Chapter Two

Whatever Happened to Kinship Studies? Reflections of a Feminist Anthropologist

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In one of the last chapters of the book *Schneider on Schneider*, Richard Handler asked Schneider, "Whatever happened to kinship?" In typical Schneider style—a style of argument that comes through clearly and evocatively in this rich set of interviews, Schneider set off on a long conversational discussion. "First," he answered, "until recently, kinship had ceased being a major popular subject in anthropology. Papers on kinship clearly fell off. They became fairly rare. Now, of course, phoenix-like, it's risen from its ashes. This is due to people like Marilyn Strathern . . . and the new work in gay and lesbian studies, like that of Kath Weston and Ellen Lewin, and to feminist work, from people like Sylvia Yanagisako." Then in the next paragraph, Schneider fastened on a second factor, "Another answer is that it isn't just kinship. It's the whole idea of discrete, functionally specific institutions—that is, the whole idea that institutions are the major things of which society is made up, and the cultural categories of institutions are really what it's about. That, I think, was abandoned" (Schneider 1995: 193).

In this chapter, I want to amend and expand on Schneider's ideas. I will argue that kinship did not rise "phoenix-like" from its own ashes. Rather, as anthropologists shifted to new ways of looking at societies, our study of kinship transformed. In other words, there was more continuity than disjuncture.[1] If we mean by "kinship studies" the old dichotomy between alliance and descent theory, or how residence rules or domestic group cycles operate, then kinship did die out. But if we are looking for the ways in which people utilize kin ties, conceive of family and sexuality, and shape marriage arrangements, then the study of "kinship" did not disappear so much as move to new arenas of study and new conceptualizations driven by the work of a new set of theorists. Feminism and political economy were the twin approaches that had the most impact on altering kinship studies. I can best discuss these

transformations through the history of my own research on the Navajo, U.S. working-class families, and new immigrants, although I will mention other research throughout the course of this chapter. Most recently, using the insights from feminist ethnography, the narratives of three Navajo women in one family allow me to rethink older topics within the study of kinship and provide a different angle of vision on residence patterns, marriage, and matrilineality.

Critiques from Inside Kinship Theory

Even from within kinship studies by the mid-1960s, there was a sense that something was wrong. Schneider's essay "Some Muddles in the Models" (1965) charged that Needham's analysis of matrilateral cross-cousin marriage was too rigid and inflexible (a "total system model"), while Needham was moving toward a position that kinship was not a unique phenomenon and therefore did not exist, at least as a distinct type of theory (Needham 1971). Schneider's analysis in *American Kinship* (1968) led him to argue that our own Euro-American models of kinship were based on ideas about biological reproduction (and the assumption that "blood is thicker than water") and thus led anthropologists to misconstrue the ways other cultures conceptualized the social relations we define as "kinship." In other words, all our models of kinship were hopelessly biased by our own system.[2]

I had my own sense during the mid-1960s that carefully crafted models did not work, though I could not have mounted the attack that Schneider did in emphasizing the Western bias of the genealogical method. Trained by two anthropologists who had been schooled in British social structure (David Maybury-Lewis and Tom Beidelman), I went to the Navajo Reservation in New Mexico after two summers of preliminary fieldwork in order to study Navajo residence patterns. Since Navajo social organization was notoriously "flexible" (to use Aberle's term), I wanted to know under what conditions Navajo families might choose to live matrilocally (meaning that daughters when married remain with their mothers) and when they might choose a virilocal (where sons when married remain with their natal group) situation. I was already well armed with concepts like Jack Goody's "developmental cycle of domestic groups" to study the kind of flexibility one finds in residence patterns (Goody 1958). However, my carefully constructed "problem," extracted from the literature on domestic groups and residence rules, was still much too abstract and removed from everyday Navajo life. Informants were particularly vague on why they had moved from one residence group to another and I soon reached a dead end. Instead, my strategy of living with different families and driving them from residence group to residence group or into Gallup for groceries or to pick up schoolchildren was much more conducive to the study of everyday cooperative patterns—the subject I finally took up for my dissertation.

During my first four years as an assistant professor at Rochester and at Brown (where I taught kinship to both Linda Stone, the editor of this volume, and Karen Sinclair, a contributor), I rewrote my dissertation as a book (Lamphere 1977). I took my analysis even further away from British structuralism, borrowing the notion of social network from British anthropologists working in urban Zambia where rigid models of lineage systems or domestic groups also did not work. The flexibility of Navajo social organization and the continuous change brought about by Anglo-American institutions pushed me beyond rigid models as I joined the critique coming from inside kinship studies itself. Yet my dissertation and book were still founded on the assumption that "the Navajo" were a discrete, bounded "society," one where the kinship system still dominated and anthropological characterizations of the Navajo as matrilineal and matrilocal still seemed appropriate.

The Feminist Transformation of Kinship

Beginning in the early 1970s, much more radical approaches to kinship theory began to come from those at the margins of the discipline. And here, I place myself among a group of younger women anthropologists who were heavily influenced by second-wave feminism. The feminist critique, at first embodied in *Towards an Anthropology of Women* (Reiter 1975) and *Woman, Culture, and Society* (Rosaldo and Lamphere 1974), was a response to our desire to bring feminism's newfound analysis about women and power into anthropology. The first issue, of course, was "Where were women in our ethnographic accounts?" For many of us, it was a shock to realize that we had spent most of our time in the field with women, but had not analyzed women's activities, much less contrasted them with men's. We needed to make women more visible and to theorize about them. This brought us to an analysis of power and autonomy, sexual asymmetry, and subordination. Kinship and lineage relations thus became construed not in terms of rights and duties but in terms of power and strategies to gain power. Here, Collier's (1974) work on patrilineal systems was particularly important. She emphasized women as strategists and argued that "wives are the worms within the apple of a patrilocal domestic group," advancing their own interests as they worked through their sons and husbands to break up domestic groups. Collier's point of view and that of Wolf (1974) as outlined in her article "Chinese Women: Old Skills in a New Context" had a big impact on my own article "Strategies, Cooperation, and Conflict among Women in Domestic Groups" (Lamphere 1974).

In my article, I broadened the analysis of women's strategies beyond patrilineal, patriarchal systems to include an analysis of women in foraging and horticultural/pastoral cultures, many of which had bilateral or matrilineal kinship systems. In contrast to peasant women (such as those in Taiwan in the 1950s and Chiapas in the 1970s), Navajo women live in a social world where

domestic and political spheres are relatively undifferentiated and, until recently, most crucial decisions were taken within the domestic group rather than in a wider political arena. Authority within domestic groups (often a cluster of households around a mother and her married daughters and sometimes married sons) is egalitarian. These "matrilocal grand families" are structured around female bonds, matrilocal residence, a system of matrilineal clanship, and a positive cultural valuation of the role of the mother. Under these conditions, Navajo women have a great deal of control over their lives. Unlike the women Collier and Wolf described who lived in patrilineal, patrilocal families, Navajo women do not need to wrest power from others who hold positions of authority or attempt to influence decisions that are not theirs to make. At no time do a Navajo woman's interests conflict with those of her close female kin. Women rarely "work through" men, but are themselves mediators between men as, for instance, between a young husband and his father-in-law.

