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## Exploring the Monterey Peninsula through the Eyes of Locals



**I long, as does every human being, to be at home wherever I find myself.**

**-Maya Angelou**

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## Introduction

Angelou's words not only speak to me, they inspire me; especially as a military wife. Just as I get comfortable somewhere, I am forced to pick up and move on. I must leave behind a life that I have built, only to make new friends, find a new job, and establish a new life for myself. I must learn how to navigate my way through my new home, both figuratively and metaphorically. Not only do I have to learn how to get around and where things are, but I also need to learn about the community I find myself in. What sort of resources can I find that will help my family quickly adjust? Will we be able to find a neighborhood that we feel comfortable in? What is there to do for fun or recreation? What are locals passionate about? What do they do in their free time? What drives people to live here? Why do they stay? *What types of opportunities are there to truly experience the culture of my new home?* Once I start to answer these questions, I finally start to feel like I am a *member* of a community.

However, this integration into the local culture often takes time and understanding. As someone who recently moved into a new community, I am experiencing these challenges right now. I moved to the Monterey Peninsula on the central California coast, and until now I had never been here before. I had no connections here, and knew nothing of the local area. As I searched for literature about the area, I quickly found that the majority of the available information was focused on tourist activities such as golf, wine tasting, outdoor recreational adventures, and shopping. While these things are certainly important, as someone trained in anthropology, I wanted more. I knew that by digging a little further, I could start to piece together a more comprehensive picture of the peninsula. I wanted to know the history of the area, as well as who the settlers were and where they came from (and why they came). I wanted to know how families have made a living here throughout the years, how they made this place their home, how they fit in, and I wanted to know about their struggles and successes. I wanted to

understand what exactly it is that makes this place so special, and what sets it apart from every other city or town I have lived in or passed briefly through.

As I started to do research however, I noticed that the information available was fragmented at best. Every organization in the area had their own website, but the history I found was not always the same, depending on the source. It was hard to find information regarding specific cultural events I had heard about, and the information I did find was often incorrect or contradicted by another website. As I tried to get out and navigate my way through the community, I would find signs which pointed me in the direction of a major cultural landmark-only to find out the signs were old and the landmark was either gone or had moved somewhere else. It was frustrating, and I often gave up and decided I'd try again another day.

As I learned about the history of the area, I became familiar with the different groups who settled in the region. I started looking for evidence of these groups within the contemporary landscape, but often found that the culturally significant places I was looking for had not been sustained but rather had disappeared due to widespread development and accompanying residential turnover. Since I knew this area is home to various programs and schools which cater to international scholars and professionals, I knew that other people coming to the area might have a difficult time identifying with, or relating to the available literature of this specific region based on the confusion I experienced. While there was no language barrier for me personally, I am well aware that it is often even more difficult to find adequate resources if someone does not speak the local language, or is unfamiliar with the traditions, histories, or prominent cultural attributes of an area. In reflecting on my own experiences moving to the area, I knew I wanted to do something that could make a difference for other people moving here. When I was trying to put together a capstone project, I expressed my interests in the local culture and that I was having a difficult time piecing together the information available. It was suggested to me that I do a cultural guide

to the Monterey Peninsula, and instantly I knew that this would be the perfect project for me. My capstone committee and I decided that this project would be broken into two phases with the first phase being the formation of a local community advisory committee who would assist me in developing the content for a blog which would ultimately be used by newcomers (and visitors alike) to the Monterey Peninsula in California. Working together, we would develop a consensual work plan and come up with desired outcomes. The second phase would be the development of an interactive website (or whatever form my committee decided on) that would serve as the repository for the data I collected.

Since it's been difficult to find things to do that match my interests, as well as places that make me feel like I'm at home, I knew that we would need to focus on creating a product that would appeal to people with various interests and backgrounds. I wanted to do this project for not only myself, so I could learn about my new community- but also for those who come after me, so that they might transition easier. I wanted to create something so that they not only feel welcome, but rather they feel as if they are an important and contributing member of the local community- because they are. Whether they're only in a new place for a few years at a time (as I often find myself), or plan on staying indefinitely, they need to be aware of where things are, as well as the resources available to them. As I created this cultural guide, I tried to keep these things in mind.

This project identifies and serves multiple goals and objectives, including allowing me to explore the different ways in which cultural sustainability work benefits communities, as well as advocating for and actively promoting the different ways we as community members can become more integrated and representative of our own unique heritage. As defined by Goucher College (where I am a student), cultural sustainability is the ability to identify, protect, and enhance a community's important traditions, their ways of life, their cherished spaces, and their vital relationships to each other and the world. In the context of creating this guide, I have used this definition to not only try and identify the cultural

traditions and shared spaces this community values (based on my conversations with my project collaborators), but also to use that information in order to implement their suggestions in such a way that protects, and promotes the sustainability of these important community characteristics. Thus, in order to create a product that is truly beneficial to the community, the goal has consistently been to let the people address how the researched content could best flow from them and be used to help them maintain their important cultural identities and traditions. Further, this project allows locals to share their stories of what is important to them with a broader audience, and gives newcomers a sense of the values, traditions, and cultural influences of the area. It may also inspire newcomers to become involved within the community as they are excited about (and build upon) their own cultural connections and experiences.

