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The assessment of acculturation patterns in a Deaf Navajo Indian through an examination of art work, accompanying narratives, and interview data: A case study

Geiser, Kathleen Ann, M.A.

The University of Arizona, 1991

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THE ASSESSMENT OF ACCULTURATION PATTERNS IN A DEAF NAVAJO INDIAN THROUGH AN EXAMINATION OF ART WORK, ACCOMPANYING NARRATIVES, AND INTERVIEW DATA: A CASE STUDY

by

Kathleen Ann Geiser

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A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of the

DEPARTMENT OF SPECIAL EDUCATION AND REHABILITATION

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
For the Degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

in the Graduate College

THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA

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STATEMENT BY AUTHOR

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This thesis has been approved on the date shown below:

Nancy Eldredge   12-3-91
Date

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The author would like to thank Nancy Eldredge, Ph.D., Director of the Rehabilitation Counseling: Deafness Program at the University of Arizona, and Jeanne Carrigan, Ph.D., ATR, Director of Studies in Art Therapy at the University of Arizona, for providing the research upon which this study is based, and for allowing the author to work so closely with them during the preparation of this thesis. Dr. Eldredge provided guidance in the thesis process, expertise in the field of deafness, and also reviewed the many drafts with a thoroughness and commitment that was altogether impressive. Dr. Carrigan, a Registered Art Therapist, consulted with the author in all matters relating to art therapy and the assessment of art work, and offered many important suggestions.

Jim Organist, Ph.D., C.R.C., Assistant Professor at the University of Arizona, provided considerable insight and many valuable suggestions during the preparation of the manuscript, and his contribution was greatly appreciated.

Jennie Joe, Ph.D., MPH, Director of Family and Community Medicine at the University of Arizona Native American Research and Training Center, consulted with the author on issues pertaining to Navajo and pan-Indian acculturation and art work. Dr. Joe made valuable observations and suggestions which contributed to the development of this thesis.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to explore the feasibility of determining acculturation in a Deaf Navajo Indian through an assessment of art work, accompanying narratives, and interview data. It was concluded that the cultural characteristics of the subject examined in this case study were reflected in his art work and stories, with his Navajo identity revealed as the primary cultural affiliation. Interview data indicated the presence of a significant, albeit less predominant, Deafness cultural affiliation that was not notably reflected in the art pieces or accompanying narratives. Art therapy alone was not established as a reliable medium through which to assess acculturation. However, used in concert with the interview and the subject's own narratives, art therapy proved to be of value in the assessment of acculturation patterns in a Deaf Navajo Indian.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter examines the issue of acculturation assessment as a precursor to culturally affirmative therapeutic intervention. The method utilized in this study for ascertaining acculturation of an American Indian man who is deaf is introduced. This method includes an assessment of art work, examination of the client's stories about his art work, and interview data. The purpose of the study, determining if cultural affiliation will be expressed through art work, narratives, and interview data, is explored in this introductory chapter. Issues relating to the need for the study are discussed, and research questions presented. Finally, the assumptions and limitations of the study are examined.

Statement of the Problem

The determination of a client's level of acculturation is a prerequisite to effective and culturally affirmative therapeutic intervention. The assessment of a client's acculturative status is typically made by a counselor in a talk therapy situation (Trimble & Fleming, 1989). However,

in counseling with American Indians or culturally Deaf[1] persons, the determination of the client's cultural affiliation through conventional talk therapy may prove problematic as a result of cultural and/or communication barriers existing between counselor and client (Glickman & Zitter, 1989; Lazarus, 1982). Traditional American Indians, for example, are often uncomfortable in situations requiring verbal self-disclosure to questions typically perceived as intrusive (Darou, 1987), and may not be willing to talk to the therapist (Yazzie, 1984). Deaf clients, commonly reliant upon American Sign Language (ASL) to communicate, often find it difficult to participate in the therapeutic process with a counselor who is not conversant in their language (Glickman & Zitter, 1989). Consequently, a credible assessment of the Indian or Deaf client's cultural identity may not be feasible via the traditional talk therapy format. Therefore, to effectively ascertain the cultural identity of Indian or Deaf clients, alternatives to talking as the therapeutic intervention of choice may need to be explored.

The assessment of acculturation is the issue addressed by this research. For the purposes of this paper,

---

[1]Following Padden (1980), the capitalized "Deaf" is used in reference to Deaf culture or the Deaf community, and the lower case "deaf" in reference to the audiological condition of deafness.

acculturation will be defined as, "the processes and results of contact between two or more different cultures which bring about diffusion of cultural traits in one or more directions" (Rehab Brief, 1991, 1). For example, an Indian client who is highly acculturated into the dominant society would reflect few, in any, components of his/her tribal culture. Conversely, an Indian client whose values and beliefs are representative of the more traditional tribal way of life would exhibit few, if any, acculturative characteristics of the dominant society.

The determination of a client's cultural orientation is necessary in order to provide culturally affirmative therapeutic intervention (Heinrich, Corbine, & Thomas, 1990). Issues such as values, communication, and religion all vary across cultures and may have significant impact on the development of an effective counseling relationship with a culturally different client (Richardson, 1981). Therapists who ignore the influence of cultural affiliation in the counseling relationship are in danger of encountering a variety of barriers to effective cross-cultural counseling. Sue and Sue (1981, 1977) discuss several of these potential issues and barriers, including culturally related language and communication difficulties, problems associated with contrasting value systems, differing views regarding life philosophy, and premature termination of

counseling, all of which occur much more frequently in cross-cultural counseling situations. Since the implications of cross-cultural counseling can be extensive, and the consequences of disregarding cultural diversity among clients may be potentially destructive to the counseling relationship (Darou, 1987), the deft therapist provides services that correspond to the client's culture and value system. Accordingly, the client's cultural identity should have significant implications for the counselor in terms of counselor-client interaction, diagnosis, and therapeutic approach.

As an alternative therapeutic approach for the assessment of acculturation, this thesis examines the feasibility of art therapy as a method of determining cultural identity in a Deaf, Navajo male. Art therapy, the use of art media in a therapeutic setting (Dalley, 1984), is based on "the recognition that thoughts and feelings are derived from the unconscious and often reach expression in images rather than in words" (Naumburg, 1966).

Art therapy has been used among people of diverse cultural affiliations, including American Indians (Eldredge & Carrigan, in press), and Deaf persons (Henley, 1988; Silver, 1970). One purpose that art therapy has been used for in the past is as a means through which one's personal identity can be expressed (Dalley, 1984; Eldredge &

Carrigan, in press; Robinson, 1984; Talerico, 1986). Perhaps cultural identity would be included in this expression of personal identity. Furthermore, art therapy has been utilized in the past to assess acculturation in individuals of minority groups (Moreno & Wadeson, 1986). Although Moreno and Wadeson's study focused on persons who were culturally Hispanic, there is no reason to believe art therapy would not also be viable when used with American Indians or Deaf persons.

Moreover, while traditional talk therapy requires the client to express him/herself verbally at some length, art therapy allows the client to express him/herself through creative arts media with a minimum of verbal interaction. Therefore, the Indian client's potential hesitancy to disclose verbally is no longer an issue, and the potential barrier to communication for the Deaf client is removed. Since both Indian and Deaf clients may be reluctant or unable to "open up" to the counselor in talk therapy, thereby permitting assessment of acculturation, perhaps art therapy should be explored as an option for the assessment of cultural identity.

Accordingly, as an alternative to assessing acculturation level via talk therapy, this paper examines the art work of Gene, a Deaf Navajo Indian male. Gene's narratives that accompany his art work, and information he

provided during an interview with the researcher, are also examined. The purpose of this examination is to assess Gene's level of acculturation or traditionalism, as demonstrated by the subject himself during an eight session art therapy program. This art therapy program was conducted under the direction of two researchers, a Registered Art Therapist (ATR), and a psychologist, and recorded on videotape for review and analysis by this writer.

It has been noted that the implications of counseling across cultures are vast. Inasmuch as Gene is both Deaf and Navajo, the cross-cultural significance becomes even more profound. The issue has now become one of dual acculturation, and the objective is to determine which, if either, cultural identity is expressed through the subject's art work.

Need for the Study

Although interest in the assessment of acculturation patterns among members of minority cultures has increased in recent years (Organist, in press) little has been written about the measurement of acculturation in American Indians who are also Deaf. Deaf Indians represent a notable subgroup of the larger deaf population. In fact, the incidence of deafness among American Indians, as with disabilities among minority groups in general, is disproportionately

higher than that of the majority population (O'Connell, 1987). In spite of the statistically significant number of deaf Indians who utilize rehabilitation and therapeutic services, there is a dearth of literature that addresses this group. With specific reference to the medium of art, only one study was located which speaks to the issue of dual acculturation as represented through artistic media in the case of a Deaf American Indian (Eldredge & Carrigan, in press).

This study is needed to provide current data regarding the effectiveness of art therapy, as an alternative to talk therapy, in the determination of acculturation level for an adult Navajo male who is also Deaf. This research is necessary in order to make some inference about the value of art therapy for the purpose of cultural identity assessment.

Purpose of the Study

Researchers have demonstrated that life is represented in art, and that a person's art work is an expression of his/her reality (Rubin, 1984). The purpose of this study is to demonstrate whether or not cultural affiliation will also be expressed through art work, accompanying narratives, and interview data, and if so, to determine whether Deafness or

Indianness will be the predominant cultural identity.

Research Questions

The research questions that are addressed in this thesis all pertain to the case of a Navajo Indian man who is Deaf, and are as follows:

1. Is cultural identity expressed through art work?
2. Is cultural identity represented through accompanying narratives and interview data?
3. Is either cultural affiliation, Deafness or Indianness, represented more strongly than the other?
4. Is the assessment of art work alone a reliable alternative to talking as a method of determining acculturative status?

Assumptions

Prior to the study the author postulated that art would, in fact, be representative of cultural identity and affiliation, and that both identities of Navajo and Deaf would be identifiable in the subject's art work.

Among hearing families of deaf children, it is quite common for the deaf child to experience overwhelming isolation (Lane, 1989) and communication deprivation (Meadow, 1976) as

a result of the language barrier. In this study, as a result of Gene's background of deficient family communication, separation from traditional Navajo customs, values, and role models during much of his youth, inability to speak or understand the language of his family (Navajo), and his upbringing at a residential school for the deaf, it was hypothesized that Deafness would be demonstrated as the dominant cultural affiliation.

Limitations of the Study

The study is restricted geographically since Gene was born and raised in Arizona, and limited by population since the case involves a representative of the Navajo tribe. Another limitation is that, due to the case study approach involving a single individual, there is restricted generalizability of findings to other populations. Additionally, it should be noted that although the subject is Navajo, generalizations, even to members of Indian tribes, should not be made. While blanket generalizations are inappropriate, it is believed that the findings presented may have some transfer value for cases consistent with the circumstances described herein.

The study is further restricted due to the fact that the researcher's background is primarily in the areas of rehabilitation and deafness. The researcher is neither an

art therapist, nor an authority on issues related to American Indians. Accordingly, both a Registered Art Therapist, and an expert on Navajos and other American Indians, were consulted during the preparation of this manuscript. Additionally, an authority in the field of Deafness was consulted extensively.

Finally, it should be noted that the original art therapy group run by Eldredge and Carrigan (in press), upon which this research is based, was conducted for purposes other than the assessment of acculturation. Had it been their intention to ascertain cultural identity through this project, Eldredge and Carrigan likely would have employed a different focus in the group. Had the group focus been altered, it is possible that the results presented here, as well as Eldredge and Carrigan's own conclusions regarding acculturation, would have been different.

Summary

This study explores the manifestation of acculturative characteristics of a Deaf Navajo Indian as revealed through his art work, accompanying narrations, and subsequent interview data. Assessing a client's cultural identity is important since it is a prerequisite to providing effective and culturally affirmative therapeutic intervention. Although acculturation level has commonly been determined

through talk therapy, this method may not be the most successful for traditional American Indian people who often do not feel comfortable disclosing verbally. Talk therapy may also prove limiting for Deaf persons who rely on American Sign Language for communication. As an alternative method through which to assess acculturation, art therapy removes the burden of verbal disclosure from the Indian client, and circumvents the communication difficulty often encountered by Deaf clients. In addition, art therapy has been used with other minority populations for the purpose of determining acculturative status, and has been shown to be an effective medium through which personal identity can be expressed.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Prior to assessing acculturation level one must first be familiar with the attributes considered representative of the culture or cultures of the client. Accordingly, the research presented initially in this chapter explores the cultural aspects of life both as a Navajo, and as a Deaf person, and describes the characteristics most commonly identified for each culture. The role of art in the Navajo and Deaf societies is also included in this section and will be examined in view of its cultural significance.

Next, the literature pertaining to the cultural implications of talk therapy with both American Indians and Deaf persons will be reviewed. Art therapy is the method examined in this study to determine acculturation instead of the more common and conventional straight talk therapy format. Therefore, reasons why talk therapy may be neither the best choice for therapeutic intervention nor the most effective way to assess acculturation with Indians or Deaf people, in certain situations, will be explored.

Finally, information pertaining to the discipline of art therapy is discussed. A description of art therapy, some of its purposes and potential benefits, an examination of the artistic therapeutic process, and the role of

interpretation in art therapy are addressed. An examination of art therapy as it has been used with American Indians and with Deaf people is also included.

Cultural Aspects of Membership in the Navajo and Deaf Communities

To accurately determine Gene's cultural identity it is necessary to know what behaviors and qualities are considered typical in both the Navajo and the Deaf cultures. The information presented in this section of the literature review will identify practices and features considered characteristic of both cultures. It is believed that this background information will assist in the determination of Gene's art work as representative of either the Navajo or the Deaf culture.

Cultural Aspects of Life as a Navajo

Navajo people vary significantly in their degree of acculturation. The extent to which an Indian will reflect Indian culture and values is dependent upon his/her exposure to both the Indian and the Anglo ways of life (Hammond & Meiners, 1991). A review of the literature indicates that traditional Navajo culture differs considerably from that of the dominant society.

Characteristics of Navajo Culture - A primary

characteristic of Navajo culture is that Navajo people tend to view the universe holistically. Each aspect of life is entwined with the others, and no separation exists between religion, medicine, culture, work, and family life (Christopherson & Dingle, 1982). "Health" occurs when one is in a state of harmony with one's physical and spiritual environments and with other people. Like life itself, illness is holistic, and "healing is a total process involving the physiological, psychological, environmental, social and spiritual aspects" (Lowrey, 1983). The Medicine Man is a prominent figure in Navajo life (Richardson, 1981).

The Navajo view of nature differs substantially from the dominant society. Animals are considered to be one's brothers and sisters. Navajos, as well as American Indians in general, are encouraged to orient themselves to the land (Richardson, 1981). Land is not considered to be inanimate, but rather, something alive and vital (Darou, 1987).

Another characteristic of Navajo culture is that age is honored. In contrast to a common view held by members of the dominant society that "the future lies with the youth," (Richardson, 1981, 225), elderly Indians are respected for the knowledge and wisdom they have accumulated over many years (Lazarus, 1982). Grandparents commonly receive a great deal of respect, and frequently help with the rearing of grandchildren (Hammond & Meiners, in press).

