

COME,
LET ME
GUIDE YOU

*A Life Shared
with a Guide Dog*

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TWELVE

The Art of the Intimate Narrative

I AM A SOCIOLOGIST AND A FEMINIST ETHNOGRAPHER. I write studies that focus on particular experiences in order to contribute to broader social knowledge. In some of my studies, I have interviewed and focused on the lives of others; in other studies, I have drawn from my own personal experiences. In both cases, I have been committed to experimenting with narrative form, presenting data in an innovative way by creating a portrait of a social reality that is direct, vivid, complex, and intimate and that takes the reader on a journey—weaving a way through a situation in order to get to know it. Traditionally, sociological narratives are written with a tone of objectivity and superior authority, with theoretical generalizations subsuming the presentation of specific data, and with a narrative voice that commands respect because of its distanced and formal vantage point and familiar legitimating style. I have been affected deeply by the social science tradition within sociology; at the same time, I view myself as an innovator within that field.

In this chapter, I revisit my studies published in the past thirty years, reflecting on a process of creating different and more personal narrative forms. *Come, Let Me Guide You* clearly extends the themes of my prior work concerning community, gender, identity, and blindness, and it takes a step further in the tenderness of its approach. I hope that my discussion of my writing as it has evolved toward increasing intimacy will encourage others who also seek to speak with a unique voice in a chosen field.

WHY I WRITE

WHEN I READ OVER MY PUBLISHED WORK, I am particularly struck by those places where my individual voice—my inner, unabashed, vernacular, sometimes embarrassing voice—comes through. I am amazed that my inner ways of speaking have made it to the printed page and recorded word. I feel proud when I find my vernacular inner voice arguing for personal expression, as, for example, in my initial methodological work, *Social Science and the Self*: “I knew I would have to ‘assert myself,’ even if my assertion felt uncomfortable, and even if I would continually feel I was illegitimately imposing myself on my data. . . . I decided, ‘I must write about what I can relate to. I must write a personal account.’” The continuity of my desire for a personal voice is clear in my next book, *The Family Silver*, in which I wrote that “because these essays draw on my internal emotional life and deal with issues of sexual preference, they result in a study that is intimate far beyond my prior works, and beyond what is usually found in the social sciences and considered acceptable in academic discourse. The intimacy of the essays is their central challenge.” Still, I am shocked by the many personal revelations that appear in my subsequent ethnography, *Things No Longer There*, where, in a story about a meaningful past relationship, I wrote:

She took my hand quietly and led me to sit beside her. She held me close and kissed me. I kissed her back. She rested her head back on the couch for a moment. Then she held me to her even more tightly and cried, her large tears rolling slowly down her cheeks. “My deep river flows only for you,” she said. I said nothing and let myself be held, fearing her feelings for me would go away.

The intimacy of my work is pivotal for me. I am a very private, often isolated person—a writer at the heart of my being a sociologist—although the title “writer” is still hard for me to accept, because

I have long thought it means someone frivolous who cannot quite earn enough money to make a living. My father was a writer. My mother often worried that he would not earn enough or have a stable enough income. But I seem to have copied him, his habits of waking early, writing first thing in the morning, writing almost every morning. It's as if the day is wasted, as if there's nothing there if I don't write, which, for me, means to think, to contemplate, to get at my deepest feelings, to put something down, to have it out. It means to imagine, to invent, to inhabit a fantasy world where everyone appreciates my thoughts, honors my perspective, says "Wow!," finds me there in my chair writing or at my computer—an unsung talent, a woman of value to be cherished, applauded, and held close.

Gone is the isolation as I sit alone in my study, gone is the fear, the anxiety. I am focusing only on the work, on putting my thoughts and feelings together, articulating, looking for insights, sailing away on the emotions involved, trying not to destroy these emotions, not to change them, not to stray from what seems to me true or accurate, what was actually present in a situation: a lesbian community or a hippie rock radio station I studied, a feminist classroom I wrote about, my own inner responses to my blindness—all of these subjects of my studies. I fear greatly, as I write, that I'll misrepresent others or myself, get wrong the name of an out-of-business gas station in a desert town I pass through in *Traveling Blind*. I fear that if I don't "get it right," people will know, and then they won't trust me or my work. They'll put it down, decide the narrator is unreliable. What else might she have gotten wrong? My deep concern is to be a reliable narrator, to provide a compelling read, but not by shocking or misleading the reader. My fear of getting it wrong is shaped by the truth-seeking norms of the social sciences. These norms guide even my intimate writing. They influence my choice of subject, my way of obtaining evidence, the way I organize my portraits, my sense of faithfulness to sources and to the "truth" of a situation that I seek to represent.