Many of the contributions to *Woman, Culture, and Society* thus put gender at the center of analysis and emphasized the variety of women's strategies within kinship systems, viewing kinship in terms of the dynamics of power relations and negotiation rather than as more abstract systems of descent and alliance. The thrust of our analyses was to view women as actors rather than as bodies over whom men had rights and whose major function was to knit together kin groups. While some may have perceived a declining interest in kinship in the early 1970s, these articles indicate that kinship analysis was "alive and well" within feminist anthropology.

Adding History and Political Economy

Still missing from many of the articles in *Woman, Culture, and Society* was a historical perspective, one that could be wedded to an economic analysis that would situate strategies in a larger context. We needed a better framework than the one provided by British structural functionalism or American cultural anthropology.

For me, dependency theory first provided that framework. I initially used this particular brand of political/economic analysis to rethink Navajo society and history in my article "The Internal Colonization of the Navajo People" (Lamphere 1976). I was, of course, cognizant of the impact of white society on the Navajo Reservation in the mid-1960s. In the preface to my book *To Run After Them: Cultural and Social Bases of Cooperation in a Navajo Community*, I noted that "Anglo institutions—schools, hospitals, churches, government agencies, and certainly Anglo business interests—dominate the reservation and continue to shape the lives of the Navajo" (Lamphere 1977: xi). In fact, one chapter of my book examined the impact of the pickup on Navajo cooperation: how those without cars or trucks got rides from those who owned ve-

hicles. What I did not have was a way of framing this impact, but the notion of an "internal colony" helped me to historicize and analyze some of the changes evident in Navajo society as a whole.

Drawing on Frank's (1967) model of underdevelopment in Latin America, on Jorgensen's (1971) analysis of the dependency fostered on American Indian reservations, and on Aberle's (1966) research on Navajo economic history, I reviewed the creation of the Navajo Reservation as an internal colony. This process entailed military defeat, the establishment of a reservation under Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) control (a relatively inexpensive method of administration), the integration of the Navajo economy into the rural satellite economy of the Southwest (through the establishment of the railroads and a network of trading posts), and the creation of a Tribal Council during the 1920s in order to grant oil leases to U.S. companies. This last set of events established a precedent of allowing non-Navajos to exploit natural resources on Navajo land. The trend continued into the 1960s and 1970s when leases for coal reserves on the Navajo Reservation became an important issue. On the one hand, the construction of power plants and strip mining at the Black Mesa, Pittsburgh-Midway, and Utah International mines provided needed resources for economic development and jobs. On the other hand, the mines removed families from homesteads and grazing lands and created environmental damage.[3] This historical analysis clarified for me the impact of larger economic and political forces in shaping the Navajo economy and in creating growing class differences on the reservation (between Tribal Council members and employees in the larger tribal, BIA, and Indian Health Service bureaucracies and local Navajo communities whose members depended on some traditional sources of income along with low-wage jobs). However, the analysis did not connect with the lives of Navajo families and how the changing political economy affected kin ties and the position of women.

Kinship, Urban Research, and Political Economy

It was not until I began to conduct urban research that I was able to link a political economy analysis with kinship. But here, my work on domestic group cycles and social networks stood me in good stead. I also turned from dependency theory to a straightforward analysis of the history of capitalism and the development of class relationships in my study of a New England working-class community, Central Falls, Rhode Island. In my book *From Working Daughters to Working Mothers* (Lamphere 1987), I was able to analyze census data on French Canadian, Irish/English, and Polish immigrant households in 1915 and 1935 using the construct of a domestic group cycle. But I argued that the cycle was in turn shaped by the expanding and then declining textile mill economy of Rhode Island. For example, as the cycle operated in 1915, at a first stage, young families were dependent on only the wages of working husbands.

Young wives either took in boarders or simply stretched their husband's wages. Middle-aged families, in a second stage, were able to send their teenage children into the mills, increasing household income, as the family came to depend on multiple wages. Yet, this strategy failed during the Depression as indicated in the 1935 census when fathers, teenage sons, and teenage daughters suffered unemployment as mills laid off workers or shut down.

Through long interviews with contemporary immigrants it was possible to understand the role of support networks for working families, a topic that could not be broached with historical census data. But even these networks had a kind of "developmental cycle," depending on a group's potential kin networks on entering the United States and the wage opportunities of the local political economy. Portuguese families came to the United States through kin who had migrated earlier, while Colombians had no such ties. By 1975, the dense networks of Portuguese kin were dispersing as layoffs and new job possibilities spread a sibling group throughout the region. In contrast, the Colombians, by bringing over parents and siblings, were creating denser kin networks in the same period. It was among these recent immigrants that the impact of wives' participation in the labor force had altered the domestic division of labor, with immigrant men taking a greater role in child care and some household tasks.

The micropolitics of domestic units and the importance of kin networks also continued to be of crucial importance in our Albuquerque study of women employed in the new Sunbelt industries (Lamphere, Zavella, Gonzales, and Evans 1992). Here we interviewed Anglo and Hispano couples where both the husband and the wife worked in blue-collar jobs in newly constructed apparel and electronics plants. Kin networks were supplemented with important friendship ties for Albuquerque working mothers. In all three of these studies (my dissertation book, the Rhode Island monograph, and the Albuquerque study), my interests have continued to be in household or domestic group organization and the use of kin networks for social and economic support. But the way I treated these organizing concepts changed as I paid more attention to gender differences and to the way in which the local political economy shaped support networks. For my research, kinship did not disappear as an interest but was reformulated through the impact of feminism and Marxist theory.

New Trends in Feminist Kinship Studies

During the late 1990s, feminist approaches to kinship gained wider recognition within mainstream anthropology as the work of Martin (1987, 1997) and Strathern (1992) began to have an impact and several important collections were published (Yanagisako and Delaney 1995; Franklin and Ragoné 1998; Edwards et al. 1999). A Wenner-Gren Conference on "New Directions in Kin-

ship Study" took place in 1998, and at the American Anthropological Association meetings, two sessions were devoted to kinship theory, and other sessions on reproduction, gender, and family touched on issues of kinship. What seems at first glance to be the "reemergence of kinship" is a result, primarily, of the broader legitimacy (through graduate seminars, publication of university press books, and attendance at meeting sessions) that feminist research has acquired.

There has been an outpouring of research on the new reproductive technologies that has provided a new space for thinking about American and British kinship as women themselves (along with medical personnel, textbook writers, and family members) have confronted situations where the "biological facts" no longer have the appearance of being "natural." Anthropologists have studied amniocentesis (Rapp 1999), maternal serum alpha-fetoprotein screening (Press et al. 1998), ultrasound (Taylor 1998), infertility and assisted conception (Cussins 1998; Franklin 1997, 1999), and surrogate motherhood (Ragoné 1994). In some cases, as Martin's work shows, American metaphors of industrial capitalism or gender relations shape the way the medical establishment presents biological processes to women patients (Martin 1987, 1997). In others, women bring their own, often ethnically based, notions about biology and kinship to the medical encounter that surrounds a new technology such as amniocentesis (Rapp 1997). And in a third group of situations, cultural meanings concerning kinship (e.g., who is a mother?) are reshaped to meet new circumstances. Thus, in Ragoné's study *Surrogate Motherhood: Conception in the Heart* (1994), surrogates and adoptive mothers distinguish between the biological mother (the surrogate) and the social mother. Surrogates override their genetic contribution and view the adoptive mother as someone who has conceived the child "in her heart," not through her body (Ragoné 1994: 126). Both women adopt a set of practices (sharing shopping trips, baby showers, and birthing classes) that cement their relationship and help them redefine motherhood as based on nurturance rather than a biological tie.