There is a general lack of orientation towards time in Navajo society. Traditional Navajos are not ruled by the clock, and tend to live for the present rather than the future (Christopherson & Dingle, 1982). American Indians are often more event-oriented than the majority culture, and consequently, are not preoccupied with arriving places or finishing things "on time" (Lazarus, 1982).

Navajos typically place a high value on sharing (Lowrey, 1983). Working to fulfill present needs and giving away the excess is characteristic of Navajo people. Accordingly, Navajos tend to be non-materialistic in nature (Christopherson & Dingle, 1982). Whereas the dominant society emphasizes ownership, Indians typically view Mother Earth as belonging to all people, and everything belonging to everyone (Richardson, 1981).

In contrast to the dominant society's emphasis on the nuclear family, the extended family is prominent in Indian communities (Rehab Brief, 1991). Clan identity is established when Navajos first meet other Indians (Lowrey, 1983), and relationships with clan members may have as much impact on a person's life as the immediate family. These relationships are interdependent in nature. The extended family and clan provide one with a sense of belonging and personal identity (Rehab Brief, 1991). Whereas the majority society may rely more on experts to provide needed

assistance, American Indians commonly look first to their extended family for relief or aid (Heinrich, Corbine, & Thomas, 1990).

What Anglos would consider shyness is characteristic of many Navajo people (Christopherson & Dingle, 1982). It is a Navajo cultural norm to maintain a lessor degree of eye contact, and Navajos often rely on non-verbal means of communication (Lowrey, 1983). Relationships among Navajos are characterized by timing and formality. Lowrey (1983) states that it is not uncommon for long silences to be "an important part of early contact between two or more people" (p. 71). Accordingly, the development of a relationship between Navajos tends to proceed slowly and cautiously (Lowrey, 1983).

Saville-Troike (1984) further explains how Navajo school children may be labeled as "shy" by members of the dominant society unfamiliar with Navajo customs and ways:

> For Navajo children, cultural conflict in the classroom often begins on the first day of school. . . The strange teacher talks to them immediately, and it is Navajo custom to keep silence initially upon encountering unfamiliar people and situations. When children, following the social rules they have learned, do not respond verbally . . . they earn the teachers' stereotype of "shy" and "unresponsive" (pp. 46-47).

Another characteristic of Navajo culture can be seen in the value that is placed upon tradition and following the old ways. This is in contrast to contemporary values of the majority society which emphasizes progress, change, and the future (Heinrich, Corbine, & Thomas, 1990). Navajo traditions and beliefs are conveyed through myths and folktales that transmit oral literature, ceremonials, and rituals (Saville-Troike, 1984).

Navajo parenting styles may be considered somewhat permissive compared with Anglo standards. According to Saville-Troike (1984), "part of being 'in harmony' with others is not imposing one's will upon them" (p. 46). Accordingly, children are given the same degree of respect as are adults (Lazarus, 1982), and are afforded ample freedom to learn through their own experiences (Hammond & Meiners, in press). Criticism and scolding of children are avoided, in favor of a more tolerant, less structured posture on the part of adults (Lazarus, 1982).

The creation of art is an additional cultural value in Navajo society, and is used for religious rituals and education, among other purposes. Art is an integral component of the Navajo way of life (Saville-Troike, 1984), and is discussed further in the next section.

There are additional cultural values that characterize Navajo people. However, those discussed herein represent

the values most frequently identified in the literature.

The Role of Art in Navajo Culture - Art is an important aspect of life for Indian people, and is used for a variety of purposes (Kellman, 1985). Religious expression is a principal function of art in the Navajo culture, often expressed through such media as sandpainting, song, and dance (Lowrey, 1983; Saville-Troike, 1984). Like American Indian tribes in general (Lazarus, 1982; Trimble & Fleming, 1989), Navajo society places a premium on each aspect of life being in harmony with the others (Lowery, 1983). As Saville-Troike (1984) observes, this plan of harmonious existence is often reflected in the Navajo's art: "The maintenance of harmony- with nature, with other people, with the spirit world- is perhaps the most pervasive theme in the Navajo aesthetic" (p. 44).

In addition to religious expression, art has been used by Indians for the purposes of record keeping, decoration, celebration (Kellman, 1985), functionalism, beautification (Dockstader, 1961), and education (Saville-Troike, 1984). Art continues to be an essential part of life for the traditional Indian, and the role of artist is one that many Navajos assume. Witherspoon (1977) has remarked that, "Navajo society is one of artists (art creators) while Anglo society consists primarily of nonartists who view art (art consumers)" (p. 152).

Since art plays an important role in so many realms of Navajo being, it would seem reasonable for the Navajo to view art as a component central to their way of life. Indeed, in her writings Saville-Troike (1984) referred to "the integral nature of art and life" (p. 49) as observed from the perspective of the 'Navajo way.' Art, then, appears to be an essential element in the traditional Navajo culture and lifestyle.

Cultural Aspects Life as a Deaf Person

To the many people not acquainted with deafness and its concomitant implications, the notion of a Deaf culture will perhaps be an unfamiliar concept. For the reader who may be unfamiliar with the existence of a Deaf culture, this section is expanded to allow a more comprehensive look at this unique cultural group. Traditionally, deaf persons have not been viewed by members of the majority society as culturally distinct. Rather, a clinical or *pathological* perspective of deafness has been most common among hearing people (Baker & Cokely, 1980; Hardaway, 1984). Those who perceive deafness pathologically view deaf people as defective and in need of restoration to a hearing or "normal" condition (Baker and Cokely, 1980).

In contrast to the pathological view of deafness is the *cultural* view, held by members and advocates of the Deaf

community. Rather than emphasizing the ways that deaf people deviate from the so-called hearing norm (Hardaway, 1984), the cultural view "focuses on the language, experiences, and values of a particular group of people who happen to be deaf" (Baker & Cokely, 54).

Over ninety percent of deaf children are born to hearing parents, who are not conversant in American Sign Language (ASL) (Tressburg, 1988). As a result, acculturation of Deaf children typically does not occur in the home. Rutherford (1988) notes that a distinctive characteristic of culturally Deaf people is that they often "acquire the group's primary trait, language, not from parents but from peers" (p. 136), and that this acculturation of Deaf children occurs primarily in state-operated residential schools for the deaf.

Characteristics of Deaf Culture - While members of the Deaf community claim cultural separateness, it is interesting to note that groups comprised of persons with other disabilities, such as blindness or paraplegia, still identify culturally with the majority society. The difference between deafness and every other disabling condition is the presence of a common language utilized by members of the Deaf community. Although American Sign Language is not universal among all deaf people, those who consider themselves culturally Deaf do use ASL to

communicate (Hardaway, 1984). Other groups of people with disabilities continue to rely upon spoken language as their primary mode of communication (Rutherford, 1988). Rutherford (1988) reports that "what makes Deaf people a cultural group instead of simply a loose organization of people with a similar sensory loss is the fact that their adaptation includes language" (p. 132). Therefore, the predominant feature of culturally Deaf people is their mode of communication, American Sign Language (Baker & Cokely, 1980; Padden & Humphries, 1988; Schein, 1984).

The use of ASL is the chief attribute identifying members of the Deaf community. Apart from ASL use there is some variance among Deaf people, but a number of characteristics appear to be widespread. For example, a fundamental attribute of members of the Deaf community is what is referred to in literature as "attitudinal deafness" (Baker & Cokely, 1980; Hardaway, 1984; Rutherford, 1988). Baker & Cokely (1980) indicate that attitudinal deafness occurs when a person affiliates with the Deaf community and identifies oneself as a member, supports the values of the community, and is accepted by other members as part of the community. Attitudinal deafness is actually more important in becoming part of the community than is the degree of hearing loss.

Researchers note that the Deaf community is distinct

from religious or ethnic communities where it is relatively easy to discern who is or is not a member (Baker & Cokely, 1980). Close geographical proximity is not necessarily a characteristic of the Deaf community. As Hardaway (1984) explains, the boundaries of the Deaf community "are more often conceptual rather than concrete" (p. 2). This distance, however, does not prevent the Deaf community from remaining a very supportive and "close knit" group. As Tressburg (1988) states, "A Deaf person anywhere will look out for another Deaf person" (p. 13).

An additional significant feature of Deaf culture is its value system (Rutherford, 1988). According to Hardaway (1984), "these values shape how Deaf people behave, what they believe in and how they react to Hearing people" (p. 4). There are a number of values especially cherished by Deaf people. Among the most precious of these values is the preservation of ASL (Baldwin, 1991). In order to preserve their language, Deaf people rarely use ASL with hearing people (Baker & Cokely, 1980), and instead utilize a more English-like form of sign language. Kannapell (cited in Baker & Cokely, 1980) explains one reason why Deaf people hesitate to use ASL with hearing people:

> It is important to understand that ASL is the only thing we have that belongs to Deaf people completely. It is the only thing that has grown out of the Deaf

> group. Maybe we are afraid to share our language with hearing people. Maybe our group identity will disappear once hearing people know ASL. Also, will hearing people dominate Deaf people more than before if they learn ASL? (p. 59)

Another common value among culturally Deaf people is the tendency to disassociate from speech (Hardaway, 1984), and to view oralists and their philosophies with overt negativity (Baldwin, 1991). Hearing people have a long history of attempting to suppress ASL and forcing Deaf people to use speech (Hardaway, 1984), and to become as "hearing-like" as possible. Rutherford (1988) refers to this practice as "linguistic genocide" (p. 142). As a result, many culturally Deaf people view oralists with a profound dislike. Oral deaf people are also frequently perceived negatively, and according to Glickman (1983), they "might receive the burden of Deaf community anger because of the implicit betrayal or sell-out in their attitude" (p. 8). Members of the Deaf community view Deafness as a positive experience, and consider themselves "whole" people, regardless of the absence of hearing (Rutherford, 1984), or speech.

Storytelling is another important facet of Deaf culture. Many Deaf people are extremely skilled storytellers, and these stories serve a variety of purposes:

to affirm fundamental beliefs of the group; to carry the messages of history; to transpose the messages of history for the reality of today; and to convey the wisdom of the group to those without Deaf families (Padden & Humphries, 1988).

There are other characteristics frequently observed within the Deaf culture. They include high (85-90%) incidence of intermarriage among Deaf persons (Schein, 1984); and attendance at Deaf clubs, athletic events, and political organizations (Hardaway, 1984), where communication between members and participants is non-problematic. Although there are others, the attributes just described are among the most frequently identified characteristics of culturally Deaf people and their community. While it may initially appear that Deaf people are simply a group of "handicapped" people who can neither hear nor speak and therefore use sign language to communicate, the reality is something quite different. Deaf people have a cultural identity uniquely their own, and claim a proud heritage, rich with their own distinct language, values, goals, traditions, political and social organizations, literature, folklore, and art work (Hardaway, 1984; Rutherford, 1988).

<u>The Role of Art In Deaf Culture -</u> The Deaf community enjoys a rich artistic heritage. Stories, poetry, plays,

folklore, and ASL history are among the works represented in the body of literature that has been produced by Deaf writers. Many of the works of Deaf authors provide the reader with reflections of the Deaf experience.

Tom Willard (1990), founder and executive director of the Rochester, New York gallery and arts service organization called Deaf Artists of America, addresses the difference between art that happens to be created by deaf people, and **Deaf art**. According to Willard, most of the work produced by deaf artists is indistinguishable from the art of hearing artists. However, a growing number of Deaf artists have begun to realize the power and effectiveness of the medium of art to express the Deaf experience to the hearing public. Deaf art, then, "communicates to the viewer the themes, moods, and experiences of being deaf or hearing-impaired" (Willard, 1990, 11A).

Although conscious expressions of Deaf political ideology are appearing more frequently in the creations of Deaf artists as Deaf art, there is very little research that addresses whether or not the condition of deafness itself actually fosters the creation of art work that is culturally, aesthetically, or qualitatively different from that of hearing artists. The single piece of research located that addresses an obvious post-deafness change in artistic style was conducted by Deborah Sonnenstrahl, Ph.D.

(1988), professor of Art History at Gallaudet University, in Washington, D.C. Sonnenstrahl, herself deaf, has studied the life of the famous Spanish artist Francisco De Goya y Lucientes, and examined the paintings that he produced both before and after his deafness. In 1792, while he was in his 40's, Goya became profoundly deaf as the result of an unspecified illness.

Because Goya's deafness did not occur until after he had spent many years as a prolific artist, a clear comparison of his pre- and post-deafness paintings can be made. In her assessment of his art prior to the onset of deafness, Sonnenstrahl described Goya's work as, "easy to understand, pleasant to look at, and impersonal without involving the artist's personality" (p. 7). These earlier paintings depicted lighthearted scenes of Spanish life, including children playing, parties, and dances. He also painted portraits, landscapes, and panoramas that were generally calm and serene in nature.

In contrast, Goya's post-deafness art became much more somber as he began to reflect his thoughts and feelings in his painting. In place of the frivolous and carefree displays that comprised most of his earlier works were harsh and unflattering representations of Spanish nobility, war scenes, victims being tortured, and inmates of asylums for the insane and the bewitched. Sonnenstrahl suggests that

Goya's entire personality changed as a result of his deafness. He became introverted, cynical, aggressive, emotional, and introspective. Since he could no longer communicate he used art as his medium of expression, and these new elements of his personality were played out in the paintings.

Although it may appear that Goya's post-morbid personality characteristics could reflect adjustment difficulties to the onset of most any disability (Wright, 1983), in her analysis, Sonnenstrahl specifically indicates that it was Goya's inability to communicate that engendered the maladaptive behaviors. This communication barrier occurred as a direct result of his deafness, and most likely would not have been an issue had Goya been blinded, lost the use of his limbs, or experienced the onset of many other disabling conditions that do not impair communication. Goya also wrote extensively about how he believed he had changed as a result of becoming deaf. Consequently, the components of his paintings that are likely attributable to the ramifications of deafness are easier to discern. However, the art work of persons born deaf or deafened at an early age provides no such opportunity for this type of comparison. Apart from Deaf art that is a deliberate reflection of political ideology, examples of art work created by deaf people, in which the deafness condition is

unintentionally manifested, was not found to be addressed in the literature.

Deaf art, then, refers to the intentional creation of art work by a Deaf individual for the purpose of conveying some aspect of a culturally Deaf perspective on life. It seems quite natural that deaf people, largely separated from the world of aural communication, would cultivate the ability to express themselves using alternate methods (Willard, 1990). The medium of art provides a means of expression for many deaf people, and an increasing number are using aesthetic elements to comment on the Deaf experience, thus creating Deaf art.

Cultural Implications of Talk Therapy With Indians and with Deaf People

The determination of a client's cultural identity is commonly made by the counselor in a talk therapy situation (Trimble & Fleming, 1989). Since counseling via talk is so much more common and familiar to many practitioners than is art therapy, the reader may wonder why art therapy is being explored as an alternative for the assessment of acculturation in the case of the Deaf Navajo Indian being studied. The following review of cross-cultural counseling literature addresses the possible implications of talk therapy both with Indians and with Deaf persons.

Cultural Implications of Talk Therapy With Navajo Clients

The literature indicates that the major reason why traditional counseling may not be the most effective therapeutic intervention with American Indian clients is because Indians are often hesitant to make verbal self-disclosures (Darou, 1987; Yazzie, 1984). Indian hesitancy to disclose verbally stems both from the talk therapy format (Heinrich, Corbine, & Thomas, 1990), and Indian distrust of White authority figures (Zitzow & Estes, 1981). This distrust seems to relate to value differences between the two cultures. Both issues of the talk therapy format and value differences are explored.