When I write, I am always involved in a relationship with the reader, with many readers actually—all those who figure in my mind, and who, I imagine, will appreciate me, or who I hope will, and with some who won't, who are questioning me all the time: Have you got it right? Is that true? Are you telling me what I need to know? Have you prepared me for what is about to happen before it occurs—for example, when you were hit by that car as you crossed the street, did you tell me first that you failed to see it coming because of your lack of sight? Have you described your emotions in the proper order, the order in which they occurred? Have you figured out the mileage correctly between Deming and Lordsburg? Have you interpreted fairly the words of the woman who spoke to you in the Mimbres General Store? Have you intellectually made sense of your experiences and created generalizations that are not hasty but true? If so, you've done the best you can for the moment. Then on to the next moment.

Many of these internal questions emerge from my early methodological training in the social sciences, which emphasized veracity about people and places represented. That training also encouraged cautious and multidimensional theoretical views of a subject and, above all, required that assertions about “what is out there” be put through repeated tests. My desire to be faithful to the realities I describe in my work might have emerged on its own, but probably not as strongly. I am not a writer of fiction, nor of topical nonfiction. Rather, I am always somehow “structuring a study,” using my writing as a tool to help me know, and using myself in the service of creating a larger portrait of a complex social reality—a portrait that can enhance others' understandings as well.

Initially in doing the research for my studies, I exclusively interviewed others. Over time, however, I came to want to say things or to explore aspects of situations about which others could not easily tell me. I began to probe my own experiences of lesbianism, gender, blindness, and identity to get at hidden complexities that seemed to

me important to articulate and document. I began to write a personal feminist version of ethnography, drawing on a female, often understated and vulnerable inner voice, not the traditional authoritative sociological narrative style, but a personal style increasingly comfortable for me and one that gave me a sense of accomplishment.

MY EVOLVING STYLE

I USED TO WRITE POETRY when I was in graduate school. I used the pen name Sarah Kistler, who never actually published anything. But I thought that my poetry was too revealing, too embarrassing, not something for an academic to have appear under her name. Often after I wrote a poem that I thought was especially good, I would feel I had to leave my house because the truth in it, what I said, even if only in a few words—for my poems were short and intimate—felt too powerful, too plain-spoken, too exposed. I had to leave the house to get away from my words.

Back when I wrote poetry as my main form of expression, I remember being told by members of a writing group that my poetry wasn't really poetry. It was too prosy, too simple. Of course, it did not rhyme, but it also lacked the usual conventions of poetry such as metaphors. I thought that the people who criticized me just did not understand. They were old-fashioned, traditional, liking the standard forms of poetry, affected, not plain-spoken like me, not as advanced as me. These are very superior attitudes, but I had them, perhaps self-protectively. Back then, when I was getting to know a person as a potential friend, my test of them, my way of having them get to know me, was to bring a folder of my poetry for them to read. If they responded well, I felt they knew me, and I then felt more secure with them. I felt accepted and special.

As it has turned out, my academic writing has become an extension of my earlier personal poetry, and like that poetry, it is

plain-spoken, though the plainness is deceptive, hiding much intellectual thought and complex self-consciousness lying just beneath the surface. I did not start out intentionally to write poetry in academic clothing, but over the years, my writing has become more intimate, more emotional and personal, as my desire to speak from an individual standpoint has deepened. Although always innovative in style and concerned with cadences, rhythms, and interior truths, my writing has become more relaxed and self-accepting over time, I think, as I develop new skills and take on new challenges with each new study. Like my early poetry, my academic writing continues to be direct, often colloquial, and seemingly lacking in artifice. By the latter, I mean that my style seems to be quite natural, especially when I write in the first person. The naturalness of the style of expression, however, belies the work that goes into it. I often wish I could write that naturally or smoothly initially, but my personal voice is actually the result of much self-conscious thinking and multiple revisions as I work on crafting both the persona of who I am as I speak and the words that go into each ethnographic portrait.