Euro-American ideology tends, on the one hand, to naturalize both kinship and power and, on the other, to utilize the dichotomy between nature and culture. The tendency is to assimilate kinship to biology and to see it as "natural." Even anthropologists took the view that kinship was "based" on the natural facts, at least until Schneider and his students persisted in showing us that even these ideas are part of a cultural model. What Yanagisako and Delaney bring to the table is the important point that power is embedded in kinship as well as in other domains such as politics, religion, ethnicity, and nation (Yanagisako and Delaney 1995: 1–21).

Historical analyses of kinship theory and research into the Human Genome Project, cloning (Edwards 1999), and computer-generated models of artificial life (Helmreich 1998) examine notions of "substance" that lie behind conceptions of kinship in Euro-American culture. Feeley-Harnik (1999) shows that

in the nineteenth century, Morgan's notion of "channels of blood" actually linked land, animals, water, roads, and indigenous peoples. In the twentieth century, rather than "blood relations," we have come to talk about kinship in terms of genes and, more recently, as "information" and "code." All of these ways of thinking of kinship as substance entail the dichotomy between nature and culture, whether "nature" is seen as the bedrock on which kinship is "added on" or culturally constructed (Yanagisako and Delaney 1995), whether nature is the ground or context for culturally constructed notions (such as that of the person or individual) (Strathern 1992), or whether culture and nature are mutually constituted (Edwards 1999). Recent approaches all generated by research on new reproductive technologies have given kinship theory a much more subtle and nuanced set of theoretical constructs, ones that seek to interrogate and make visible Euro-American assumptions and interventions as well as those of other cultures.

Another site for analysis of kinship has been the family, particularly new forms of partnership and domestic life in the United States. Stacey's *Brave New Families* (1990) probes the impact of the electronics industry in Silicon Valley on the upward mobility of two white families in the early days of economic boom. Then she follows their stories and those of their children as they experience divorce, death, religious conversion, feminism, drugs, and unemployment. Her study explores the changing nuclear family as it evolves into different household and kin forms. Weston's *Families We Choose* (1991) and Lewin's *Lesbian Mothers* (1993) examine gay and lesbian family, household, and relationship forms. These studies show how gays and lesbians (often rejected by their own nuclear families) borrow from American notions of kinship and reshape them, creating new definitions of kin relations. For example, Lewin's chapter on single lesbian mothers and their children emphasizes the phrase "that permanent roommate," citing the ways in which mothers develop "companionate," almost friend-like relations with their dependent children (Lewin 1993). Sherman's book *Lesbian and Gay Marriage: Private Commitments, Public Ceremonies* (1992) takes up this same theme in a different way, examining the myriad ways in which gays and lesbians create families through commitment ceremonies. Adoption is another area where Americans construct kin ties through both exclusion and inclusion, but here, adoptive parents create "as-if-begotten" kinship (Modell 1998) and thus suppress biological relations. In transnational adoptions, there are also negotiations around issues of class and race. Upper middle-class white Euro-Americans both erase and exclude the birth parents from what counts as family and yet retain the right to return a child who is in some way "defective" (Gailey 1998).

Finally, feminist anthropologists have examined kinship and family in connection with colonialism. Stoler's work emphasizes the changing colonial role in shaping sexual relations and family formation between Europeans and natives. At first, regimes encouraged concubinage and then later, with the immigration of European women to the colonies, created segregated European set-

tlements where white women upheld sexual standards (Stoler 1997). Gailey takes a seemingly traditional analysis of the Tongan kinship system (of conical clans or pyramidal ramages) and uses it to explore both gender relations and the transformation of the kin system under missionary activity and colonial dependence (Gailey 1987). These analyses place kinship at the heart of analyses of power, a very different approach from early anthropological work that separated kinship from the domain of politics and ignored the importance of gender ideologies.

All of these studies have been powerfully informed by feminist anthropology, placing gender at the center of analysis, yet paying attention to race, class, and power. Most interrogate Euro-American conceptions of kinship and in the process lay bare the cultural logics involved in both utilizing these notions and/or restructuring them. Most studies also elucidate the daily practices Americans construct as they confront new situations (brought about through the new reproductive technologies, the increasing instability in wage, jobs, or marriages, and the increased acceptance of gay/lesbian relationships).

Navajo Kinship and Personal Narratives

In my present work *Weaving Together Women's Lives: Three Generations in a Navajo Family*, a biography of three women in a Navajo family, I am using personal narratives (gathered in long, life-history style interviews) to forge a story informed by both feminism and political economy (Lamphere n.d.). My approach owes a great deal to feminist ethnography where anthropologists have interrogated their own positionality vis-à-vis their subjects. A number of essays have examined the ways in which race, class, and colonialism shape the fieldwork situation, which nevertheless usually remains one in which the anthropologist has more access to power than do her subjects (Zavella 1993; Limón 1989; Wolf 1996; Narayan 1993). Several recent monographs focus on women's lives using dialogical forms that place the anthropologist and her subjects in the text as interlocutors (Behar 1993; Abu-Lughod 1993; Briggs 1998). What these narrative-based texts lack is specific attention to the historical context and political economy in which women's lives are carried out, something I attempt to remedy in my book, which spans the period from 1930 to the present.

I see my own life, as someone who grew up in Colorado, as part of the same political economy that has shaped the lives of Eva Price, her daughter Carole Cadman, and granddaughter Valerie Johnson. I first met Eva when I was conducting research for my dissertation in 1965 on the Eastern Navajo Reservation. I lived several months with Eva, her husband (who was often away working for the railroad), and four young boys. Her daughter Carole, who was much closer to my age, was attending a boarding school near Gallup, New Mexico. Over the past thirty-five years, I have kept in close touch with Eva and

Carole. During these decades, the children have grown and married, and Carole has had her own children, including Valerie, her oldest daughter, who attends the University of New Mexico where I teach.

One of the foci of the biography has become tracing the mutual and contrasting themes that separate our lives by class and race, as well as generation. There are aspects of my own family history that intersect with Navajo history, including my grandfather's role in the discovery of oil on the Navajo Reservation and our Presbyterian church's support of a mission in Tuba City. Eva's family experienced the impact of both oil development and missionization, in the former case through the family's interaction with a couple that ran an oil pumping station near their homestead in the 1930s, and in the latter case through Eva's conversion and active participation in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (the Mormon religion). Both Carole and I vividly remember reading "Dick and Jane" as young grade-school students, but the gap between these texts and our everyday lives was quite different. I may have felt alienated from the silliness of the text and "blondness" of baby Sally, but those children looked much more like me than like Carole, who started school knowing only Navajo and who spent summers herding sheep with her grandmother. Our cultural and class backgrounds even more fundamentally shaped the way divorce and drinking have impacted our respective families. Finally, as I have watched Carole's experiences in the labor force and on welfare, and Valerie's passage through the reservation public school system into the state university and into a series of part-time jobs, our differing class position and life trajectories within the same state economy have become more marked, even as we have continued to interact across economic and racial divides.

