, the role of the instructor, the role of the learner, role of peers, and nature of evaluation? Is this syllabus supporting, encouraging, and rewarding the ways of knowing I want students to be practicing and developing?
- What do my teaching strategies reflect about my beliefs about the nature of the knowledge of the subject matter/discipline, the role of the instructor, the role of the learner, role of peers, and nature of evaluation? Are my strategies supporting, encouraging, and rewarding the ways of knowing I want students to be practicing and developing?
- What do my interactions with my students reflect about my beliefs about the nature of the knowledge of the subject matter/discipline, the role of the instructor, the role of the learner, role of peers, and nature of evaluation? Are my interactions supporting, encouraging, and rewarding the ways of knowing I want students to be practicing and developing?
- What does my grading and reward system communicate about my beliefs about the nature of the knowledge of the subject matter/discipline, the role of the instructor, the role of the learner, role of peers, and nature of evaluation? Is this reward system supporting, encouraging, and rewarding the ways of knowing I want students to be practicing and developing?

The answers

a range of op

central to Ra

Prac

suggest that

supported, e

knowing ex

with the wa

situation w

simultaneoc

confusing

ways of kn

when tryi

supported

curricula

3. How e

students'

l

be aware

expecte

ways of

When t

The answers to each of these questions suggest different relationships with authority, and a range of opportunities for the development and emergence of voice, issues that are central to Rahnuma's and other women's stories.

Practices across courses. In addition to being aware of one's own expectations, I suggest that teachers should be aware of the repertoire of ways of knowing being supported, encouraged, and expected by each of a given student's teachers. The ways of knowing expected by one teacher's instructional practices may or may not be congruent with the ways of knowing expected by another teacher of the same student. This creates a situation whereby multiple and often conflicting ways of knowing are being simultaneously expected of the student. This could prove overwhelming and/or confusing to the student, or it could facilitate the development of a useful repertoire of ways of knowing. In either case, it would be important and helpful information to have when trying to work with a student. Being aware of the ways of knowing being supported, encouraged, and rewarded across classroom contexts is critical for designing curriculum at the college or department level.

3. How congruent are your practices with the ways of knowing preferred by each of your students?

In addition to being aware of our own ways of knowing, I suggest that we need to be aware of the ways of knowing preferred by our students. The ways of knowing expected by a teacher's instructional practices may or may not be congruent with the ways of knowing preferred by the student herself in a given social classroom context. When the teacher's and the student's ways of knowing are congruent, the student will

more easily a

student's wa

resist meetin

and teachers

intellectual

alter the soc

preferred w

Bei

us for the c

preferred v

described

context of

and rewar

with whic

ways (O'

• show

• avoid

• resis

• cryi

• com

• wor

• con

more easily and readily meet the teacher's expectations; when the teacher's and the student's ways of knowing are in conflict, however, the student may struggle with or resist meeting her teacher's expectations (Welte, 1995). In other words, when students' and teachers' ways of knowing do not match, students may be unable to demonstrate their intellectual abilities, or they may resist or rebel against instructional practices, trying to alter the social classroom context in ways that would be more supportive of their preferred ways of knowing.

Being aware of our students' preferred ways of knowing would begin to prepare us for the challenges inherent in teaching in ways that do not match or support these preferred ways of knowing. In a study of his own teaching, Michael O'Loughlin (1990) described what happens to students who prefer received knowing in the social classroom context of a teacher who does not support or accept received knowing, but rather supports and rewards constructed knowing. These students, when exposed to ways of knowing with which they may be unfamiliar, and certainly uncomfortable, respond in the following ways (O'Loughlin, p. 5):

- showing tremendous fear and anxiety
- avoiding risk-taking
- resisting new ideas, and wanting to cling to old ideas
- crying out for direction and guidance
- complaining about ambiguity & uncertainty
- worrying about grades now that the rules have changed
- complaining that the teacher is arbitrary or unfair

- devoting

- trying de

While

sources of a

have been c

continue le

students' w

concerned

students'

would pro

with my s

preferred

their lea

In

expresse

different

knowing

wrote,

- devoting lots of energy to reading the teacher's mind in order to succeed
- trying desperately to please the teacher to get a "good grade"

While students' beliefs about themselves, about their knowing, and about the sources of authority and knowledge may be quite deep-seated and resistant to change, I have been committed to challenging these beliefs because of the benefits to their ability to continue learning. Prior to this study -- prior to my awareness of cultural influences on students' ways of knowing (which I will discuss in the next section) -- I was not concerned with or interested in matching my ways of knowing as the teacher with my students' ways of knowing. Instead, I was inclined to advocate for and teach in ways that would promote ways of knowing I valued, even if these ways of knowing were in conflict with my students' preferred ways of knowing. I believed that supporting the students' preferred ways of knowing would often be doing a disservice to my students, hindering their learning.

In a critique of Baxter Magolda's work written prior to this study (Welte, 1997), I expressed concern with Baxter Magolda advocating for teaching responsively to students' different ways of knowing by "matching the classroom environment to students' ways of knowing, or providing appropriate confirmation" (Baxter Magolda, 1992, p. 227). I wrote,

While I agree with Baxter Magolda's contention that "reconnection involves a balance between joining students' 'where they are,' so to speak, and encouraging them to consider more complex ways of thinking" (p. 224), I have concerns about joining students in their absolute ways of knowing....My own research [Welte, 1995] and experience suggest that any confirmation of students using absolute ways of knowing confirms that they are not knowers....When teaching students who demonstrate absolute ways of knowing, I argue, any confirmation, any support, makes

it in  
ther

I pr

are using v

supportive

proposed

an environ

about its e

take respo

1997, p. 2

I

of our be

recogniz

our part

compati

instruct

own sel

4. How

the cult

ways t

longer



it impossible for them to reevaluate their assumptions; they cannot see themselves as capable of such knowing. (Welte, 1997, p. 206)

I proposed that we not support the students' ways of knowing (especially if they are using ways of knowing, like received knowing, that I do not value), but rather create a supportive environment for whatever ways of knowing we do value. More specifically, I proposed we create an environment that supports the students' development as a knower: an environment that is helpful, personal, and explicit; an environment that is explicit about its expectations of students -- i.e., that students see themselves as knowers, and thus take responsibility for and play an active role in their own and others' learning ( Welte, 1997, p. 207).

I recognize that our beliefs and practices often differ. Given the dynamic nature of our beliefs and practices, I am not suggesting that we try to make them the same, and recognize such a goal may not be possible. But I am advocating for an explicit effort on our part to have the ways of knowing we value ideologically to be more congruent and compatible with the ways of knowing we support, encourage, and reward in our instructional practices. In turn, as Clark (1995) contends, we will be contributing to our own self-directed professional development.

4. How congruent are your practices with the ways of knowing accepted and expected by the culture of each of your students?

While I am still an advocate of teachers developing students' ways of knowing in ways that they value, after learning about women's ways of knowing in Bangladesh I no longer take such an extreme position in advocating for a particular way of knowing.

Hearing R

own (which

cultural co

women co

classroom

students :

expectati

students'

V

difficult

practice

knowin

attention

I sugge

their cl

and en

comm

because

attempt

ways

my st

Hearing Rahnuma's and the other women's stories and struggles, as well as living my own (which I discuss in Chapters Four and Five), helped me to understand that the cultural context in which we live and know has a significant and powerful influence on women college students' ways of knowing, perhaps more so than does the social classroom context, both in and out of the classroom. Consequently, my finding that students strive to meet cultural expectations that are often in conflict with teachers' expectations has important implications for my own and others' teaching, as well as for students' learning.

When planning and designing my courses, I need to add some important and difficult questions to the aforementioned list of questions about pedagogical beliefs and practices. I cannot only be concerned with whether or not the course, and the ways of knowing it supports, serve my students well in the college classroom, but I must also pay attention to whether or not the course will serve my students well outside the classroom. I suggest that teachers, in addition to being aware of the ways of knowing encouraged in their classrooms, need to be aware of the ways of knowing being expected, supported, and encouraged by each student's culture, (e.g., the norms and expectations communicated by each student's family and religion, with particular attention to gender), because students are simultaneously trying to use particular ways of knowing in an attempt to meet their cultural expectations.

Specifically, I suggest we need to pose the following general questions: What ways of knowing are supported and encouraged by the cultural contexts of which each of my students is a part; i.e., What ways of knowing are allowed and expected by each

student's f

consequen

one's cultu

- How c

with t

- How c

strate

accep

- How

and r

cultu

I

construc

students

of know

valued

for stud

any cor

ways o

externa

these c

aware

student's family and religion, paying particular attention to gender? What are the consequences for not practicing these particular ways of knowing, and thus not meeting one's cultural expectations?

- How congruent are the ways of knowing supported and encouraged by my syllabus with the ways of knowing expected and accepted by each student's culture?
- How congruent are the ways of knowing supported and encouraged by my teaching strategies and interaction with my students with the ways of knowing expected and accepted by each student's culture?
- How congruent are the ways of knowing supported and encouraged by my grading and reward system with the ways of knowing expected and accepted by each student's culture?