Finally, it has been my intent through this work to build an effective model of community collaboration and cultural heritage awareness and promotion that I can take with me and use in other places my family is stationed at in the future.

## **Methodology**

In the beginning of this project, I identified some of the main questions I had that would ultimately help guide my research. These questions revolve around two main concepts; the first being grounded in ideas of community integration and building. I was interested in how the Monterey Peninsula has changed as a community due to the various cultural groups which have immigrated into and made this place their home. Additionally I wanted to know what the processes of integration into a new community are, and how people orient themselves when they move to a new place. What types of enculturation take place? Do people assimilate completely to their new surroundings, or do they adapt to some of the ideals and processes of their new environment while still maintaining those pieces of

their identity they have collected over time and throughout other locations? I was ultimately hoping to better understand how people identify and form relationships with others, and what the social bonds are which bring people together. The second concept I wanted to explore is the ways in which cultural diversity and heritage preservation are addressed in a community setting (on both a personal, as well as organizational level). I wanted to research people's personal connections (with one another and physical spaces) and the collective identity we share, while addressing the role of cultural sustainability work in maintaining them. In order to begin to answer some of these questions, I needed to reach out to people in the community who might be able to assist me in my research.

My first step was to seek out and create a community cultural advisory committee, who could help me pinpoint those cultural values and places which the locals are most passionate about. I knew that if I sought people out who are residents of this area (preferably living here for a few years or more) and comfortable with their role in the community (and their community ties), I would have the opportunity to better understand (from an insider's perspective) any perceived issues, as well as those traditions and places that members of the community feel are important. I knew that by seeking out and creating an advisory committee, I (as a cultural sustainability worker) would be better able to apply my specific field-specific knowledge, skillsets, and experiences, since I would be better informed on what the members of the community desire. The questions I was trying to answer were: What do locals like most about living here, and what do they feel are the resources that are most valuable and useful to them? Conversely, what are the things the community is lacking, and *what are the ways I, as a cultural sustainability worker, can help the community overcome any perceived lack in resources- or better help them preserve those things which are most important to them?*

In order to most effectively work with a cultural advisory community, I needed to seek out those community members who met specific criteria. I looked for people who worked for organizations that

are integral to the cultural landscape of the region, as well as people (working independently) who had a vested interest in preserving the culture and history of the area. I knew in order to do this successfully I needed to research who the prominent cultural organizations are here, as well as their mission and success stories. Starting on the internet, I started looking at organizations such as the Monterey Historical Society, the Museum of Monterey (MOM), the Monterey State Historical Parks, the City of Monterey, the Arts Council for Monterey, the Monterey Convention and Visitor's Bureau, the Monterey Public Library System, and the Monterey Bay Property Management Company. Through varied emails sent to these different entities, I was able to identify three key individuals, including Thom Diggins, Nancy Selfridge, and Tish Sammon.

Thom Diggins is the owner/operator of Historic Monterey Walking Tours

(<http://www.walkmonterey.com/>), and has been a Monterey area resident for over fifty years. In creating a walking tour here, he has conducted countless hours of local historic research in an effort to create his business, and is consistently educating himself further to improve the cultural experience and accuracy of information that he provides to people on his tours. He is passionate about the history of the area, and I was able to feel his enthusiasm when I went on one of his tours with my family. He has daily contact with personnel working throughout the community in different cultural preservation organizations, and is familiar with the connections and working relationships between these entities.

In addition to Mr. Diggins, I have also met with Nancy Selfridge, who is a city council member for Monterey. Mrs. Selfridge has been a great resource, as she is an integral part of the local community and has been heavily involved in events and historic site promotion here in the area. She has worked with various organizations in the area, including the Cultural Arts Commission, Colton Hall Museum, and Monterey Vista Neighborhoods (an organization dedicated to preserving and cleaning up local neighborhoods through community funds), and has actively stood up for cultural awareness and action



through her position as a city council member. As a Monterey council woman, Nancy Selfridge has been heavily involved in community debates, city council meetings with community stakeholders, and personal meetings with Monterey County community members. Her public position is why I asked her to work with me, as I knew she would have the unique perspective that comes only with listening to and having frequent conversations with people from the community.

Finally, I met with Tish Sammon, who works for Historic Monterey. Historic Monterey is a collaboration between public and non-profit organizations within the city of Monterey, whose mission is to “promote and interpret Monterey’s rich history to its visitors and citizens, as well as to safeguard Monterey’s cultural heritage by preserving and protecting Monterey’s its historic buildings and collections for the betterment of generations to come”. Due to her position as a liaison between multiple cultural organizations and non-profits that specialize in heritage preservation and management around the region, she is consistently meeting with members of these organizations in order to evaluate their individual and collective goals as well as methods of conducting successful community outreach. She is familiar with general community heritage preservation issues, and has been heavily involved in community cultural events and preservation projects in the past. Mrs. Sammon has been vital to my research, as she has been able to not only fill me in on different community projects already taking place, but also point me in the direction of many other community stakeholders who have been able to help me in my research. Through my work with Mrs. Sammon, I have been able to meet and converse with other community members from different organizations including the Monterey Convention and Visitors Bureau, the Cannery Row Company, the Monterey Bay Aquarium, the Steinbeck Center, the Pacific Grove Museum of Natural History, the Association of Monterey Area Preservationists, Naval Postgraduate School, California State Parks, the Japanese Association of Monterey, the Monterey Chamber of Commerce, the Monterey Cultural Arts Commission, the Monterey Historical Society, the Museum of Monterey (MOM), Monterey State Historical Parks, the Arts Council for Monterey, and the

Monterey Bay Public Library. These meetings and conversations have been central to identifying the major issues and themes which are important to the community, as well as coming up with a strategic plan to help to address them. Equally, they have allowed me to see the issues from various perspectives and vantage points, as each of these organizations often have different priorities and operating procedures.