In addition to the analysis of class, culture, and race, Eva's narratives have allowed me to rethink several aspects of Navajo kinship and reassess the value of kinship models that were prominent in the 1960s and 1970s within anthropology. I have approached kinship from a much more internal, narrative standpoint than I did thirty years ago, much like Abu-Lughod did in her book *Writing Women's Worlds* (1993). In what follows, I will use three examples from topics that have traditionally been at the heart of anthropological analysis of kinship. The first topic—domestic group developmental cycles—illustrates the way a more narrative, life-history approach uncovers the cultural and personal logics for postmarital residential moves. This exposes the weakness of abstract models of postmarital residence and the developmental cycle of domestic groups, prevalent in my own dissertation research and anthropological studies of the 1960s that relied heavily on one-time census analyses (Fortes 1949; Goody 1958; Richards 1950). The second topic—that of arranged marriage—can be used to critique not just the literature on kinship, but the models of assimilation and acculturation so common in the research on Native Americans. Finally, Eva's narratives, along with Schwarz's (1997a) recent writing on Navajo personhood, lead to a reconsideration of matrilineality, place, and the substance of kinship. The Navajo construction of kinship,

which I argue does not utilize the dichotomy of nature and culture, contrasts with Euro-American forms of relationship. Rather than kinship as something constructed on top of or out of the "natural facts," (e.g., the processes of conceptions and birth, genetic relationship between parents and children, and so on), among the Navajo so-called "natural" forms, sacred beings, and humans all partake in the same structure, including those relationships that are included under the English term "kinship" and the Navajo term *k'é*, a term that means compassion, cooperation, friendliness, peacefulness, and unselfishness. Relationships of *k'é*, birth, and place are all intertwined so that aspects Euro-Americans would see as distinct (e.g., the creation of links between humans and the connections between humans and a particular landscape), are conceptually connected and inseparable.

Rethinking the Developmental Cycle of Domestic Groups

My earlier analysis of the developmental cycle of domestic groups looks much different when viewed from a narrative approach where the dynamics of family interaction and powerful cultural beliefs about death and illness play into decisions to move. More recently, economic forces, largely emanating from the U.S. political economy and the incorporation of Navajos into it, have pushed Navajos to move more frequently and to move to a variety of new contexts (suburban housing tracts near stores, schools, or chapter houses on the reservation, or to urban apartments or trailer courts). The search for wage jobs as well as new forms of housing and urban or border-town migration now enter into the mix of factors important in shaping residence and family developmental cycles.

In the past, anthropologists have conceptualized Navajo residence patterns in terms of matrilocality or, more technically, uxorilocality (a young couple resides with the wife's relatives). However, most non-Navajo observers wrote that there was considerable "flexibility" in these rules so that married sons often remain with their mothers and bring their wife to live with them (Aberle 1961, 1963). Witherspoon has summarized what his Navajo consultants told him in the following way, "A Navajo may live wherever his or her mother has the right to live. A mother has the right to live wherever her mother lived. In addition, a Navajo may live wherever his or her spouse has the right to live. Residence rules are therefore based on the mother-child and husband-wife relationships and residence rights are acquired from one's mother and one's spouse" (Witherspoon 1975: 74). However, these rules do not consider how new residence groups are formed (e.g., couples hive off from a mother or parental homestead), or how residence groups of middle-aged siblings or individual couples are moved.[4]

Through Eva's narratives of her childhood and young adulthood, it is possible to see how the dynamics of what we used to think of as domestic group

formation, development, and fission are played out in relation to Navajo beliefs surrounding illness and death, rather than through the application of abstract residence rules. For example, Eva's parents moved from their homestead at Black Rock Standing in the early 1930s, after their eldest son was burned in a fire that erupted when a kerosene lantern was overturned. They established a new residence at Yellow Hills, where Eva still lives today.

As she explained, "And then my late older brother [Frank Sandman] . . . was building a fire with the coals still in there. He poured white gas on it. It made a 'ts'ibag' sound, and he caught on fire. . . . He became crippled, and his ligaments burned on one side. . . . Most of his hand was burned, and that is the reason why his hand was like that. He was in critical condition when they transported him to the hospital in Shiprock. He was on the edge of death. That is what they were saying. Somehow he came back to life. That is how I remember it.

"As for me, someone threw me out of the hoghan and I was standing outside. . . . At that time they didn't have cars, but the only person that had a car was Hastiin Bitsii Be'estł'nii [Mr. Tied Hair]; he had a Model T. That's how they took him to the hospital."

The fire that burned Frank Sandman provided a narrow escape for Eva, who was pulled from the burning hoghan. Eleanor, Eva's sister who was eight years older, remembered that Hastiin Tł'aai performed a Blessing Way for Eva, who was only about four years old at the time. "He did an all night ceremony for this one, at Black Rock Standing. . . . When my older brother burned up, my father had [had] a bad dream then . . . [5] about two days later, my older brother burned. So it was then that her grandfather [Tł'aal] performed the ceremony for her. This is what I remember. . . . And then he also performed the Chiricahua Windway for her too." The fire prompted the family to move from Black Rock Standing to the base of a low hill near a larger yellow bluff, an area called Yellow Hills, about three miles across the plains to the southwest. Clearly, the bad dream and the subsequent fire meant that Black Rock Standing had become dangerous (*báhádzid*), and not where the family should rebuild and stay. A new place would be *hózh*, not filled with *hoch* (evil, difficult, unpleasant conditions), but blessed, harmonious, balanced, and beautiful.[6]

Later, in the 1950s, this same older brother was involved in another fire, one that took his life. Carole, Eva's daughter, was in Utah at the time, living with a Mormon family (on the Mormon Placement Program). She recalled what family members told her about the fire, after she returned to Yellow Hills that next spring. "But I understand, they were saying that he was drinking, and some of them, like Leonard Sandman [Frank's stepson] was drinkin' also at the time. . . . He [Frank] tipped over the kerosene lamp. . . . And the only person that was in there with him was his daughter [Elizabeth] . . . and of course, Elizabeth was young at the time . . . four or five. . . . And I guess the only thing he said to her was, 'Run out. Get out,' while he was tryin' to find his way out through the door. I don't know, but I think he was pretty drunk at the time.

He didn't make it out. That's what they were telling me when I came back [from Utah]. And when I came back, you know, people didn't live over here [at Yellow Hills]. See, I left when people were over here, against this hill. Real nice—a horse corral and houses and everything. . . . So, when I came back from Utah, you know, things were a little bit different than they used to be. People used to tell 'em, you know, 'You can't live over there' . . . everybody else just . . . moved across [the road]. And then over here, I guess Joe didn't wanna move this house; he just wanted to stay here . . . So that's how we stayed. We were a little distance from where those . . . people were, see?. . . [7] They used to say, 'It [will] affect you guys or something later in the future' . . . but it hasn't affected anybody yet."

In this narrative, Carole reiterated the Navajos' aversion to living near a place where someone has died, since the ghost may trouble those who remain and bring bad dreams or illness. Frank's widow Anita, her grown son Leonard, his wife, and their children moved across the road to a new residence site.

