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Anticipating the Future of Autoethnography as Critical Social Research



Focus Your Reading

- Autoethnography continues to grow in the critical social research literature; however, some ethnography scholars argue that the method should assume a more traditional qualitative direction.
- Social media and supporting technologies are opening possibilities for autoethnography.
- Autoethnographic writing, performances, presentations, and professional development at major academic research associations continue to increase. Autoethnography is finding additional academic spaces with the growth of interest in mixed methodologies and interdisciplinary research.
- The future of autoethnography will depend on how scholars of the approach begin addressing key gaps in its application, including epistemology, clarity, transparency, and evaluation.
- Many highly selective academic journals of critical social research publish autoethnography articles, and most of them also publish quantitative research, thereby extending the potential reach and respectability of the genre.

Growth and Creativity, Yet Sustained Skepticism and Criticism

Growth and Creativity in Autoethnography

Autoethnographic processes and products can take on multiple forms, including, but not limited to, memoirs, personal essays, short stories, journals, scripts, and poetry. The sustained growth of autoethnography as a possibility of critical social research remains contingent on the creativity of researchers and the leaders of international publication venues for qualitative and quantitative research. In addition to the 20 established iterations of autoethnography described in Chapter 1, we anticipate that lesser-known and less frequently published forms of autoethnography will continue to grow and inform researchers' work internationally. Among those iterations is the application of autoethnography as narrative inquiry to study intercultural communication in higher education (e.g., Trahar, 2009). The following three additional creative directions in autoethnography are less established, but they offer some promising possibilities for the future of the genre as critical social research:

- Autoethnography and the arts
- Autoethnography and mental and physical health/well-being
- Autoethnography in/as coursework

Autoethnography and the Arts

The arts in synthesis with autoethnography have led to some interesting research in small but growing new forms of the genre, such as *visual autoethnography* (Smith-Shank & Keifer-Boyd, 2007). As mentioned in Chapter 1, there are audiovisual forms of autoethnography that tend to extend beyond the realm of those accepted by academic (peer-reviewed and non-peer-reviewed) publications. Still, it would be neglectful to dismiss signs of the future for academic publications in this area. For example, visual autoethnography extends from the inclusion of digital photos and graphics to the use of technology for digital literacy and digital storytelling projects. An exemplar of such work is Eldridge's (2012) collaged critical reflection on art teaching in the *Journal of Social Theory in Art Education*, which is based in social justice and visual culture theory. Another new form of autoethnography gaining traction for the future of autoethnographic work in academic publications is musical autoethnography, which originated in Australia. Autoethnography pioneer Carolyn Ellis and Australian scholar Brydie-Leigh Bartleet introduce musical autoethnography in a coedited book format in which individual chapters are written through the eyes, ears, emotions, experiences, and stories of music and autoethnography practitioners, with the goal of telling and demonstrating how autoethnography can extend musicians' critical awareness of their praxis and, in turn, how musicians can augment the creative possibilities of autoethnography in the arts (Bartleet & Ellis, 2009). The influence of this work on a Sri Lankan immigrant to Australia, Rohan Nethsinghe (2012), is unmistakable.

Paying homage to the work of Bartleet and Ellis (2009) early in his music-based autoethnography published in the *Qualitative Report*, Nethsinghe (2012) applies

Autoethnography and the Arts

Autoethnographers are using multiple forms of representation (e.g., music, art) beyond journal articles and texts to bring their work into other realms.

autoethnographic method to investigate his own musical background, including the different modes of music education he received. From this genre, it was possible for Nethsinghe, then a doctoral candidate in music education at Monash University, to reconstruct that “my interests along with the methods of interpretations I practice in the field of multicultural music are influenced by and formulated through my appreciation and understandings of and beliefs gained from education” and “shaped by the social context, cultural placing, and life experiences” (p. 1). His autoethnography gleans information

from personal journals, photographs, performance programs, records of achievements including certificates and newspaper articles, and information collected by talking to family members. Similar to Hughes's doctoral students who contributed to Chapter 3 of this textbook, Nethsinghe describes the process of autoethnography as “one of the most difficult tasks that I have encountered, as I felt uncomfortable” and sensed that it was culturally inappropriate to begin “articulating my personal achievements,” while conversely feeling that “it was also hard to discuss some conflicts I faced as a school student” (p. 3). Moreover, he concludes, as did Hughes's doctoral students, that the findings of his autoethnographic study “at the end . . . provided me with some valuable insights about what shaped my professional practice and beliefs” (p. 3).

Autoethnography and Mental and Physical Health/Well-Being

Through psychology, psychiatry, and social work research as well as nursing research, autoethnography is beginning to extend other fields toward developing strong possibilities for its interdisciplinary contributions to critical social research. *Transpersonal psychology* was born in the 1960s out of the humanistic psychology research of Abraham Maslow. The goals of transpersonal psychology and autoethnography are linked through their concern for meta-thinking, critical consciousness, and self-discovery en route to transformation from an undesirable mental/physical space to mental health and well-being. For example, Raab (2013) finds the link between transpersonal psychology and autoethnography to be organic, because both of them highlight experiential data, “which can be easily documented in autoethnographical format.” Such a format “can be therapeutic and healing in that the information presented by the autoethnographer involves self-discovery, self-awareness, and a sense of empowerment” (p. 2).

Similarly, *vocational psychology* and autoethnography share the goal of appreciating how lives are informed by issues of consciousness and social class. However, autoethnography’s role in vocational education differs from its role in transpersonal psychology. Peter McIlveen (2008) of the University of Queensland, Australia, notes that in vocational psychology, autoethnography is presented as a potential vehicle to improve vocational psychologists’ own class consciousness, and it is intended to improve their capacity to grasp social class in their own research and practice. McIlveen concludes that it takes a step further to recommend that autoethnography be used for research, training, and professional development for vocational psychologists.

Brenda A. LeFrançois (2013) extends autoethnography to explore the *psychiatrization* of children and how she was complicit in perpetuating First Nations genocide through “benevolent” institutions, such as child protection and psychiatry, institutions that, she argues, too often produce “mental illness” through the psychiatrization of the people they are meant to support (p. 108). In her article in the journal *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society*, LeFrançois applies autoethnography to offer an example of the ways in which a child welfare organization can be both sanist and racist in its organizing principles and in its interpretations of the needs and desires of indigenous peoples. Her autoethnographic narrative also provides an example of how an autoethnographer’s own shifting complicity within the relations of power can occur (in her case, in a particular “benevolent” child protection agency). LeFrançois, in sum, offers “a narrative that uses autoethnographic knowledge and queers my lived experience in order to unwrap and make visible the normalizing connections between psychiatrization, colonialism, racialization, and adultism” (p. 108). Similarly, Shahram Khosravi applies autoethnography in his book *“Illegal” Traveller: An Auto-Ethnography of Borders* (2010) in a manner that effectively challenges the notion that we live in a world without borders. Traveling from Iran to Sweden, Khosravi offers a critically reflexive

Autoethnography and Well-Being

Autoethnographers in health-related fields are exploring how understanding the self and identity plays a role in health care.

account of his personal experience as an “illegal traveler,” largely by exposing the inequitable and inhumane racial dimensions of crossing borders, why and how people like him risk their lives do so “successfully,” and what happens to those border crossers during and after their journeys, including how they reflect upon and make sense of the experience toward healing.