Talk Therapy Format - Experts in cross-cultural counseling with American Indians have found that the conventional talk therapy commonly used with members of the majority society has a notably limited scope of effectiveness when implemented with traditional Indian clients (Heinrich, Corbine, & Thomas, 1990; Lazarus, 1982; Lowrey, 1983). In his work with American Indian children, Lazarus (1982) determined that, "A counselor will not meet with success using verbal interaction" (p. 85). Counselors working with adult Indian clients have also discovered a variety of cultural issues that may be potential obstacles to effective talk therapy (Darou, 1987; Richardson, 1981; Zitzow & Estes, 1981). For example, Indians may consider

the counselor's questions to be intrusive. Self-disclosure to strangers is not traditionally characteristic of Indian people (Darou, 1987; Trimble & Fleming, 1989). Yazzie (1984) indicates that cultural restrictions may cause Indian clients to be reluctant to talk to counselors. Even when asked a direct question the Indian client may feel culturally prohibited from giving a direct answer (Darou, 1987), or may respond in a culturally representative manner such as with a lengthy period of silence (Lazarus, 1982; Richardson, 1981; Saville-Troike, 1984; Zitzow & Estes, 1981).

Another disadvantage of talk therapy situations for Indian clients occurs when the therapist relies chiefly on the client's verbalizations for information. In addition to talking, traditional Indians depend heavily on non-verbal forms of communication (Darou, 1987). For example, in Anglo society direct eye contact between people communicating is common, and refusing to meet the eyes of the person one is talking or listening to is considered indicative of boredom, disrespect (Glickman, 1983), or is somehow "less honest" (Richardson, 1981, 226). On the other hand, it is more important in Indian cultures to be a good listener (Richardson, 1981). Many Indians may also be considered shy by Anglo standards (Christopherson & Dingle, 1982). Consequently, it is common for Indian clients not to

maintain eye contact (Trimble & Fleming, 1989).

The issue of eye contact among Indian cultures also relates to respect, albeit in quite a different way from how the issue is perceived by Anglo speakers. According to Diane Yazzie (1984), director of Indian Rehabilitation, Inc. in Phoenix, eye contact may be inappropriate depending on the age, sex, relationship, tribal value system, and level of familiarity between the people conversing. So while lack of eye contact in the Anglo culture may be interpreted as dishonesty, boredom, or disrespect, this same behavior among traditional Indians could be reflective of respect for the speaker and/or intense concentration on the message being listened to.

In contrast to the potentially problematic issues of verbal disclosure and non-verbal communication that can occur in a talk therapy situation, art therapy does not require the client to verbally self-disclose to the counselor. Furthermore, the counselor does not run the risk of committing cultural errors in non-verbal interaction. Thus, these two barriers are effectively removed as obstacles to the establishment of a productive counseling relationship.

Value Differences - There are currently 478 American Indian tribes that are officially recognized by the U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs. An additional 52 tribes exist

that do not receive federal government acknowledgment (Heinrich, Corbine, & Thomas, 1990). While there is a striking diversity among these many tribal units (Richardson, 1981; Trimble & Fleming, 1989), there are certain cultural consistencies and values that appear to span tribal and geographic boundaries (Kluckhohn & Strodtbeck, 1961; Lazarus, 1982; Richardson, 1981).

As Trimble & Fleming (1989) report, the values espoused by Indians are quite dissimilar to those of Anglos. In fact, these values are frequently in direct opposition to each other (Richardson, 1981). Richardson goes on to say that, "No two races could so grossly differ in value systems than the American Indian and White" (p. 225).

As a result of these contrasting value orientations, relations between Anglos and Indians have been turbulent. Throughout history, according to Saville-Troike (1984), members of the dominant society have repeatedly tried to abolish the language and traditions of American Indians. Richardson (1981) describes the prevailing attitude by the White society toward American Indians historically as one of hate, combined with "the obsession to eliminate the Indian" (p. 219).

Coupled with the value differences that exist between the two cultures is the frequent Indian distrust of Anglo authority figures. According to the following researchers,

the legacy of the White race to the American Indian can be characterized by lies, intimidation, broken treaties, land theft (Richardson, 1981), cultural oppression (Heinrich, Corbine, & Thomas, 1990; Saville-Troike, 1984), compelled integration (Fixico, 1989), infliction of disease, and attempted genocide (Richardson, 1981). As Heinrich, Corbine, and Thomas (1990) state, "Given their overwhelmingly bitter experience with Whites historically, it is not unexpected that many Native Americans view Whites with suspicion and even hostility" (p. 128). With regard to the Indian people, the United States has done little to live up to its reputation as "a magnanimous country steeped in a history of humanitarian concern for human rights all over the world" (Richardson, 1981, 230). To the contrary, according to Fixico (1989), Heinrich, Corbine, and Thomas (1990), and Saville-Troike (1984), Indian cultures and values have consistently been disregarded and oppressed by a dominant White society that has repeatedly and violently tried to assimilate American Indians into the Anglo culture.

The instigators of this crusade to quell Indianness have been both the United States Government and, ironically, various Christian organizations (Fixico, 1989). Broken promises and other recurrent negative experiences with representatives of these groups have left many Indian people with a suspicion of White authority figures. Indians may

perceive Anglo counselors as authority figures.

Indian value differences have significant implications for counselors. The values of American Indians are not well known to many practicing counselors since the values and cultures of Indians are often omitted from counselor training programs. Most graduate counseling programs do not provide training in the area of American Indian values and traditions (Darou, 1987; Sue & Sue, 1981). Consequently, although many counselors work with clients of cultures not their own, comparatively few are adequately prepared to counsel across cultures. While this omission of training in American Indian culture is perhaps not deliberate, the end result is often the development of counselors who have completed their training without acquiring a sensitivity to Indian culture and values. Pedersen (1977) indicates that a heightened awareness to cross-cultural sensitivity in counselor training programs is important for successful interventions with culturally different clients. In situations where the counselor is inadequately trained in the culture of American Indians, it is possible that he/she may be viewed by certain Indian clients as one who is both uninformed regarding Indian culture and norms, and is representative of the society that has spent the last two hundred years acting out the "compulsion to make the Indian into a White person" (Richardson, 1981, 220). Consequently,

traditional American Indians in therapy may view the non-Indian counselor with a feeling of distrust, which may, in turn, influence the Indian client's willingness to disclose in the session. This hesitancy to disclose would also affect the counselor's ability to assess cultural identity. Cross-cultural counselors indicate that assessment of cultural identity is a precursor to the establishment of a culturally affirmative therapeutic environment (Trimble & Fleming, 1989). Since a culturally affirmative environment may be required for trust and disclosure, and some Indians may be hesitant to disclose to an inadequately trained non-Indian counselor, talk therapy may not be the most appropriate counseling intervention with traditional Indian people in certain instances.

In contrast, art therapy permits the client to reveal him/herself non-verbally. Furthermore, since communicating through art therapy is less threatening than expressing oneself verbally (Dalley, 1984), the client may be more receptive to the concept of conveying in images what he/she is less comfortable putting into words (Naumburg, 1966). Therefore, acculturation level, commonly determined through verbal interaction between counselor and client, would perhaps be assessed more effectively through art therapy when working with traditionally oriented Indian people. Moreover, through the less intimidating avenue of art,

perhaps there exists a basis for the development of the trust that historically has been so clearly violated.

Cultural Implications of Talk Therapy with Deaf Clients

The majority of counselors who work with deaf clients are hearing (Anderson & Rosten, 1985). Therefore, most counseling situations involving culturally Deaf people will be cross-cultural in nature. Any counseling situation involving participants of different cultures presents unique challenges to effective therapeutic intervention. With regard to Deaf clients, two significant challenges are the issue of communication and the phenomenon of mistrust. Each will be examined in detail.

Communication - Effective communication between counselor and client is clearly a prerequisite to a productive therapeutic relationship (Anderson & Rosten, 1985). Deaf persons may utilize any of several communication methods, including various forms of sign language, speech, speech-reading, gestures, drawings, paintings, pantomime, and writing (Patterson & Stewart, 1971). The culturally sensitive counselor communicates with the client in the manner the client most prefers (Glickman & Zitter, 1989).

To determine the mode of communication most preferred by the client, an evaluation of his/her linguistic skills

must be done. The ability to evaluate client skills presumes a certain level of proficiency on the part of the evaluator. Ideally, the counselor then adjusts his/her mode of communication to match that of the deaf client (Glickman & Zitter, 1989).

For most culturally Deaf clients the preferred communicative method is American Sign Language, and cultural sensitivity mandates that the counselor be competent in this language. Unfortunately, the overwhelming majority of counselors, therapists, and psychologists do not possess adequate sign language skills (Glickman & Zitter, 1989). In the absence of communication between counselor and client, the establishment of a therapeutic relationship is impossible. As Stewart (1981) reports, in interacting with Deaf clients "the counselor's skills become the key elements in effecting change in the counseling process" (p. 136). The inability to communicate is the most common barrier separating the majority of hearing counselors from their Deaf clients (Patterson & Stewart, 1971). In addition to this communication barrier precluding any type of one-on-one counseling relationship, it is likely that the lack of communication would also prevent the therapist from any credible assessment of the client's acculturative status in the Deaf community.

While talk therapy with most Deaf clients requires a

significant level of counselor expertise in ASL, art therapy does not. Researchers actually suggest art as a possible communication technique when interacting with Deaf clients, particularly those whose linguistic skills are highly visual and less verbal in nature (Glickman & Zitter, 1989; Patterson & Stewart, 1971). For many clients, perhaps art therapy is a meaningful avenue through which the communication barrier may be circumvented, a therapeutic relationship may be established, and level of acculturation may be discerned.

Phenomenon of Mistrust - Many Deaf people regard the hearing world with feelings of suspicion and mistrust (Chough, 1983). This phenomenon of mistrust is conspicuous in many counseling relationships between Deaf clients and hearing counselors. One Deaf authority explains the origin of this trust-mistrust phenomenon:

> When a deaf person goes to an agency for help she or he brings a history of experiences with hearing people. If deaf persons have negative experiences with hearing people, they tend to generalize from those experiences with hearing people to all hearing people. If deaf persons have negative experiences with hearing people while growing up, they will feel negative toward hearing people throughout their lives until they understand this and know that it is not they as

individuals who deaf people do not trust. The hearing counselors represent hearing people that deaf people have had negative experiences with in the past (Kannapell, 1983, 20-21).

Members of the Deaf community feel entirely justified in their characterization of encounters with the hearing world as "negative." Historically, it is the hearing professionals who have made decisions for deaf people, thus fostering a cycle of dependency by the deaf often continuing into adulthood (Chough, 1983). Equally common has been the ignorance of hearing people regarding deafness, and their basic apathy toward becoming educated on the subject (Kannapell, 1983).

An additional area of distress for the Deaf client, stemming from prior negative experiences, is confidentiality. There is concern that if the counselor has some connection with the Deaf community, word may "leak out," and confidentiality would therefore be violated (Kannapell, 1983). Confidentiality is also broken when professionals decide to share information "for the good of the client." For example, counselors in residential school settings often seem to function as "informants," reporting to parents and administrators pieces of information that were told to them in confidence (Falberg, 1985).

As a result of past unpleasant or offensive encounters

with the hearing world, feelings of mistrust and negativity are often transferred to the counselor. In a talk therapy setting, where feelings of trust are generally important for the client to feel comfortable self-disclosing, this lack of trust may severely impede the therapeutic process.

Conversely, art therapy does not require the client to disclose verbally to the counselor. It is an interesting parallel that many American Indians and Deaf people, as a result of their perceptions of how they have been treated in the past, often have a profound mistrust of members of the majority society. This feeling of mistrust may not bode well for a cross-cultural counseling relationship requiring verbal self-disclosure. The medium of art therapy seems to be worth exploring as an alternative for traditional American Indians as well as culturally Deaf people.

Art Therapy

Art Therapy Defined

Although there is no universally accepted definition of art therapy, it is acknowledged that art therapy is practiced in a variety of forms and varies according to the proportions of art and psychotherapy involved (Birtchnell, 1984; Ulman, 1975), depending upon the theoretical orientation of the practitioner (Edwards, 1987; Wadeson, 1987). While practitioners are agreed that art therapy

necessarily joins the two domains of art and psychotherapy to some degree, to **what** degree is an area of some divergence.

For the purposes of this paper, the following definition of art therapy, published by Georgiana Jungels (1979), Registered Art Therapist (ATR), and past Chairperson of the Public Information Committee of the American Art Therapy Association (AATA), is used:

> Art therapy is a human service profession providing opportunities to develop physical, emotional, and/or learning skills through art experiences. It provides for the exploration of personal problems and human potential through both verbal and non-verbal expression (p. 20).

Benefits of Art Therapy

The purposes for utilizing art therapy, as well as the benefits clients may realize from its use, differ according to the treatment setting, client population, theoretical orientation of the practitioner, and the reason the client has sought therapy. Accordingly, specific treatment goals also vary just as they do in any other therapeutic environment.

In spite of the diversity to be expected within specific circumstances, the literature does reflect a

variety of general objectives and benefits that may conceivably be realized through participation in the art therapy process. Among the more commonly mentioned benefits of art therapy is an increased ability to express oneself. A number of differing types of expressions may occur, including expression of emotions and inner conflicts (Talerico, 1986); expression of feelings and images that the client is not comfortable voicing (Naumburg, 1966); expression of unconscious thoughts that may be verbally censored (Ulman, 1975); and expression of feelings relating to sense of identity and "self" (Robinson, 1984). The latter expression of one's identity is perhaps a basis from which acculturation can be inferred.

Therapeutic Process

Within the discipline of art therapy there is a distinction made between **art psychotherapy** and **art as therapy**. The art therapy group upon which this work is based is an example of the **art as therapy** approach. Accordingly, art as therapy will be examined in further detail.

Art As Therapy - Art as therapy, developed by Edith Kramer (Henley, 1987), refers to the creative process itself, which offers the client "potentially useful insights from art experiences neither designed for nor subjected to

analysis of their symbolic implications" (Ulman, 1987, 289). Therapists advocating an art as therapy approach believe that the art process "is both the means and end of therapy" (McNiff, 1988, 42). Kramer (1975) has observed that the creative encounter itself is the principal factor in movement toward emotional well-being.

Upon completion of the creative process, discussion of the art work may or may not take place. In their work with college students in art therapy groups, Geller, et al. (1986) note that the participants often spontaneously begin discussing each other's art, and at other times the therapist will "initiate a group discussion to help the students explore and understand more deeply what they have just experienced" (p. 230).

Role of Interpretation in Art As Therapy

Although art therapy has been utilized in the past as an instrument for psychiatric or psychological diagnosis (Birtchnell, 1984; Rubin, 1979), this practice is met with dissenting opinions by practicing clinicians. Whether or not a practitioner engages in interpreting the client's art work at all, as well as the purpose for which it may be interpreted (for example, affixing diagnostic labels), seems largely a reflection of theoretical orientation.