Later, Eva moved for a while across the road and had a hoghan built there (near her sister's house), because she had become very ill. The first phase of her illness led to a conversion to the Native American Church (also known as the Peyote Religion) and to the discovery that Joe, her husband, was performing witchcraft on her and was thus the source of her illness. As Carole told the rest of the story, "After she [had] gotten better, you know, maybe like a year or something like that, she started feeling very funny . . . like . . . something was burning on her body. . . . She felt absolutely funny to where she couldn't stand going into this old house over here. And they had to build her a new hoghan across the road. And she used to feel better when we stayed over there. For every time she entered this house . . . something would start bothering her. And she said that up in the mountain when she was young she used to live with my uncle Frank Sandman and Frank Sandman told her to go up to the cornfield; she said that somebody's eating corn and . . . she had a .22 gun, and she found out that it was a porcupine. So . . . when the porcupine was sitting on top of a tree, she aimed at it and she killed him . . . she got him in the heart and maybe, you know, that started affecting her because that's got something to do with the . . . Mountain Top Way Chant [*dziłk'ijí*] . . . and she burned the poor porcupine also. And that was what was starting to bother her. . . . They did all kinds of medicine men singing on her." Only after she was well again, and after she had separated from her husband, did she return to her mother's area and her former house.

In the next two generations, Eva's children and grandchildren have often moved because of wage jobs or new housing opportunities that have become available in federally funded neighborhoods where two-, three-, and four-bedroom, all-electric homes have been built. Timothy, the oldest, has adhered to the more traditional pattern. He moved to the residence group of his wife's mother, building a hoghan there, and remaining in that site for more than twenty years, although both he and his wife have commuted to wage jobs in

Shiprock and Farmington. Another son, Rudolph, also has lived with his wife's family, but primarily at their summer residences in the Chuska Mountains. As his children became of school age, he and his wife would spend the school year at Eva's home. For a number of years, they lived in the ceremonial hoghan built for Valerie's *Kinaaldá* (girl's puberty ceremony),[8] and then later they built a large hoghan just north of Eva's house. Then, in the early 1990s, they moved to a newly constructed home in a tribal housing area near Newcomb, fifteen miles away from Eva's. In 1998, they divorced and Rudolph moved back to the hoghan next door to his mother. Randy, the youngest son, often lived with his mother after his marriage to Barbara. The housing program sponsored by the tribe built a one-bedroom home for Eva and for Randy's family, next door to the remodeled log cabin that Carole and her children occupied in the late 1980s. A few years later, Randy and Barbara moved to Salt Lake City where Randy works in a warehouse. He and his family (often including one of Barbara's aunts) have lived in a series of apartments and a rented home. Erica, Carole's middle child, immigrated to Salt Lake City after high school and lived with Randy and his family before sharing several apartments with co-workers and then living on her own. Valerie and her younger brother J. R., as of 1999, were living in Albuquerque where Valerie lived in a rental apartment and J. R. stayed in the dormitory at Southwestern Polytechnic Institute where he attends classes.

While a narrative approach reveals the importance of Navajo notions of illness and death in residential decisions in the period 1930–70, recent changes in the Navajo economy and the prevalence of wage work away from the reservation have propelled Navajo people away from traditional residential groups. These decisions are not just about "neolocality" but are negotiated through kin ties, which are often crucial in allowing a family member to immigrate to an urban area or to return home to his or her mother's residence site if a job is lost or a relationship breaks up. Narratives unveil the cultural logic behind such residential choices, even as fluctuations in the availability of jobs or schooling mean that Navajo individuals are moving as often as families following their herds moved in the late nineteenth century.

Marriages and "Models of Acculturation"

Anthropological analysis of marriage in the 1950s and 1960s was rooted in a model emphasizing marriage as the glue between two kin groups. The transfer of rights over women's reproductive capacity and labor was the main vehicle for forging such affinal relations (Fortes 1949; Radcliffe-Brown and Forde 1950; Radcliffe-Brown 1952; Lévi-Strauss 1969). Such a view seemed compatible with the study of small-scale populations in the colonial contexts often studied by anthropologists. But with the increasing impact of Western notions of romantic love, egalitarian gender relations, and "individual choice,"

so-called "traditional" views of marriage are changing. It is all too easy to view these changes within the context of an assimilationist model, one that is particularly prevalent in the literature on Native Americans. In this view, Native Americans or Navajos progress along a continuum from "traditional" to "assimilated." They lose their culture and language and become more and more "white" or "American," not only in terms of material culture (housing, dress, food) but also in terms of cultural knowledge and identity. Individual Native Americans and Navajos can thus be classed as either "traditional," "semi-traditional," or "assimilated" or "acculturated" (i.e., "modern"). A variant of this model posits that Navajos or other Native Americans are "between two worlds" or have one foot in the nineteenth century and the other in the twenty-first (see Benedek 1995: 7–12). Such a model assumes an incompatibility between "tradition" and "modernity." It emphasizes the impossibility of new patterns of integration and it leaves the impression that Navajos are "torn" between two opposites, or "stuck" in a "no-win" situation. An analysis of narratives within one family allows me to use a much more dynamic and less teleological approach to the intersection of Navajo culture with the larger American political economy and culture. By examining the way marriage was experienced by Eva, Carole, and Valerie, we can see that there is no simple unidirectional change from arranged marriage to relationships of "choice" as an acculturation model would suggest. Rather, there are both radical transformations and fascinating continuities over a seventy-year period, as each woman forged relationships within the possibilities presented to her and forms a narrative analysis of her own relations and that of her other kin.

Eva's mother Mary Sandman and Eva both had arranged marriages, as did Eva's sister Eleanor. Each was arranged when the girl was thirteen or fourteen, just after her *Kinaaldá*, to a man several years older. Eva recalled how her mother described her relationship with her father. "This is what my mother used to say, when I was small, when I was about twelve years old. 'He had already become a man. I was given to him.' This is what she used tell us. 'And so I was afraid of him, and I didn't want him.' [S]o she was left by herself with him, and he would tie her up next to a pole and wrap the rope around her. So that she wouldn't run away from him. 'He did that to me,' my mother used to tell me. That's how it was. And somehow she got used to it."

Very often these early relationships broke up, even in Mary Sandman's generation. This was also the case for both Eva and her sister Eleanor. Like their mother, their narratives indicate they attempted to avoid these marriages, or once married, resisted their husband's advances. Eva explained that "I was scared of him, for four years . . . I was still little and he was a man. . . . It was my mother who actually did it, not my father. Well, he [Aaron] was with another woman—Betty's mother. Betty's mother passed away. . . . You'll be given to him, they told me.

"Yes, I was afraid of him, and they were saying that I should marry him, and they cooked and prepared food and I was told to take out some cornmeal

mush in the four directions, and so I ate some. Then people spoke to me."[9] After the marriage ceremony, the couple lived in the hoghan with Eva's parents. "I used to run away from him [to stay with a clan sister]. Her name was Elsie. She was Shoemaker's wife's daughter, the youngest one. We would go around together. In the summers, I would herd sheep with her. 'Why did they do that to you?' she asked. So I would run away from him. Sometimes I would even spend the night over there."

Eva reiterated, "I was scared. He told my mom. He told my mom and his mother, Cross Hills Lady, that he was not wanted by me. That's the reason for it . . . I was not used to him . . . He was a man. I was just a child.[10] At that time, my older brother Grant was in the army, World War II, 1940, '41 and '42. That is how I remember, when he came back, he really got mad at my mother. 'Why did you give her away to a man? Are you crazy?' he scolded her. 'You should have let her go to school.'"[11]

Eleanor, Eva's older sister, had an arranged marriage as well. When she heard about the pending ceremony, she also ran off to a clan sister who was herding sheep, but this woman counseled her to go through with the marriage even though she was "scared." In both cases, the marriages broke up. Later, Eva and Eleanor formed other relationships that were consensual and not marked by a ceremony where the couple eats cornmeal mush from a traditional Navajo wedding basket.