During the past decade, we have witnessed the slow but steady growth of autoethnography in nursing research in both *psychiatric mental health nursing* (e.g., Foster, McAllister, & O'Brien, 2006; Sealy, 2012) and nursing in general (Peterson, 2015). Nursing researchers are finding the subjective lens of autoethnography to be a useful qualitative methodology that can offer insights and opportunities for exploring the influence of nurses' personal and professional cultural identities on their practice. In the *International Journal of Mental Health Nursing*, Foster et al. (2006) detail their study of a psychiatric mental health nurse's application of autoethnography for exploring the experiences of being an adult child of a parent with a psychosis. As a qualitative research method, the authors find “autoethnography is useful for making connections between researcher and participant, deepening interpretive analysis of both common and differing experiences, and producing knowledge drawn from compassionate understanding and rigorous reflection” (p. 44). Citing Foster et al. (2006), Patricia Ann Sealy (2012) describes her application of autoethnography as part of an overall mental, physical, and metaphysical approach to healing from breast cancer.

The specific purposes of Sealy's (2012) autoethnography, published in the *Clinical Journal of Oncology Nursing*, are to increase nurses' understanding of the primary cultural implications of “unresolved emotional issues from the past complicating current treatment and recovery for locally advanced breast cancer” and to inform nurses that “reflective journaling and meditation can provide an opportunity to ‘socially construct’ past psychological injury” (p. 38). It was the way in which autoethnography moved Sealy to pursue critical, reflexive reconstructions of her past, including reexperiencing childhood wounds (e.g., losing her mother at age 5 after her father abandoned the family), that impressed her enough to share the process, product, and possibility of the method with others. Her autoethnography reframes mental health providers as both healers and in need of healing, and it challenges the mutual exclusivity of mental and physical health. Moreover, autoethnography became a process through which Sealy could gain insight into her duality as nurturing mother providing comfort and support for her family while battling breast cancer and as nurturing mother in need of help for the wounded child within her who still longed for the comfort and support of the mother she had lost at such a young and vulnerable age. The combined autoethnography reflective journaling/meditation approach “empowered” Sealy “toward self-acceptance and self-worth” and “finding meaning in suffering” to “heal pain and free energy for the pursuit of justice, peace and joy” (p. 38).

Similarly, in the *Journal of Research in Nursing*, Jane Wright (2008) evaluates positively the validity of autoethnography with reference to nursing and nurse education, concluding that “autoethnography is a useful research tool, which provides personal

insights, which can provide meaning to others. This is particularly true when creative methods of expression are harnessed” (p. 338). Her autoethnographic contribution began with her application of critical reflexivity on her creative identity as a female nurse and lifelong learner from a White, middle-class Northern Irish background. Peterson (2015) implies in the *Journal of Advanced Nursing* that autoethnography can invite and move nurses to share stories that would otherwise not be heard and that, as a process, autoethnography supports nurses to be courageous in a different way by “laying bare of the self to gain new cultural understandings”; further, “it offers the potential for nurses to learn from the experiences and reflections of other nurses” (p. 226).

There are even signs of autoethnography extending beyond nursing research to more specific research concerning rehabilitation for alcoholism and drug abuse. Elizabeth Ettorre (2013) found that doing reflexivity via autoethnography with women who were drug users has some cathartic and healing influences. Unfortunately, there is a dual stigma attached to alcoholism and drug abuse that only adds difficulty to the healing process. The stigmatized alcoholic/drugged self is too often rendered not quite human and dangerous (Goffman, 1963), and that stigmatized self “may suffer from the imposition of a double, contradictory identity: ‘ . . . perceived as being sick, as suffering from an illness or a disease, but lacking willpower and self-will’ (Denzin, 1995, p. 3)” (Grant, 2010, p. 577). In the *Journal of Psychiatric and Mental Health Nursing*, Grant (2010) confronts this dual stigma in depth through an autoethnography based on his battle with alcoholism over two decades. His approach to autoethnography involves “literary devices, including poetry, [and] time changes to tell the story” of his lived experiences of feeling increasingly stigmatized and treated as other by members of what he calls “the humanistic counselling and therapy fraternity” (p. 377). In the end, Grant’s autoethnography provides insight into the development of selfhood in society, including the ways in which alcoholic selves can become stigmatized and “othered” (p. 377). Grant invites his readers to contribute toward ending “us–them” divisions. His concluding thoughts have a more specific message for the mental health nursing community that builds on his previous applications of the genre (e.g., Short, Grant, & Clarke, 2007) to decrease the mental health difficulties associated with alcoholism: “It would be of great historical significance if more mental health nurses, nurse therapists and mental health nurse academics engaged with autoethnographies of suffering or did autoethnographic work around their own mental health difficulties” (p. 582). Furthermore, Grant envisions a future of writing autoethnography in this field that “would contribute towards destigmatiz[ing] these difficulties and would document and communicate crucial experiences, including the firsthand experience of being on the receiving end of unsympathetic services” (582). A decade of evidence from Foster et al. (2006) and Grant (2010) to Sealy (2012) and Peterson (2015) suggests a future for autoethnography as an evolving, flexible, applicable, and yet rigorous ethnographic option for critical social researchers in the areas of physical and mental health and well-being.

Autoethnography in/as Coursework

Autoethnography in High School. Some promising advances in autoethnography coursework are emerging at the high school, undergraduate, and graduate levels. There seems to be a particularly astute move toward using autoethnography to teach critical literacy skills. Camangian (2010) uses autoethnography to teach critical literacy in an urban high school, which he calls SHS, in the Slauson District of South Los Angeles. SHS had highest Black student population (66.1%) in Los Angeles for a large, comprehensive campus. The 2005–2006 school year began with a series of gang-related shootings near SHS and the murder of a recent graduate, who was shot at point-blank range. SHS had a statewide academic ranking in the lowest percentile, and for six years in a row it did not meet the adequate yearly progress criteria required under the U.S. No Child Left Behind mandates. In fact, SHS lost its accreditation by the Pacific Union of Schools and Colleges, which led to more than 100 parents withdrawing more than 600 students from the school, yet little to no discussion occurred about this social context with the children until Camangian decided to bring autoethnography into his high school English course. The triumph is recorded in his article in the journal *Research in the Teaching of English*. Camangian (2010) explains that he found that autoethnography not only met the 11th- and 12th-grade English/Language Arts Learning Standards for the California State Board of Education, but it is also “increased students’ sense of self and positionality in the world, mediated differences, and fostered compassionate classroom community” (p. 187). In fact, “beginning the year with autoethnographies urged students to intellectually analyze their own perceptions and practices while the oral communication cultivated understanding across perceived differences” (p. 187).