The words, my father used to tell me, should disappear. They should seem not to be there, not to call attention to themselves. As I craft each study, I concentrate on the central subject or theme—lesbianism, gender, blindness, identity—and I work at having my words slip away, guiding the reader through my content, making it acceptable. The writing, I tell myself, should make the content go down like a smooth chilled oyster suddenly sliding down the back of one's throat before it's clear whether, in fact, this was something one wanted to eat. As I write, I seek to move the reader quickly through my text, discouraging stops. I want the reader to feel right there with me—in my thoughts, my feelings, sharing my observations, having my emotions in the process of having hers. I try to smooth the path, stir feelings, prompt new insights. I feel less alone as I engage with the reader, and I hope that the reader, too, will feel less alone. My

desire to bring the reader with me has continued through a variety of books, each with a different subject matter and setting, and each posing a different challenge for me, prompting me to create, in each case, a new and fitting narrative form.

My first two ethnographies were third-person narratives—*Hip Capitalism*, an organizational study of a hippie rock radio station emerging in the Summer of Love in San Francisco that traced the station's cooptation into mainstream corporate America, and *The Mirror Dance*, a study of a midwestern lesbian community and how individuals sought and found personal identity within it. In both of these books, I drew from interviews I had conducted to create unusual narratives that conveyed the thoughts and feelings of individuals. The style of *Hip Capitalism* was extremely novelistic for sociology, developing individual characters and a drama evocative of the hippie 1960s. The narrative structure I created in *The Mirror Dance* broke further with convention in that it was composed entirely of the voices of the women of the lesbian community responding to and commenting upon one another in a "multiple-person stream-of-consciousness" fashion, without an omniscient authorial voice. The study provided a "bird's-eye view," like overhearing the gossip of a small town. In the introduction, I explained that: "*The Mirror Dance* is clearly an experiment, both in women's language and in social science method. It is composed of an interplay of voices that echo, again and again, themes of self and community, sameness and difference, loss and change."

Although the narrative structure of *The Mirror Dance* worked out well in the end, it did not come readily to me. For two years after I completed my interviews, I could not write up my findings or figure out how to interpret my data. I picked up my interview notes, put them down, carried them across the country with me to a new university job, unable to identify significant themes or ideas with which to understand what the women had told me. Only when I developed

an exercise for “re-engaging” with my original interview experiences and my period of involvement as a member of the lesbian community did I begin to find a voice with which to speak back to the voices of the women and to understand their struggles. Reflecting on my own experiences, I found themes of likeness and difference, merger and separation, and processes of losing and finding a sense of self that helped me also to interpret other members of the community.

In an article titled, “Beyond ‘Subjectivity’: The Use of the Self in Social Science,” I wrote about my process of drawing from within myself to arrive at insights also useful for understanding others. That article was a turning point for me in terms of method and led to my subsequent book-length study, *Social Science and the Self: Personal Essays on an Art Form*. In both these works, I spoke personally, arguing that the self of the inquirer, rather than being viewed as a contaminant that would detrimentally bias a study, could more fruitfully be viewed as a source of knowledge that can make a study more true. “The great danger of doing injustice to the reality of the ‘other,’” I suggested, “does not come about through use of the self, but through lack of use of a full enough sense of self, which, concomitantly, produces a stifled, artificial, limited, and unreal knowledge of others.”

After speaking personally in “Beyond ‘Subjectivity’” and *Social Science and the Self*, I found that I could not go back to my earlier third-person style. A self-reflective approach to research and writing had become too rewarding, too rich a source of insights for me. This is not to say that I found a personal approach easier, for I would soon discover that it posed many new challenges and required new goals. For my approach to be valuable, I thought, it would have to generate insights not easily gained in other ways, and that were often not as obvious to others as they were to me. It would require that I achieve a level of honesty and self-reliance unequalled in my prior work, often pushing myself to say what was difficult, and it would require that I stand up, even more than before, to the naysayers and critics.