Among clinicians who follow the art as therapy

approach, there seems to be consensus that therapist interpretations without significant client input are to be avoided (Dalley, 1984; McNiff, 1988; Silver, 1979). For example, in his 1988 publication, Fundamentals of Art Therapy, McNiff declares that assigning fixed meanings to certain images, a practice sometimes engaged in by those attempting to make diagnoses, is nothing less than "image abuse" (p. 48). The foundation for image abuse occurs when the interpreter views the art work with negativity and suspicion, assuming that a hidden message exists, and that the actual meaning is something different from what is presented. McNiff continues:

> The problem is magnified to epidemic proportions through the publication of interpretation catalogs which actually tell people what a particular image means. . . As in other situations of abuse, the problem is largely one of ignorance. . . Artists have the freedom or the right to give titles to their work, and perhaps this is as close as we can come to fixing a meaning. . . I have learned from my experience with art interpretation in groups that there can never be a fixed meaning or story 'behind' a picture (pp. 48-49).

Landgarten (1981) concurs with McNiff, declaring that "it is essential to understand the client's own interpretation" of art pieces (p. 4). Dalley (1984)

maintains that the therapist's role should be to discuss the art with the client after it is created, and perhaps speculate or suggest ideas to the client, but the artist him/herself is the only person qualified to correlate the significance of the art piece to his or her own life circumstance. Further, Dalley flatly states that, "art therapy is not diagnosis through art. . . While this is a very interesting idea, at the present time [I] believe it is a matter only for speculation, as there is no way of testing its validity" (p. xxiv). Silver (1979) also believed that interpreting client's art work was a dangerous practice. Thus, it appears that an art as therapy approach would utilize a substantial amount of input from the artist when attempting to arrive at any type of interpretive analysis of the art piece.

Art Therapy With Indians

Extremely few studies regarding the use of art therapy with American Indians have been published, and there is even less available research that specifically addresses art therapy with Navajos. Among the researchers that address Indian people in general, Lazarus (1982) asserts that one preferred method of therapeutic intervention with Indian youngsters utilizes "art as a form of symbolic expression" (p. 85). In his work with Indian children, Lazarus has

found that they generally assume a nonverbal, passive demeanor when interacting with a non-Indian counselor. Consequently, art therapy is a therapeutic intervention he employs to circumvent these cross-cultural communication difficulties.

There has been a limited amount of research on art therapy done with Indians for the purpose of determining the participants sense of identity. For example, Eldredge & Carrigan (in press) conducted a series of art therapy sessions with deaf Indian young men, two of whom were Navajo. Among the stated purposes of their study was to "examine [the participants'] 'view of self'" (p. 3).

In earlier research, Schuster (1978) utilized art therapy with both Indian and non-Indian children as a means of measuring attitudes, interests, and values. Perhaps a person's attitudes, interests, and values could be considered a significant part of his/her cultural identity.

In their work with non-Indian populations, several researchers have indicated that participation in art therapy can impact feelings of identity. Talerico (1986) stated that the creative process "encourages feelings of. . . identification" (p. 233). Laing suggests that "art therapy offers an area where the patient can proclaim his identity and. . . be himself" (Laing cited in Dalley, 1984, xxi). Robinson (1984) adds that "art work can convey the

fundamental questions of identity" (p. 83).

In his work as a cross-cultural psychologist, Wayne Dennis (1966) completed a multi-cultural study which examined the drawings of several thousand boys between eleven and thirteen years of age, from thirteen countries and several socioeconomic groups. The findings presented support Dennis' use of what he has termed "the value hypothesis." Simply put, the value hypothesis states that when asked to draw a man, children will consistently draw a man that they perceive as positive or valued; someone they would like to emulate or become. According to Dennis (1966),

> . . . values control to a large extent the kind of man who is portrayed. The man drawn is not merely a familiar man. He is a familiar man toward whom favorable attitudes are held . . . Drawings do not merely mirror the environment. . . they reflect values or preferences (p. 4).

Art Therapy With Deaf Persons

Art therapy has been used with deaf persons for a variety of purposes. For example, Rawley Silver (1970, 1978, 1979, 1987) has published extensively on the use of art therapy to enhance cognitive skills and abilities in deaf children. According to Silver (1987), a cognitive

approach to art therapy is "based on the premise that art can be a language of cognition paralleling the spoken word" (p. 233). Additional goals of this approach include the diagnosis and treatment of emotional disorders, the exploration of emotions, the enhancement of self-confidence, and the development of the capacity for abstract thought (Silver 1987, 1970).

David Henley is another prominent art therapist who has worked extensively with deaf children. Henley (1988, 1987) states that two significant benefits of art therapy with deaf people include enhanced self-esteem and improved expressive communication. A third benefit is the aesthetic satisfaction that is derived from participation in the creative process.

While Lowenfeld (1987) indicates that art therapy with the deaf can serve as an outlet for emotional expression, only one reference was located which addressed the concept of cultural expression through art work. Although the expression of cultural identity was not a stated purpose of their research, the study by Eldredge and Carrigan (in press), upon which this thesis is based, determined that cultural identity was expressed through art pieces. In their work, the authors concluded that the cultural identity of Deafness was not expressed through the paintings of four deaf men who represent three different Indian tribes.

Although art therapy with deaf people may not have been utilized specifically for the purpose of cultural identification thus far, there was nothing found in the literature that reflected negatively on its use for this purpose.

Summary

The initial section of this chapter explored the cultural aspects of life as a Navajo and as a Deaf person. Navajos vary substantially in their level of acculturation or traditionalism, and retain many distinctive cultural characteristics that differ from members of the dominant society. Some of the characteristics of Navajo culture include a holistic view of the universe, respect for age, de-emphasis on time, emphasis on extended family and sharing, use of non-verbal communication, placement of value on tradition, tolerant parenting styles, and the creation of art.

The role of art in Navajo culture is significant. Religious expression is a principal function of art in Navajo culture, but art is also used for record keeping, decoration, celebration, functionalism, beautification, and education. Navajo people view art as a component central to their way of life.

The chief identifying feature of culturally Deaf people

is their language, American Sign Language. Other frequently observed characteristics of members of the Deaf community include attitudinal deafness, a common value system, story telling, high incidence of inter-marriage, and attendance at Deaf clubs and organizations.

The Deaf community enjoys a rich artistic heritage, and the role of art in Deaf culture is becoming increasingly representative of the Deaf experience. Art work created by Deaf artists for the purpose of conveying some aspect of life as a Deaf person is known as **Deaf art.**

The central portion of this chapter explored the cultural implications of traditional talk therapy with American Indians and with Deaf people. Experts in cross-cultural counseling indicate that, in some settings, talk therapy may not be the most effective therapeutic intervention for traditional American Indians since cultural restrictions may deter the client from verbally disclosing to the non-Indian therapist. Cultural disparities in non-verbal behavior may also prove problematic in the counseling relationship. Furthermore, Indian distrust of the White counselor, associated with value differences between the two cultures, may be an additional factor obstructing the client's willingness to disclose verbally. All of these factors lend credibility to the conclusion that talk therapy, in certain instances, is not the preferred method

of therapeutic intervention with traditional Indian people. If clear communication is not established between client and counselor, the counselor's ability to assess the client's level of acculturation is also frustrated.

Most counseling relationships with Deaf clients involve hearing counselors. In this type of cross-cultural counseling situation, two significant potential barriers exist: the communication issue and the phenomenon of mistrust.

Effective communication is a precursor to the establishment of a therapeutic relationship. Although deaf clients may express themselves in any of several different communicative methods, most culturally Deaf individuals utilize American Sign Language as their preferred mode of communication. However, the overwhelming majority of hearing counselors, therapists, and psychologists are not conversant in ASL. Therefore, the customary one-on-one talk therapy relationship between client and counselor is precluded. Accordingly, determination of acculturative status via talk therapy is also hampered.

Many Deaf people regard hearing people with feelings of suspicion and mistrust. These feelings often occur as a result of past negative experiences with hearing professionals and are then transferred to the current hearing counselor. Since feelings of mistrust may deter the

client from disclosing to the hearing counselor, even if the communication barrier has been bridged, an alternative intervention may need to be sought.

Inasmuch as art therapy permits the client to reveal him/herself non-verbally, the client's distrust of the Anglo counselor and hesitancy to disclose verbally are no longer issues for the Indian client. Additionally, art therapy may be considered a way to circumvent the communication barrier that exists between many hearing counselors and their Deaf clients. Mistrust of the hearing counselor would also be less problematic in an art therapy setting. Consequently, acculturation level would perhaps be assessed more effectively through art therapy when working with traditionally oriented Indian clients, as well as with Deaf persons.

The final section of this chapter addressed what art therapy is, some of its purposes and potential benefits, the therapeutic process itself, the role of interpretation in art therapy, and art therapy as it has been used with American Indians and with deaf persons. Art therapy is a human service profession that joins the domains of art and psychotherapy, and may be approached from a variety of theoretical orientations. One commonly mentioned benefit of art therapy is the client's heightened ability to express him/herself in a variety of ways.

The therapeutic process utilized in the original art therapy group is an example of an **art as therapy** approach to art therapy. Art as therapy refers to the creative process itself, utilizing the philosophy that the art process is not only the means but also the end of the therapy. In art as therapy, the therapist may or may not initiate a discussion after the art work has been completed, however, the therapist does not analyze the art work or its potential symbolism. Although art therapy has been used diagnostically in the past, most therapists agree that interpreting art work without significant input from the artist is to be avoided.

Very few studies exist which address the use of art therapy with Navajo Indians. Among the references that do exist, researchers have determined that art therapy can be an effective therapeutic intervention with Navajos as well as with Indians from other tribal affiliations. One purpose for which art therapy seems to have been effective with Indians is as an expression of personal and cultural identity.

Art therapy has been used more extensively with deaf persons than with Navajos. A number of experts have indicated that art therapy with deaf people can serve a variety of purposes, including the enhancement of cognitive skills, self-esteem, and emotional expression.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This thesis expands on the original research and findings of a 1989 study conducted by two researchers from the University of Arizona who utilized art therapy with four deaf Indian men. This chapter describes their research and delineates data collection procedures for the current case study. The method utilized for analyzing the art pieces and narratives for cultural thematic content is addressed, and the interview with Gene is discussed.

It should be noted that the original art therapy project was conducted primarily for the purpose of addressing transition, rather than acculturation, issues. Had the researchers intended to make some examination of the acculturation patterns of the participants, it is likely that the format for the group exercises would have been different, which may have influenced the findings.

Art Therapy Group

The art therapy group on which this study was based involved four deaf Indian men in a study conducted by Nancy Eldredge, Ph.D., director of the Rehabilitation Counseling: Deafness Program, and Jeanne Carrigan, Ph.D., ATR, director of Studies in Art Therapy, both at the University of

Arizona, in Tucson. Eldredge is a psychologist with expertise in the field of deafness, and is fluent in American Sign Language. Carrigan is an art therapist who is experienced in providing therapeutic intervention with a variety of populations, including deaf people.

Students who were part of a federally funded Transition Program at the Community Outreach Program for the Deaf in Tucson were eligible to participate in the art therapy project. The sessions were held at the University of Arizona Art Department during the Summer of 1989. The project continued for four weeks, and the participants were asked to attend two, two-hour sessions per week. A total of eight meetings were held. Even though participation in the project was voluntary, the researchers emphasized that if a person decided to become involved in the group it was essential that he/she attend all eight meetings. Due to transportation difficulties among prospective participants the group was limited to the four members who had transportation. Although the project was not intended to be restricted to Indians or males, the four participants represented three different Indian tribes and all were young men in their late teens - early 20's. Additionally, all four men were either severely or profoundly deaf, and were fluent in American Sign Language. Each of the four had attended the same residential school for the deaf for the

bulk of their academic careers.

The researchers reported that they primarily served as facilitators of the therapeutic process, and based their intervention style on Greenspoon-Linesch's (1988) five elements of art therapy intervention. These elements include "establishing a relationship with the subject; accepting all art expression; facilitating the expansion of self-expression; responding to underlying meanings revealed in the art pieces; and offering empathy and encouragement" (Eldredge & Carrigan, in press, 5).

During each of the eight art therapy sessions the participants were given a theme and art materials to work with. They were encouraged to express themselves freely, initially through the art media, and subsequently through the creation of a story or narrative about their art work. The researchers also participated in the art creation and story telling. Once the theme for the session had been presented, the environment was relatively informal and the focus non-directive in nature. The participants were free to create as they wished and proceed without input from the researchers unless such input was solicited. The following four themes were addressed by the group:

"Who Am I?"

"Family and Home"

"Personal Power and Strength"

"Message to Others"

The stories that the participants shared with the group, after the completion of each art piece, gave evidence of recurring thematic elements, most significant of which was the "need and desire to connect with their own peoples, their tribes, their histories and traditions as Indian people" (p. 9). The researchers also reported that the participants' "Indian identities were stronger than their Deaf cultural identities" (p. 9). No characteristics of the Deaf culture were described in the researchers' findings. However, as stated previously, the determination of cultural identity was not a focal point of their research.

Although four different works of art were created by the men, including a clay mask, clay statue, oil painting, and wood totem segment, only the paintings and their possible accompanying symbolisms or interpretations were addressed in depth by the researchers in their writings. Whereas Eldredge and Carrigan arrived at their conclusions by analyzing the paintings and stories of all four subjects, this paper examines the four art pieces of one of the subjects in view of his cultural identity.

Inasmuch as an examination of all of the art work of each of the four participants in the art therapy group was beyond the scope of this investigation, a single subject, case study design was utilized by the researcher. A case

study approach permitted the researcher to examine the subject and his art work in greater depth, and to interview the subject, yielding significant additional data. It is believed that the case study approach may provide some heuristic value, stimulating interest in others who may wish to further explore the issues and findings addressed by this research.

Data Collection Procedures

Three primary resources were available which provided data for this analysis: The videotapes and slides of the original study, and the subject himself who was interviewed.

Videotapes and Slides

Five of the original eight art therapy sessions were videotaped in their entirety. Since the majority of the interactions taking place during the sessions occurred in American Sign Language, segments of the videotapes that were germane to Gene's art and stories were translated into English by this writer, and transcribed into written form for easy reference. These translations were subsequently reviewed by two additional independent reviewers who are fluent in ASL. Numerous slides were also taken of the art pieces which facilitated examination of the art work itself.

Interview

Using ASL, Gene was interviewed on videotape by this writer during the Summer of 1991 for approximately 80 minutes. The literature reviewed for this study suggests that, in certain situations, both Deaf people and Indians may be reticent in their verbal interactions with hearing people and non-Indians, respectively. Therefore, one might have expected Gene to be reluctant to discuss so many aspects of his personal life with a hearing Anglo woman he had never before met. However, in what may initially appear as a contradiction, Gene was extremely candid in his self disclosures to the interviewer.

Several factors may provide some insight into why Gene was both able and willing to self-disclose as he did. With regard to Gene's Deaf cultural affiliation, his ability to reveal himself can be accounted for by the interviewer's ability to use ASL in conversation. As mentioned in Chapter II, Patterson and Stewart (1971) indicate that the communication barrier is the major limitation preventing hearing counselors from working with Deaf people. Clearly, if communication is not present, the client is unable to self-disclose. When communication is afforded, however, culturally sensitive interaction may occur (Glickman & Zitter, 1989). Since no communication barrier existed between the subject and the interviewer, Gene was able to

self-disclose.