After putting together my advisory committee, the first thing we did was sit down and discuss how the content of this project would best flow from and benefit the community. In order to do this, we took into account the concerns and discussions my committee members have heard (and been a part of) over the past couple years. Since all three of my committee members have been well-versed in community concerns and perspectives, I knew that their individual skillsets and knowledge (along with extensive experience) made them especially well-suited to inform me of what I should include in my research. Throughout this process, I feel that they have been a reliable source of insight, and by collaborating with them I feel that my research is reflective of the desires of the community.

Afterwards, we collectively identified multiple community values. They are listed and explained as follows:

- **Collective History and Identity:**

There is shared community interest in preserving the structures and buildings which have played an important part of Monterey's history as the locations of major historical events (both for the state of California and the United States). Many locals feel strongly connected to these structures, and desire to not only preserve them for generations to come, but also share their importance with outsiders (and even locals who are not aware of them).

There is also a strong shared community interest in preserving the stories and cultural influences which have strengthened the area's diversity. This community prides itself on having a strong background and identity rooted in various industries such as fishing, canning, whaling, military operations, academia, and tourism. Many immigrants have come to the area to make a living in these industries since European explorers first arrived here, and this has resulted in the community being a place where many voices have come together to tell a unique story which is not often seen in other communities.

- **Cultural Richness:**

The Monterey area has a strong love of culture that has been celebrated through the public art displays and cultural events (theater performances, history reenactments, musical and dance performances, community festivals, etc.). Monterey County residents are passionate about their talents and artistic backgrounds, and host many events in order to showcase their skills throughout the year for locals and visitors alike.

- **Local Trade and Community Sustainability:**

The Monterey Peninsula's commitment to buying local is especially notable, as there are many resources for supporting local farmers and merchants. The region hosts many fresh produce stands, and there are strict laws which prohibit the building of national chain stores in areas around the county. Residents are passionate about keeping their money within the local community, as well as sustaining local small business ventures.

After discussing community values (based on my informants' experiences and input), the next logical step was to talk about issues the community is currently facing. These issues are seen as a hindrance to the values identified, and serve as the foundation for this project. They followed some very specific

themes, and provided insight as to how exactly we could orient this project so that it was filling some of the objectives and goals of the community.

Some of the recurring themes are as follows:

- There is a strong perceived lack of cohesion and collaboration throughout the many local cultural organizations, and a general lack of history and cultural education resources available (while there are many festivals throughout the summer time, the city's cultural resources- existing historic structures, places- are not well advertised or organized). This was reflected in voiced concerns that people are often not able to access the historic structures and buildings which locals feel a strong connection to. This is mainly due to a lack of resources and funding within the community, as well as these culturally significant locations being managed and operated by different organizations not affiliated with one another (state parks, federal government, etc.).
- Resources available to visitors and residents were lacking in either content or difficult to use. Maps and brochures are hard to follow, and websites dedicated to the Monterey area's cultural assets are limited, and often not telling the "same story" as others.
- With the large number of tourists and incoming international residents this area experiences yearly, it has been unfortunate that most resources are only printed in English (with very few exceptions). This sentiment has been expressed extensively by my committee members, and is based on their discussions with members of the public.
- There is a significant lack of representation of many cultural groups in the area, although some of these groups have been important in developing and strengthening the community into what it is today.

In reflecting on our discussions, it did not surprise me that these issues were identified as being major community concerns, as this has been exactly my personal experience as well.

Following our identification of both community values and issues, we discussed the benefits of collaboration in a project like this as well as what each of us would essentially get out of participating. I knew that by working with this specific group of people, I would gain the unique perspectives that would make my research meaningful. Also I knew that by doing a project like this, I would be able to connect with my community on a level that I have not experienced in other communities I've lived in. In addition to the above benefits, we also listed the following:

- My blog would provide free advertising for community members to spread the word about their businesses (this was a benefit Thom Diggins identified, as he is constantly looking to increase the popularity of his walking tours).
- An interactive project (such as a website) would allow all of us to add content we feel is especially important- as well as give the community a chance to tell their own stories and be keepers of the cultures they are passionate about.
- This collaboration would give us a chance to sit down and articulate community assets, issues, and possible solutions in an informal way; where everyone has something to input and everyone is treated respectfully and listened to equally.
- My individual blog would help my committee members (especially Mrs. Sammon and Mrs. Selfridge) by providing a cohesive list of culturally significant sites, events, organizations, and businesses. Mrs. Sammon and I talked about how this work specifically would benefit her in her work with Historic Monterey, as they conduct work with many people and organizations that might be able to utilize my research in the future.