Expecting and rewarding particular ways of knowing in the classroom, such as constructed ways of knowing, may have negative consequences that go beyond making students uncomfortable because we are challenging their preferred and comfortable ways of knowing. Expecting and rewarding ways of knowing in the classroom that may not be valued or allowed outside of school may create potentially painful and abusive situations for students. Rahnuma, for example, is certainly discouraged from publicly expressing any constructed opinions. Within her culture, she is limited to demonstrating received ways of knowing, allowed only to reproduce the opinions of her parents and other external authorities. In turn, she suffers cruelty and abuse when she does not demonstrate these culturally preferred and expected ways of knowing. As a teacher, I need to be aware of the consequences, both in and out of the classroom, of creating and teaching a

course that

for such w

W

that they

While try

I may in

her aware

the dicta

of her pe

longer o

oppress

empow

similar

strive t

particu

repress

silence

anti-re

course that expects and rewards students for demonstrating only ways of knowing I value, for such ways of knowing may not always be serving students well beyond the classroom.

When students strive to meet my expectations as their teacher, I need to remember that they are also striving to meet the cultural expectations of their family and religion. While trying to help students develop more complex and sophisticated ways of knowing, I may in fact be creating conflict and struggle for these students. As in Rahnuma's case, her awareness of these other ways of knowing is what made it difficult to rely solely on the dictates of external authorities. But the consequences for not relying on the authority of her parents and religion were too severe to ignore. The result is a student who is no longer oppressed by ignorance, but rather oppressed by awareness; i.e., Rahnuma is oppressed by being aware of what is possible, but being unable to act accordingly.

Elizabeth Ellsworth, in her 1989 work entitled, "Why doesn't this feel empowering? Working through the repressive myths of critical pedagogy?," addressed similar concerns in a study of her own teaching. She too found that teaching in ways that strive to develop and empower student voice can be problematic and harmful. In particular, she raises concerns about the ways in which liberating pedagogies can be repressive. She urges educators to consider the following question, What diversity do we silence in the name of "liberatory" pedagogy? Based on a study of her class on media and anti-racist pedagogies, she argues,

...that key assumptions, goals, and pedagogical practices fundamental to the literature on critical pedagogy -- namely, "empowerment," "student voice," "dialogue," and even the term "critical" -- are repressive myths that perpetuate relations of domination. By this I mean that when participants in our class attempted to put into practice prescriptions offered in the literature concerning empowerment, student voice, and dialogue, we

pr  
ve  
se  
to  
re  
th  
re

A Debate

V

courses

cultural

uncomf

incongr

Rahnum

only be

outside

to use a

Being

the wa

inclusi

ways c

Rahnu

reinfor

raises



produced results that were not only unhelpful, but actually exacerbated the very conditions we were working against, including Eurocentrism, racism, sexism, classism, and "banking education." To the extent that our efforts to put discourses of critical pedagogy into practice led us to reproduce relations of domination in our classroom, these discourses were "working through" us in repressive ways, and themselves become vehicles of repression. (p. 502)

### A Debate with Myself

While I am suggesting that it is important to recognize the extent to which our courses are culturally congruent, I am not necessarily advocating for the creation of such cultural congruence. I still believe that learning is inherently and fundamentally uncomfortable and disorienting, albeit to different degrees, and thus some cultural incongruence may be helpful to the learning process. What is of great concern to me, as Rahnuma's case suggests, is that the consequences of such cultural incongruence may not only be unhelpful, but may be detrimental and debilitating as well. If the conditions outside school are not supportive of the ways of knowing students' are being encouraged to use and develop in school, students are bound to face serious challenges and obstacles. Being more aware of the problems inherent in teaching in ways that are not supportive of the ways of knowing expected by a student's culture helps me to be more sensitive to and inclusive of the diversity of my students' ways of knowing.

Designing courses and teaching in ways that are supportive of students' cultural ways of knowing, while positive in many respects, also raises some concerns for me. In Rahnuma's case, teaching in ways that support the silencing of women only serves to reinforce an existing cultural system which is certainly not gender equitable. In turn, this raises the question of whether schools and teaching should reflect society, or whether

schools a

question

themselv

will sup

teachers

question

of know

committ

develop

Summ

who te

sugges

Heath

teache

backg

and le

and o

atten

atten

know

inter

schools and teaching should serve to better society. While I am not going to explore this question further here, I believe it is an important one for educators to be asking themselves as they make decisions about the ways of knowing their courses and teaching will support and encourage. As I mentioned earlier, what I am advocating is that we, as teachers, interrogate ourselves, our courses, and our students. It is my hope that such questioning and awareness will facilitate our efforts to accommodate the variety of ways of knowing our students bring while at the same time taking into account our values and commitments about the directions in which we hope students' ways of knowing will develop.

### Summary

While these implications may be of obvious importance and relevance to teachers who teach abroad and for teachers who teach international students in the United States, I suggest that we must not assume cultural congruence with any of our students. As Heath's (1982) comparative study of questioning at home and at school suggests, even teachers and students of the same nationality can come from different cultural backgrounds, and hence may bring different norms and expectations for communicating and learning. To help our students develop valued and valuable ways of knowing both in and out of the classroom, it is imperative that we, as educators, need to not only pay attention to the ways of knowing supported and encouraged in schools, but also pay attention and be inclusive of our students' diverse cultural backgrounds and ways of knowing when designing and teaching our courses. As Heath suggests, the ideal intervention needs to be two-way; students need to be introduced to teachers' ways of

knowing

opportun

would b

I

classroo

encoura

how the

encoura

particu

beliefs

knowin

are rec

depend

ways c

to mee

well a

happe

that t

religi

stude

unev

knowing, and teachers need to be introduced to students' ways of knowing. Providing opportunities for learning about each other's ways of knowing as explicitly as possible would be beneficial for all concerned.

I hope this detailed case study of Rahnuma's life, both in and out of the classroom, helps us to think about and understand the ways in which our teaching can encourage and support particular ways of knowing by our students, and to pay attention to how these ways of knowing may support or be in conflict with the ways of knowing encouraged and supported outside the classroom. Students enter classrooms with particular beliefs about knowledge, relationships with authority, voice and silence: beliefs that will not change easily, if at all. And if we expect changes in ways of knowing, we should be aware that these changes may be at odds with the messages they are receiving from the larger cultural context of which they are a part. And thus, depending on the match between teachers', students', and cultural expectations about ways of knowing, students will experience different challenges and struggles as they try to meet those expectations. Such challenges and struggles raise important educational as well as ethical questions and concerns.

I believe my research offers a significant contribution to understanding what happens when students and teachers come together in college classrooms. It is my hope that this case study will help teachers tune in to the remarkable ways that culture, family, religion, gender, and life history -- of each student -- come together and influence students' learning and development in what might otherwise appear to be ordinary, uneventful classrooms. And ultimately, I hope this research generates thought-provoking

conversa

levels, to

situation

a part, h

propose

like to p

study, a

in high

third, s

My pre

meanin

1. Stu

colleg

knowi

attem

the re

propo

espec

in wa

conversations about specific ways in which we can design and teach our classes, at all levels, to be sensitive to the diversity of students' social and cultural expectations.

### **Implications for Research**

My claim that women college students' ways of knowing are dynamic and situational, and particularly sensitive to the social and cultural contexts of which they are a part, has important implications for research as well as practice. The following section proposes future research areas which deserve further study, and specific questions I would like to pursue. In general, there are three lines of research that have grown out of this study, all of which are focused on teaching, learning, and ways of knowing: first, studies in higher education; second, studies in public elementary, middle, and high schools; and third, studies of transitions and connections between public schools and higher education. My preference is to work collaboratively with teachers and students to help ensure meaningful and impactful research in all these areas.

#### 1. Studies in Higher Education

While there have been numerous attempts to improve teaching and learning at the college and university level, there are only a few studies that consider students' ways of knowing, and even fewer studies on teachers' ways of knowing. What began as an attempt by Baxter Magolda (1992) to "simply redesign educational practice" ended with the realization that "transforming educational practice seems to be required" (p. xiv). I propose that further research is needed on students' and teachers' ways of knowing, especially on the interaction of their ways of knowing, to transform educational practice in ways that are locally appropriate, culturally sensitive, and long lasting.

1  
pursuing

a) How  
educati  
transfer

populat

b) How  
educati  
part?

c) How  
context  
progra

implic

d) An  
divers

value?

2. Sit

exten

rescar

the se

stude



The following questions are ones that I myself am particularly interested in pursuing in this area:

- a) How are college students' ways of knowing at a diversity of institutions of higher education influenced and shaped by social and cultural contexts and expectations? How transferable are my claims and findings to a diversity of college and university student populations?
- b) How might college students' ways of knowing at a diversity of institutions of higher education be influencing and shaping the social and cultural contexts of which they are a part?
- c) How are college students' ways of knowing influenced and shaped across social contexts by interdisciplinary studies programs? In particular, I am interested in how these programs support and encourage similar or diverse ways of knowing. What are the implications for teaching and learning?
- d) Am I designing and teaching my own courses in ways that both accommodate the diversity of students' ways of knowing and also promote the ways of knowing that I value?