For just as my earlier poetry had been criticized as “not really poetry,” I soon found that critics questioned whether my sociological work was “really social science.” I think this was because, even when written in the third person, my studies specifically presented intimate details drawn from individuals’ lives, rather than relying on a more traditional sociological style in which abstract theories and hypotheses—or generalizations—subsumed the details. Each of my ethnographies, instead, provided a complex, multifaceted narrative portrait. This portrait was my organizing device, or interpretation, with theory implicit. My authorial voice was understated and often invisible in my early studies, sometimes intensely personal in the later ones, opening up a complexity rather than summarizing it. It was a narrative voice far different from that of a traditional male authoritative speaker. I invited the reader to join with me in each setting, becoming part of a community or adventure, experiencing it with me, drawing her own conclusions while considering mine.

NEW INTIMATE NARRATIVES

AFTER *SOCIAL SCIENCE AND THE SELF*, my next three books extended my method into new realms. In *The Family Silver: Essays on Relationships among Women*, I focused on the invisible worlds that women create and on the hidden wealth—the female cultures and customs, the “family silver”—that women pass on to one another. More candidly self-reflective in style than I had been before, in *The Family Silver* I drew on my experiences as a lesbian within academia as well as outside. I looked closely at women’s intimate ties, the ambiguities of female gender roles, and the risks of academic nonconformity. “In previous work,” I explained, “I have studied others, and it seems to me that it is far easier to look at others and think one sees what is occurring than to look at oneself and try to see themes, explanations,

interpretations, to offer stories that are both true and acceptable. When one looks at oneself, the picture becomes more complex, more intimate. The easy answers disappear.” In a chapter on gender roles, I especially confronted this challenge of suggesting social complexity through individual self-reflection. For example:

People who know me, for instance, think I look like myself, and that I am a woman. My clothes seem fitting to me. They are not aware of how much I feel, and fear, I am a man. When younger and wanting so much to be a man—in order to be free of being a woman, or like my mother, and in order simply to be free—I used to take greater pride in being mistaken for a man than I do now, and to feel less discomforted when called one. Maybe I got so accustomed to the pants and freedom that being called a man did not seem so much of a compliment anymore. I felt better when seen as a woman. But maybe the reason has more to do with a change in what the genders came to stand for in my particular world. At some point, the meanings switched, and good became female, and freedom became female, and so did I.

Gender and lesbian themes persisted into my next study, *Things No Longer There: A Memoir of Losing Sight and Finding Vision*, where I began to explore issues of inner sight. I had found that my experiences of “moving on and growing older” led to losses that I needed to confront. I was interested in how, although the outer world may change over time and old relationships and landscapes disappear, inner visions of them persist, giving meaning, jarring the senses with a very different, and often more valuable, picture than what appears before the eyes. To create my narrative in *Things No Longer There*, I drew from my inner imagery, painting pictures from memory of special places I had known that were now built over with new homes and roads, and of intimate personal relationships of my past now gone in

the outer world but still very present in my mind. I sought to suggest that vision, very importantly, is made up of such inner imagery, extending the limits of visual sight and rich with emotional meanings.

I wrote, too, of my recent experience of losing my eyesight and of how, when objects in the outer world “literally became no longer visible to me,” I began to need not only to use my mind to see what my eyes did not, but also “to create a counterposing internal vision so that my sense of my own value would remain intact.” In the face of many external attitudes that might make me feel that my loss of eyesight rendered me less valuable as a person, I needed to develop an alternate, positive inner vision—a view of myself as different and still capable, rather than as diminished by my lack of sight. In *Things No Longer There*, I was committed to revealing the importance of such inner rebuilding and of retaining crucial memories from the past despite a sense of loss. In stories about blindness, lesbianism, and emotional connection, I wrote more intimately about myself in all the portraits in that book than I had before.

Interestingly, when *Things No Longer There* required a subtitle, the publisher suggested using the term “memoir.” At first I was taken aback, since I viewed my book as a study organized around the theme of valuing inner vision when outer landscapes disappear. However, I knew that the purpose was to identify the work in a popular category that would be useful for sales representatives in selling the book to bookstores. What I did not at first realize was how much the word memoir would soon haunt me, and not only because it appeared in my title. Increasingly as I began to use a more intimate narrative style—moving from reflecting on the lives of others to exploring my own experiences in my ethnographies—I found that I often was perceived as “writing memoir.” Although not necessarily a criticism, this categorization felt like a slight to me, or at least a misunderstanding. In my mind, I was still using an approach deeply affected by my early training in social science research methodology. I was committed to faithfulness and to

structuring my narratives to illumine social realities. I used my personal experiences selectively to that end. A close look at my narratives reveals, I think, a deliberately detailed structure that is more like a presentation of data than it is like the more autobiographical form of memoir, which relies on conventional expectations of storyline and personal drama.