As to Gene's willingness to self-disclose, the literature review indicated that Deaf people and Indians may distrust members of the dominant society due to their perceptions of how they have been treated by them (Chough, 1983; Heinrich, Corbine, & Thomas, 1990). It is possible that any distrust Gene was feeling toward the interviewer, as a hearing person, was mitigated in his mind by her familiarity with Deaf culture, and experience working at a residential school. Upon first meeting, Gene asked the interviewer several questions which provided him with the knowledge that she had spent three years working at a residential school for the deaf. This information seemed to serve as a type of endorsement or sanctioning of the interviewer, and produced a heightened responsiveness in Gene's level of disclosure. The interviewer's familiarity with Deafness and experience at a residential school seemed to make a difference to Gene, and is perhaps a reason why he was so willing to self-disclose during the interview.

Any distrust that Gene may have been feeling toward the interviewer, as a White person, could also have been tempered through his preliminary questioning of her. Very soon after meeting Gene inquired if she had any Indian ancestry. Coincidentally, the interviewer had a distant ancestor who was a Sioux. This information appeared to

affect Gene positively, and may have added to his degree of comfort with her. This hypothesis is also consistent with the findings of Eldredge and Carrigan (in press) who state that, during their study, the knowledge that all four participants were Indian, and that both researchers had some Indian blood as well, "may have served to establish a basis for trust and disclosure by creating a sense of group unity and identity" (p. 23). Perhaps Gene's view of this interviewer as "part Indian" also facilitated his willingness to trust and disclose.

Furthermore, it may have been a factor significant in Gene's willingness to self-disclose that the relationship between the subject and the interviewer was not therapeutic in nature. The researchers cited herein, who predicted a possible Deaf or Indian resistance to self-disclosure, were describing counseling situations, the focus of which are necessarily different from an interview conducted for the purpose of research. Since the exchange between the subject and interviewer contained no therapeutic overtones, perhaps it is less surprising that Gene was more willing to self-disclose.

Many of the interview questions centered around Gene's family, educational, and cultural background, and included his family demographics, means of communication with family members, experiences with traditional Navajo cultural

ceremonies and rituals, religious beliefs, feelings about people of various cultural affiliations, opinion of "White man's" medicine and doctors, experience at deaf residential school, and personal value system. (For specific interview questions, see Appendix B.) Much of Gene's background information is covered in the opening pages of Chapter IV. Further information about his values and beliefs unfolds throughout Chapter IV. Gene also responded to questions from the Deaf Culture Intentionality Scale (Wright, 1987, Appendix C), which was geared toward the assessment of cultural identity.

Data Analysis

Gene's art work was physically described, and both his art pieces and his stories about the art pieces were examined for thematic elements that may have reflected identification in either the Navajo or the Deaf cultures. As was discussed at length in the preceding chapter, one must be extremely cautious when attempting to utilize art pieces as interpretive projections of individual needs, desires, or feelings. Eldredge and Carrigan (in press) state that, "whenever possible, other interview data was used to help understand the visual images and myths expressed by each participant" (p. 10). In a similar manner, Gene's videotaped stories describing his art work,

as well as the opportunity to interview him, were both critical to the researcher in evaluating his cultural identity as it was revealed through his artistic expression.

The slides of Gene's art work were also utilized in the art assessment. Whereas the videotapes provided insight into the process of creating the art and the stories conveyed by the participants, the slides offered an "up-close" look at the finished products.

Summary

The findings presented in this thesis are an expansion of the original research and conclusions of Eldredge and Carrigan (in press), who conducted an art therapy project with four deaf Indian men. The researchers concluded that the primary cultural affiliation of the four subjects was that of their Indian heritage and that the paintings created by the participants were not representative of the Deaf culture. Whereas Eldredge and Carrigan relied chiefly upon the participants' paintings, and stories told about the paintings, to arrive at the conclusions that provide the basis for their article, this thesis examines all four art pieces of one of the subjects, Gene, to provide an assessment of his cultural affiliation(s) as may be represented through his several pieces of art work.

The resources utilized to collect data for this

analysis consisted of videotapes of the original study, slides of the original study, and the subject himself who was interviewed. Both the videotapes and slides were examined for thematic elements that may demonstrate cultural identity. Gene's videotaped narratives explaining his art work, and his interview with the researcher, were both extremely valuable in determining his cultural preferences and in drawing possible inferences from his art pieces.

CHAPTER IV

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was to assess the acculturative status of a Navajo Indian who is Deaf, through an examination of his art work, accompanying narratives, and interview data. This chapter will present background information on the subject examined in this case study, and describe his art pieces. Further information gathered from the interview is presented, along with the findings of the study. Finally, the research questions posed in Chapter I are answered. Specifically, the issues of whether or not cultural identity is expressed through art work, narratives, and interview data, as well as which cultural affiliation is more strongly represented, are addressed. Lastly, the question of whether or not the assessment of art work is a viable alternative to talking as a means of determining acculturative status is answered.

Gene's Background

Although Gene (a pseudonym) was born in a large Texas city, at the age of 3 or 4 he moved with his mother and four siblings to the Navajo reservation in Northern Arizona. His father had previously been killed in a work-related accident in Texas. Gene was deafened at approximately age 4 as a

result of spinal meningitis. At the age of 5 he was sent away to boarding school at the state residential school for the deaf, several hundred miles from the reservation. With the exception of summers and holiday vacations Gene remained at the school until he was 18. He states that he quit school in his junior year because he "wasn't happy," and returned to the reservation where he remained for the ensuing several years. While there he spent his time working at odd jobs such as tending sheep and working as a stock clerk. He participated in Navajo cultural celebrations as they occurred, and indicated that he enjoyed taking part. This is in apparent contradiction to Gene's comments to Eldredge and Carrigan (in press) about attending ceremonials only occasionally because he felt alienated from the other Indians, and because hearing Indians had beat him up. Perhaps the two year interim between the art therapy group and Gene's interview with the writer and/or his current distance from the reservation have altered his perceptions of these past experiences. Or, perhaps Gene's experiences actually were more positive than he initially recalled to Eldredge and Carrigan.

In 1989, at age 23, Gene returned to the large urban community where he resided while attending residential school. In the last two years he has worked at a fast food restaurant, attended community college, and currently works

in a leather shop.

In spite of growing up largely separated from Navajo culture and customs, he is an active participant in tribal celebrations and rituals that occur when he visits the reservation, where his family still resides. Currently Gene reports that he participates in as many Indian gatherings and events as possible in the city where he lives. He states that he definitely prefers Navajo culture to the culture of Whites, but has chosen to live apart from the reservation "because I needed to be able to communicate and interact with people." Since Gene communicates almost entirely in American Sign Language, communication with family members and others on the reservation was achieved only at a very rudimentary level.

It seems noteworthy to mention that although Gene referred to himself as "Navajo" during the art therapy group conducted by Eldredge and Carrigan, during his interview with the writer he almost invariably referred to himself by the more general term "Indian." Dr. Jennie Joe (personal communication, November 12, 1991), the Navajo expert consulted during the preparation of this paper, indicated that in a group situation with other Indians, it is customary for Indians to identify with their specific tribal affiliation as a means of individuation. However, in one-on-one communication with a non-Indian, such as the writer's

interview with Gene, it would not be uncommon for the person to identify him/herself more generally as Indian. The reasoning behind this, according to Dr. Joe, is that the Indian may assume that members of the dominant society may not know much about specific tribes, but will be familiar generally with the concept of "Indian."

Further, in addition to Navajo, perhaps Gene himself also identifies with the more general concept of "Indian." Dr. Joe (personal communication, November 12, 1991) stated that the motif in his mask, totem, and oil painting "reflected more the generic or pan-Indian than specifically Navajo. One would expect yei masks, sandpainting or desert scene with hogan, etc. Perhaps one could hypothesize that pan-Indianism is a form of acculturation where Indians become more generic than tribal specific." Joe (personal communication, November 12, 1991) and Eldredge (in process) each have independently theorized that extended exposure to the residential school environment, with deaf Indians in residence from various tribal affiliations, could contribute to the pan-Indian acculturation phenomenon.

Description of Art Pieces

Mask

The mask Gene created from clay portrays an Indian face (figure 1). The face is covered in red and black paint and

is applied in a manner consistent with Gene's subsequent applications of color on other art pieces that he has referred to as "war paint." The mouth is gaping open as if in a scream, and the expression exposes a range of possible emotions. A horn protrudes from the forehead of the mask. Unfortunately, Gene's narrative about the mask and additional information about his creative process are unavailable since it occurred during one of the initial three art therapy sessions that were not videotaped.

Sculpture

Gene's second art piece was a clay sculpture of a horse. The horse's body is cut off from the waist down, and the upper body is "rearing up" with the fore legs out in front of the upright animal (figure 2). The legs appear to be non-threatening, and are disproportionately small in comparison to the rest of the horse. The legs are uneven, with the left fore leg situated lower on the body than the right one. The horse's mouth is open, though not extremely wide. The ears are diminutive and tilting backward, and are also disproportionately small in comparison with the rest of the head. The eyes are open and looking forward. The horse's expression is alert. The creation of the horse also occurred during one of the initial three art therapy sessions that were not videotaped.

Painting

Gene's oil painting portrays a muscular Indian warrior holding a spear in his left hand, with an eagle sitting on his right shoulder (figure 3). The Indian's expression is determined. His eyes are focused on something in the distance that appears to be eliciting some emotion. Eldredge and Carrigan (in press) describe the eyes as displaying "a penetrating sorrow" (p. 17). Gene describes the painting, and the bond that exists between the warrior and the eagle:

> A long, long time ago there was an Indian, and he had an eagle that was very precious to him. Long ago White people used to kill the eagles, and the eagle population dwindled such that there were not many left. Now eagles are cherished because there are just a few left. The Indian in the picture puts the eagle on his shoulder, takes care of him, protects him, and uses his spear to defend him. He guards and protects the eagle so that White people can't kill them anymore. The eagle is precious and protected.

Totem Segment

Gene's final art work, the totem segment, utilizes a variety of colors. Though the dominant colors in the top and bottom halves are yellow and blue respectively, the top

half incorporates bands of pink near the eyes, and gray at the top of the head, that alternate with the wider segments of yellow (figure 4). The entire center of the piece is a powerful looking nose which Gene has represented as a large orange star. The eyes appear intense. The bottom of the segment is characterized by a fierce looking mouth, with streaks of pink color on each cheek that Gene identified as "war paint." As he was painting the wood piece Gene stopped long enough to comment that, "The stripes on the face of the Indian that I'm drawing are the Arizona flag." Having earlier identified his creation as an Indian, he subsequently stated that, "Arizona is the place where the Indians were." Gene further commented:

> I really enjoyed carving the totem and applying the different paints. I liked making the wood follow an Arizona design and also making it look Indian. I liked making it look tough, and I enjoyed applying the war paint.

Interview

Much of Gene's demographic and background information gathered from the interview was presented at the beginning of this chapter. Throughout the interview Gene's comments and responses were a reflection of his values, beliefs, and cultural orientations. He appeared to focus on several

topics which serve to highlight his cultural identities. This information is presented in the Themes section of this chapter, beginning on page 84.

During the interview Gene also disclosed a variety of other Navajo cultural characteristics that were not readily discernable from his art work. For example, Gene indicated that his parents and siblings were not the only family members he regularly interacted with on the reservation. He stated that he had "many, many cousins," who lived very nearby, and they would participate in activities together. On several occasions he also made reference to his uncles, aunts, and grandparents. Gene described his interactions with family members as generally positive, with the exception of the difficulty in communication. His interactions with these family members seem consistent with a Navajo view of the importance and role of extended family, as discussed in Chapter II.

Gene stated that there are numerous ways in which his Navajo heritage impacts his life currently. For example, he participates in Navajo rituals and celebrations as often as possible in the city where he now lives. In spite of living apart from the reservation, Gene has located and established a relationship with a Medicine Man who lives in the city. He reports that they get together sometimes and Gene watches him as he engages in his healing activities. Gene discussed

his interest in Medicine Men and Indian medicine with the interviewer:

> Gene (G): I'm fascinated with Indians and how they know how to make the different medicines from herbs to heal people. That really fascinates me.
>
> Interviewer (I): Where do they get the medicine?
>
> G: From plants and things that are grown. They gather it from plants. I really like all that.

Gene's interest in the Medicine Man and learning the ways of healing is consistent with the importance of the Medicine Man in Navajo society, as well as the value of tradition and learning the "old ways," as referenced in the literature review.

Another indicator of the significance of Indian culture in Gene's life now is his present art work. He reported that the paintings and drawings he is currently working on all have Indian motifs. He described one piece he is now painting as having

> some horses in one area and an Indian resting next to the horses, and a store in the background. . . I really love to draw Indians and pow wows. All that stuff fascinates me so I try to draw that now. That's what I love to draw.

The importance of art to Gene relates to Saville-Troike's (1984) comments regarding art as a component central to the

Navajo way of life.

The following interchange, which occurred during the interview, seems to provide some insight into Gene's value system:

I: Is it important to be rich and have a lot of money to buy things like a fancy car, nice house, furniture- are these things important to you?

G: No, that's not important. I like to be humble. Riches aren't important. I like to help people- you know, follow Jesus.

I: Suppose someone like your cousin, the University student, came up to you and wanted to borrow some money.

G: I'd give it to him.

I: Suppose he had no apartment, no place to sleep.

G: I'd invite him over to stay with me. It works just the same with Deaf people. If they need a place to stay I'd invite them to come and stay at my place for awhile. If they have no place, I have them bring their stuff and stay with me. I'm happy to have them come over- I don't mind.

Gene's attitude toward giving of himself can be related to Christopherson and Dingle's (1982) description of Navajos as non-materialistic, as well as Lowrey's (1983) assertion that Navajos typically place a value on sharing. Furthermore,

Gene's inclusion of Deaf people into the group of those he would take into his home is consistent with Tressberg's (1988) characterization of members of the Deaf Community as "taking care of their own."

Other indicators of a Deafness cultural identity were also manifested by Gene during the interview. In fact, It was through the interview process that the writer was able to ascertain the fact that Deafness is a stronger cultural affiliation for Gene than he expressed in the four pieces of art work analyzed, or their accompanying stories. For example, Gene uses American Sign Language as his primary mode of communication. He used ASL with the interviewer, as well as during the art therapy sessions conducted by Eldredge and Carrigan. This characteristic is consistent with information presented in Chapter II which identifies the use of ASL as the dominant feature of culturally Deaf people (Baker & Cokely, 1980; Padden & Humphries, 1988; Schein, 1984).

Gene also reported that most of his friends are Deaf. Since he had previously indicated that most of his friends are also Indian, his largest support group is comprised of Indians who are Deaf. However, that his friends are Deaf is the more significant characteristic with regard to communication. Gene stated during the interview that he left the reservation to live in an urban environment so that

he would have people to communicate with. Hence, communication is clearly a priority. In order to facilitate communication, most of Gene's social interactions are with other Deaf people. This finding is characteristic of Deaf culture, and is supported by Hardaway (1984) who indicates that Deaf social contacts tend to be with other Deaf people.