In considering the dynamics of our collaboration and the benefits of working together, we also identified our desired outcomes. These are listed below.

- Increased recognition of culturally significant places within the community
- Increased awareness in the community about where are cultural assets (buildings, landmarks) are- and the stories, people, and events which define them
- Increased participation in cultural events by locals and non-locals
- Increased awareness and education about the diversity of the area
- Increased patronage at community family-owned small businesses
- Increased ease of finding resources by newcomers to the area
- Increased public input in heritage preservation efforts and organizations that would be able to utilize these lists in the future.

After listing our desired outcomes, we also discussed and listed the following set of task descriptions:

- Identify under-represented cultural groups
- Make a list of fieldwork research resources
- Make a list of community contacts we could potentially work with in the future (who are intimately familiar with the traditions, history, and prominent family stories of the region),
- Make a list of possible working collaborations (identify tourism and hospitality and real estate and property management companies, along with community non-profits and libraries) that we can utilize in the future.

These tasks were not assigned to anyone specific, but instead have served as a list of steps we would apply to our collaboration and project.

Since a lack of cohesion was a major issue, we decided that two achievable objectives would be to 1). make contact and devise a plan with local organizations in order to spread awareness about the community's cultural resources, and 2). make a list of cultural events and history in my blog so that the information is accessible in one convenient location. By listing these objectives, we were able to come up with pragmatic approaches to eliminating these community concerns in a way that serves to sustain the community's values of having a collective identity and history.

In an effort to identify the culturally significant buildings and sites around this community, I have consulted with my advisory committee to identify what exists and what roles they have played in the region's historic past (in addition to what they mean to the community today). I have listed them in my blog according to where they are, their cultural significance, and any relevant websites or contact information I have been able to find. With regards to the various cultural events, I have followed the same methodology in order to provide a comprehensive and centralized user-friendly resource that newcomers to the area could access.

Additionally, I found out that Historic Monterey has already been working on bringing various organizations together in order to promote the cultural heritage of the area. They have recently submitted a grant proposal, that if approved will provide funding for the renewal of collective cultural outreach and promotion efforts, as well as identify ways of "weaving together" the story of Monterey. This process is broken up into two phases, with the first one being to "review, assess, and develop an action plan for better collaborative outreach, community education, and promotion of Monterey as a historic place, and the second phase being the "implementation of prioritized activities of the plan (which will probably include a website portal and calendar, but could include a new program "History Happened Here" which would engage businesses, residents, and others- depending on the needs and interests of the group). Tish Sammon (of Historic Monterey) and I then sat down to discuss how the

content of my blog could aid in this overall goal, and we decided that I would proceed with gathering community information, stories, and data that could ultimately be used in these community programs and help aid in building a large comprehensive website in the future. With regards to what will be featured on this website (or whatever form the larger project takes), we will ensure that the story we are telling is as authentic as possible by including as many community member's voices as we have access to. In order to do this, we will solicit input from community members through public meetings about what should be included and the way it is presented (the details of these meetings have not yet been decided, as we will ultimately be conducting this research after the grant has been received).

In order to identify resources that could help raise awareness about our cultural assets, we specifically focused on organizations and tools that were widely available, and would appeal to both residents and tourists alike. To ensure a wide dissemination of the collected materials, we decided we would need to reach out to local media sources such as community online forums and newspapers/magazines, and organizations which promote tourism (e.g. Monterey County Convention and Visitors Bureau). We are currently working on plans to utilize these resources, and hope to achieve a working relationship with these organizations as we proceed in the future.

To combat the issue of a language barrier for many incoming residents, we have been working to identify and locate community members who may be interested in collaborating long-term to translate the literature which presently exists (in conjunction with the data I have been gathering throughout the creation of my blog). At this time, I do not have any specific sources I can mention; however, this will be an ongoing collaborative goal. It is my hope that as I build my blog, we will be able to incorporate the translations that will allow larger demographic to access information about the area's unique heritage, hopefully encouraging them to get out and explore more of the area than they might have before.



Since my cultural advisory committee expressed concern about various cultural groups (which have been integral to the formation of the local landscape as it is today) not being significantly identified or discussed at local sites which are reflective of their cultural history, I have contacted some local individuals who are interested in exploring and discussing new ways of preserving their cultural heritage throughout the community. In my future work with my advisory committee, I hope to work with these people in order to include voices which reflect the local Native American, Portuguese, Hispanic, Japanese, and Chinese communities.

Naturally, my individual research has been greatly influenced by the many different resources available to me. I have used the internet to locate everything from different ethnic stores and restaurants, to historic landmarks and various cultural events. One specific resource that has been extremely helpful in my research has been the “100 Stories Project” which was created by M.D. Baer who is the Executive Director of the Museum of Monterey. This project was compiled over a year’s time, and focuses on artists, historians, icons and institutions to paint a portrait of the Monterey Region; past, present, and moving forward. It features 146 stories (videos) and draws upon the knowledge and talent of 106 participants from the local area. The project cost was approximately \$20k and was funded by the Museum of Monterey and its parent organization, the Monterey History and Art Association. The project rationale was that the Museum of Monterey could tell the stories of the Monterey Region in all its diversity with an emphasis on history, art, innovation and our maritime heritage. This project has been valuable in that it has allowed me to gain a better understanding of the area and the people who live here (as well as what is valuable enough for them to go on public record and speak about), and it has also given me insight into who we can seek out to provide us with rich community stories and dialogue in our future work.