In contrast to her mother and aunt, Carole had two significant relationships (one with Valerie's father) before her mother arranged a marriage for her in the mid-1970s. Carole herself was very ambivalent about the marriage and tried to avoid it. "It was a forced marriage," she said. Carole ran away to a girlfriend in Shiprock where she stayed all night, but then she returned. "Well, she forced me . . . my mom forced me." Her mother and a man named Elton who was trying to arrange the marriage made a lot of promises. "He'll take care of you. I'll be wealthy after . . . he starts helping me. . . . But I found out that . . . it was a totally different story after [about] three months later. . . . He was an alcoholic." The marriage lasted several years before Carole left. Clearly, female resistance to arranged marriage, in this family at least, was not simply a response to acculturation or the impact of Western notions of "individual choice." Resistance and acquiescence had a great deal to do with the kinds of economic resources and social support each woman could marshall in a particular context.

The meanings of marriage are often negotiated between generations that have very different understandings, as clearly was the case for Eva as she resisted her mother's arrangements, and for Carole when she resisted those of her own mother. Both "gave in" in the short run, but through different paths, they eventually extricated themselves from these marriages. Valerie, a full-time student living 200 miles from home with scholarships and, later, a steady part-time job, has been more successful in defining her own path. During her college years, Valerie had a long-term relationship with Duane whom she met in

high school, but she was not married. The divergence between her views and the experiences of her mother and grandmother was not apparent to her until the day she lay on the bed listening to my interview with Carole and Eva concerning the role that arranged marriages played in her own family. Her surprise and disagreement with these marriages emerged on that Sunday morning in January 1996. This four-way conversation illustrated the ways that a more narrative approach to kinship and marriage uncovers the interpretive meanings of differing conceptions of marriage and illustrates the ways women negotiate across generational differences, often incorporating another's point of view into their own thinking.

Eva explained the old system as one based on respect. "That's what it was for; that was how it was done. Now it seems like we don't have any worth. Like when they just get together these days. Later on, they split. Anyway, inside a church is also a marriage that has worth [meaning]. . . . That is how it was." Valerie objected, saying, "I'm going to marry who I want to marry. Not what nobody, what everybody else wants . . . for me . . . I mean, once you think about it, if somebody were to pick a husband for you, it's like disrespectful to you. . . . It's like you're saying, 'You're not . . . old enough or you're not mature enough to find your own husband,' so somebody else has to do it for you. You know what I mean?"

My own role in this conversation was to explain, as an anthropologist, that lots of other cultures had arranged marriages. But I also suggested to Valerie that we (meaning the larger American society) agreed with her. "That's the way we think about it, but I think other systems think . . . what marriage is really about is ties between two families. And what they're trying to do is make an arrangement between two families who will . . . provide kids for both families." Eva returned to the issue of worth and respect. "And probably after you are bought like that, and paid for, then you also become of worth to the relatives as you go among them. That was the reason for that price, so that you earn the right to go among the male's and the female's family, out of respect for them and respect for one another."

In a later interview in 1997, Valerie commented on her views of arranged marriage that seemed to incorporate her new understandings of her own family history, even as she used the language of individual choice. An acculturation model that views assimilation as taking on the dominant culture's values seems too simplistic to register the nuanced way in which Valerie thinks about her own situation, yet validates her grandmother's, mother's, and uncle's experiences. "I never understood the concept behind those arranged marriages. Maybe they just thought that person was good for you and they were wealthy, they owned cows, or horses, or whatever. Maybe that could have been a factor. Maybe their family was well-off, and you wanted your daughter to go and be part of that wealthy family. But my views are definitely different over arranged marriages. I, myself, maybe if I lived back in the 1960s . . . wouldn't have minded so much, but now I'm my own individual, and I'm free to make my

own choices. I don't think I would agree to it if my grandma or my mom would ever suggest it to me. I don't think I would want to. I would never impose that on my children. I think it just has a lot to do with the changing times. That's how they did it back then and today it's like, these kids these days are growing up and they choose for themselves. They have choices. Back then, you didn't have a choice only because you couldn't get off the Reservation. There was no way you could get off the Reservation. You had to stay . . . and learn to weave . . . either you were weaving, or you bore children, or you kept up with your farm. That was your life, that was the way of living back then. But now there's this difference. There's more opportunities for people these days. My Uncle Bean's marriage was arranged, and his arranged marriage seems to be working. . . . I don't really know. There's just a lot of factors that played a large part on why they did it back then as opposed to today."

Matrilineal Clanship, Place, and the Substance of Kinship

Finally, these narratives shed light on the nature of matrilineal clanship and the importance of place in relation to the conceptions of kinship. The outlines of Navajo kinship have been best worked out by Aberle (1966) and Witherspoon (1975), the former drawing more heavily on a social structural approach, and the latter on a more cultural, interpretive one. Witherspoon writes that Navajos think of kinship in terms of *k'é*. Following the terminology of his mentor Schneider, Witherspoon called this "intense, diffuse, and enduring solidarity" (Witherspoon 1975: 37). "My relatives," or *shik'éí*, are the particular ones with whom one shares such intense enduring relationships. They are relatives through what anthropologists call clans (open-ended collections of kin descended from a common ancestor where the actual genealogical links are not traced). *K'é* is anchored in birth, since it is through birth that a baby becomes affiliated with relatives on both the mother's and father's side. First, every Navajo is born *of* a woman (coming up and out of her womb). Birth affiliates a child with her or his mother and the mother's relatives or clan. These would include the mother's mother, the mother's sisters, and women of the same clan as well as one's own siblings (those who came up and out of the same womb) and children of any women in the same clan. Other important relatives would be males of the same clan, including mother's brothers, sister's sons, and mother's mother's brothers. It is birth from women linked directly to the births of other women that is central to identifying one's clan.

Second, each Navajo is "born for" his or her father. This notion of being "born for" affiliates each child, male and female, with the father's matrilineal clan. Third, each individual is further related to those their father was "born for," that is, the father's father's clan (called *da shinálí*). Finally, the individual is also affiliated with the relatives his or her mother was "born for," that is, the mother's father's father's clan (called *da shichei*). Some clans are "related to

each other" and, hence, members of these clans address each other by kin terms and assume relationships based on *k'é.*

Birth and, hence, clanship is located in space. Clan names derived most likely from places, for example, *Tódích'íi'nii* or Bitter Water describes a place where the water perhaps had a distinctive taste. Others are *Kii'yaa' áanii* or House in the Rocks, *Tábaa'há* or Water's Edge, *Haltsooí* or Meadows, and *Tó baazhní'ázhi* or Two-Came-To-Water. Even clan names like *'Áshiihí* (Salt People) or *Haashtl'ishnii* (Mud People) could refer to places where there was a salt deposit or a particularly muddy area. Eva's clan *Dziłtł'ahnii* is often translated as "Mountain Corner," but another possible translation is "Mountain Recess." The name indicates a corner in a rocky landscape, a place where two ridges come together at an angle, creating a recessed area in the shadow of uplifting rocks. Although clans do not hold territory or property in common, clan members often visit, extend hospitality, or go out of their way to help clan relatives. *K'é* and clan relationships are the primary way in which the Navajo people locate themselves in the social universe. There are connections to the physical universe as well. Even though generations of movement and post-marital residence patterns have separated sisters and their descendants and even though links to the original places have been severed, clanship ultimately leads back to the land. Birth, motherhood, *k'é,* and landscape are intimately connected.