When asked about his future plans for a relationship, Gene stated that he would like to get married. Asked to detail some of the qualities of his future wife, his first qualification was that she be Deaf. He not only mentioned this requirement first, but then paused before he subsequently added that she must be either Indian or Hispanic. To the interviewer it appeared that Deafness was an absolute requirement, but race was somewhat more flexible. The fact that Gene doesn't feel Indianness is essential in a wife, but Deafness is, seems representative of a culturally Deaf philosophy. As discussed in Chapter II, the intermarriage rate among Deaf people is extremely high, approaching 90 percent (Schein, 1984).

In addition, results of the Deaf Culture Intentionality Scale (Wright, 1987) demonstrated a relatively strong Deaf cultural affiliation. For example, Gene indicated that he felt entirely favorable about the following five statements:

1. You experience Deafness positively.

2. You prefer to communicate in Sign Language.

3. You want a Deaf wife.

4. You like socializing with the Deaf community.

5. You felt like residential school was a second home.

During the interview Gene clearly exhibited a number of characteristics which indicated that his Deafness cultural identity more significant than was revealed through his art work/narratives alone.

Themes

An examination of the art work, narratives, and interview data reveals the presence of several themes that seem significant in Gene's cultural orientation. Whereas the art work is dominated by Navajo themes, representations of both Navajo identity and Deaf identity can be discerned from the interview. Themes that are apparent both in the interview and in the art work/narratives include a kinship with horses and other animals, a nature orientation, negativity toward White people, and a de-emphasis on the value of hearing. Each area will be addressed.

Kinship With Horses and Other Animals

Animals are represented in Gene's sculpture, his painting, and in his narrative about the painting. He identified the sculpture, a horse, as his favorite of the four art works. His painting includes an eagle, and Gene

described the warrior in the painting as riding a horse when he found the baby eagle. As will be discussed in greater detail later in this chapter, Gene described the relationship between the warrior and the eagle as "family."

Gene grew up with animals on the reservation, and spent a significant amount of time with horses, in particular. Although he spent only a limited amount of time there during the years he was away at school, he nevertheless commented on his experiences with horses, or feelings about them, nine times during the interview. Indeed, the topic of horses was more recurrent than any other during the exchange. When describing his interactions with his family while growing up, Gene explained:

> We were always around each other. I had a lot of relatives and we were always together. All of us would get together and ride horses up in the mountains. It was a lot of fun.

Gene also recounted experiences where horses were a part of Navajo cultural ceremonies and festivities. However, perhaps the most telling example of the importance of horses in Gene's life can be inferred from the following interchange that occurred during the interview:

> I: Do you look forward to going back to the reservation to visit?
>
> G: Yes, I look forward to going. I have horses there

and I get to ride them and go up into the mountains. Here there are no horses and that's kind of boring. I look around for horses.

I: Do you look forward to seeing your family?

G: Yes, my cousins and all. I like seeing them all.

When contemplating the benefits of returning to the reservation for a visit, the first thing that occurred to Gene was the presence of horses. He then proceeded to comment on what he does with the horses there and his feelings about the absence of horses in the city where he lives. When asked expressly if he liked to see his family on the reservation Gene responded that he did, although his answer was much briefer. It is perhaps significant that horses were mentioned as the main thing he anticipates when he returns to the reservation, and seeing his family was acknowledged only secondarily as something he looked forward to, when specifically asked.

Inasmuch as Gene related that horses were a part of many Navajo celebrations, representations of horses appear to be weaved into his perceptions of Indianness and his Indian culture. This attitude is consistent with a Navajo view of the importance of animals. Richardson (1981) explains the Indian cultural perception of animals:

> As in the past, Indians today still believe that Mother Earth gave birth and sustained life for all living

> creatures. They do not make the marked contrast between humans and animals that others do. They find the animal capable of planning, thinking, loving, and caring; and they have many legends to emphasize the wisdom and greatness of animals. They feel, in fact, that people and animals and all living creatures are akin, all possessing equal rights (p. 221).

Gene seems to share this perception of the importance of animals, and appears to have a bond with horses, especially.

Moreover, for Gene, as a Deaf man, it is possible that horses hold an even deeper significance than the link with his Navajo culture. During the interview Gene indicated that in-depth communication with his family simply did not occur due to the language barrier, and that this was extremely frustrating for him. In Chapter II Richardson (1981) stated that members of Indian cultures view animals as their brothers and sisters. Therefore, perhaps it is not unusual that Gene sought out the company of horses so frequently. Inasmuch as Gene viewed much of his interaction with his human family as a frustrating experience, perhaps he saw his time with horses as one of quiet but equal interaction, as opposed to his communicatively disadvantaged position with other family members.

Although horses were mentioned by Gene the most often, other animals are significant in his life as well. He

described his home on the reservation as always having a variety of animals around. In addition to horses, Gene referred to mules, sheep, cats, and dogs during the interview. Furthermore, Gene's painting of the warrior and the eagle seems to demonstrate the feeling of "equality" between human and animal that Richardson (1981) described. During the process of creating the painting, Gene explained how the eagle and warrior originally got together:

> I was thinking of something that happened a long time ago with the Indians. This one Indian was riding on a horse and he saw an eagle. It was a little baby sitting high up on a ledge. The Indian climbed up and brought it back down and took it home. He fed it and it grew up. They became friends. They became family.

In the story of his painting, Gene places the eagle into a position of equivalence with the warrior when he characterizes their relationship as "family." This is again consistent with Richardson's (1981) characterization, of animals being viewed as family members, and may provide further understanding as to why Gene indicated during the interview that horses are what he looks forward to seeing most when he returns to the reservation for a visit. Perhaps horses are as much "family" to Gene as are his human relatives. Moreover, when he later described his completed painting and stated that the eagle and warrior protect each

other, Gene was reiterating his view that the Indian and eagle each shared a comparable role. Although Gene appears to identify with animals in general as part of his Navajo culture, horses seem to have had the most impact on him, and this phenomenon is reflected in his art work.

Nature Orientation

Gene chose to depict Indians in three of his four art pieces: the mask, totem segment, and painting. Although there is limited information available about the mask, the totem segment and painting each seem to characterize, to some extent, a focus on Indians in harmony with nature, animals, and the land. The remaining art piece, a sculpted horse, might also fit into Gene's view of the role of animals in harmony with nature and people.

As described earlier, Gene's totem segment is a variation of the Arizona flag. Gene identified Arizona as "the place where the Indians were." It is possible that Gene equates Arizona with Indianness. From his comments about the art piece and the appearance of the totem segment itself, Gene appears to infer a significant relationship between Indians and the state (land) of Arizona. This relates to what Richardson (1981) said about Indians orienting themselves to the land, as well as Darou's (1987) comment about the Indian view of land as animate. Gene

appears to feel a unity with the land of Arizona that is consistent with a Navajo perspective of harmony with nature.

Gene's painting is of an Indian warrior standing under the blue sky with his eagle companion on his shoulder. His story about the White slaughter of the eagles (p. 77) also seems to reflect an orientation toward nature. Animals are important to Gene; animals are viewed as brothers and sisters. The White threat to the eagle population is perhaps seen by Gene as an assault on the nature he appears to have so much respect for.

As discussed, horses and animals were a significant part of Gene's Navajo upbringing. When considered along with his other art works, Gene's decision to sculpt a horse seems yet another reflection of the role of nature, including land and animals, in his life.

The interview also revealed that Gene has an orientation toward nature, including a respect for and connection with nature, animals, and the land. For example, Gene discussed working the land with his grandparents, as he chopped wood, made necessary fires, and rounded up the cows and horses. He spoke in such a way as to leave the interviewer with the impression that this was a positive experience for Gene. He also mentioned going up into the mountains on horseback, and spending time outdoors tending sheep. Nature, land, and animals appear to be connected in

Gene's view, and he demonstrated a respectful posture when discussing it. As discussed in the literature review, this orientation toward nature and living in accordance with the environment is consistent with a Navajo view of the importance of living in harmony with other creatures and creations (Christopherson & Dingle, 1982; Lowrey, 1983).

Negativity Toward White People

Earlier it was noted that Gene described his totem piece as a tough Indian with an Arizona design in the face, and war paint on the cheeks. During the art therapy session when he was asked about the fate of the Arizona Indians, Gene responded by saying that the Indians "would hide in the trees or go behind the rocks and they'd be safe. That was a long time ago. There was a war with the White people. When the Whites came they couldn't hide but the Indians could hide." Perhaps the fierce expression on the Indian's face, as well as the war paint, reflect some level of negativity toward White people. As will become evident, comments regarding what White people did historically to Indians is a common focus both in Gene's narratives about his art pieces, and in his interview with the writer.

In describing his painting, Gene indicated that long ago most of the eagles were killed and therefore they became precious to the Indians. He initially identified the

warrior in his painting as the eagle's protector, and later amended his explanation to say that they protected each other. Gene also identified White people as those who massacred the eagles. Later, when he was again asked who killed the eagles he reiterated:

> White people. The other people in America-- the Whites-- killed the eagles and the number of them really dropped. So the precious eagles have to be taken care of and protected now. That's why the Indian has the eagle on his shoulder.

Not only did the Whites slaughter the eagles, according to Gene, but it is also noteworthy that the warrior in the painting appears ready for some additional type of conflict. His expression seems to indicate that his posture is more defensive than offensive in nature (Eldredge & Carrigan, in press). His face is decorated with war paint, and he holds a spear in a ready position. The warrior appears to be anticipating a threat of some sort. Considering Gene's other comments about the Whites' behavior, perhaps he may be perceiving White people as projecting the threat to the warrior in the painting.

Since so little additional information is available about the mask, extra caution must exercised in attempting to arrive at interpretive conclusions. Nevertheless, the presence of war paint on the Indian's face, and the mouth

gaping open in some extreme expression of emotion, both generate speculation as to the artist's intentions. There are certainly a number of possible interpretations. Without the benefit of Gene's input, it is difficult to arrive at any definitive conclusion about the mask. However, the expression on the warrior, and the presence of war paint, may be consistent with Gene's stated feelings of negativity toward Whites. The presence of war paint does not necessarily imply that the conflict involved White people. However, in his narratives describing both the warrior in his painting, and the Indian's face on the totem segment, each of which are decorated with war paint, Gene stated that the enemies were, in fact, Whites.

Negativity toward White people is a theme that surfaced on three occasions during the author's interview with Gene. The first time the topic arose was when he was recounting the reasons why he quit school:

> There were a lot of problems in the dorm. There was fighting every day with the boys in X dorm. I was in Y dorm with the Indians and Mexican group, and in X dorm were the Whites, and they were against us. There were all kinds of arguments and everybody there was against us. The Indians were against the Whites and the Whites against the Indians. The staff punished us and I just thought it would be best to get out of there. I wasn't

happy.

Further on in the interview Gene was discussing his uncle:

G: My uncle told me that he's against White people. He's right, and I don't really have an answer for that. He dwells on the wars with Whites that happened a long time ago when they killed the Navajo people and destroyed our land. They killed us. My uncle obsesses about that so I just leave him alone.

I: Are you upset inside because White people killed the Indians a long time ago?

G: Yeah, I am, because they destroyed everything and erected their own buildings and changed the land.

I: You feel that way now?

G: Yes, but I don't say anything about it; I try and forget it. I do my art work . . . and I just leave White people alone. They don't bother me.

Although Gene states that "he tries to forget" about what White people did, his art work and the stories he tells about his art seem representative of his feelings of anger toward Whites. Three of the four pieces of art created by Gene and analyzed for this study appear to manifest indications of negativity toward the White race.

Gene's third reference to hostility toward Whites occurred later when he said that he "likes to remember the

Indian rebellion of 1817. The Indians rebelled at that time and there was a war (with the Whites). The Sioux people were involved and I like to read and draw about that rebellion." Perhaps Gene de-emphasizes negative feelings or comments about White people in everyday interaction, but reveals these feelings more forcefully through his art work. His recurrent themes of war with the Whites, hiding from White people, White slaughter of the eagles, and the possible implication of the expression and war paint on the Indian mask would support a conclusion of Gene possessing some level of negative feelings toward White people, which, as discussed in Chapter II, is characteristic of many traditionally acculturated American Indians (Heinrich, Corbine, & Thomas, 1990).

De-emphasis on the Value of Hearing

One expression of Gene's feelings regarding hearing is clearly identifiable in the art pieces reviewed in this study: the clay horse's ears. As he was sculpting the horse Gene was apparently unable to decide if it should have ears. He added ears to the horse, only to subsequently remove them. He repeated this process several times before ultimately electing to retain the ears. In their final form the ears appear small and insignificant, and as already mentioned, disproportionate in comparison to the rest of the

head.

Gene's indecisiveness regarding the presence of the horse's ears is perhaps reflective of the role of ears in his own life. While they provide a certain ornamental normalcy, they are functionally useless. In opting to retain the horse's ears, yet keeping them small and insignificant, perhaps Gene is making a statement regarding the value of hearing in his own life.

The size of the horses ears also seem to be in contrast with the power Gene was attempting to create in the rest of the horse. Although the horse's legs do not appear strong, and the horse is not sculpted from the waist down, Jeanne Carrigan (personal communication, October 4, 1991), the art therapist involved with the original research, indicated that these circumstances could be the result of Gene's lack of technical skill in sculpting. Carrigan stated that, given the size of the rest of the horse, the fore legs could not have been made much larger. Therefore, perhaps Gene attempted to create the horse (and legs) to appear as strong as he was able, given his artistic and spatial limitations.

In actuality, all of Gene's interactions during the art therapy sessions, as well as his other three artistic expressions, can be characterized as strong or powerful. Eldredge and Carrigan (in press) state that Gene "was clearly the leader in the group" (p. 14). In reviewing the

videotapes, this writer would concur with that conclusion on the basis of his assertive and confident manner, and the deferential way in which he was treated by the other group members. Gene's strength and self-confidence fairly permeated the sessions that were available for review by the researcher. Perhaps the horse is Gene's attempt at a representation of his own strength and capabilities, with the small and under-developed ears in contrast to the rest of him.

During the interview Gene demonstrated a number of Deaf cultural characteristics that have previously been addressed. His responses to the Deaf Culture Intentionality Scale (DCIS) also demonstrated a strong "pro-Deaf" philosophy. As indicated, the DCIS revealed that Gene agreed completely that Deafness was a positive experience, seemingly diminishing the importance of hearing to a happy, productive life. In addition, he disagreed completely that Deafness meant having to be underemployed. Gene indicated that Deafness was not a condition sufficient to justify underemployment, again apparently discounting the significance of hearing, this time in the work place. Hearing does not appear to be a condition Gene places any great value on. This outlook is consistent with information presented in Chapter II regarding the attitude of culturally Deaf people who view their Deaf identity as positive, and

see themselves as "whole" people, who simply do not hear (Rutherford, 1984).

Research Findings

The research questions addressed by this study, as presented in the introductory chapter, and the researcher's findings, are now presented.

1. Is cultural identity expressed through art work?
The findings indicate that cultural identity was expressed through Gene's art work.

2. Is cultural identity represented through accompanying narratives and interview data?
The results indicate that cultural identity was also expressed through Gene's narratives and the interview.