Influenced by the suggestions of my advisory committee, I have focused on locating landmarks representative of the underrepresented cultural groups here. Specifically, I have researched the history of, and walked through the neighborhood lovingly referred to as “Spaghetti Hill” here in Monterey that Spanish, Portuguese, and Sicilian fishermen first called home in the early 1900’s. The neighborhood was built to house these immigrants as they came to the area to work in the local sardine and fishing industry which was booming at the time (Lyons). The director of the Central Intelligence Agency Leon Panetta is from Monterey, and also grew up in Spaghetti Hill as the son of Italian immigrants. His parents owned Carmelos Café in Monterey, where he often washed dishes as a young child (Fertig Panneton). Today this neighborhood is an eclectic mix of architectural styles and influences, and this character is being preserved through recent efforts by city planners through zoning initiatives that would deem the area as historically significant.

I have walked along and photographed the shore of Point Alones on the eastern boundary of Pacific Grove where there once stood a thriving Chinese village which was the home of immigrant fishermen and their families. I toured the remaining cannery buildings (across from where the village was located) and looked through the pictures taken of this village before a suspicious fire burned it down in 1906. Today the buildings stand as a small shopping mall. Where shoe and candy stores now stand, there used to be rooms which provided the space where canning machines once whirred and provided a moderate income for the wives and daughters (primarily) of the Chinese and Japanese fishermen who worked in the bay.

I have explored and taken notes and photographs of the neighborhoods where the original Japanese immigrants to the area settled as they found work in fishing and the canneries (prior to WWII). I walked through the streets where there once stood two general stores, a cleaner, a hotel, three restaurants, two insurance offices, a beauty shop, barbershop, three pool halls and bathhouses, an art goods store

and a net shop (all owned by Japanese Americans) ("Preserving California's Japantowns"). Today, the only thing still standing is the Nihonjinkai (Japanese Association) building. The California Japantowns organizations states that the first floor of this building is primarily devoted to a large hall with a raised stage where traditional Kabuki theater was performed and Japanese language movies were screened, and classrooms take up much of the second story ("Preserving California's Japantowns"). They also state that this building was used as a National Guard Armory during the war, and as a hostel for returning Nikkei in the post-war period. Today, it serves as a meeting place for the Japanese American Citizens League ("Preserving California's Japantowns"). Founded in 1929, the JACL is the oldest and largest Asian American civil rights organization in the United States. They are a national organization whose ongoing mission is to "secure and maintain the civil rights of Japanese Americans and all others who are victimized by injustice and bigotry. The leaders and members of the JACL also work to promote cultural, educational and social values and preserve the heritage and legacy of the Japanese American community" ("Japanese American Citizens League ").

I have attended and photographed multiple festivals in Monterey over the past few months, including the Greek Festival, the Italian Festival, and the Turkish Festival. At these festivals I had the opportunity to taste region-specific food that was prepared by locals, as well as watch the traditional cooking methods they employed to make the food. There was a variety of live entertainment as well, and it was fascinating to watch local members of the community sing and dance to music that was specific to their cultural roots. I browsed unique locally-made handmade gifts and wares being sold at vendor booths, and even purchased a few small items. Although these festivals were packed, I was able to speak with a few vendors and event participants who explained to me that this was their "opportunity to showcase their culture for everyone else" living in the area". I really enjoyed these festivals, because they gave me new insight that the cultural expressions I had been looking for in the beginning were not actually gone- but rather had gone through change and adaptation- and that I was actually witnessing the way people

identify with their heritage in a much more contemporary context than simply finding the physical structures and places I had learned about in my beginning research.

Recently I attended and photographed the Christmas in the Adobes event which is a joint collaboration between multiple cultural organizations here in the area, and features 22 historic structures (some public, some private) which are all tied to Monterey's history as a Spanish port town and military community. At this event, I had the opportunity to experience Monterey's unique heritage as a Spanish community (prior to Americans claiming the area-and the state of California in 1846), and explore some of the gardens that are associated with these adobes. In a recent article about the event posted in the San Francisco Chronicle, Michael Green, manager of Monterey State Historic Park, said "There's something about a strong community spirit, about something everyone does during the holidays. You see a really happy community, families out together, with their children, seeing these buildings in a different way," he explained. "It's a different experience than going into a business that's operating out of the adobe during the day. When you see it at night, decorated with volunteers in historic wardrobe that are eager to share their history of that place, it means so much more, and it sheds new light in our community" (Cooper).