Autoethnography at the Undergraduate Level. Jenn Stewart (2013), a visiting assistant professor of English at Indiana University–Purdue University Fort Wayne, provides another connection between autoethnography and literacy through her description of an undergraduate-level assignment for a course in digital literacies, available online (<http://www.scribd.com/doc/168753294/Literacy-Autoethnography>). The stated purpose of the digital literacies/autoethnography assignment is for students to (a) better understand how they might situate themselves within the context of digital literacies by producing a literacy autoethnography, (b) apply autoethnography as a way of systematically analyzing their use of digital tools, or how these tools manifest in their everyday lives, and (c) connect the data collected via autoethnography to their existing beliefs about digital literacy, with a specific focus on the question “Do your findings challenge, reinforce, or confound your assumptions?”

Another promising application of autoethnography in the undergraduate classroom is highlighted by Shudak (2015). South Dakota Indian Studies is one of two courses required by the state of South Dakota as part of the qualifications for teacher

Autoethnography and Coursework

Autoethnographers are bringing ideas of understanding and enhancing educational contexts to courses at the high school and university levels in order to address critical issues.

certification. While indigenous students constitute 10% of the state's population and a noticeable presence in each school district, 95% of the teachers are White, with cultural worldviews that tend to produce an identifiable mismatch. To address this cultural mismatch, the Oceti Sakowin developed a standards report for the purposes of intervention and prevention of any dire consequences for indigenous students. Shudak notes that the use of the name Oceti Sakowin is a critical conscientious "departure from the historically pejorative term *Sioux*, an English adaptation of a French corruption of an Ojibwa term . . . , which essentially means little snakes, devils, or demons" (p. 86). In conjunction with the Oceti Sakowin standards, as of 2012, all candidates who want to teach in South Dakota must show transcripts proving that they have taken an approved Indian studies course. Shudak engaged autoethnography and found it to be a useful tool for White undergraduate preservice teachers seeking to inquire into culture through resonances (similar to critical incidents, resonances are resounding differences and similarities that must be unveiled if harmonious, nondominant intercultural relations are to form and be sustained). Autoethnography was applied as a method of inquiry for Shudak's students, with the goal of finding concepts rooted in their cultures in order to find resonances with concepts rooted in the Oceti Sakowin culture. The students reached that goal and began to understand the "other" and the "self" in deep, powerful, and profound ways. Three "autoethnographically rooted" assignments were integral to achieving this goal: (a) Re-Presentation of the Self, (b) Re-Presentation of the Other, and (c) 5 Things. Shudak's student prompts for the first two of these assignments are presented below, followed by his description of the third.

RE-PRESENTATION OF THE SELF

Prompt 1: An understanding of autoethnography is that it is a type of study and writing that inquires into the self as the self is part of a larger context. In a few sentences, begin to re-present to yourself what you think is the larger context that encapsulates the individual self. What is in this context? What does it look/feel like? Who's there? What's there? Of course you can't add everything. I'd like you to limit yourself to about 150 words. Please be more matter of fact and descriptive than creative with your writing.

Prompt 2: Re-read your response to the first prompt. In terms of a larger context, what did you leave out and why?

Prompt 3: Prompt 1 asked you to focus on a larger encapsulating social context. For this prompt, focus on the self more narrowly. What do you think represents you as a self? There might be some overlap with the first prompt.

Prompt 4: How might your responses to prompts 1 and 3 sound differently would you have done this assignment five years ago? Why?

[Shudak, 2015, p. 93]

RE-PRESENTATION OF THE OTHER

Prompt 1: The first assignment asked you to think about your larger context as a way of helping you think about what makes you, you. This assignment asks you to identify what makes the Oceti Sakowin who they are. Identify 3 specific cultural “things” from the readings that you think re-present the Oceti Sakowin. Follow the example: Colors are extremely important to this group of people. There are four that stand out. Black is a representation of the West, where the Thunder beings and weather come from; White is a representation of the North, where the cold white winds come from; Red represents the East, the place of the rising star; and, Yellow is a representation of the South, where the summer and power to grow come from.

Prompt 2: This prompt asks you to dig deeply within to figure out why you chose those cultural concepts or “things” found in prompt 1. Write a couple sentences defending your choice, but defending it in a way that indicates how your chosen concepts “resonate” with you. Follow the example: In Catholicism, colors are quite meaningful to the mass, such that the altar is at times adorned with different colors during the different times of the liturgical calendar coinciding with certain celebrations. A few examples follow. White is used during Christmas and Easter and during feasts and ceremonies like nuptial ceremonies. It means light, innocence, purity, triumph, and glory. Red is used for the Lord’s Passion, Palm Sunday, and Pentecost. It means the Passion, blood, fire, martyrdom, and God’s love. Black is used on All Souls Day, for the dead, and for mourning in general. Black means mourning and sorrow. Though there are a few others, the ones above are in resonance with the Lakota concepts from prompt 1, and resonate with me personally.

(Shudak, 2015, p. 94)

5 THINGS

The third assignment . . . gives meaning to the other two assignments. This assignment is generally sandwiched between the previous two and is an accompaniment to several different kinds of readings and sources. . . .

. . . Each student is required to identify five “things” from the reading she/he thought was quite interesting. . . . Some of those “things” [are to] be explicitly cultural, but they can also be a point made by an author or a turn of phrase that caught [the student’s] attention. Not only are the students to identify a “thing,” they are to respond to that “thing.” . . . Each response [should] be an explanation of why the identified “thing” was interesting, or, it can literally be a response, visceral, intellectual, or otherwise, to something in the text. . . . [This assignment] is a quick and simple way to get the students interacting with the texts, leads to quite a bit of discussion, and, when the assignment occurs later in the semester, resonance seems to be a natural outgrowth.

(Shudak, 2015, pp. 94–95)

Mini-Autoethnography at the Undergraduate Level. One of Hughes's own undergraduate courses, titled Cultural Competence, Leadership and You, includes what he calls a mini-autoethnography. This course, which is offered to undergraduate education minors at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, has the goal of students becoming leaders who understand that transformative leadership begins with critical self-reflection. The work is referred to as a mini-autoethnography because it involves all of the previously detailed elements of autoethnography, except that the depth of writing required is about one-third of what would be expected of a typical published autoethnography. While the course is not required for education minors, it tends to fill up rather quickly with 30 students, largely because it is open to all undergraduate students and it counts as an elective for global studies and social and behavioral sciences. Students in the course also conduct oral history interviews with leaders of campus organizations that were founded historically by students from marginalized and underrepresented populations. Due to the sensitive nature of racial, ethnic, and cultural relations on campus, students are nudged to take the autoethnography very seriously. The evidence of the gravity of this assignment is that it serves as the midterm examination for students in the course. Coincidentally, prompts similar to those used in Shudak's (2015) assignments presented above are integral to the course, as are opportunities for students to read the mini-autoethnographies of previous students who earned exemplary midterm scores (with written permission from the students whose mini-autoethnographies are shared). Samples of exemplary work from the mini-ethnography assignment are available in Appendix B.

In another capacity, Hughes spent two summers teaching autoethnography to undergraduate students in a 10-week intensive program called the Moore Undergraduate Research Apprenticeship Program (MURAP) at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC). The UNC-MURAP students are, quite simply, driven and brilliant, and Hughes often found that they taught him more about autoethnography as a process, product, and possibility than he was teaching them. MURAP is designed primarily to recruit and mentor top-notch undergraduates of color from throughout the United States to pursue doctoral degrees. Much like Camangian (2010), Stewart (2013), and Shudak (2015), Hughes found autoethnography to be an accessible and educative form of critical social research for these students, enabling them to challenge their own taken-for-granted knowledge and complicity and to seek renewal by analyzing their own perceptions and practices. In fact, Hughes recently recruited and funded one of his former MURAP apprentices to pursue her doctoral work with him at UNC beginning in the fall semester of 2015.