3. Is either cultural affiliation, Deaf or Navajo, represented more strongly than the other?
The findings, as discussed previously in this chapter, demonstrate that Gene's Navajo identity is by far the stronger cultural orientation. Characteristics of Deafness as revealed through Gene's art pieces and stories were relatively minor in comparison with artistic and narrative projections of his tribal affiliation. When the interviewer asked specifically which cultural affiliation has more impact on his life, Gene responded that his Indian culture is the stronger influence. His art work, narratives, and

the interview data all seem to support this statement, and indicate that Deafness is the less dominant cultural identity. Yet, it also seems clear from his disclosures in the interview that Deafness, as a cultural affiliation, is more significant than one is led to believe through an analysis of his art work and narratives alone.

4. Is the assessment of art work a reliable alternative to talking as a method of determining acculturative status?

Results of this study indicate that art assessment provided valuable information regarding the subject's cultural identity when utilized in conjunction with other data. However, during the interview Gene demonstrated many more acculturative characteristics of the Deaf Culture than were revealed through his art work and accompanying narratives. Without the information provided by the interview, the researcher would not have ascertained the depth of the subject's Deafness identity. Accordingly, the answer to the fourth research question must be no; the assessment of art work <u>alone</u> was not a viable alternative to talking as a means of determining acculturative status in the case of Gene. Rather, the methods seemed to complement each other, each providing a valuable component in the assessment of Gene's cultural identities.

Summary

This chapter presented background information on Gene, the subject of the study, and described his four pieces of art work. Data discerned from the interview was presented as it correlated with Gene's acculturation in either the Navajo or Deaf cultures. Cultural identifying characteristics that were represented as themes in the art work, narratives, and interview were presented as findings. Finally, the four research questions initially posed by this study were responded to.

The subject of this study was Gene, a 25 year old Navajo man who was deafened at age 4 as a result of spinal meningitis. Gene's family resides on the Navajo Reservation in Northern Arizona. Gene spent much of his life, from age 5 to 18, as a student at a state operated residential school for the deaf. He spent his holidays, vacations, and summers on the reservation with his family, and also lived there from the age of 18 to 22. Currently Gene makes his home in the large urban community where he attended residential school, and works in a leather goods store. He participates in as many Navajo ceremonies as he can, and endeavors to maintain ties with his Navajo heritage. Gene's preferred mode of communication is American Sign Language.

The four pieces of Gene's art work examined for this study included a clay mask, clay sculpture, oil painting,

and totem segment. The mask depicts an Indian's face covered in war paint. The sculpture is of a horse, crafted from the waist up. The oil painting portrays a muscular Indian warrior adorned for battle, with his eagle companion on his right shoulder. Gene indicated the warrior and eagle were "family." The totem segment is Gene's representation of the Arizona Flag, merged with the features of an intense looking Indian. Gene stated that Arizona is where the Indians lived.

During the interview Gene revealed a number of Navajo and Deaf cultural traits that were not readily discernable from his art work and stories alone. Gene demonstrated a strong attachment for extended family, an interest in associating with the Navajo Medicine Man and traditional Indian ways, a lack of interest in materialism, and a tendency toward sharing, all of which are consistent with Navajo cultural characteristics as described in Chapter II.

With regard to his Deafness identity, Gene indicated an interest in "looking out" for other Deaf people, a preference for ASL as his communication mode of choice, a tendency to interact socially with Deaf people, and a desire to marry a Deaf woman. These characteristics of Deafness are also consistent with information presented in the literature review regarding Deaf culture. Furthermore, results of the Deaf Culture Intentionality Scale demonstrate

that Gene has a strong Deafness orientation.

Several thematic representations of cultural orientation were identified through an analysis of Gene's art work, narratives, and interview:

Kinship with horses and other animals

Nature orientation

Negativity toward White people

De-emphasis on the value of hearing

Results of this study indicate that cultural identity was expressed through art work, narratives, and interview data in the case of Gene, a Deaf Navajo Indian. The dominant cultural affiliation expressed in his art pieces was that of the Navajo culture. The recurring themes of kinship with horses and other animals, nature orientation, negativity toward White people, and devaluing of hearing that surface in Gene's art work, stories, and interview support the conclusion that his primary cultural identity is that of a Navajo.

Gene's secondary cultural affiliation is as a Deaf person. The singular clear manifestation of Deafness in his art was demonstrated in his process of creating, and the end result of, the sculpted horse's ears. An analysis of Gene's work reveals that his Deaf identity is significantly weaker than his Navajo identity, and the interview supported this finding. However, the interview also yielded information

that indicated Gene's Deaf identity is substantially stronger than his art work/stories alone demonstrate. Inasmuch as Gene exhibited more characteristics of the Deaf culture than are readily apparent in his art, the assessment of Gene's art work alone did not prove to be a reliable alternative to talking as a way to determine acculturative status. Talking with Gene actually produced a significant amount of information. Used in conjunction with other data, however, art therapy proved to be valuable in the delineation of acculturation patterns in the case of Gene. The author's original hypothesis, that Deafness would be manifested as the dominant cultural affiliation, was not supported by the findings.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This final chapter presents a summary of the significant research findings concluded from this study. In addition, recommendations are submitted for counselors, therapists, and other professionals who provide services to Deaf American Indians.

Summary

The first research question posed in this thesis inquired as to whether or not cultural identity would be expressed through the art work of Gene, a Navajo Indian male who is also Deaf. The findings indicate that expressions of cultural affiliation were revealed through Gene's four pieces of art.

The second research question inquired if cultural identity would be represented through the narratives accompanying Gene's art work, and through the interview data. The results indicate that acculturation patterns were demonstrated through both the narratives and interview.

The third research question asked which of Gene's identities would be evidenced as the dominant cultural affiliation. The findings demonstrate convincingly that elements of Gene's Navajo identity were reflected in his art

work with much greater strength than were expressions of his Deaf acculturative status. Gene's secondary cultural affiliation is with the Deaf community.

In response to the fourth research question, which asks if the assessment of art work is a reliable alternative to talk therapy for the purpose of ascertaining Gene's level of acculturation, the answer must be no. As mentioned, during the interview Gene demonstrated many more acculturative traits of the Deaf community than were revealed through his art work. Consequently, to rely exclusively upon his art work for the determination of cultural affiliation(s) would not produce a precise or accurate reflection of his level of cultural identification with the Deaf community.

Recommendations

The research described in this thesis is a case study of one individual, and, therefore, cannot be generalized to other populations. However, it is conceivable that some transfer value may exist for cases consistent with the circumstances described herein. The following five recommendations may prove applicable for counselors or other service providers who interact with persons demonstrating dual acculturative status in the Indian and Deaf societies.

Recommendation 1: It is recommended that the practitioner be conversant in the language, values, and beliefs of any and all potential cultural affiliations of the client.

The dominant themes appearing both in Gene's art work and his narratives corresponded to his identification and bond with the Indian culture. To clinicians unfamiliar with characteristics and manifestations of the Deaf culture, one might erroneously infer that Gene's identification with Indian society occurred to the exclusion of his Deaf identity. However, during the interview a number of conspicuous cues presented themselves which confirm the relevance of Deafness in Gene's life. For example, persons not acquainted with the significance attached to growing up at a residential school, the importance of having a Deaf spouse, the role of socialization in the Deaf community, and the cultural implications of American Sign Language versus other English-based sign systems, might overlook this type of clear expression of Deafness. Conceivably, the practitioner could falsely conclude that Gene's Deafness identity was not merely secondary, but insignificant.

Although it did not occur in the case of Gene, it is conceivable that the reverse situation could develop as well. That is, perhaps there are some Deaf Indians for whom their Deafness identity is dominant and Indian acculturative

traits are demonstrated as secondary. A practitioner experienced in working with Deaf people, but not with American Indians, is disadvantaged in attempting to assess acculturation, as well as in efforts to work therapeutically, with these clients.

To reduce the likelihood of clinician error in work with persons who are potentially representative of these two different cultures, it is recommended that therapists or clinicians be utilized who are familiar with both cultural orientations of Indianness and Deafness. Clinicians who demonstrate expertise in their knowledge and understanding of both cultures lessen the possibility of minimizing the magnitude of either.

Recommendation 2: It is recommended that art therapy be used in conjunction with interviewing in the assessment of acculturation in a Deaf American Indian.

A number of sources cited herein indicated that art therapy is a credible medium for the expression of cultural identity, personal identity, and "self." Overwhelmingly, the authors cited were referring to persons who identify exclusively with one culture. However, in the case of Gene, a person exhibiting dual acculturative characteristics, art therapy did not prove to be a reliable outlet for the accurate reflection of both cultural affiliations. However,

as has been mentioned, Eldredge and Carrigan's art therapy group was not conducted for purposes of acculturative assessment.

Although Gene's Navajo identity is undeniably predominant, his Deafness identity was demonstrated in the interview to be much stronger than initially inferred from an analysis of his art work alone. Had art therapy been utilized solely as the means through which to assess acculturation, an accurate deduction of the significance of the subject's Deafness identity could not have been made. Hence, it is recommended that art therapy not be utilized as the only medium through which to assess acculturation in a Deaf Indian.

However, art therapy, used in conjunction with other data, was found to be valuable in the determination of cultural orientation. Gene's art work clearly demonstrated his Indian values and culture, and firmly supported information gained through both the interview process and Gene's own stories.

Furthermore, art expression offered a less threatening and more open format for the demonstration of Gene's cultural identity. For example, when asked during the interview if he was angry at White people, Gene responded affirmatively. Yet his expression was without emotion and his demeanor innocuous. Although he was signing that he

was, in fact, upset at White people, the interviewer was left with the impression that the issue was not terribly consequential to Gene. This impression was furthered through Gene's additional comments that White people "don't bother me," and that he makes an effort to forget about what White people did to the Indians. However, an examination of Gene's art work and accompanying narratives reveals that he really does not forget about the issue at all. Minus the supplemental information provided by his art pieces and stories, the researcher likely would not have ascertained the significance of this issue to Gene from the interview alone. An examination of all the data, including art work, stories, and interview, heightened the researcher's awareness of this issue as one of great significance to Gene.

That Gene's feelings of negativity toward Whites may have been expressed more emphatically in his art work than through verbal interaction is consistent with an understanding of art therapy. It has been noted that art therapy is an effective medium for the expression of feelings and images that the client is less comfortable speaking (Naumburg, 1966). Since he was interviewed by a White woman, perhaps Gene felt "less safe" indicating the true depth of his negative feelings toward White people. Art may have provided a safer medium through which he felt

more comfortable expressing these feelings.

In the case of Gene, art therapy has been demonstrated to be valuable in the assessment of acculturation patterns when used in concert with other data. It has been concluded that art therapy was less reliable if depended upon exclusively to make a determination of acculturative status. Consequently, it is recommended that art therapy be used in conjunction with talk therapy and other data collection procedures. When used in collaboration with other methods, it is probable that art therapy will enhance the clinician's ability to ascertain cultural identification.

<u>Recommendation 3: It is recommended that further study and investigation be conducted into the existence of art which is apolitical in nature, but may be reflective of a Deafness culture or condition</u>.

There is a growing body of literature which addresses Deaf art, the purposeful expression of Deaf philosophies or political ideologies through artistic expression. However, as discussed in Chapter II, there is very little research that addresses whether or not the condition of deafness itself actually fosters the creation of art work that is culturally, aesthetically, or qualitatively different from that of hearing artists.

If, in fact, the art work of Deaf artists is inherently

or naturally distinct from that of hearing people, this would have powerful implications for art therapists and other clinicians working with Deaf persons in therapeutic settings. As discussed in the literature review, art therapy is often used for such purposes as counseling with Deaf children, diagnosis of psychiatric or emotional disorders, and to enhance cognitive development. If the clinician involved is making judgments about the art work of Deaf persons based on the norms of hearing clients, cultural bias, leading to potentially inaccurate assessments, is certainly a risk. Further investigation into the existence of art that is an apolitical and unintentional expression of Deafness seems warranted.

Recommendation 4: It is recommended that further study and investigation be conducted into the use of art assessment as a method of ascertaining cultural identification among Indian people who are also Deaf.

In the case of Gene, the use of art assessment proved to be valuable in the determination of cultural affiliation when used in conjunction with interview data and Gene's own narratives about his art work. Art assessment alone was not established as reliable in ascertaining the subject's cultural identities. However, it is significant that the art therapy group Gene participated in was not conducted for

the purpose of assessing cultural orientation. In addition, Gene was just one case. Therefore, further investigative data is needed regarding the value of art therapy as a method of determining cultural affiliation with this population. An art therapy research project conducted for the specific purpose of acculturative assessment of Deaf Indians would likely contribute valuable relevant data.

There is an additional reason why the use of art therapy with Deaf Indians should be further investigated. In the present case, Gene demonstrated an impressive willingness to disclose verbally to the interviewer. However, a significant number of researchers, in both fields of Indianness and Deafness, have indicated that verbal self-disclosure to non-Indian or non-Deaf counselors may be situationally problematic for members of these two cultures. Therefore, it is not assumed that other interactions with Deaf Indians would necessarily be as uncomplicated as was communication with Gene. For situations in which verbal self-disclosure is less of an option, it becomes even more important to have alternative methods for the assessment of acculturation. Therefore, further research into the use of art therapy as a method of ascertaining cultural identity of American Indians who are Deaf is recommended.

Recommendation 5: It is recommended that further research be conducted into the existence and ramifications of a pan-Indian Deaf culture that incorporates characteristics of both Deaf culture and Indian culture, but is actually a third cultural orientation.

Although Gene exhibits a strong Indian cultural affiliation, during the present study he appeared to demonstrate characteristics more typical of a pan-Indian orientation than of his specific Navajo tribal affiliation. He also demonstrated a substantial number of attributes common among culturally Deaf people. It is possible that individuals who are both Indian and Deaf not only share features of each of these cultures, but may have some additional characteristics that are unique, generating the existence of a third cultural affiliation: Indian Deaf.

Aramburo (1989) addressed the existence of a black Deaf culture, comprised of individuals who are both black and Deaf, who share values and characteristics of each culture, as well as characteristics unique to black Deaf people. Some of these unique features included the segregation of social clubs, differing educational patterns, and sociolinguistic variations.

Similarly, if Indians who are Deaf demonstrated unique cultural traits not commonly found among Deaf-only individuals or Indian-only individuals, perhaps they, too,

could be viewed as a third, and distinct, cultural group. One characteristic found in Gene, while not typically noted in hearing Indians, has already been addressed: pan-Indian acculturation. Perhaps some Indians who are Deaf, as hypothesized earlier by both Joe and Eldredge, develop fewer tribal specific characteristics as a result of their separation from the tribe and placement at residential school with Indians of many other tribes. Accordingly, generic Indian characteristics may develop, whereas attributes unique to any one tribe may not evolve.

Further study is needed to confirm the existence of this Indian Deaf culture, as well as the implications of such a culture on the counseling relationship. To provide culturally affirmative therapeutic intervention the counselor will want to understand the client's cultural orientation, be it Indian, Deaf, or Indian Deaf.

Summary

This chapter reviewed the findings of this case study and suggested five recommendations for clinicians working with American Indians who are Deaf. These recommendations were:

1. That the practitioner be conversant in the language, values, and beliefs of any and all potential cultural affiliations of the client.

2. That art therapy be used in conjunction with interviewing in the assessment of acculturation in a Deaf American Indian.

3. That further study and investigation be conducted into the existence of art which is apolitical in nature, but may be reflective of a Deafness culture or condition.