## 2. Studies in Public Schools

The research and literature on public school teaching and learning is even more extensive than the higher education literature. And while there is a great amount of research on students' cognition, including Gardner's (1983, 1991, 1993) critical work on the seven intelligences, there is again very little work on public school teachers' and students' ways of knowing. It is my contention that improving public school education

also inv

the epist

needed

school t

in the p

nature a

pursuin

a) Are

knowin

their be

b) Ho

cultura

genera

popula

• Int

Gi

Gi

sc

ex

• G

be

also involves more than simply redesigning educational practice, but rather attending to the epistemological assumptions which guide teachers' practices. Further research is needed to explore this contention, as well as to better understand the interaction of public school teachers' and students' ways of knowing. Research on students' ways of knowing in the public schools will be invaluable for furthering our understanding of the role of nature and nurture in epistemological development.

The following questions are ones that I myself am particularly interested in pursuing in this area:

- a) Are public school teachers supporting, encouraging, and rewarding the ways of knowing they want to be supporting, encouraging, and rewarding? How congruent are their beliefs with their practices?
  - b) How are public school students' ways of knowing influenced and shaped by social and cultural contexts and expectations? How transferable are my claims and findings to this general population? How transferable are my claims and findings to the special populations mentioned below?
- Informed by the existing research and literature on middle school girls (e.g., Brown & Gilligan, 1992; Cohen & Blanc, 1996; Orenstein, 1994; Pipher, 1994; Taylor, Gilligan, & Sullivan, 1995), I am particularly interested in exploring how middle school girls' ways of knowing are influenced and shaped by social and cultural expectations.
  - Given the diversity of sub-cultures in our urban public schools, among students and between students and teachers, I am particularly interested in exploring how urban

scho

expe

c) How

and cult

3. Stud

studies

aware e

believe

school

affords

across

provid

dynam

pursu

a) Ho

in our

rewar

stude

educ

school students' ways of knowing are influenced and shaped by social and cultural expectations.

- c) How might public school students' ways of knowing be influencing and shaping social and cultural contexts?

### 3. Studies of Educational Transitions

While there are many studies of cognition and context and transfer, there are few studies of transfer between public schools and higher education, and none which I am aware of that address the phenomenon of ways of knowing. As teacher educators, I believe we are in the unique position of working with teachers and students at both public schools and colleges/universities. This unique position which spans educational contexts affords us the opportunity to explore and address the phenomenon of ways of knowing across the lifespan, including school to work transitions. Such research would also provide further support or critique of my claim that students' ways of knowing are dynamic and situational.

The following questions are ones that I myself am particularly interested in pursuing in this area:

- a) How congruent are the ways of knowing being supported, encouraged, and rewarded in our public schools with the ways of knowing being supported, encouraged, and rewarded in our colleges and universities? In other words, how prepared are high school students, in terms of the development of their ways of knowing, to pursue higher education?

b) How

in our tea

encourag

preservic

• How

teach

Inform

argues

dusty sh

research

second

discuss

comm

student

cultur

of "ed

the se

public

throu

b) How congruent are the ways of knowing being supported, encouraged, and rewarded in our teacher education programs with the ways of knowing being supported, encouraged, and rewarded in our public schools? In other words, how prepared are preservice teachers, in terms of ways of knowing, to pursue careers in the public schools?

- How can we better design coursework and fieldwork opportunities for prospective teachers?

### Informed and Inspired

It is certainly my hope that my research will not end up, as C.W. Mills (1959) argues much research does, “hollow” and “lacking of ready intelligibility,” and thus on a dusty shelf in a library, neither read nor thought about. As I have discussed, I believe this research has implications for all educators, at the elementary, secondary, and post-secondary levels. Attending to students’ ways of knowing will enable and allow us to discuss educational change in more fundamental and significant ways.

I hope hearing Rahnuma’s story highlights the need for each of us, as educators committed to student learning and development, to pay more attention to each of our students in her or his entirety. Each student is influenced by a multitude of social and cultural expectations, which are often competing, that are often neglected in the process of “educating” our students. In turn, I urge each of you to recognize and be sensitive to the seriousness of girls’ and women’s struggles with voice and silence, self and other, public and private, in their efforts to be good students and good daughters. It is only through such awareness and sensitivity that transforming educational practice will be

possible

learners

ways o

that wi

the wa

you are

own an

interro



possible, and students will then be encouraged and supported to become life-long learners.

I hope that this research has not only informed you of the importance of students' ways of knowing, but also inspired you to accept the responsibility of teaching in ways that will accommodate the diversity of your students' ways of knowing and also promote the ways of knowing that you value. Regardless of what ways of knowing you value, if you are committed to improving your teaching and your students' learning, then take your own and your students' ways of knowing seriously, and begin this process of interrogation and change now.

was al

public

unders

strugg

mine

and ce

Anthr

herse

and o

new

cross

to er

unde

wor

## Epilogue

### LESSONS LIVED: "THE VULNERABLE OBSERVER"

As I was studying and learning about women's ways of knowing in Bangladesh, I was also experiencing and living my own struggles with voice and silence, self and other, public and private, choice and expectation. It was certainly my goal as a researcher to understand the lives of these women whom I wished to understand. And while I have struggled with the issue of representation, and wonder whose story I have really told -- mine or Rahnuma's -- I believe my experiences paralleled, more than I would have liked and certainly more than I was prepared for, the experiences of these women.

Anthropologist Ruth Behar (1996), by reflecting on both those whom she observed and herself as the observer, highlights how the lines between participant and observer, insider and outsider have become less clear. In turn, the blurring of these lines leaves us, in our new roles as both observer and participant, more vulnerable.

After writing for nearly a year, I still feel vulnerable, and I am still struggling with crossing borders as I try to bring the stories of these women home. How do I invite you to enter a world that I, even now, months after having left Bangladesh, don't fully understand? How do I capture what life for women, including me, is like there? The words certainly don't come easily, and sometimes they don't come at all. The images and

feelings

and at ti

describe

worked

the mo

Oz. I, t, t

home,

and w

my dis

though

not be

life w

data,

pove

incre

not p

how

hom

Ban

feelings are at the very least uncomfortable and challenging to remember and think about, and at times even disorienting, disabling, and painful. Life in Bangladesh is difficult to describe because it is a world so different from the world in which I have lived and worked all my life. Almost nothing was familiar, and even less was comfortable. From the moment I arrived in Dhaka, my struggles began. Just like Dorothy in the Wizard of Oz, I, too, realized that I was not in Kansas anymore.

On September 2, 1995, I boarded a plane for Dhaka, Bangladesh, and left my home, my family, my friends, and my job in America. Having spent three months living and working in Bangladesh in the summer of 1993, as well as having been "warned" by my dissertation committee about the challenges and difficulties of international research, I thought I was prepared to conduct my dissertation research in Bangladesh. I was wrong; not because I was unable to collect my data, but rather because I was unprepared for what life would be like in this South Asian Muslim country.

I had anticipated many of the obstacles I would have to overcome to collect my data, and I was prepared to deal with the unanticipated ones. I was prepared for the abject poverty, the overpopulation, and the unimaginable filth. I was even prepared for the ever-increasing number of beggar children, and of children taking care of children. What I was not prepared for, however, was how I would be treated, how it would make me feel, and how it would affect my ability to live and know; and all because I am a woman.

In hindsight, I realized that that I had left more than my family and friends at home. I had left my identity, my sense of self, at home as well. While I had gone to Bangladesh to further my learning and understanding of women's ways of knowing, and

in partic

women

are influ

definite

beliefs

woma

conce

more

cultur

baggi

outsid

imme

beca

clear

clot

they

the

unc

ess

in particular to pay attention to how social and cultural contexts influence and shape women college students' ways of knowing, I somehow forgot that my ways of knowing are influenced and shaped by the social and cultural contexts of which I am a part. I was definitely unprepared for the influence of this unfamiliar culture, with its particular beliefs about what is acceptable, on my own ways of knowing and my own sense of self.

### **Conscious of My Gender**

From the moment I arrived in Bangladesh, I stood out like a sore thumb: a white woman with light curly hair, blue/green eyes, western clothing (although very baggy to conceal my womanhood). I do not speak Bengali, and most Bangladeshis do not speak more than a few words of English, if that. Despite my attempt to dress in a way that was culturally appropriate and sensitive, I found myself wishing for bigger T-shirts and baggier pants. I was constantly stared at, but rarely spoken to. I was most definitely an outsider in this foreign land. There would be no mistaking me for a Bangladeshi. I immediately became uncomfortable, tentative, quiet, and perhaps most importantly, I became incredibly conscious of and insecure about my gender. Being a woman was clearly not an asset.