During this event, I enjoyed watching reenactments of Spanish dances at the custom house (the first American built building in California), and listened to local narrators and historians explain how California's first theater was originally built as a hotel for military officers to spend the night, but then evolved into a theater (performances were conducted by these young officers in order to make the money necessary to buy weapons and uniforms) and a bar. I visited the Monterey Hotel which opened in 1904, and was described as "the most unique and elegantly furnished European hotel west of Chicago" ("Monterey History"), as well as Casa Soberanes where my family and I were treated to traditional Mexican Horchata (a drink made with milk, rice, vanilla, and cinnamon) and pastries. Casa

Soberanes was originally built in the 1840's by Rafael Estrada, and has been the home of various other community members through time. Today the gardens of this elegant home feature wine bottles, whale bones, and abalone shells. On display inside are beautiful furnishings which are a blend of early New England and China pieces mixed in with modern folk art ("California Department of Parks and Recreation "). This was an exciting opportunity for me as a newcomer to the area, because I got to see how this community identifies with the historic buildings and structures of the past. This is a huge celebration that has a large faithful attendance every year, and it was inspiring to see people really connecting with the local landscape in a way that I had not previously witnessed here. Buildings that are normally closed to the public were alive with storytellers and dancers, as well as people eating and drinking traditional ethnic staples that are representative of the lifestyles of the first immigrants to the area.

Another unique opportunity I had was to participate in Thom Diggins' Historic Monterey Walking Tour, which snakes through downtown and the adobes and tells the story of the area; starting with the Native Americans that first lived here. Mr. Diggins spoke extensively about the history of Monterey, and about how the Spanish conquistadors claimed the area for Spain- only to be ousted by the Mexicans after Mexico gained independence from Spain. Pledging allegiance to Mexico, Monterey becomes part of Mexico until the "Treaty of Guatalupe Hidalgo" is signed, ceding California and other Mexican territories to the US ("City of Monterey California "). He explained how Monterey served as the state's capital (originally called Alta, California) until 1849 when the capital becomes San Jose. He took us through the adobes (that were open to the public), explaining each one's significance, and who lived in them. He showed us the remnants of the local whaling industry which was booming in the late 1800's and early 1900's here, which included a stop at the Old Monterey Whaling Station. The whaling station is now a landmark owned and operated by the California Department of Parks and Recreation, and features a sidewalk made entirely of whale vertebrae (the last remaining one of its kind) ("California Department of Parks and Recreation "). He also took us up to Colton Hall (among other places not mentioned), where

the constitution of California was written and signed, and now houses authentic artifacts and replica documents relating to these proceedings. It was a unique experience as a newcomer, because it got me out of my vehicle, and allowed me to retrace the steps of the famous men who fought to make the state what it is today.

In addition to attending these events and exploring these culturally significant sites around the community, I have also been able to eat at various local family-owned ethnic restaurants which have given me a glimpse of how food traditions have been carried on by immigrants to the area. A few of the restaurants I ate at were Pepper's Mexicali Café (a favorite among locals, and consistently ranked as the number one Mexican restaurant in Pacific Grove by locals), Gianni's Pizza in Monterey featuring authentic Italian food, and the International Marketplace in Monterey which offers traditional Greek gyros, falafels, and other staple Mediterranean foods. I was not able to interview the owners of these establishments during the capstone period, but I will be including interviews with them as part of my blog in the future.

With regards to how I chose to visit and document these events, businesses, and cultural sites, there was no specific methodology I followed. However, I tried to concentrate on exploring a variety of events and places so that I could get a feeling of not only how the community has perpetuated the cultural roots of the people who have made this area unique, but also so I could see how the local landscape has changed and evolved over time. This has helped me to understand my greater theoretical questions involving processes of community integration, who the original settlers of the county were (and why they came), their struggles and successes, and what makes this place so much different than other places I've been. It has also helped me to better understand the importance of cultural programming and heritage preservation in communities, as I have been able to see the perpetuation of cultural traditions and values in a modern context. Throughout this journey, my documentation through

photographs, notes, and speaking with others has helped me better understand not only the places I have gone and the people who made these places significant, but also *what it means to truly be a part of this community*.

Finally, I have conducted community research at local libraries, including the Mayo Hayes O'Donnell Library, and the Monterey Public Library, as well as visited the Monterey Historical Society and various community museums and art galleries. Similar to my experiences in locating culturally significant places and events, I also decided to go to these galleries and museums based on what I had either heard about them (from locals I talked to), or their perceived influence on this project. Although the decision to document certain aspects of this community has been mine individually (in the creation of my blog), I will most certainly seek the advice and recommendations of my advisory committee on what will ultimately be contained within the larger project. It is my intent that we will work to seek input from various community members on which specific stories we tell, and how they are conveyed.

Unfortunately the documentation of an entire region is a large and time consuming project, and I was not able to find nearly as much information as I would have liked. Thus while phase one of this project (the formation of a community cultural advisory committee and the creation of this blog as a repository for gathered research) has relied solely on publicly available historical records and the input of local community members from various cultural institutions, phase two will focus on gathering and documenting the individual voices that add the rich value and meaning to this community. I will focus on conducting oral interviews with various members of the community, including members of historically ethnic neighborhoods and locally-owned businesses. I will place emphasis on working-class community members whose families have immigrated to the area and personally experienced the enormous changes and adaptations this community has endured. Currently there is a lack in diversity in this project in that it does not yet reflect these voices, but it is my goal in the future to incorporate this aspect into

my overall work. Specifically, I will be working with my committee in order to identify more of the local Spanish and Mexican culture, as well as Native American culture. Another cultural group we will work to identify members of and document more thoroughly is the original Sicilians and Italians who came to this area to work in the fishing industry. I was able to include some information about the Native American cultural influences and history in the region, but it is specifically from the internet, and does not reflect any personal documentation (which I would prefer to do in the future). In addition to showcasing more of these specific groups through my blog (and our eventual larger project), I would also like to collect more photographs and notes about the communities I was able to document through this journey. Clearly I have barely scratched the surface of what actually exists here, but I am confident that my research and documentation has paved the way for the considerable work which needs to be done in the future.