Place, Clanship, and the Metaphor of Corn in Eva's Narratives

These connections can be seen first in Eva's stories of her own clan history, and second, in her narratives about her birthplace and her own identity. Eva is a matrilineal relative of *Hastiin Tł'aaí,* a well-known medicine man whose relationship with the local trader's wife, Franc Newcomb, led to a published biography, and whose connections with Mary Wheelwright resulted in the founding of the former Museum of Navajo Ceremonial Art in Santa Fe. In tracing Eva's relationship to *Hastiin Tł'aaí,* the importance of clan relations (in this case, the *Dziłtł'ahnii* or Mountain Recess Clan) has emerged much more clearly than in my dissertation. Furthermore, these narratives locate the various groups of *Dziłtł'ahnii* in space. This amounts to a placing of people who are *k'é* or *shik'éí* (my relatives) in the landscape. Such "emplacement" is also interwoven with the colonization of the Navajo. For example, one of the most important "placing" narratives is that of *Hastiin Tł'aaí*'s mother's escape from Fort Sumner (where the Navajo were held between 1864 and 1868), and her long walk back to the Chuska Mountains to her homestead on "Fuzzy Mountain." Eva tells the end of the story in the following way:

"It took her seven days to return home. She went up the Chuska Mountains, and as she was coming back, she noticed someone behind her [a black spot in the distance]. So then she thought that this would be the end of her

life, because she thought that it was one of the Mexicans.[12] But as he came closer, she could see that it was a Navajo. It was her uncle. Her feet were puffy and swollen, she could barely walk, but she did. So then he threw her on top of the horse. Then he took her back to where they lived somewhere on top of that mountain range. And so this is where our grandmother came from and so did we. Just like corn, we have spread out and we are of the many that have sprouted."

Elsewhere she said, "Based on that, I believe we are from the *Dziłtł'ahnii* clan. His late mother had been taken captive at Fort Sumner. After she escaped and returned home *Tł'aaí'* came into existence [was conceived, came into being] and from that birth, we came into existence, and to this day we of the *Dziłtł'ahnii* clan have grown [like plants]. This did not take place somewhere else. It took place here on this mountain ridge, on 'Chuska Mountain,' [said in English] on this land we call 'Washington Pass' [also in English]. This is how it is, and from this mountain ridge, our ancestors have traveled back. And also, we who are of the *Dziłtł'hnii* clan have grown [come to maturity as a corn plant comes to maturity]."

Eva mingles her memories of *Tł'aaí'*s mother with her strong sense of how her clan is rooted in the Chuska Mountains, placed there in a landscape that has defined them and also allowed them to expand and grow. She uses the word *diniit'* which is associated with plant life, especially corn, growing to maturity. The metaphor of the cornstalk is just below the surface of this description, but it is also a metaphor of growth that is "emplaced," put down in a certain locale associated with members of a matrilineal clan, kinsmen, or relatives. There is an unbroken link (subsumed in the metaphor of the growing cornstalk) between *Tł'aaí'*s mother, *Hastiin Tł'aaí'*, Eva's mother, Eva and her children.

When we first began working on these narratives, Eva took me to her birthplace, *Dzil 'Zéé'aasgai* (White Neck Mountain). There, we found the ruins of her parents' hoghan. Then we walked to a grove of oak trees just down a slight hill near an old cornfield. There, Eva told me she was born under a ramada or shade (*cha'a'oh*) that had been built for outdoor living during the summer months. She bent over and took some of the earth and blessed herself with it.

Afterwards, Eva recorded her thoughts about being back at her birthplace. "This mother earth, you put it on like this; [then] you will live a good life. And when it rains, you put that on your body or you bless yourself with the rainbow. And early in the morning you have to bless yourself [with corn pollen]. These are holy places. I am very glad I have returned to my birthplace. I am very grateful. There is where I was raised, the place I was born. If you just forget and go any old way, I don't think you will last long that way. You won't live very long. You must return to your birthplace and say prayers for yourself and state how you will be and how you will live. These days, babies are born in hospitals. What did they do with that thing that comes out with the baby [the placenta]? What do they do with that now? They probably burn it and then trash

it. Not me. They say you should roll around on the dirt on the place where your placenta is buried. They would say 'Go back over there and roll around the area where you are born.'"

Burying the placenta is done so it can "become one with Mother Earth again" (Knoki-Wilson as quoted by Schwarz 1997a: 138). The baby's umbilical cord is even more important. The parents or grandparents often bury the cord in a location considered to be beneficial to the child's future. A boy's cord was usually buried in a sheep, cattle, or horse corral, or in the family fields when it was desired that he be concerned with livestock or with farming. Likewise, a girl's cord might be buried in a sheep corral to ensure that her thoughts were with the livestock or inside the hoghan so that she would become a good homemaker. Also, a girl's cord might be buried where the loom is erected in the hoghan if the family wished her to become an expert weaver (Schwarz 1997a: 138).

As Schwarz explained, "Burial of the cord in the earth anchors the child to the 'belly button' of Mother Earth and establishes a lifelong connection between a person and a place, just as the cord anchors a child to its mother while in the womb and establishes a lifelong connection between mother and child. The presence of this anchoring cord is evidenced by spirals on the human body that represent an anchoring force that forms a continuous connection from Mother Earth to the person" (Schwarz 1997b: 48).

This connection between a person and place was clearly explicated by Eva. "I was not raised anywhere else but around the Washington Pass area. On that mountain was where I was born. And to this day, I am a woman from this place, the one called Sheep Springs. From a certain point, the white people and the Navajo have been aware of me, and that is how I walk around. And for that reason, my thinking has been laid down. That's how I think about it, to this day and from this time on."

Euro-American kinship, as I have already pointed out, always implies a distinction between nature and culture, although there have been several ways of characterizing the relationship between the two. In contrast, among the Navajo, there is no definitive split between nature and humans. In Navajo thinking, moisture, air, substance, and heat are the four elements needed for life to exist. A fifth element—vibration—which is often talked about as sound, is also necessary.[13] These elements often manifest themselves in a range of phenomena from rain (a form of moisture), to soil (a form of substance), to zigzag lightning (heat), and wind (air). Baskets, hoghans, cradles, and looms are composed of these elements just as persons are. Thus, in the Navajo formulation there is no distinction between the human, the supernatural, and the natural. All are constructed of the same elements and all are equally rooted in space.

It is not surprising, therefore, that Eva's narratives make these connections between the growing corn, birth, and place. Matrilineality is not, as most conventional anthropological models would suggest, an issue of building on the

biological facts and tracing kin through females (using a particular cultural construction of kinship). Such an analysis misses the importance of place in the constitution of the person and those who are *k'é*. Birth and growth are the twin processes that apply to the making of kinship, but these processes are also located on the land. The emergence of the ancestors of the Navajo through several layered worlds on to the earth surface (the earth referred to as "our mother") parallels the emergence of siblings up and out of a mother's womb (and the emergence of clan relatives through the wombs of related mothers) at a particular place. Just as the Earth as Mother sustains the corn plants so they can grow, Navajo mothers give sustenance to their children (see Witherspoon 1975: 20–21). And again, these processes of growth occur in individual cornfields and at particular places of residence.