Unlike the men in this country who wear whatever they want, mostly Western clothing, the women in Bangladesh must be dressed to conceal anything suggesting that they are female, such as breasts, buttocks, and crotch. Femininity must be hidden from the view of others, specifically the men, for fear that women will turn men into uncontrollable sexual aggressors. Women are supposed to be covered and cloistered; in essence, they are supposed to become invisible. And invisible the majority of women are.

Few wo

poor, th

prostitu

gender

was tre

I was !

was th

People

and w

accor

const

Inste

myse

oper

livin

all t

was

way



Few women can be seen on the streets. One only sees women who are the poorest of the poor, the women who must "work" for survival: the beggars, the brick-breakers, the prostitutes, the garment workers.

While my white skin color made me privileged, my gender did not. And my gender seemed to dictate the way others would interact with me. Sometimes the way I was treated was subtle, and sometimes it was quite overt. I was no longer Sheryl Welte. I was Mr. Mike's wife. Despite the fact that I had a mind and voice of my own, Mr. Mike was the boss and I was merely his wife. I had no identity or even name that was my own. People would talk about me as if I was not there. They would ask my husband what I did and what I wanted, even though I was present. If my husband was not home, then according to the guards at our building, no one was home. It was as if I did not exist.

The sexually suggestive stares and comments by Bangladeshi men are almost constant, which makes taking a walk or going to the market particularly unpleasant. Instead of living like a researcher, paying attention to everything around me, I found myself desperately trying to shut out everything and everyone around me. Instead of opening me up and exposing me to new and different sights and sounds and experiences, living in Bangladesh shut me down. Instinctively, I felt the need to insulate myself from all the unpleasantness and discomfort I faced everyday. While some of the discomfort was a concern for my personal safety, some was a result of my inability to deal with the way I was treated because of my gender.

and cert

all that,

While I

rarely,

consci

because

reactio

exper

many

same

exper

the c

noth

first

priv

intu

stop

cap

### **Struggles with Voice and Silence, Self and Other**

Before I left for Bangladesh, I thought of myself as a fairly strong, independent, and certainly assertive and outspoken woman. Arriving in Bangladesh, however, changed all that, or at the very least it made me doubt and question my independence and strength. While I have experienced times in the U.S. when I am conscious of my gender, I have rarely, if ever, been silenced or chosen to be silent because of it. On the contrary, being conscious of my gender usually enrages me when I feel that I have been treated unfairly because I am a woman. My response is to fight back. In Bangladesh, however, my reaction was to become quiet, withdrawn, cautious, and insecure.

I had hoped that my experience at Gulshan University would be different than my experience with the general population. The faculty and staff were highly educated, and many of them well-traveled. While the treatment was more subtle, the message was the same: the more invisible, the more silent I was, the better. Despite my education and experience, I was never viewed or treated as someone who was intelligent or capable. On the contrary, I was treated as someone without opinions or insights, as someone who had nothing to contribute.

After continually being silenced and ignored, I slowly began to silence myself. At first, I just kept my opinions to myself. I kept my thoughts and feelings, my voice, private. Eventually, however, I realized that I had begun to no longer trust or act on my intuition; I had started to lose my voice, both literally and figuratively. Publicly, I had stopped sharing my ideas; privately, I had started to doubt my own intelligence and capabilities, and thus the ideas themselves.

and to

that he

expect

more

that "

an ex

sugg

to be

had

expe

I ho

my

mai

wor

ger

inc

jec

### **Meeting Expectations**

At the end of my stay in Bangladesh, the President of GU called me into his office and told me that I had learned a lot during my time in Bangladesh. In particular, he said that he was pleased that I had learned not to expect anything. He remembered my initial expectations, (although we would probably describe them differently), and was much more comfortable now that I had stopped trying to meet those expectations. He explained that "life is ordained here and you must learn not to expect."

At the time, I remember thinking of all the things I had expected -- to be treated as an experienced professional; to be treated as someone with intelligent ideas, opinions, and suggestions; to be treated as an equal; to be treated with respect; to be allowed to speak; to be heard -- and how none of my expectations had been met. And indeed, in a way, I had learned not to expect. But what I had really learned was to meet his and society's expectations of me. He expected me to be silent, and eventually I learned to be silent. If I hoped to collect my dissertation data at his university, I could not afford to jeopardize my relationship with him or the other faculty and staff members. But in the process of maintaining a relationship with others, I sacrificed a relationship with myself; just as the women in my study did.

### **Words We Live By**

In America, the phrase: "Women are to be seen but not heard" describes a gender-based attitude still too common. The research on women's ways of knowing indicates that many women feel silenced, or even silence themselves, for fear of jeopardizing their relationships with others. It is not surprising to me that after years of

being s

feel, be

voice, '

be neti

Bangl

no che

these

self a

self.

their

influ

wom

Ami

obs

soci

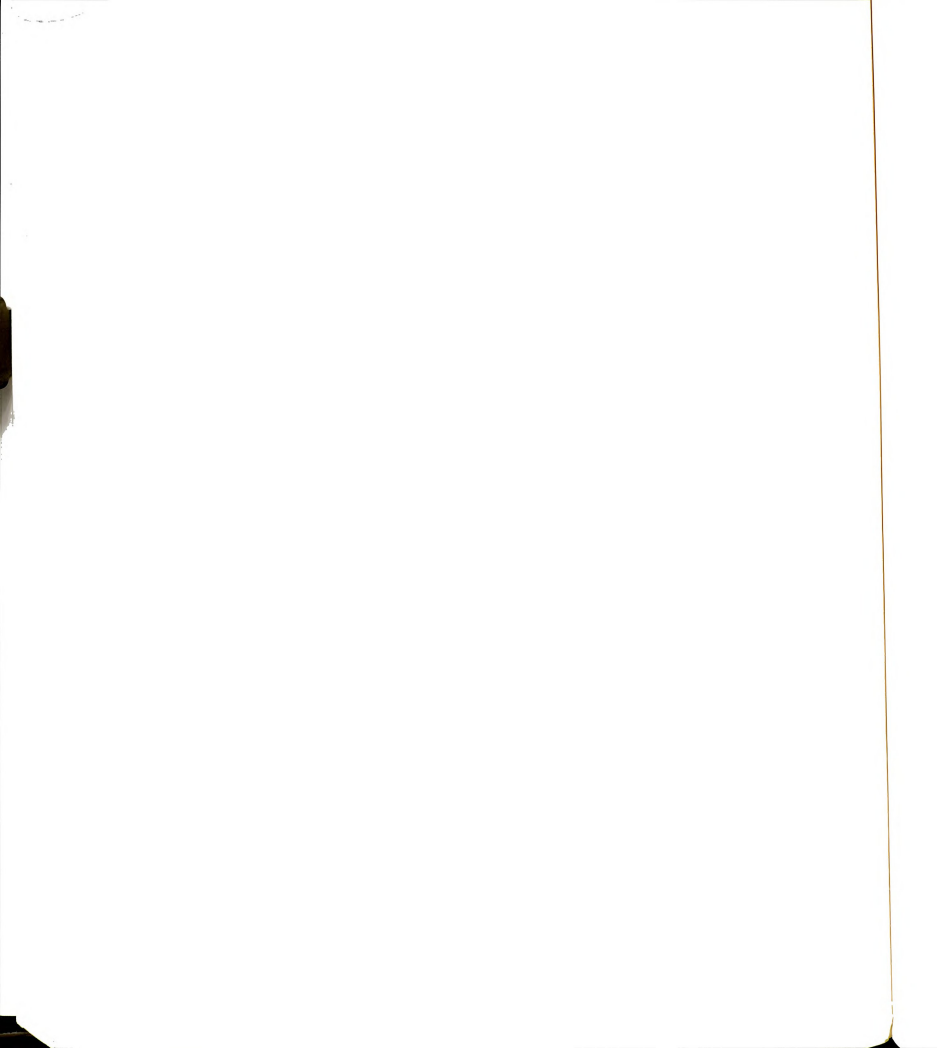
bor

pre

being silent, many women have no voice; that is, they do not know what they really think, feel, believe, desire. Or, at the very least, they do not know how to communicate, to voice, to say aloud, what they think, feel, believe, desire.

In Bangladesh, women hear a similar, but more extreme message: women are to be neither seen nor heard. They are to be both silent and invisible. The women of Bangladesh have taken, or been forced to take, these words to heart. They have little or no choice but to live their lives silently and in seclusion. It is no surprise that many of these women are voiceless and selfless.

Just as the women I talked and listened to were struggling with voice and silence, self and other, inner and outer authority, I, too, was struggling to find my voice and my self. In many ways, albeit to a lesser degree, my life paralleled what I was learning about their lives. I learned how powerfully social and cultural contexts and expectations can influence and shape women's ways of knowing and being not only by hearing these women's stories, but also by living and experiencing their power in my own life. Anthropologist Ruth Behar's (1993) reflections on her own experiences as a vulnerable observer help me to make sense of my struggles with voice and silence in the unfamiliar social and cultural contexts of Bangladesh. Guided by her explanation that, "We cross borders, but we don't erase them; we take our borders with us" (p. 320), I feel better prepared and more inspired to cross borders in the future.