My advisory committee has been in integral part of my research plan, as we sat down in the beginning of this collaboration and identified the various ethnic groups who have settled the region, and talked about the different resources I could utilize in order to learn about their history and presence in the area. Some of the key resources we listed were local libraries, various Monterey-specific websites, and even the contact information for different community members I could interview as the project progressed. So far we have not been able to include any outside members of these ethnic communities in our meetings (due to personal availability issues), but it is our intent to work with different community members (both already established contacts and future contacts) as we proceed with our larger project. As I conducted my fieldwork, I continuously advised my committee on what I was researching as well as any difficulty I was having finding resources. We conversed regularly about my progress and if there were any changes to my research plan they felt I should implement. I have shared my blog address with them, and welcomed suggestions on the format and content of my blog throughout this project. As of yet there have been no major disagreements regarding the specific data



I've collected, and I have allowed my fieldwork to change directions as I have had different opportunities to experience local culture. This is mainly due to the fact that after successful completion of phase 1 of this project, we will be working together closely to ensure the information we include in the larger community project is reflective of the desires of the committee members (as well as any participating community members). At this time I do not know what specifically will be included or excluded (of the research data I've already collected), as we will make decisions about this in the future as we see fit.

## My Findings

My ethnographic fieldwork has given me a great new insight into the lives of the people who have made the Monterey Peninsula their home. Through my research, I have learned about people like Roy Hattori who was born and raised in Monterey before having to relocate to a Japanese Internment Camp in 1942 as part of Executive Order 9066. In the interviews I watched, Mr. Hattori details what life was like in Monterey and what it was like to be one of the first abalone divers in the area. He speaks eloquently about how difficult it was to make a living as an abalone diver, as well as how tight the abalone diving community was. Another prominent figure who has come up in my research has been Mr. Larry Oda who I learned about through the 100 Stories Project (conducted by the Museum of Monterey). In the videos I watched, I learned that after the Japanese Americans returned to Monterey (after they were released from the internment camps), they had a hard time getting back into the fishing industry. Many of the Japanese run companies had been taken over, or had closed down while they were away, and so they looked for work elsewhere. Many went to work in the fields of the Salinas Valley, and introduced crops such as strawberries, lettuce, broccoli, and cucumbers to the area, which was primarily involved in growing grain crops and sugar beets before they came. This was hugely pivotal as today the Salinas Valley is known as the "salad bowl of the world", due to the variety and quality of crops grown here. Although the significant Japanese American presence has faded with time, there have been books

published such as “The Japanese on the Monterey Peninsula” written by Tim Thomas (a local historian who leads walking tours of Cannery Row), in order to make the public aware of the influence the Japanese Americans had in the area prior to WWII.

My research has also taught me about the fire of 1906 which wiped out the Chinese fishing village at Point Alones. The fishermen who lived in this village made their living by catching cod, halibut, flounder, yellowtail, sardines, squid and shark- as well as oysters and mussels from the bay waters (Kemp). They harvested these fish and sold them to fishmongers in San Francisco, as well as the miners in The Sierra Nevada Mountains. Whatever fish was not sent to these places usually ended up being shipped back to their home province of Canton, China (Kemp). Their success fueled animosity and conflict between them and the Italian-American fishermen, as they were seen as competition. Due to anti-Chinese sentiment in California, many laws were passed that greatly restricted Chinese fishing operations in Monterey Bay. The fire that started on May 16<sup>th</sup>, 1906 not only was of suspicious origin, but also revealed just how much animosity was present between the Chinese community and the non-Chinese locals. As the fire burned and people scrambled to save their loved ones and possessions, non-Chinese locals stood above the village, laughing and pointing as they watched without offering any assistance. In the morning after the flames had been extinguished, many of these same people looted what was left of the village in search of valuables. Despite this experience, the village’s resilient Chinese people sought work in other industries around the peninsula, and today work hard to promote their cultural identity and heritage with the community. One such example is the annual Feast of Lanterns celebration which takes place in Pacific Grove. In this celebration, the community celebrates the Chinese fishermen who once fished by lantern at night in Monterey Bay. Traditional stories are told to the children during this celebration, in addition to other events which are available to the public. These events include things like the opening and closing ceremonies, feasts (feast of flavors, feast of dancing), and family fun day. Monterey native Gerry Low-Sabado leads the Walk of Remembrance every year, which travels down Forest Ave, through

the coastal recreation trail, and stops at the Hopkins Marine Station where the village once stood. In publically-available interviews, she states that she wants to ensure that the community is familiar with the story of the Chinese fishermen who once worked here, and that their story does not fade from the memories of the community over time.