Autoethnography at the Doctoral Level. Students in Hughes's doctoral-level autoethnography course practice thinking of autoethnography as described in Chapter 3. It is both process and product, both art and science, a reflexive research practice that uses the lens of the self (auto) to study, represent, and write (graphy) about people in relation to cultural groups/contexts (ethno). This course also introduces doctoral students to the methodological and theoretical roots of autoethnography, and then guides them in becoming autoethnographic researchers. (See Appendix D for

a sample syllabus and review Chapter 3 for an example of doctoral student autoethnography work.) It focuses on both the theory and the practice of autoethnography, or “reading” significant patterns in everyday experience and connecting those patterns to the self and to broader social concerns. At the end of the course, students are expected to be able to do the following:

- Summarize the emergence of autoethnography from its epistemological and methodological roots.
- Critically analyze contemporary examples of autoethnography.
- Evaluate the scholarly and artistic merits of autoethnographic writing.
- Conduct autoethnographic data collection via the principles of assemblage.
- Write an autoethnographic manuscript draft for conference and/or journal submissions.

Because it would be impossible to teach everything about the theoretical underpinnings and method of autoethnography before having students start their own independent research, most of the semester involves a combination of reading models of autoethnography, reading the few existing methodological “how-to” works, doing writing exercises, and creating independent autoethnographic projects. The growth of autoethnography coursework nationally and internationally at the high school, undergraduate, and graduate levels provides a refreshing glimpse of the future, if these students continue to add autoethnography to their critical social research repertoires.

Skepticism About and Criticism of Autoethnography

Although autoethnography continues to grow in critical social research, skepticism still looms among some qualitative scholars who seemingly view themselves as guardians of the ethnographic tradition. Some of these scholars argue that autoethnography should assume a more traditional qualitative direction. Others scoff at the notion of autoethnography as an empirical research endeavor to be pursued in the future. As discussed in Chapter 1, qualitative scholars in the former group call for the removal of all autoethnography from the lexicons of critical social research (e.g., Delamont, 2009). Those in the latter group call for the removal only of evocative autoethnography, the style made popular by Carolyn Ellis, in favor of analytic autoethnography (e.g., Anderson, 2006; Walford, 2009). Their argument and scholarship restricts the application of autoethnography as part of a larger empirical endeavor by endorsing its usage only on some occasions and under limited conditions in the form that Leon Anderson (2006) introduced as analytic autoethnography in the *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*.

Walford (2009) and Anderson (2006) intend to protect and preserve the future integrity of ethnography by applying autoethnography through a traditional realist empirical lens that critiques the deliberately evocative and performative applications of autoethnography toward change (Ellis, Adams, & Bochner, 2011) or social justice (Denzin, 2014). Tradition calls for attempts to reduce ambiguity and to exhibit precision

in ways that seem to escape much of the autoethnographic work critiqued by opponents of the genre. Still, there is a glimmer of hope among the detractors who uplift the autoethnography work of Chang (2008) as a model for the type of autoethnography that is worthy of association with traditional ethnography. In support of the return of the “simple empiricist,” Walford (2009) concedes that storytelling (as applied in autoethnography) is “central to educational ethnography” but asserts that autoethnographers often forget “that the traditional purpose has been to communicate something about others” (p. 280). His acceptance of Chang (2008) is rooted in his interpretation of her work as being restricted to a form of autoethnography that “shares the storytelling features with other genres of self-narrative but transcends mere narration of self to engage in cultural analysis and interpretation” (p. 43). In addition, Walford appreciates that Chang conceptualizes autoethnography as being centrally focused on the concerns of anthropology and argues that it should not be seen as a form of therapy. He notes that 4 out of 10 chapters in Chang’s 2008 book are devoted to generating autoethnographic data, starting with the importance of the research focus, then going through personal memory data, self-observation, self-reflective data, and external data (p. 279).

Similar to Walford (2009), Anderson (2006) seeks to legitimize autoethnography by embedding it in realist ontology, symbolic interactionist epistemology, and traditional ethnographic qualitative research. He complicates the notion that empirical evidence can be gathered from evocative autoethnography. For Anderson, only analytic (not evocative) social science research methodology can elicit the type of empirical evidence (or data) that will withstand the tradition of rigor and scrutiny in the academy. He states his hope for the future of autoethnography quite clearly in his concluding thoughts: “[I] hope that other scholars will join me in reclaiming and refining autoethnography as part of the analytic ethnographic tradition” (p. 392). In sum, the scholarship of Delamont (2009), Walford (2009), and Anderson (2006) provides arguments either to remove or to begin reclaiming particularities of autoethnography as an empirical endeavor due to what the authors interpret as epistemological gaps. With pressure from such traditional scholars who have strong international reputations and voices among qualitative methodologists, one can logically surmise that any academic move that autoethnographers make (particularly more evocative autoethnographers) can be perceived as a move with a palpable risk of failure. Yet, the robust evidence we have presented suggests that it is crucial for autoethnographers (evocative, analytic, and everywhere in between) to continue taking that risk in the future to write and disseminate their scholarship if we are all to reap the benefits of the important contributions to critical social research that have been illustrated throughout this textbook.

Taking Healthy Risks: Growth in Autoethnographic Dissertations

University scholars and doctoral students are taking healthy risks with qualitative research and writing in critical social research (Lichtman, 2013, p. 310). One sign of this healthy risk taking is the increase in the numbers of doctoral students willing

to write, doctoral advisers willing to advise, and department chairs and university leaders willing to support autoethnographic dissertations. For more than a decade, we have witnessed an increase not only in dissertations that engage autoethnography as a method, tool, or technique within a larger qualitative methodology but also in dissertations that apply autoethnography as the central methodology. For example, as early as August 2003, the Department of Curriculum and Instruction at Louisiana State University approved the dissertation of Pamela K. Autrey, titled *The Trouble with Girls: Autoethnography and the Classroom*. Autrey (2003) states that she engaged autoethnography to study her “experience as girl and woman, student and teacher, in elementary and middle schools and how these informed my pedagogical practices and knowledge as an elementary school teacher” (p. v). One year later, John T. Patten’s dissertation, *Navigating Unfamiliar Territory: Autoethnography of a First-Year Elementary School Principal* (2004), was approved by a team of scholars at the University of Utah–Salt Lake City. In 2005, the dissertation of Carl Dethloff, titled *A Principal in Transition: An Autoethnography*, was approved at Texas A&M University. Dethloff (2005) seems particularly impressed with how “the introspection and evaluation provided by the methodology of autoethnography greatly facilitates an understanding of the processes of transition” (p. iii). Ideally, future autoethnographic dissertations will continue to convey critical reflexive accounts of some of the salient encounters, interactions, events, and episodes from the lives of the authors and how those experiences shape and are shaped by the researchers’ goals for improving theory, practice, and policy.