The themes I introduced in *Things No Longer There* concerning blindness and sight became further elaborated in my subsequent ethnography, *Traveling Blind: Adventures in Vision with a Guide Dog by My Side*, where I focused specifically on mobility. What is it like to “travel blind”? I asked. What is it like to live in an ambiguous world—as I was beginning to do—where things are not black and white so much as present and absent, shades of gray? What is it like to navigate through constantly changing external imagery that requires changing inner perspectives as well? What is it like to travel with a guide dog, to have an invisible disability? What can experiences of blindness tell us about sight?

In *Traveling Blind*, I explored, as well, the gratitude I felt in sharing my path with my intimate partner, Hannah, making the book a romance, as well as a story about my changing perceptions as I navigated the world with my new guide dog, Teela. As the three of us travel through the Southwest, I often use desert imagery to help me examine issues of blindness and sight. The book is full of descriptions of vast skies, mountains, and mesas, often seen imperfectly, and of my internal responses to them as I attempt to arrive at insights of broader usefulness. “Like the desert that gradually reclaims its own,” I reflected, “my vision has a quality of gradual change in which my efforts to see—to grasp what is before me, and to appreciate my experiences in a positive way—count more than my losses.” And “the comfort I viewed in the landscape was, in part, because my blindness lent a softness to the scenery, blending the trees and fields together. Sometimes I yearned for clarity, for the individual tree shapes to stand out, but I also accepted the softness as a gift of my blindness.”

In this unusually focused travel narrative, I wished to take the reader with me on my journeys even more than before—through airports and city streets as well as desert towns, using my personal experiences to create broader understandings. As I described what I saw and did not see, I sought to present vision as a multidimensional achievement in which touch, sound, smell, mind, and feeling count as much as visual sight and to suggest that the blind also see—through a mixture of these senses, through adaptation, intuition, and through living in the world of the sighted.

I think that in *Traveling Blind*, as in my prior works, I was again pushing a recognition of something hard to see—an invisible reality. In *Things No Longer There* and *The Family Silver*, lesbianism was the central invisible reality that I had focused upon, seeking to describe it in an underlying way for what I felt it was—a difference, something soft and at my center of great import in my life, but for which I often did not have the words to describe it well, to acknowledge it, to “see” it. Like blindness, lesbianism felt so connected to my vulnerable inner sense of self and comfort that I felt it was difficult to reveal, for fear of adverse consequences.

Drawing from my experiences to describe invisible realities has often left me feeling very exposed in my narratives, wondering: Will others like me? Will they see what I see? Will they believe me? Will my prose carry the reader along as I wish? Am I being too intimate? Not intimate enough? In my sociological writing, as in my life, I am extremely sensitive to public exposure and to the negative judgments it may bring, as suggested in this passage, from the “Airport Stories” chapter of *Traveling Blind*, about my navigating with Teela:

Airports—they are so very public and I am so very private, and so obvious with Teela. I feel odd being guided by a dog, trying to do it in good form yet looking like I'm blind. I am unsure of what others see, unsure of what I see myself,

doubtful inside of who I am, and of what I should be doing all the while as I am doing it, as Teela pulls me forward and I follow her. She weaves me through the other passengers, the world whizzes by me out of focus and I wonder, am I doing it right, am I blind enough? Do I need this dog? But if I let go of Teela's harness for even a moment, if I lose her, she then turns back and looks strangely at me, as if to say, "Where are you? You're supposed to be on the other end of this." I pick up the harness handle and start again the rolling walk we share.

Now, in *Come, Let Me Guide You: A Life Shared with a Guide Dog*, I further explore the importance of my relationship with Teela, extending themes concerning blindness, intimacy, gender, and identity introduced in my prior work. In writing these stories about our life together, I have found that examining my relationship with Teela has led me not only to new recognitions about myself and others, but also to new and deepening possibilities for intimate expression. In speaking of a time when Teela became injured, for example, I reflect:

In that moment, and in others like it, I have had to realize how deeply Teela's life had become intertwined with mine. As she breathes, I do; when she is injured, I hurt. When she is happy, I glow with her joy. It's an odd bond, an unusual bond—no guide in life is different, no relationship less importantly tended than this one has been for me. Teela has been a guide to a new way in the world for me, much needed because of my loss of sight; a guide to getting older, and a guide to sharing my life. In the nine and-a-half years I have had her, she has been with me almost every place I have gone. When I have had to leave her behind, I have missed her. I have run after her when she has strayed, listened for her tinkling collar,

played with her, worked with her, watched her sleep, traveled in cabs and in snowy forests with her, kept her clean and safe, and tried to share her dreams.