4. That further study and investigation be conducted into the use of art assessment as a method of ascertaining cultural identification among Indian people who are also Deaf.

5. That further research be conducted into the existence and ramifications of a pan-Indian Deaf culture that incorporates characteristics of both Deaf culture and Indian culture, but is actually a third cultural orientation.

APPENDIX A

ILLUSTRATIONS

FIGURE 1 - CLAY MASK

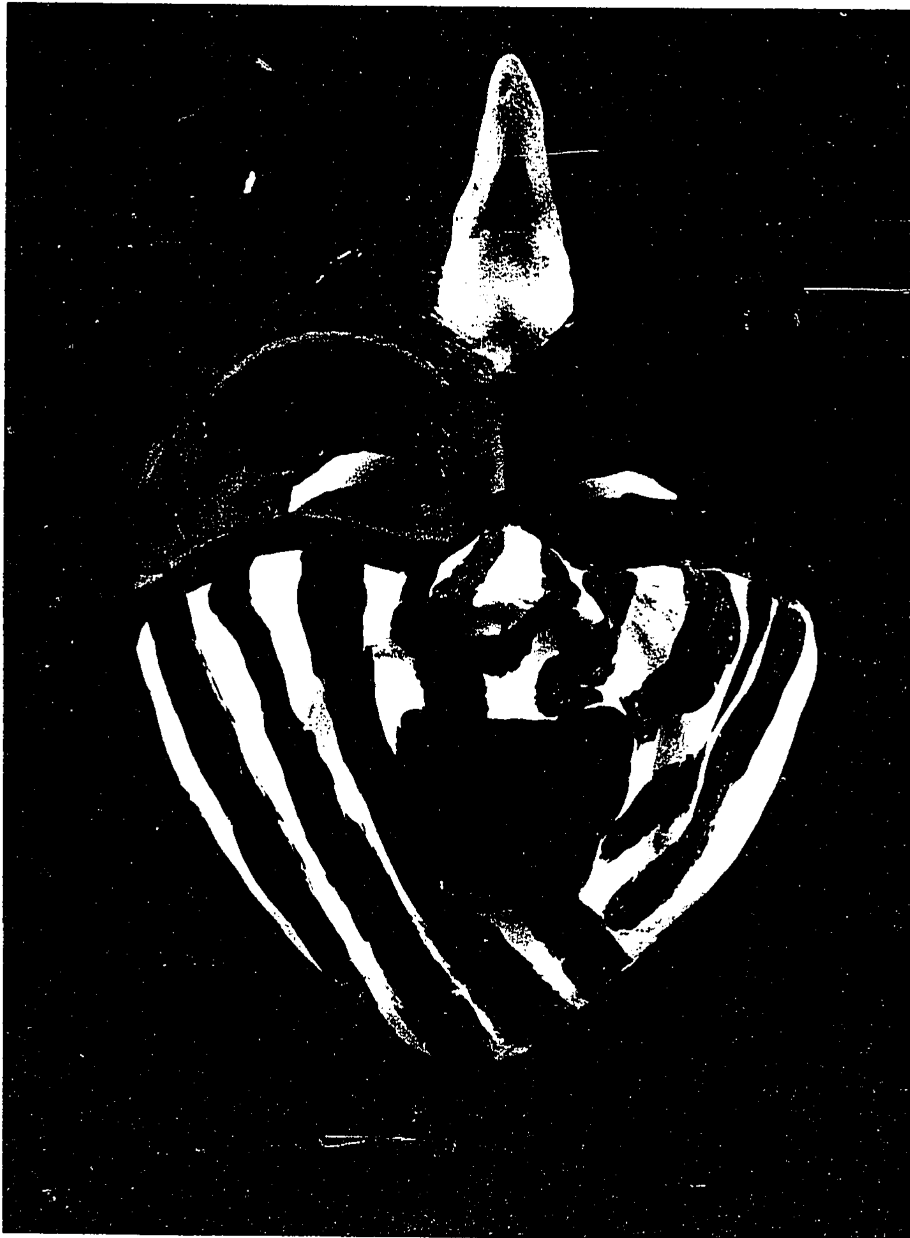


FIGURE 2 - CLAY SCULPTURE

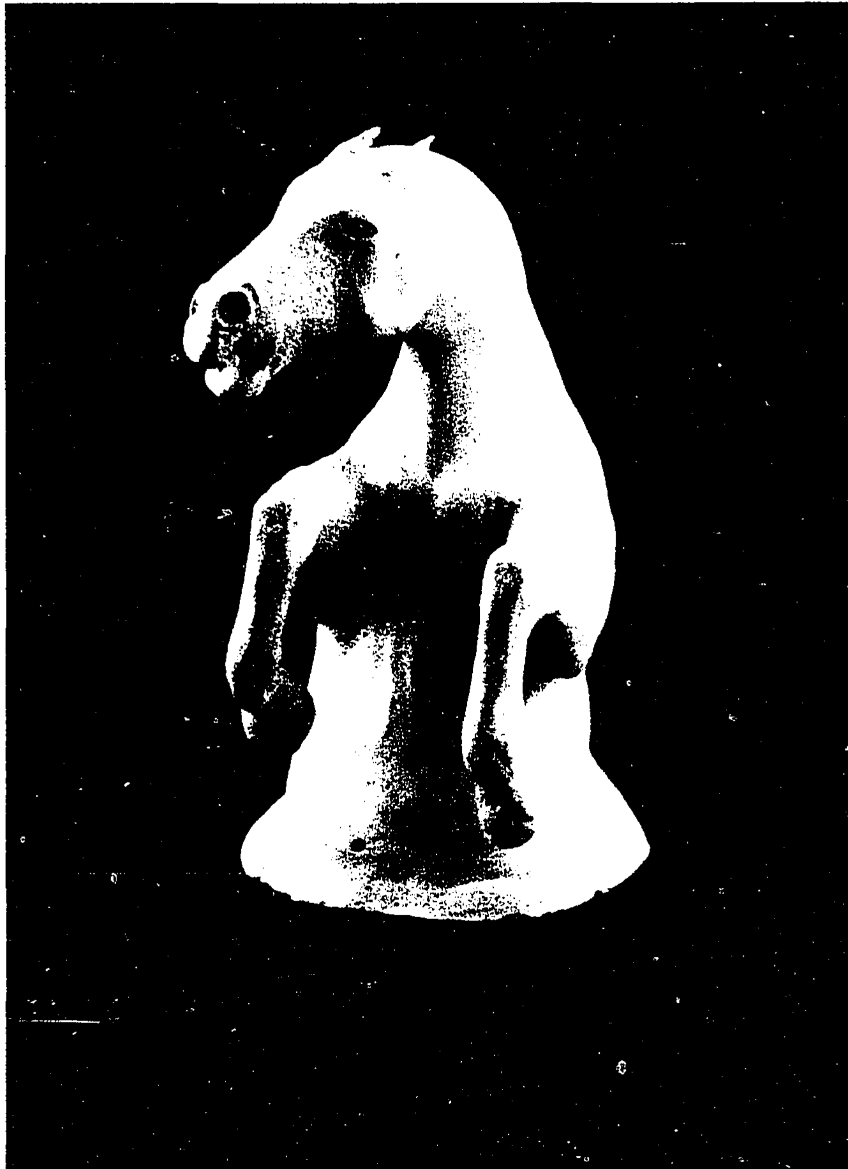
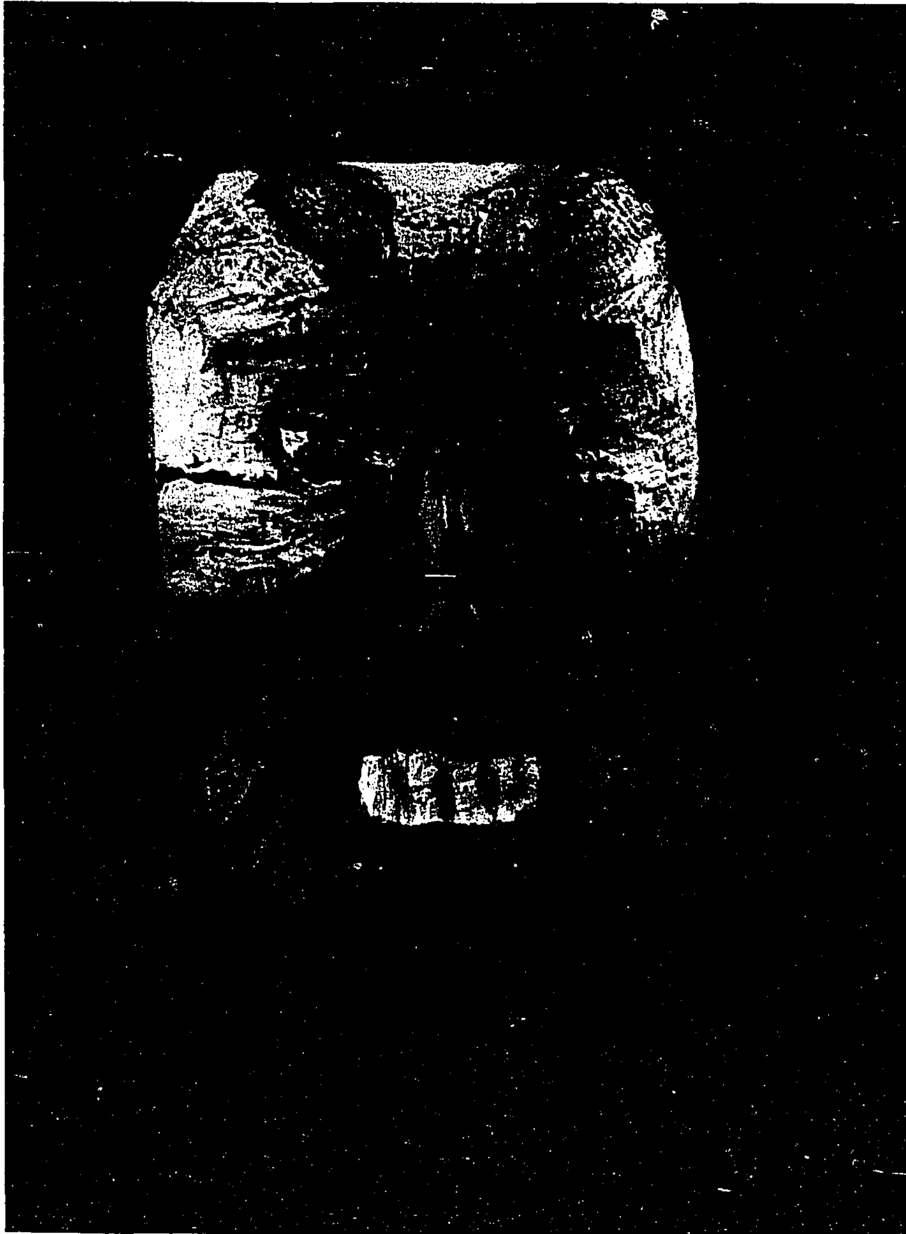


FIGURE 3 - OIL PAINTING

FIGURE 4 - TOTEM SEGMENT



APPENDIX B

SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Family Background

Where were you born and raised?

Who were the other members of your family?

What is the rest of your family doing now?

How did you get along with your family members?

How did you communicate with your family members?

How, and at what age, did you become deaf?

What was your family's reaction to your deafness?

Were you included in family events?

What type of contact do you have with your family now?

Educational Background

Where did you go to school?

At what age were you sent away from the reservation for schooling?

How do you feel about the two residential schools you attended?

How did you communicate upon arrival at residential school?

Why did you leave school before graduation?

Navajo Cultural Background

Tell me about your extended family.

What type of Navajo ceremonies and festivals occurred on the reservation as you were growing up?

What was your participation in these activities?

What are/were your feelings about these activities and your participation in them?

What was your family's role in your involvement in these activities (e.g., encouragement, discouragement, etc.)?

What Navajo or Indian cultural ceremonies do you participate in now?

Deaf Cultural Background

Tell me about your experiences at residential school.

What is your preferred mode of communication?

Why is it important to have a Deaf wife?

Do you maintain contact with people from residential school?

Socialization

Tell me about your friends.

Are your friends typically Indian?

Are your friends typically Deaf?

Do you associate with White people?

How do you feel about White people?

What are your goals regarding a future romantic relationship?

What do you do for fun?

Religion/Medicine

What religion do you practice?

What are your current religious practices?

How did you become involved in Catholicism?

Do any of your family practice the Navajo religion?

Tell me about the Navajo religion.

How do you feel about the Navajo religion?

Tell me what a Medicine Man does.

Tell me about the Indian way of healing.

Do you prefer Indian or White doctors? Why?

General

What is important to you?

What is not important to you?

How do you feel about wealth?

How do you feel about sharing?

APPENDIX C

DEAF CULTURE INTENTIONALITY SCALE

DEAF CULTURE

INTENTIONALITY SCALE

Code________

USE THE FOLLOWING SCALE TO INDICATE THE EXTENT TO WHICH YOU AGREE OR DISAGREE WITH THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS

0	25	50	75	100
Not agree	Agree some	Agree moderately	Agree often	Agree completely

______ 1. Deafness is a positive experience.
______ 2. Deaf people prefer communicating in Sign Language.
______ 3. Deaf people prefer having Deaf children.
______ 4. Deaf people prefer having Deaf spouses.
______ 5. Deaf people prefer to use speech in communicating with hearing people.
______ 6. Deaf people prefer to use writing skills when communicating with hearing people.
______ 7. Deafness means being underemployed.
______ 8. Deaf people prefer socializing within the deaf community.
______ 9. Deaf people experience residential school as a second home.

USE THE FOLLOWING SCALE TO RATE THE EXTENT TO WHICH YOU FEEL FAVORABLE OR UNFAVORABLE ABOUT THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS.

-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
Unfavorable			Doesn't matter			Favorable

______1. experiencing deafness positively
______2. communicating in sign language
______3. wanting deaf children
______4. wanting a deaf spouse
______5. using speech in communicating with hearing people
______6. using writing skills in communicating with hearing people
______7. having to be underemployed
______8. socializing within the deaf community
______9. experiencing residential school as a second home

RATE THE EXTENT TO WHICH YOU FEEL YOUR FRIENDS THINK YOU SHOULD OR SHOULD NOT PERFORM THE FOLLOWING.

Most of my deaf friends think I

-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
I should not			Doesn't matter			I should

_____1. think deafness is a positive experience
_____2. communicate in Sign Language
_____3. want to have deaf children
_____4. want to have a deaf spouse
_____5. use speech to communicate with hearing people
_____6. use writing to communicate with hearing people
_____7. have to be underemployed
_____8. socialize within the deaf community
_____9. think of residential school as a second home

RATE THE EXTENT TO WHICH YOU DON'T WANT TO OR WANT TO DO WHAT YOUR FRIENDS THINK YOU SHOULD DO.

In general

-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
I don't want to			doesn't matter			I want to

do what my friends think I should do about

_____1. experiencing deafness as positive
_____2. communicating in sign language
_____3. wanting to have deaf children
_____4. wanting to have a deaf spouse
_____5. using speech to communicate with hearing people
_____6. using writing to communicate with hearing people
_____7. being underemployed
_____8. socializing within the deaf community
_____9. thinking of residential school as a second home

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