Over the course of more than a decade as a tenure-track professor at three research universities, Hughes has served as adviser on a handful of dissertations that have used autoethnography as a method or tool, but only one student has passed the dissertation proposal defense stage with autoethnography at the center of the work: Susan Schatz. A doctoral candidate from Gallaudet University, Schatz (2014) is currently conducting an autoethnographic study that focuses on the change processes that she experiences as she works with a classroom teacher to facilitate the adoption and implementation of a schoolwide reform strategy called *close and critical reading*. This dissertation research is groundbreaking in that autoethnography also allows Schatz to take a critical reflexive look at how being a member of the deaf community influences her positionality, leadership, and biases as well as classroom teachers’ responses to her.

Autoethnographic dissertations are available online. Typically a Google search using the keywords “autoethnography” and “dissertation” will return a number of choices to consider. If you are a university scholar or student trying to make an argument for pursuing autoethnography because your university has yet to consider and/or approve an autoethnographic dissertation, then you definitely want to locate those dissertations that have passed from either peer or aspiring peer institutions of higher education.

Determining “Good Enough” Autoethnography

Back in 2008, Hughes pursued the question of determining “good enough” methods for autoethnography as an alternative approach to dilemmas of legitimacy facing

the genre (Hughes, 2008c). Drawing on previous inquiry regarding ethnography by Harvard University's Wendy Luttrell (2000), he began to conceptualize good enough methods for autoethnography researchers as being rooted not in mediocrity but in sincere efforts to understand and appreciate difference and accept errors often made because of scholars' blind spots and intense involvement in their fields and in the worlds of social justice, diversity, equity, difference, and resistance. Hughes gathered evidence via autoethnography from cases of his former graduate student practitioners in a course titled Intergroup/Intercultural Education. Moreover, that article added some insight into (a) a connection of autoethnography to research in education, (b) key decisions of a good enough methods approach to autoethnography (redeveloped as five key ideas of autoethnography, or CREPES, as noted in Chapter 1), and (c) how this approach can be applied to expose and address educator biases (Hughes, 2008c). As university scholars and students continue to grapple with legitimizing autoethnographic research, we anticipate that the traditionalists and the postmodernists will continue to move in opposition to what is "good enough" autoethnography.

The future of critical social research may simply follow the trends that are currently opening local, state, and federal funding coffers: causality-driven, evidence-based, traditional validity/reliability-based, replicable studies with interventions that can be scaled up. If that is the case, evocative and analytic autoethnographers would be wise to discuss the practices with the most promise to help legitimize this genre. As mentioned previously, some scholars argue that autoethnography should *not* be considered in light of traditional criteria. Others rely on the validity and reliability argument and compartmentalize autoethnography in the self-study box of qualitative possibilities. Some scholars focus on the construction of autoethnography when applied as self-study as the key to reputable autoethnographic research (Feldman, 2003), rather than the post hoc evaluation of autoethnography proposed by scholars like Hughes, Pennington, and Makris (2012). Moreover, other scholars seem to apply both constructive approaches and evaluative approaches to the validity and reliability of qualitative studies (Holt, 2003, p. 12). For an example of the former, one might consider the work of Feldman (2003), who has developed four criteria on which autoethnographic data collection could be based:

1. Provide clear and detailed description of how we collect data and make explicit what counts as data in our work.
2. Provide clear and detailed descriptions of how we constructed the representation from our data. What specifics about the data led us to make this assumption?
3. Extend triangulation beyond multiple sources of data to include explorations of multiple ways to represent the same self-study.
4. Provide evidence that the research changed or evolved the educator and summarize its value to the profession. This can convince readers of the study's significance and validity. (pp. 27–28)

For an example of the latter (also mentioned earlier in this book), Richardson (2000) doesn't center self-study per se, but instead centers the notion of personal narrative. She then compels readers to begin reviewing personal narrative with at least five criteria and related questions:

1. *Substantive contribution.* Does the piece contribute to our understanding of social life?
2. *Aesthetic merit.* Does this piece succeed aesthetically? Is the text artistically shaped, satisfying, complex, and not boring?
3. *Reflexivity.* How did the author come to write this text? How has the author's subjectivity been both a producer and a product of this text?
4. *Impactfulness.* Does this affect me emotionally and/or intellectually? Does it generate new questions or move me to action?
5. *Expresses a reality.* Does this text embody a fleshed out sense of lived experience? (pp. 15–16)

In addition, autoethnographic manuscripts might include dramatic recall, unusual phrasing, and strong metaphors to invite the reader to “relive” events with the author (Richardson, 2000, pp. 15–16). Although Richardson's criteria and related questions may provide a framework for directing investigators and reviewers, relatively few of them will be familiar with such criteria. Holt (2003) was among the first to use autoethnography to describe how his autoethnography was not accepted by journal editors and reviewers several times before finding a reputable home at the *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*. While laments such as Holt's are still present more than a decade later, as mentioned above, recent years have seen increasing acceptance of both constructive and evaluative tools to assess autoethnography and greater access for autoethnography scholars and scholarship. This increase in acceptance and access, particularly via the Internet, social media, and Web 2.0, brings with it an ethical responsibility on the part of researchers to find reputable journals, books, and associations when they are considering online options for disseminating their autoethnographic work.

The Internet and Other Technologies: Greater Access and Responsibility

Autoethnographic writing, performances, presentations, and professional development at major academic research associations continue to increase with the use of the Internet and social media to disseminate researchers' work. From Twitter, wikis, Facebook, instant messaging, and blogs to iPhones, iPads, e-mail, Listservs, online journals, Wikipedia, and vlogs, autoethnographers are constantly posting new forms and possibilities for the genre.

Autoethnography's relationship with social media influences can be considered both positive and negative. On the positive side, the Internet may offer an avenue for developing autoethnographic narratives via blogs, wikis, Twitter, and so on. In addition to the Internet and social media, new tools have become available for transcribing data and for data analysis. Digital recorders have improved researchers' ability to record conversations, and software such as DragonDictate and Transana can be used for transcription assistance. For analyzing data, there are many computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software (or CAQDAS) products available, including MAXQDA, NVivo, and ATLAS.ti. With such access to the Internet and emergent technologies, autoethnographic researchers also have a great responsibility to take care in how they use these tools.

On the negative tip, the Internet is full of traps—articles that haven't been vetted, false claims, web addresses that are no longer active, and so on—so it is wise to stick to reading dissertations and academic journal articles that adhere to the blind peer-review process. Even with its growing reputation for reliability, Wikipedia, the largest online free encyclopedia, is susceptible to fraud and misinformation. We try to stay current by attending conferences, attending meetings within conferences, and teaching a biannual professional development course in autoethnography for the American Educational Research Association. Moreover, listening to NPR on the commute to and from work provides some needed intellectual stimulation. Still, we are finding after a decade of autoethnography in our lives, and more than three decades of technology in our lives, that we are learning the most about media missteps, miscalculations, and blind spots at the intersection of autoethnography and technology from our students. It was during a critical literature review conducted in a doctoral-level autoethnography course that Hughes once taught at the University of Maryland at College Park (where he worked from 2007 to 2012) that he began identifying additional gaps in autoethnography research—gaps to be addressed for the future of the genre.