Writing intimate narratives may not seem the best thing to do for someone who tends to hide, to fear what others may think, who tends to feel unacceptable. Yet this writing always has been healing for me, clarifying, giving light and air to something deep within. It has enabled me to write it out, present it to the world, feel present, assess where I am now, who I am, sift through the complexities of the various experiences in which I participate and observe. For me, there is a great treasure trove everywhere of things to see and know, to describe, to interpret as I seek to hold onto and cherish what I have lived. Those special moments, special experiences felt intensively within, are often difficult to articulate to the outer world, but always worth the trying.

I was pleased to represent the lesbian community in *The Mirror Dance*; finally to get the hippie rock radio station's story down in its period-piece detail in *Hip Capitalism*; to "write myself in" in *Social Science and the Self*. I was then shocked and delighted to be able to continue to have my inner thoughts, my colloquial yet crafted stream-of-consciousness way of getting at underlying realities, appear again on the printed page in four successive ethnographic works probing issues of gender, blindness, and identity. Each book has extended the reach of my intimacies. In each, I have combined the norms of a social science with the practice of an introspective art.

In the future, I hope to explore more of what I see beneath the surface of social experiences. I remain committed to writing intimately, to drawing from within myself to achieve broader insights. Giving myself internal permission to represent reality "as I see it," however, is a difficult thing to do, especially, perhaps, because I am a woman—taught early on not to emphasize or call attention to

myself, taught that the personal, the particularly individual may not be worth much. Flying in the face of that sense of lack of worth, I pick up my pen or sit at my computer, trying to set forth the words, hoping to catch that glimmer, that flow of inner thought and feeling that will create insights, a sense of knowing, of feeling I was here. Then tentatively, each time I finish a study, when I get enough of that stream-of-consciousness out, enough of my inner sense of experience, I offer it to readers to learn what they will say. At that moment, with each new study, I am back again all too easily to my days in graduate school when I gingerly took out a folder with my poems in it to show to a new potential friend. Would she like me? Would she read them? Would I be acceptable, applauded, cherished, and held close?

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Bibliographic Notes

HUMAN-ANIMAL STUDIES

NOTABLE OVERVIEWS AND EDITED COLLECTIONS in human-animal studies that provide context for *Come, Let Me Guide You* include: Arnold Arluke and Clinton Sanders, *Between the Species: A Reader in Human-Animal Relationships* (San Francisco: Pearson, 2008); Christopher Blazina, Güler Boyraz, and David Shen-Miller, eds., *The Psychology of the Human-Animal Bond: A Resource for Clinicians and Researchers* (New York: Springer, 2011); Margo DeMello, *Animals and Society: An Introduction to Human-Animal Studies* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012); Margo DeMello, ed., *Teaching the Animal: Human-Animal Studies across the Disciplines* (Herndon, VA: Lantern Books, 2010); Clifton P. Flynn, ed., *Social Creatures: A Human and Animal Studies Reader* (Herndon, VA: Lantern Books, 2008); Aaron S. Gross and Anne Valley, eds., *Animals and the Human Imagination: A Companion to Animal Studies* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012); Samantha Hurn, *Humans and Other Animals: Cross-Cultural Perspectives on Human-Animal Interactions* (London: Pluto Press, 2012); Linda Kalof and Amy Fitzgerald, eds., *The Animals Reader: The Essential Classic and Contemporary Writings* (New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2007); and Claire Jean Kim and Carla Freccero, eds., "Special Issue on Species/Race/Sex," *American Quarterly* 65, no. 3 (2013).