## LIST OF REFERENCES

related

of coll

story.

Bostc

Wom  
Basie

The

intro

Nic

reco

M.  
Ha

bu  
co

## LIST OF REFERENCES

- Ali, I. (1993). Prospectus. Gulshan University.
- Baxter Magolda, B.M. (1992). Knowing and reasoning in college: Gender-related patterns in students' intellectual development. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Becker, H., Geer, B., & Hughes, E. (1968). Making the grade, the academic side of college life. New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc.
- Behar, R. (1993). Translated woman: Crossing the border with Esperanza's story. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Behar, R. (1996). The vulnerable observer: Anthropology that breaks your heart. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Belenky, M.F., Clinchy, B.M., Goldberger, N.R., & Tarule, J.M. (1986). Women's ways of knowing: The development of self, voice, and mind. New York: Basic Books.
- Blanchet, T. (1996). Lost innocence, stolen childhoods. Dhaka, Bangladesh: The University Press Limited.
- Bogdan, R. & Biklen, S. (1992). Qualitative research for education: An introduction to theory and methods (2nd ed.). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
- Bordo, S. (1990). Feminism, postmodernism, and gender-skepticism. In L. Nicholson (Ed.), Feminism/postmodernism. New York: Routledge.
- Bordo, S. & Jaggar, A. (1989). Gender, body, knowledge: Feminist reconstructions of being and knowing. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.
- Boyd, J. (1990). Ethnic and cultural diversity: Keys to power. In L. Brown & M.P.P. Root (Eds.), Diversity and complexity in feminist therapy. New York: Harrington Park Press.
- Brown, L. (1990). The meaning of a multicultural perspective for theory-building in feminist therapy. In L. Brown & M.P.P. Root (Eds.), Diversity and complexity in feminist therapy. New York: Harrington Park Press.

psychol

action

educat

sociol

Bangl

Unpu

deve

Issue

know

cont

(pp.

and

De

Jou

de

Ge

pg

Brown, L. & Gilligan, C. (1992). Meeting at the crossroads: Women's psychology and girls' development. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Carr, W. & Kemmis, S. (1986). Becoming critical: Education, knowledge and action research. London: The Falmer Press.

Carter, K. (1993). The place of story in the study of teaching and teacher education, Educational Researcher, 22(1): 5-12, 18.

Chodorow, N. (1978). The reproduction of mothering: Psychoanalysis and the sociology of gender. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Choudhury, A.H. (1990). Private universities facing the future. Dhaka, Bangladesh: Quest.

Clark, C.M. (1995). Thoughtful teaching. New York: Teachers College Press.

Clark, C.M. (1992). Good teaching: An international portrait gallery. Unpublished Fulbright Proposal.

Clinchy, B., & Zimmerman, C. (1982). Epistemology and agency in the development of undergraduate women. In P. Perun (Ed.), The undergraduate woman: Issues in educational equity (pp. 161-181). Lexington, MA: Lexington Books.

Code, L. (1991). What can she know? Feminist theory and the construction of knowledge. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Cohen, R. & Siegel, A.W. (1991). A context for context: Toward an analysis of context and development. In R. Cohen & A.W. Siegel (Eds.), Context and development (pp. 3-23). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Collins, P.H. (1990, 1991). Black feminist thought: Knowledge, consciousness, and the politics of empowerment. New York: Routledge.

Cross, S. & Markus, H. (1991). Possible selves across the life span. Human Development, 34: 230-255.

Davies, B. & Harre, R. (1990). Positioning: The discursive production of selves. Journal for the Theory of Social Behavior, 20(1): 43-63.

Debold, E., Tolman, D., & Brown, L. (1996). Embodying knowledge, knowing desire: Authority and split subjectives in girls' epistemological development. In N. Goldberger, J. Tarule, B. Clinchy, & M. Belenky (Eds.), Knowledge, difference, and power (pp. 85-125). New York: Basic Books.

E  
repressiv

E  
Wittrock  
Macmill

I  
P.W. Ja  
MacMi

Univer

uncons

experie

approac

Basic

Wad

mor

(Ed

Ellsworth, E. (1989). Why doesn't this feel empowering? Working through the repressive myths of critical pedagogy. Harvard Educational Review, 59(3): 297-324.

Erickson, F. (1986). Qualitative methods in research on teaching. In M.C. Wittrock (Ed.), Handbook of research on teaching (3rd ed., pp. 119-161). New York: Macmillan.

Erickson, F. & Schultz, J. (1992). Students' experiences of the curriculum. In P.W. Jackson (Ed.), Handbook of research on curriculum (pp. 465-485). New York: MacMillan.

Esmailka, W.R. (1994). Balancing the circle of life: Athabascan women at the University of Alaska Fairbanks. Unpublished dissertation, Michigan State University.

Finke, L. (1993). Knowledge as bait: Feminism, voice, and the pedagogical unconscious, College English, 55(1): 7-27.

Florio-Ruane, S. & Clark, C.M. (1990). Using case studies to enrich field experiences. Teacher Education Quarterly, 17(1): 17-28.

Fosnot, C.T. (1989). Enquiring teachers, enquiring learners: A constructivist approach for teaching. New York: Teachers College Press.

Freire, P. (1983/1989). Pedagogy of the oppressed. New York: Continuum.

Gardner, H. (1983). Frames of mind. New York: Basic Books.

Gardner, H. (1991). The unschooled mind. New York: Basic Books.

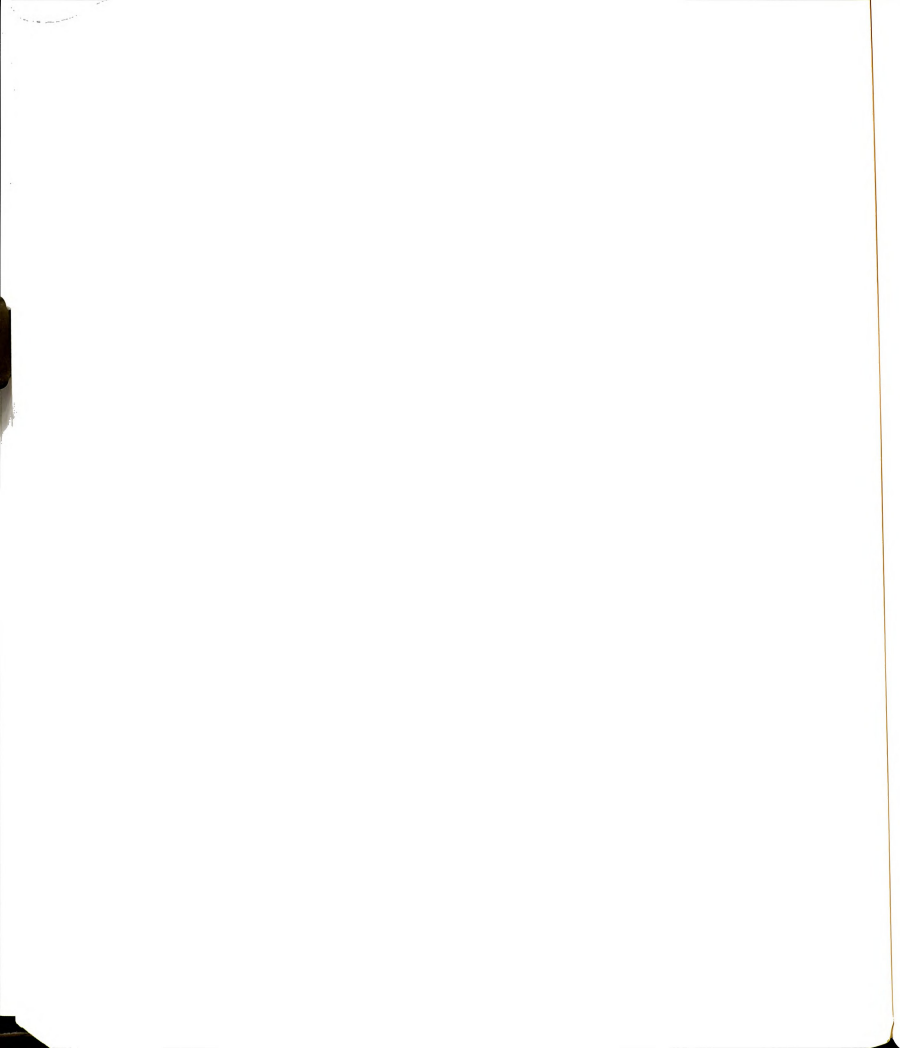
Gardner, H. (1993). Multiple intelligences: The theory in practice. New York: Basic Books.

Gardner, J. (1989). College is only the beginning (2nd ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

Geertz, C. (1973). The interpretation of cultures. New York: Basic Books.

Gilligan, C. (1977). In a different voice: Women's conceptions of self and morality. Harvard Educational Review, 47: 481-517.

Gilligan, C. (1978). Moral development in the college years. In A. Chickering (Ed.), The future American college. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.





Gilligan, C. (1979). Women's place in man's life cycle. Harvard Educational Review, 49: 431-446.