Addressing Gaps in Autoethnography for the Future of the Genre

Gaps in Epistemology

Addressing epistemology will be important for the future of autoethnography as critical social research. Studies utilizing autoethnography that are situated within the larger paradigmatic interpretive frames associated with qualitative work represent the ways in which autoethnography is centered on the self, beyond relying on particular data sets. While many qualitative methods, as represented in studies, are not necessarily explicitly bound within paradigmatic frames, autoethnographic work is a dramatic departure from positivist stances as well as most other interpretive frames, such as postpositivism, constructivism, critical theory, and cultural studies. Therefore, failing

to convey a clear foundation for autoethnographic study can leave studies open to misunderstandings and misguided critiques. Positioning autoethnographic inquiries as simplistic opportunities to examine the self can lead to questions regarding how such studies contribute to existing work. Tour (2012) offers some promise toward filling this gap as she clearly elucidates her understandings of the nature, status, and production of knowledge. Moreover, she is clear and transparent about her epistemological link to autoethnography, stating, "I discuss the value of autoethnography in the form of a personal narrative in providing an opportunity for reflection on research practice, which may facilitate the development of researchers' professional knowledge" (p. 72).

Gaps in Clarity and Transparency

Addressing gaps in clarity and transparency will also be important for the future of autoethnography as critical social research. Many of the articles referenced in this book name the works as autoethnographies, but beyond the initial statement, they

offer little to no evidence of further connection between the methodology and the remainder of the studies. Some authors have written self-studies or action research pieces and linked those to autoethnography, presumably because of the inclusion of "self" in their work, but have not included other aspects of autoethnography. Some of the authors of reviewed articles have used autoethnography as a broad methodology and connected it to their research methods, such as narratives, self-study, or action research. For example, Tsumagari (2010) clearly delineates the research methods used, describing "a qualitative research design that consisted of an interpretive phenomenological analysis of an autoethnography"

(p. 294) and a "relational cultural theory framework" (p. 295). Tour (2012) clearly defines autoethnography as the "underlying research method," but she writes in narrative form, bridging the two in order to "construct a critical understanding of the self in relation to research" (p. 71). She also elaborates on the reasons she found using autoethnography in conjunction with narrative form to be the most appropriate approach for her study.

On the other hand, Sander and Williamson (2010) mention autoethnographic methods in their abstract, citing Sparkes (2007), yet the methods they used are not mentioned. The article is a first-person narrative and a dialogue between the two authors, with no research methodology described in the body of the article. These examples illustrate the differences between using autoethnography as a methodology and using it as a method. The gaps in the representations of autoethnography are wide. Yet we do not advocate for prescribing or constraining the presentations of autoethnography. Autoethnography at this point in time resides within the qualitative tradition and is interpretive and subject to wide ranges of expression and methods.

Gaps in Autoethnography

Some autoethnographic work seeks to clarify autoethnography's role in qualitative research relative to the following gaps:

- Epistemology
 - Clarity and transparency
 - Evaluation
-
-

Gaps in Evaluation

Addressing gaps in evaluation is another important consideration for the future of autoethnography as critical social research. If autoethnography is to be applied as empirical research, logic dictates that it must also be valued as a research method(ology) that provides beneficial insight, particularly in the field of education. Evaluation and publication of autoethnography are integral to the genre's longevity and utility both within and outside the academy. Yet evidence from this review suggests a key gap in the literature on evaluation and publication of autoethnography that, if left unaddressed, could undermine the legitimacy of autoethnography as an empirical endeavor. Based on the wide range of published autoethnographies reviewed here, we find a problematic lack of consistency in the evaluation of autoethnography-based articles for publication. A small number of the articles clearly define autoethnography and link it to the theory and methods used in the studies (Hermann-Wilmarth & Bills, 2010; Tour, 2012; Tsumagari, 2010), while many others either loosely connect autoethnography to the studies or merely define autoethnography without connecting it to the remainder of the articles. In order for more top-tier journals to seriously consider autoethnographic pieces for publication, a clear and consistent standard for quality autoethnographies need to be prevalent.

Challenging and Promising Signs for Addressing the Gaps

During the literature search that contributed to this textbook, we located some autoethnography articles that provide a glimpse of the future of autoethnography that bridges the research gaps of the past. For example, Hermann-Wilmarth and Bills (2010) address each of the widespread gaps discussed above. These authors clearly define autoethnography, citing Reed-Danahay (1997) and Ellis and Bochner (2000), and connect it throughout the article to queer theory, which they utilized in their research study. Hermann-Wilmarth and Bills used autoethnography as both a methodology and a method, and "as an analytical tool [that] became the only way that we could make sense of the work we were doing" (p. 261). They addressed ethical considerations in protecting the identities of the preservice teachers who served as participants in the study, as well as in recognizing their own stance as researchers. Because the authors were working with a group of individuals whose safety could be compromised if their identities were revealed, they found further ethical considerations necessary, and they note that the extra level of protection "required innovation, forethought, and carefulness" (p. 263). Finally, Hermann-Wilmarth and Bills produced a well-written research article with research methods and analysis clearly defined. The study is carefully outlined, and autoethnography is brought back to the reader throughout the article, as the authors continuously explain their reasons for shifts in methods or analysis as related to autoethnography.

Autoethnography provides opportunities for close examination, understanding, and dissemination of the inner world of those engaged in critical social inquiry. The articles reviewed here describe the myriad ways that autoethnographers go

about collecting, analyzing, and reporting educational self-study data. Fewer of the articles describe the epistemological and methodological processes involved in autoethnography. For the sake of the future of autoethnography, authors of the genre would be remiss to dismiss the history of legitimizing autoethnography in the academy, including recent efforts to name its “realist” and “empirical” possibilities.

The analysis of the observed articles that contributed to this textbook in one way or another reveals some of the ethical and political elements that have surrounded autoethnography since its initial growth in our field (1990 to the present). The analysis highlights some of the major critiques of autoethnography with regard to relational ethics, legitimacy, rigor, and utility. In addition, this chapter unveils how some authors are working toward problematizing the narcissistic “self” in relation to cultural “others” when attempting to apply autoethnography to social contexts of epiphany, salient encounters, episodes, and other events that influence, challenge, inform, and even transform lived experiences of teaching, learning, schooling, and education.

Through the process of writing this textbook, we found gaps in critical social research that offers tools and techniques for engaging or doing a sound, ethical social science version of autoethnography for publication. Moreover, there is a paucity of research on the criteria that students, reviewers, editors, and authors might use to judge the merit and worth of autoethnographic manuscripts. There is a need for more autoethnographic work that delves into the challenging and yet promising work of detailing the processes of narrative synthesis and crystallization techniques. The American Educational Research Association’s call for transparency and clarity in quantitative and qualitative methods is certainly applicable to improving the prospects for the future of the social science form of autoethnography that is highlighted in this review.