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INTIMATE ETHNOGRAPHIC METHOD

THE INTIMATE ETHNOGRAPHIC APPROACH used in *Come, Let Me Guide You* extends that of my prior studies: *Traveling Blind: Adventures in Vision with a Guide Dog by My Side* (West Lafayette, IN: Purdue University Press, 2010); *Things No Longer There: A Memoir of Losing Sight and Finding Vision* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2005); *The Family Silver: Essays on Relationships among Women* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1996); *Social Science and the Self: Personal Essays on an Art Form* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1991); *The Mirror Dance: Identity in a Women's Community* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1983); and *Hip Capitalism* (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1979).

The quotations used in Chapter 12 are from the above works as follows: from *The Mirror Dance*: “clearly an experiment,” page xvii; “multiple-person stream of consciousness,” page 187; from *Social Science and the Self*: “I knew I would have to ‘assert myself,’” page 182; “We see others as we know ourselves,” page 182; from *The Family Silver*: “The intimacy of the essays is their central challenge,” page 2; “the easy answers disappear,” page 1; “people who know me, for

instance, think I look like myself,” page 31; from *Things No Longer There*: “She took my hand,” page 158; “moving on and growing older,” page 1; “a counterposing internal vision,” page 93; from *Traveling Blind*: “Like the desert that gradually reclaims,” page 8; “the comfort I viewed in the landscape,” page 161; “Airports—they are so very public,” page 128; and from *Come, Let Me Guide You* (West Lafayette, IN: Purdue University Press, 2015): “In that moment, and in others like it,” pages 196–97.

The “turning point” methodological article discussed in Chapter 12 is: “Beyond ‘Subjectivity’: The Use of the Self in Social Science,” *Qualitative Sociology* 8, no. 4 (1985): 309–24 and is included in *Social Science and the Self*: 165–83. I discuss my mixing of genres in *Hip Capitalism* and *The Mirror Dance* in “Fiction and Social Science,” *Studies in Symbolic Interaction* 5 (1984): 269–86, reprinted in *The Mirror Dance* as an Appendix: 173–99. In “Research and the Construction of a Text,” *Studies in Symbolic Interaction* 2 (1979): 167–87, I discuss the “novelistic” approach of *Hip Capitalism*. I reconsider the multivoiced approach of *The Mirror Dance* in “*The Mirror Dance* Revisited,” *Journal of Lesbian Studies* 9, no. 1-2 (2005): 1–9.

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The quotation from *Traveling Blind* in Chapter 13, “We had a good dinner that night back up in Silver City,” appears in that book on pages 48–49.

Further helpful discussions of the use of self-reflection in ethnography can be found in: Tony E. Adams, Stacy Holman Jones, and Carolyn Ellis, *Autoethnography* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015); Robin M. Boylorn and Mark P. Orbe, eds.,

Critical Autoethnography: Intersecting Cultural Identities in Everyday Life (Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press, 2013); Peter Collins and Anselma Gallinat, eds., *The Ethnographic Self As Resource: Writing Memory and Experience into Ethnography* (Oxford and New York: Berghahn Books, 2010); and Stacy Holman Jones, Tony E. Adams, and Carolyn Ellis, eds., *Handbook of Autoethnography* (Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press, 2013). Feminist methodologies are explored in: Sharlene Nagy Hesse-Biber, ed., *Handbook of Feminist Research: Theory and Praxis*, Second Edition (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2011) and *Feminist Research Practice: A Primer*, Second Edition (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2013). See also: Christa Craven and Dána-Ain Davis, eds., *Feminist Activist Ethnography: Counterpoints to Neoliberalism in North America* (New York: Lexington Books, 2013); Carolyn Ellis, "Telling Secrets, Revealing Lives: Relational Ethics in Research with Intimate Others," *Qualitative Inquiry* 13, no. 1 (2007): 3–29 and *Revision: Autoethnographic Reflections on Life and Work* (Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press, 2008); and Mary Jo Maynes, Jennifer L. Pierce, and Barbara Laslett, *Telling Stories: The Use of Personal Narratives in the Social Sciences and History* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2008). Two valuable discussions of truth-seeking objectives in personal and fiction writing that I have found particularly helpful are: Judith Barrington, *Writing the Memoir: From Truth to Art*, Second Edition (Portland, OR: Eighth Mountain Press, 2002); and Ann Patchett, *This is the Story of a Happy Marriage* (New York: Harper, 2013).

WOMEN AND DISABILITIES

THE WOMEN AND DISABILITIES COURSE discussed in Chapter 13 draws from a rich literature on women's experiences that I have gratefully explored each year. The works I used in the course in 2011