Gilligan, C. (1982). In a different voice: Psychological theory and women's development. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Gilligan, C. (1988). Mapping the moral domain: A contribution of women's thinking to psychological theory and education. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Gilligan, C. (1990). Making connections: The relational worlds of adolescent girls at Emma Willard School. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Glaser, B. & Strauss, A. (1967). The discovery of grounded theory. New York: Aldine De Gruyter.

Goetz, J.P. & LeCompte, M.D. (1984). Ethnography and qualitative design in educational research. Orlando, FL: Academic Press.

Goldberger, N. (1996). Cultural imperatives and diversity in ways of knowing. In N. Goldberger, J. Tarule, B. Clinchy, & M. Belenky (Eds.), Knowledge, difference, and power (pp. 335-371). New York: Basic Books.

Goldberger, N., Tarule, J., Clinchy, B., & Belenky, M. (1996). Knowledge, difference, and power. New York: BasicBooks.

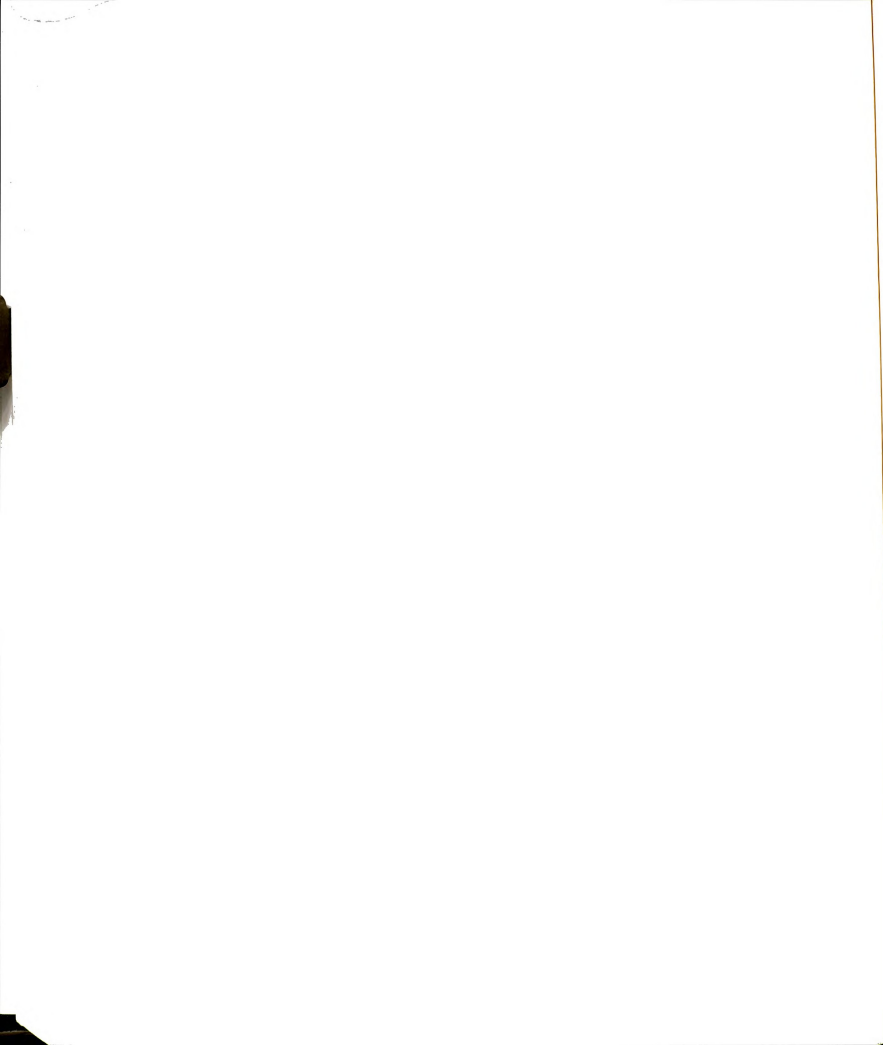
Goodnow, J.J. (1990). The socialization of cognition: What's involved? In J.W. Stigler, R.A. Shweder, & G. Herdt (Eds.), Cultural psychology: Essays on comparative human development (pp. 259-286). New York: Cambridge University Press.

Greene, B. (1994). Diversity and difference: Race and feminist psychotherapy. In M.P. Mirkin (Ed.), Women in context: Toward a feminist reconstruction of psychotherapy (pp. 333-351). New York: Guilford Press.

Harding, S. (1996). Gendered ways of knowing and the "epistemological crisis" of the West. In N. Goldberger, J. Tarule, B. Clinchy, & M. Belenky (Eds.), Knowledge, difference, and power (pp. 431-454). New York: Basic Books.

Harding, S. & Hintikka, M. (1993). Discovering reality: Feminist perspectives on epistemology, metaphysics, and philosophy of science. Dordrecht: Reidel.

Hare-Mustin, R. & Maracek, J. (1990). Making a difference: Psychology and the construction of gender. New Haven, CT: Yale University.



Hart, M. (1981). Becoming a mother: Motherhood from the woman's perspective. Unpublished dissertation, Pennsylvania State University, State College.

Heath, S.B. (1982). Questioning at home and at school: A comparative study. In G. Spindler (Ed.), Doing the ethnography of schooling: Educational anthropology in action (pp. 102-131). New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

Higgenbotham, E. (1985). Designing an inclusive curriculum: Bringing all women into the core. In J. Glazer, E. Bensimon, & B. Townsend (Eds.), Women in higher education: A feminist perspective (pp. 553-563). Needham Heights: Ginn Press.

Holland, D.C. & Eisenhart, M.A. (1990). Educated in romance: Women, achievement, and college culture. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Hollingsworth, S. (1993). By chart and chance and passion: The importance of relational knowing in learning to teach. Curriculum Inquiry, 23(1): 5-35.

Jacob, E. (1992). Culture, context, and cognition. In M. LeCompte, W. Millroy, & J. Preissle (Eds.), The handbook of qualitative research in education (pp. 293-335). San Diego: Academic Press.

King, P.M. (1990). Assessing development from a cognitive-developmental perspective. In D. Creamer (Ed.), College student development: Theory and practice for the 1990s. Alexandria, VA: American College Personnel Association.

Kleinfeld, J. (1990). The special virtues of the case method in preparing teachers for minority schools. Teacher Education Quarterly, 17(1): 43-52.

Krieger, S. (1991). Social science and the self. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.

Kurfiss, J. (1977). Sequentiality and structure in a cognitive model of college student development. Developmental Psychology, 13: 565-571.

Labouvie-Vief, G. (1990). Wisdom as integrated thought: Historical and developmental perspectives. In R. Sternberg (Ed.), Wisdom: Its nature, origins, and development. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Levesque-Lopman, L. (1988). Claiming reality: Phenomenology and women's experience. Totowa, NJ: Rowman and Littlefield.

Levin, H. (1976). Educational opportunity and social inequality in Western Europe. Social Problems, 24: 148-172.



Lewis, M. & Simon, R. (1986). A discourse not intended for her: *Learning and teaching within patriarchy*. Harvard Educational Review, 56(4): 457-472.

Lincoln, Y.S., & Guba, E. (1985). Naturalistic inquiry. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Lloyd, G. (1984). The man of reason: Male and female in western philosophy. London: Methuen.

Loevinger, J. & Wessler, R. (1970). Ego development. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Lortie, D. (1975). Schoolteacher: A sociological study. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Luttrell, W. (1989). Working-class women's ways of knowing: Effects of gender, race, and class. Sociology of Education, 62, 33-46.

Luttrell, W. (1993). "The teachers, they all had their pets": Concepts of gender, knowledge, and power. Signs, 18(3): 505-546.

Lyons, N. (1990). Dilemmas of knowing: Ethical and epistemological dimensions of teachers' work and development. Harvard Educational Review, 60: 159-180.

McElroy-Johnson, B. (1993). Giving voice to the voiceless, Harvard Educational Review, 63(1): 85-104.

McMillan, C. (1982). Women, reason and nature. Oxford: Basic Blackwell.