Although much of the autoethnographic scholarship discussed in this book treats the explanation of the method and methodology of autoethnography as an ancillary topic, the imagined futures of the genre will include such explanations, albeit in a succinct manner—and such futures are imagined. The imagined futures of autoethnography in critical social research offer more expansive descriptive sections of “how-I” do autoethnography, as opposed to simplistic, stepwise prescriptions for “how-to” do autoethnography. Such sections could be both conceptual and practical as they focus on autoethnography as process and product through the framework of elements that animate the genre (i.e., legitimizing, problematizing, and synthesizing). Despite these recognized challenges and critiques, and those yet to be imagined, and despite the gaps in autoethnography research that have yet to be addressed adequately, the evidence of this book suggests that autoethnography is firmly in place in the academy. Perhaps no sign of this is greater than the increasing acceptance of autoethnography scholarship by highly selective journals of critical social research—the *crème de la crème* of the academy.

Publishing Autoethnography: Journals and Academic Publishers

We want to call your attention to the following highly selective academic journals and publishers of critical social research that publish autoethnography. These academic journals are labeled as “highly selective” due to their adherence to the blind peer-review process, their Thomson Reuters and SCImago Journal Rank impact factors, and their article acceptance rates, which are less than 25% according to *Cabell's Directory*, which is available through many, if not most, university libraries worldwide (in both print and electronic formats). While many other journals publish articles that apply autoethnography as a method, those listed below have known impact that relates to higher circulation and greater likelihood that the articles will be read by international interdisciplinary audiences. Many highly selective journals that adhere to the blind peer-review process also publish autoethnography as critical social research. Cognizant of Holt's (2003) admonition for the future of autoethnography, most of the journals publish both quantitative and qualitative research. Why Holt? Because he makes the following key statement:

If autoethnographies are only submitted to purely qualitative journals then autoethnographic writers may be reinforcing the dominant practices of verification that emerged here. If autoethnography is to be justified as proper research then publication in broad “mainstream” journals (i.e., that publish qualitative *and* quantitative research) is a necessary step. (p. 18)

Highly Selective Peer-Reviewed Journals

Some brief introductory information about the aims and scope of each journal is presented below. More detailed descriptions of all these journals are available at the web addresses provided and links therein. The journals are listed here in alphabetical order.

- *Anthropology & Education Quarterly* (<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com>): Draws on anthropological theories and methods to examine educational processes in and out of schools, in U.S. and international contexts. Articles rely primarily on ethnographic research to address immediate problems of practice as well as broad theoretical questions.
- *Educational Studies*, journal of the American Educational Studies Association (<http://www.tandfonline.com>): Invites submissions relevant to the association and the disciplines of social and educational foundations. Provides a cross-disciplinary forum for the exchange and debate of ideas generated from the disciplines of anthropology, economics, history, philosophy, politics, and sociology of education, as well as race/ethnic, gender, queer, cultural, comparative, and transnational studies.

- *Education and Urban Society* (<http://online.sagepub.com>): Multidisciplinary journal examines the role of education as a social institution in an increasingly urban and multicultural society. Publishes articles exploring the functions of educational institutions, policies, and processes in light of national concerns for improving the environment of urban schools that seek to provide equal educational opportunities for all students.
- *Equity & Excellence in Education* (<http://www.tandfonline.com>): Publishes articles based on scholarly research utilizing qualitative or quantitative methods, as well as essays that describe and assess practical efforts to achieve educational equity and are contextualized within an appropriate literature review. Considers manuscripts on a range of topics related to equity, equality, and social justice in K-12 or postsecondary schooling, and that focus on social justice issues in school systems, individual schools, and classrooms.
- *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung/Forum: Qualitative Social Research* (<http://www.qualitative-research.net>): Multilingual open-access journal publishes empirical studies conducted using qualitative methods and contributions that deal with the theory, methodology, and application of qualitative research. Innovative ways of thinking, writing, researching and presenting are especially welcome.
- *Harvard Educational Review* (<http://hepg.org>): Committed to featuring the voices of people engaged in various educational activities around the world. Welcomes reflective pieces written by students, teachers, parents, community members, and others involved in education whose perspectives can inform policy, practice, and/or research.
- *International Journal of Mental Health Nursing*, journal of the Australian College of Mental Health Nurses (<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com>): Examines current trends and developments in mental health practice and research. Provides a forum for the exchange of ideas on all issues relevant to mental health nursing, including directions in education and training, management approaches, policy, ethical questions, theoretical inquiry, and clinical concerns.
- *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, journal of the International Institute for Qualitative Methodology, University of Alberta, Canada (<http://online.sagepub.com>): Eclectic and international forum for papers reporting original methodological insights, study design innovations, and funded-project proposals using qualitative or mixed methods research that are useful to the global research community.
- *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education* (<http://www.tandfonline.com>): Publishes empirical research employing a variety of qualitative methods and approaches, such as ethnographic observation and interviewing, grounded theory, life history, case study, curriculum criticism, policy studies, narrative, ethnomethodology, social and educational critique, phenomenology, deconstruction, genealogy, and autoethnography. Encourages innovative and provocative approaches to qualitative research as well as the ways research is reported.
- *Journal of Advanced Nursing* (<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com>): Targets readers who are committed to advancing practice and professional development on the basis of new knowledge and evidence. Contributes to the advancement of evidence-based

nursing, midwifery, and health care by disseminating high-quality research and scholarship of contemporary relevance and with potential to advance knowledge for practice, education, management, or policy.

- *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography* (<http://online.sagepub.com>): International and interdisciplinary forum for research using ethnographic methods to examine human behavior in natural settings. Publishes material that examines a broad spectrum of social interactions and practices—in subcultures, cultures, organizations, and societies—from a variety of academic disciplines, including anthropology, communications, criminal justice, education, health studies, management, marketing, and sociology.
- *Journal of Latinos and Education* (<http://www.tandfonline.com>): Provides a cross-, multi-, and interdisciplinary forum for scholars and writers from diverse disciplines who share a common interest in the analysis, discussion, critique, and dissemination of educational issues that affect Latinos. Encourages novel ways of thinking about the ongoing and emerging questions around the unifying thread of Latinos and education.
- *Journal of Psychiatric and Mental Health Nursing* (<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com>): Publishes research and scholarly papers that advance the development of policy, practice, research, and education in all aspects of mental health nursing. Considers rigorously conducted research, literature reviews, essays and debates, and consumer practitioner narratives.
- *Journal of Research in International Education* (<http://online.sagepub.com>): Seeks to advance the understanding and significance of international education for schools, examiners, and higher-education institutions around the world. Undertakes a rigorous consideration of the educational implications of the fundamental relationship between human unity and human diversity.
- *Journal of Research in Nursing* (<http://online.sagepub.com>): Seeks to blend good research with contemporary debates about policy and practice. Contributes knowledge to nursing practice, nursing research, and local, national, and international health and social care policy.
- *Qualitative Health Research* (<http://online.sagepub.com>): Provides an international, interdisciplinary forum to enhance health care and further the development and understanding of qualitative research in health care settings.
- *Qualitative Inquiry* (<http://online.sagepub.com>): Provides an interdisciplinary forum for qualitative methodology and related issues in the human sciences. Publishes research articles that experiment with manuscript form and content, focusing on methodological issues raised by qualitative research rather than the content or results of the research.
- *Qualitative Report* (<http://nsuworks.nova.edu>): Oldest multidisciplinary qualitative research journal in the world, devoted to writing and discussion of and about qualitative, critical, action, and collaborative inquiry and research. Serves as a forum and sounding board for researchers, scholars, practitioners, and other reflective-minded individuals who are passionate about ideas, methods, and analyses permeating qualitative, action, collaborative, and critical study.