The substance of kinship is at once about the natural and the cultural.[14] The particularity of place, where one was born, where one's placenta and cord are buried, and the land where one grew up, or where one's clan relatives have lived are intimately connected to the creation of the person and to the constitution of a whole social universe.[15] Personal narratives are a particularly good source for bringing out these mutually constituted connections. They not only give a sense of kinship in relation to historical meaning, personhood, and the substance of kinship, they outline the ways Navajos put the cultural meanings of kinship to work in their own lives.

Conclusion

Whether we think of kinship as having disappeared and then, more recently, "risen from the ashes" or whether, as I have argued, it has "been there all along," the kinship that anthropologists study in the 1990s is a transformed subject. Its center is perhaps in the Euro-American system and the contact of that system with others. Research on kinship has shifted over to the exploration of reproduction and sexuality, the analysis of new forms of family, and the impact of colonialism and transnational forces on populations across the globe. We are studying kinship through examining ideologies, using narratives, and placing the anthropologist among his or her subjects (rather than as an aloof analyst). Feminism and political economy have been the twin orientations that have fueled these changes. As we look toward the study of kinship in the twenty-first century, we should expect that the frameworks we use will continue to change, but that anthropological interest in those intimate family and social relationships that are the "stuff" of everyday lives will continue to thrive.

Notes

1. This same theme has been developed in the Wenner-Gren international symposium, "New Directions in Kinship Study: A Core Concept Revisited," which took place March 27 to April 4, 1998, organized by Sarah Franklin and Susan McKinnon. The organizers argue that kinship

studies have "neither declined nor been displaced from the center of anthropological inquiry. Rather kinship studies continue to be crucial to the discipline—but this is, in part, precisely because they no longer look quite the same as they once did" (Franklin and McKinnon 2000).

2. Schneider's impact on feminist analysis of kinship is seen in Yanagisako's and Delaney's collection *Naturalizing Power: Essays in Feminist Cultural Analysis* (1995). A recent reconsideration of Schneider's impact on kinship studies is being edited by Richard Feinberg. Several papers from this volume were presented at the 1998 American Anthropological Association Meetings in a session titled "The Cultural Analysis of Kinship: The Legacy of David Schneider and Its Implications for Anthropological Relativism," organized by Martin S. Ottenheimer and Richard Feinberg.

3. Although the tribal government has always favored leasing coal reserves to outside interests, the Navajo Tribe has attempted at several times in the past to renegotiate the terms of leases from Peabody Coal. On June 16, 1999, the Navajo Tribe sued Peabody for $600 million for monies owed because royalty rates were not promptly raised in the late 1970s and because Peabody pressured BIA officials to keep rates as low as possible (*Navajo Times*, June 24, 1999, pp.1, 2, 6).

4. Witherspoon *does* discuss the possibility that a divorced or widowed woman who is part of a couple that had already established a residence group may remain as head of that family (in the use area of the husband's kin) rather than move back to her relatives. He gave an example of one divorced woman and said the following about the impact of death: "If the husband dies, the wife is expected either to remarry into the unit or to return with her children to her mother's unit. She can also remarry elsewhere and take her children with her. In the leadership generation, the wife will remain without remarrying into the unit, because she will likely be the head of the unit" (Witherspoon 1975: 76).

5. A dream is often an indication that something dangerous, or *bahadzid*, is going to happen.

6. The terms *hózh* and *hoch* are perhaps the two most important concepts in Navajo thought and worldview. *Hózh* has been translated as beauty, harmony, blessing, balance, and pleasant conditions. It describes a state of all that is positive—the way things should be. Its opposite is *hoch*, a state that has been described in English as one of disharmony, disorder, evil, or unpleasant conditions.

7. Eva's house is about 150 yards from the site of the hoghan that burned.

8. The *Kinaaldá* is performed when a young girl reaches menarche. It is a four-day ceremony during which the girl runs towards the East three times each day (to ensure a strong body later in life). A large corn cake is baked overnight in the ground on the last night of the ceremony, and songs from the Blessing Way are sung. What the girl does during these four days has an impact on her later personality, health, and well-being. The ceremony celebrates Navajo values of womanhood and ensures that a girl will live a long life (see Frisbie 1967; Schwarz 1997).

9. The core of the Navajo wedding ceremony consists of having the couple eat cornmeal mush served in a Navajo wedding basket before an assemblage of the groom's and bride's relatives. Afterwards, speeches are given urging the couple to take good care of each other.

10. Carole thought that her father had stayed until shortly after her birth in 1948, probably six years after Eva was married. "My grandmother used to tell me that he stayed around until I was one or two months old because he made that cradle board for me."

11. Carole added, "In those days, you know, they used to say, 'Oh, that man,' you know, 'will help you within your future life . . . and buy you things, and, you know, keep you well off.' Those are the things that I used to hear a lot. From my *grandmother*, you know. And I don't . . . know if that's right, but . . . they would just give you anybody else that they think, you know, is capable of . . . marrying you."

12. At the beginning of this narrative, Eva said that *'Asdz Hashké* (Angry Woman), *Hastiin Tl'aaí*'s mother, had been kidnapped by Mexicans and enslaved. One of them made her his wife. There were two Mexicans watching her when she escaped. A very large dog that was tied up outside escaped with her and led her safely back towards Navajo territory. When she reached the Rio Grande, she evoked the names "Collected Waters" and "Water's Child," which caused the waters to recede so that she could cross. These waters, like all parts of the plant, animal, and

worldly environment, have the same homologous properties as humans. They are animated, move, and in this case, provided assistance and help. This is significantly different from the story recorded in Newcomb's book *Hosteen Klah* (1964). According to Newcomb *Hastiin Tł'aaí*'s mother was called *'Asdz Tsósí* (Thin Woman) and later *'Asdz Tso* (Tall Woman). At Fort Sumner, she worked for the wife of an army lieutenant, but left this employment in the summer of 1865 to marry Hoskie Nolyai. She was pregnant when she traveled with her uncle *Dziłtł'ahnii Yázhí* and his wife, her aunt, and this woman's Apache husband to Fort Wingate. They were allowed to leave Fort Sumner and were accompanied by American soldiers as far as Wingate, where they camped in the piñon trees. *Hastiin Tł'aaí*, according to this account, was born near Wingate in December 1867.

13. "The fundamental living elements take a variety of forms when they are formulated and reformulated depending on the particular entity under construction. This variety includes, but is not limited to, the following manifestations: Moisture can take the form of water, rain, mist, snow, blood, or saliva. Air can appear as wind, breath, or voice. Substance can take the form of soil, pollen, skin, cornmeal, *ntł'iz* [hard goods], wood, or stone. Heat can appear as sunlight, zigzag lightning, sunrays, or fire. Vibration can take the form of song, prayer, speech, or melody. Individual persons such as baskets, hoghan, cradles, looms, songs, and masks are formed from a variety of manifestations of these basic elements. Regardless of the particular forms these elements take, one thing remains constant: some type of moisture, air, substance, heat, and vibration must be included in the formulation for life to exist" (Schwarz 1997a: 37–38).

14. Schwarz used the term "homology" to describe how parts of the whole are constructed on the same building blocks or processes (Schwarz 1997a: 4).

15. Basso has recently explored the importance of place among the Apache. His book has a great deal of relevance to the Navajo case, although he does not make the connection between kinship and place that I am making here (Basso 1998).

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