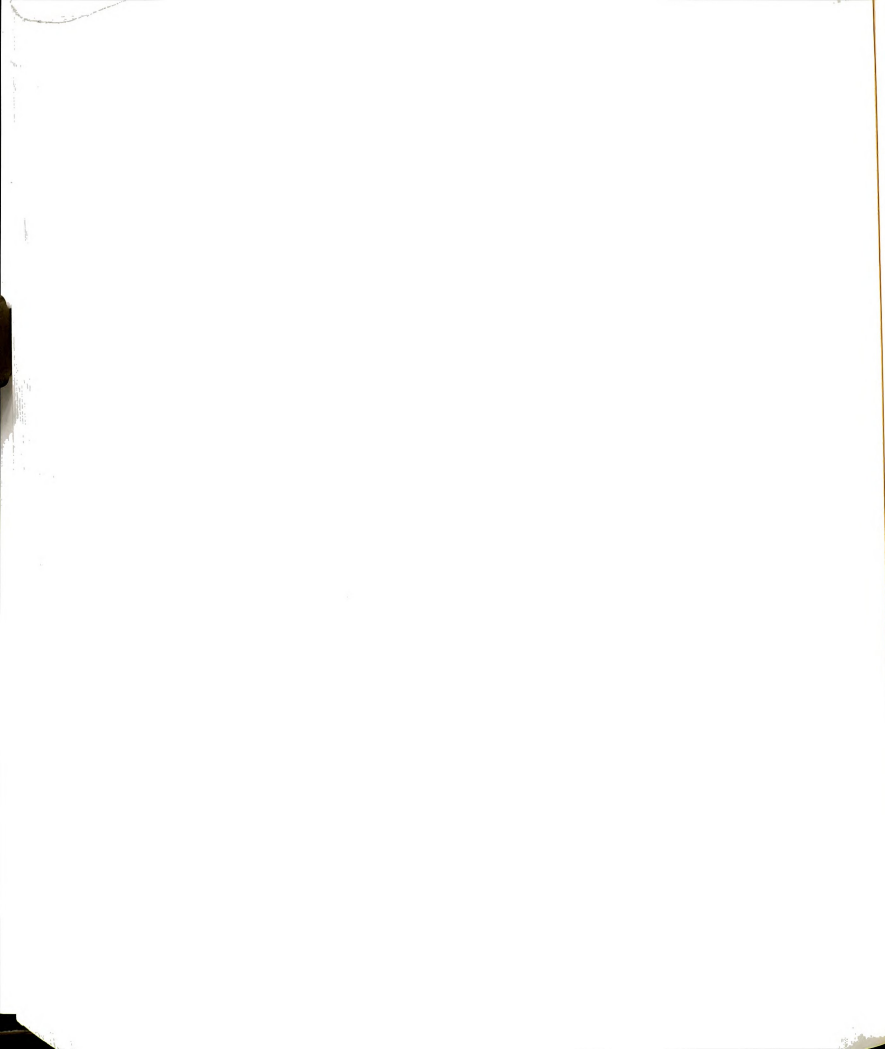
McNeil, L. (1986). Contradictions of control: School structure and school knowledge. New York: Routledge.

Markus, H. & Nurius, P. (1986). Possible selves. American Psychologist, 41(9): 954-969.

Martin, J.R. (1985). Reclaiming a conversation. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Merriam, S.B. (1988). Case study research in education: A qualitative approach. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Merseth, K.K. (1990). Case studies and teacher education. Teacher Education Quarterly, 17(1): 53-62.



Miller, J.B. (1976). Toward a new psychology of women. Boston: Beacon Press.

Mills, C.W. (1959). The sociological imagination. New York: Oxford University Press.

Mitchell, W.J. (1990). Representation. In F.M. Lentricchia (Ed.), Critical terms for literary study (pp. 11-22). Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Morawski, J. (1994). Practising feminisms, reconstructing psychology: Notes on a liminal science. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.

Morgan, G. (1986). Images of organization. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Neumann, A. (1992, October/November). On experience, memory, and knowing: A post-holocaust (auto)biography. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Association for the Study of Higher Education, Minneapolis, MN.

Neumann, A. (1995). Context, cognition, and culture: A case analysis of collegiate leadership and cultural change. American Educational Research Journal, 32(2): 251-279.

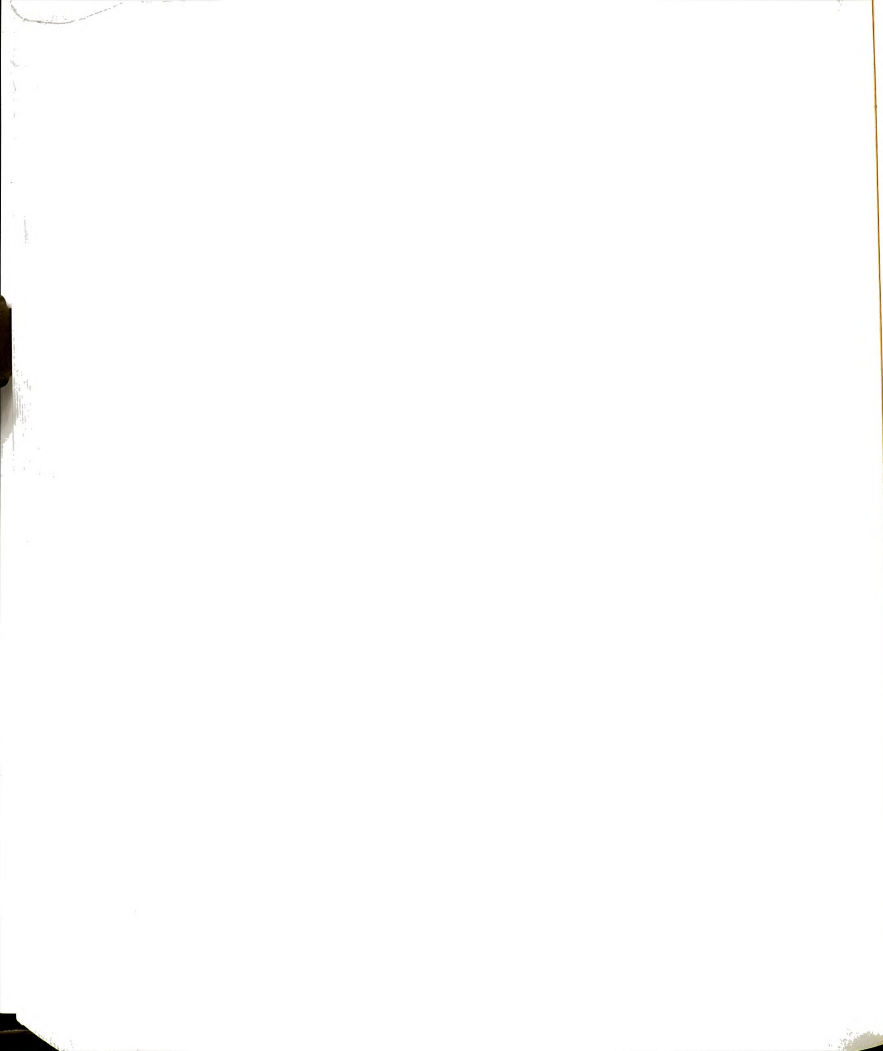
Noah, H.J. (1984). The use and abuse of comparative education. Comparative Education Review, 28(4): 153-165.

O'Loughlin, M. (1989, June). The influence of teachers' beliefs about knowledge, teaching, and learning on their pedagogy: A constructivist reconceptualization and research agenda for teacher education. Paper presented at the Nineteenth Annual Symposium of the Jean Piaget Society, Philadelphia, PA.

O'Loughlin, M. (1990, April). Teachers' ways of knowing: A journal study of teacher learning in a dialogical and constructivist learning environment. Semiotic methods: A critical analysis. Symposium conducted at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Boston.

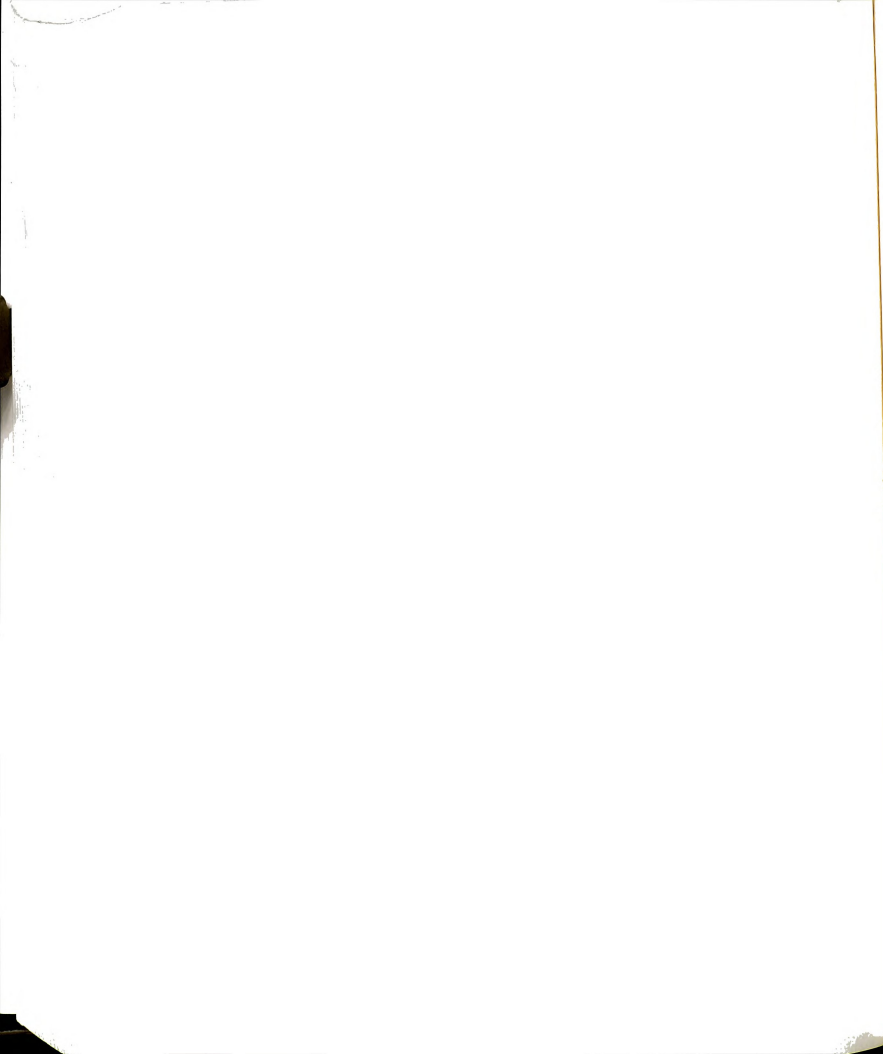
O'Loughlin, M. (1991, April). Beyond constructivism: Toward a dialectical model of the problematics of teacher socialization. In V. Richardson (Chair), The emerging role of constructivism in changes in teachers' beliefs. Symposium conducted at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Chicago.