- *Qualitative Research* (<http://online.sagepub.com>): Publishes original research and review articles on the methodological diversity and multidisciplinary focus of qualitative research. Accepts global contributions from within sociology, social anthropology, health and nursing, education, human geography, social and discursive psychology, and discourse studies.
- *Race Ethnicity and Education* (<http://www.tandfonline.com>): Provides a focal point for international scholarship, research, and debate on racism and race inequality in education. Publishes original and challenging research that explores the dynamics of race, racism, and ethnicity in education policy, theory, and practice.
- *Research in the Teaching of English*, journal of the National Council of Teachers of English (<http://www.ncte.org>): Multidisciplinary journal publishes original research articles and short scholarly essays on a wide range of topics significant to those concerned with the teaching and learning of languages and literacies around the world, both in and beyond schools and universities.
- *Substance Use & Misuse* (<http://www.tandfonline.com>): Provides a unique international multidisciplinary venue for the exchange of research, theories, viewpoints, and unresolved issues concerning substance use and misuse (licit and illicit drugs, alcohol, nicotine, caffeine and eating disorders). Features original articles, notes, and book reviews, as well as proceedings and symposia that describe and analyze the latest research and information on clinical prevention, training, law enforcement, and policy efforts.
- *Teachers College Record* (<http://www.tcrecord.org>): Publishes a variety of scholarly materials in all areas of the fields of education and educational research. All topics related to the field of education broadly conceived are welcomed.
- *Urban Review* (<http://www.springer.com>): Provides a forum for the presentation of original investigations, reviews, and essays examining the issues basic to the improvement of urban schooling and education. Publishes empirical, interpretive, and critical research studies, as well as theoretical analyses of schooling and education in the contemporary urban setting and reports of original investigations.

Academic Publishers

Some introductory information about the aims and scope of each of these academic publishers is presented below. More detailed descriptions are available at the web addresses provided and links therein. The publishers are listed here in alphabetical order.

- *AltaMira Press (Rowman & Littlefield)* (<https://rowman.com>): Produces high-quality, peer-reviewed scholarly titles by both established and emerging scholars, making a significant contribution to the scholarship in the humanities and social sciences.
- *Information Age Publishers* (<http://www.infoagepub.com>): Publishes academic and scholarly book series, monographs, handbooks, encyclopedias, and journals in the social sciences. Seeks to develop a comprehensive collection of materials that break

down and define specific niches that lack high-level research material in the fields of education, psychology, management, leadership, educational technology, mathematics, and Black studies.

- *Left Coast Press (Routledge)* (<https://www.routledge.com>): Global publisher of academic books, journals, and online resources in the humanities and social sciences. Current publishing program encompasses groundbreaking textbooks and premier, peer-reviewed research in the social sciences, humanities, built environment, education, and behavioral sciences.
- *Palgrave Macmillan* (<http://www.palgrave.com>): Publishes award-winning research that changes the world across the humanities, social sciences, and business for academics, professionals and librarians. Offers authors and readers the very best in academic content while also supporting the community with innovative new formats and tools.
- *Peter Lang Publishers* (<http://www.peterlang.com>): Specializes in the social sciences and humanities and covers the complete spectrum from monographs to student textbooks. Covers the complete range of topics in the social sciences and humanities, including cultural studies, fine arts, religion, sociology, psychology, gender studies, and Black diversity studies.
- *SAGE Publications* (<https://us.sagepub.com>): Independent international publisher of journals, books, and electronic media is the academic and professional publisher of choice. Known for commitment to quality and innovation, a world leader in scholarly, educational, and professional markets.
- *Sense Publishers* (<https://www.sensepublishers.com>): Fastest-growing publisher of books in educational research and related fields. With offices in Rotterdam, Boston, and Taipei, brings a true global perspective to its publishing efforts.

In the real world of academic publishing, autoethnographers seeking promotion and tenure would do well to select from among the journals and publishers above when looking for potential homes for their research. It has been difficult for researchers to keep track of which journals have stepped up to publish autoethnography. When we began our academic publishing careers more than 15 years ago, very few impact journals published this qualitative genre. Faculty in many universities were either unwilling or unable to accept autoethnography as a legitimate form of ethnographic research, and therefore it was marginalized much more than it is today. If these impact journal editors, publishers, and reviewers who now agree to publish autoethnography are a sign of change, then it is indeed very nice to see that this marginalized status is changing. Yet autoethnography dissertations are still rarely accepted by graduate committees, and there are still plenty of people resisting the possibilities of autoethnography for furthering research. As students and advisers, we are on the front lines of possibility. Our hope is that we will continue to contribute autoethnographic work to the larger body of critical social research.

Toward an Evolving Online Reading List for Autoethnography

Sheryl Shermak (2011) offers the following statement as an introduction to her reading list, which she has posted online: “In qualitative research, there has been a rapid expansion of autoethnographic styles since Carolyn Ellis’s early work. The following is a rudimentary reading list. A further place to explore many different styles of autoethnography is in *Qualitative Inquiry* (journal)” (p. 1). Readers of this book are encouraged to enhance Shermak’s reading list, an adapted version of which is presented below, and to disseminate their own versions via the Internet. As discussed earlier in this chapter, autoethnography will continue to improve and evolve as critical social research as long as digital technologies continue to enhance opportunities to disseminate it.

AN AUTOETHNOGRAPHY READING LIST (ADAPTED FROM SHERMAK, 2011)

Getting Started: A Few Suggestions

Ellis, C. (2004). *The ethnographic I: A methodological novel about autoethnography*. Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press.

Muncey, T. (2010). *Creating Autoethnographies*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Richardson, L., & St. Pierre, E. A. (2005). Writing: A method of inquiry. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research* (3rd ed., pp. 959–978). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Styles of Autoethnography: A Selection

Evocative Autoethnography

Ellis, C. (1999). Heartful autoethnography. *Qualitative Health Research*, 9(5), 669–683.

Ellis, C., & Bochner, A. (2000). Autoethnography, personal narrative, reflexivity: Researcher as subject. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (2nd ed., pp. 733–768). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Analytic Autoethnography

Anderson, L. (2006). Analytic autoethnography. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, 35(4), 373–395.

Critical Autoethnography

Holman Jones, S. (2005). Autoethnography: Making the personal political. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research* (3rd ed., pp. 763–791). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Kaufmann, J. (2011). An autoethnography of a hacceity: A-wo/man-to-eat-androgen. *Cultural Studies ↔ Critical Methodologies*, 11(1), 38–46.

Spry, T. (2001). Performing autoethnography: An embodied methodological praxis. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 7(6), 706–732.

A Couple of Interesting Examples

Poulos, C. (2010). Spirited accidents: An autoethnography of possibility. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 16(1), 49–56.

Richardson, L. (2011). Hospice 101. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 17(2), 158–165.

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