Orenstein, P. (1994). SchoolGirls: Young women, self-esteem, and the confidence gap. New York: Doubleday.





- Palmer, P. (1987, September/October). Community, conflict, and ways of knowing. Change, 20-25.
- Patai, D. & Koertge, N. (1994). Professing feminism. New York: Basic Books.
- Perry, W. (1968, 1970). Forms of intellectual and ethical development in the college years. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.
- Perry, W. (1988). Cognitive and ethical growth: The making of meaning. In A. Chickering (Ed.), The modern American college (pp. 76-116). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Peshkin, A. (1985). God's choice. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Pipher, M. (1994). Reviving Ophelia: Saving the selves of adolescent girls. New York: Ballantine Books.
- Powell, A., Farrar, E., & Cohen, D. (1985). Treaties. In The shopping mall high school: Winners and losers in the educational marketplace. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.
- Raivola, R. (1985). What is comparison? Methodological and philosophical considerations. Comparative Education Review, 29(3): 261-273.
- Reid, P. & Kelly, E. (1994). Research on women of color: From ignorance to awareness. Psychology of Women Quarterly, 18: 477-486.
- Richert, A. (1992). Reflective teacher education: Cases and critiques. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.
- Rogers, A. (1993). Voice, play, and a practice of ordinary courage in girls' and women's lives, Harvard Educational Review, 63(3): 265-295.
- Rose, M. (1989). Lives on the boundary. New York: Penguin Books.
- Ruddick, S. (1989). Maternal thinking: Toward a politics of peace. Boston: Beacon.
- Ruddick, S. (1996). Reason's "femininity": A case for connected knowing. In N. Goldberger, J. Tarule, B. Clinchy, & M. Belenky (Eds.), Knowledge, difference, and power (pp. 248-273). New York: Basic Books.
- Ryff, C. (1991). Possible selves in adulthood and old age: A tale of shifting horizons. Psychology and Aging, 6(2): 286-295.



Schiefelbein, E. & Farrell, J. (1980). Women, schooling, and work in Chile: Evidence from a longitudinal study. Comparative Education Review, 24(2): 160-179.

Schutz, A. (1967). Phenomenology of the social world. Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press.

Shulman, J.S. & Nelson, L. (1988). Case methods in teacher education. San Francisco: Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development.

Shweder, R. & Bourne, E. (1984). Does the concept of the person vary cross-culturally? In R. Shweder and R. Levine (Eds.), Culture theory: Essays on mind, self and culture. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Smith, D. (1987). The everyday world as problematic: A feminist sociology. Boston: Northeastern University Press.

Smith, F. (1985). Comprehension and learning: A conceptual framework for teachers. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.

Stake, R. (1978). The case study method in social inquiry. Educational Researcher, 7(2): 5-8.

Stipek, D. (1993). Motivation to learn. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Stromquist, N. (1989). Determinants of educational participation and achievement of women in the third world: A review of evidence and a theoretical critique. Review of Educational Research, 59(2): 143-183.

Swidler, S. (1995). Story in context: A study in the form and function of teachers' personal experience narratives. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Michigan State University, East Lansing.

Taylor, C. (1989). Sources of the self: The making of the modern identity. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Taylor, S.J. & Bogdan, R. (1984). Introduction to qualitative research methods (2nd edition). New York: Wiley.

Taylor, J., Gilligan, C., & Sullivan, A. (1995). Between voice and silence: Women and girls, race and relationship. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Tierney, W. (1989). Cultural politics and the curriculum in post secondary education. Journal of Education, 171(3): 72-89.



UNESCO (1983). Higher education and employment in Bangladesh. Dhaka, Bangladesh: University Press Limited.

UNESCO (1988a). Higher education and national development in four countries: India, Bangladesh, Thailand, and the Philippines. Bangkok, Thailand: UNESCO Principal Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific.

UNESCO (1988b). Long-term planning in higher education. Bangkok, Thailand: UNESCO Principal Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific.

van Manen, M. (1990). Researching lived experience: Human science for an action-sensitive pedagogy. Albany, NY: SUNY Press.

Weiland, S. (1995). Life history and academic work: The career of Professor G. In R. Josselson & A. Lieblich (Eds.), The narrative study of lives (Volume 3, pp. 59-99). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

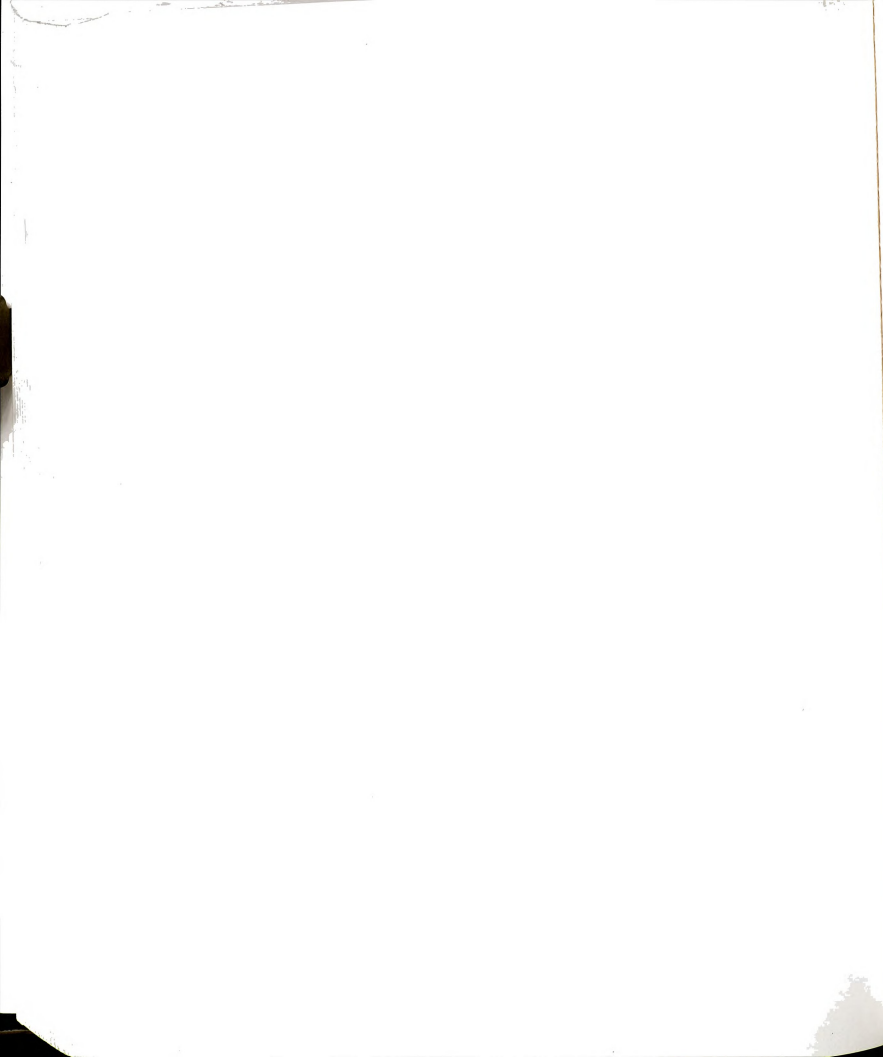
Weiler, K. (1991). Freire and a feminist pedagogy of difference, Harvard Educational Review, 61(4): 449-474.

Welte, S. (1993). Women and cylcones: Educating for survival, UNICEF, Dhaka, Bangladesh.

Welte, S. (1995). Meeting teachers' expectations: The social construction of college students' ways of knowing. Unpublished document.

Welte, S. (1997). Transforming educational practice: Addressing underlying epistemological assumptions. Review of Higher Education, 20(2): 199-213.

Young, K. (1987). Taleworld and storyrealms: The phenomenology of narrative. Dordrecht, Netherlands: Martinus Nijhoff.











MICHIGAN STATE UNIV. LIBRARIES



31293015631058