In researching the local Native American culture, I learned about how there were three major groups; the Ohlone, the Esselen, and the Salinan, and that these Native groups traded extensively with others throughout the state (and beyond). They often traded items such as obsidian and seashells, and ate a diet mostly consisting of fish, seeds, grasses, and a mush made of acorns. As the Spanish missionaries came and converted them to Christianity, much of the indigenous culture was lost; and very little can be seen today. This lack of cultural presence today is also partly due to the fact that Ohlone culture dictates that when someone passes away, their belongings are burned. Thus, there is hardly any physical evidence remaining in the area today (at least in the public sector). Through my research however, I came across Linda Yamane who is from the Rumsien band and has worked for decades to learn the art of Ohlone basket weaving. Through years of combing through anthropological records and traveling to places like the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress in Washington DC, she has studied the methods incorporated by her early ancestors. She now replicates these baskets, and creates them for local museums on commission. She is considered to be the only Ohlone tribal member to know how to create these tribe-specific baskets, and has been working to pass her craft onto her family so that they can carry on the once-lost tradition. In addition to basket weaving, she has also taught herself the Ohlone language, and is the only known speaker of this language in the world.

While this is only a very small amount of the knowledge I have learned about the local landscape, these three examples are a testament to the resiliency and courage shown by the original people and settlers here. In considering the plight of the Chinese fishermen whose village was burned to the ground, I can

see that their strong work ethic and sense of community was far more powerful than those flames. As many village members went on to find work elsewhere and successfully reintegrate themselves into different segments of the community, they did so with a strong spirit that could not be broken. Today they are reviving their culture through celebration, remembrance ceremonies, and public outreach. Thinking about the men who fought off enemies in order to declare the state of California as part of the United States, it is clear to me that the sense of identity and connection to this place that locals have had throughout the years here is infallible. People like Linda Yamane are working hard to revive the Native American culture through song, language, and basket weaving. Due to her passion in sustaining her cultural heritage, she will pass on a gift that was once not available to the larger public. The Japanese brought hard work, innovation, and new ideas to the Salinas Valley, and changed the local landscape so that this area now has one of the biggest agricultural economies in the world. These are the stories and traditions I have tried to include in my blog- so that they not only educate the public about *what once was*, but about efforts to revive and sustain the cultural traditions which are important to the residents who still live here today.

Every immigrant who came here brought with them a unique set of cultural values, customs, and ideologies that has helped to shape the peninsula into the diverse landscape it is today. Through collaborating with my advisory committee and conducting my own research, I learned that integration into a community is much more than simply moving to a place; it takes a strong commitment to providing a promising life for your family and making connections and forming relationships with those around you. The people that have made a life here for themselves against all odds are what makes this community special. This sentiment is reflective of my original capstone questions involving community values and the integration and processes of joining and shaping a community.

## Literature/Resource Review

This project has been a learning experience for me as I have tried to ground my ideas and passions in both academic resources and my own real-life inspiration. One of my favorite quotes is by a famous Senegalese singer named Youssou N'Dour who is now serving as Senegal's Minister of Tourism and Culture. He is quoted as saying "People need to see that, far from being an obstacle, the world's diversity of languages, religions, and traditions is a great treasure, affording us precious opportunities to recognize ourselves in others." I used this same quote in my application for graduate school, and it is something that I have consistently turned to throughout my education. To me, in the context of this project it means that throughout our lives we are often exposed to many different backgrounds, beliefs, and ideologies about the world. We frequently find ourselves surrounded by people who represent different cultural values and traditions, and we have the unique capacity-and responsibility- to learn and absorb as much from them as we can. This has been inspirational to me in that cultural sustainability is about recognizing the differences in one another, yet understanding that we are all similar in our human story. I have looked for these personal connections and expressions of human empathy and similarity throughout this work, as this sentiment has been instrumental to my understanding of the individual stories while being able to place them in the larger community cultural context.

I believe that Arlene Goldbard also eloquently touches on this same idea in her book *New Creative Community: The Art of Cultural Development*. In this piece, she cites the article 1 of the "Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity" (illustrated by UNESCO's 2005 cultural diversity convention) as saying "Culture takes diverse forms across time and space. This diversity is embodied in the uniqueness and plurality of the identities of the groups and societies making up mankind. As a source of exchange, innovation and creativity, cultural diversity is as necessary for humankind as biodiversity is for nature. In this sense, it is the common heritage of humanity and should be recognized and affirmed for the benefit

of present and future generations” (Goldbard 49). This insight builds on N’Dour’s sentiment in that it not only implies the importance of diversity in being able to recognize ourselves in others, but also that it is vital for a healthy community identity- both in the present and future sense.

N’Dour’s quote and Goldbard’s insight have helped me in trying to figure out how to orient my project since I wanted to make sure I was giving full credit to the ways in which diversity enriches our lives.

From a cultural sustainability objective, I wanted to highlight the contributions made by individual ethnic groups to the area, while paying close attention to how these contributions have changed the landscape throughout the documented history of the area.

Another piece of literature that has helped me frame my questions and analyze what it is that I have been trying to accomplish is titled *Heritage and Hegemony: Recent Works on Historic Preservation and Interpretation* by Richard Handler. In this article published by the University of Virginia, the author talks about the role of heritage preservationists in cultural policy, and brings to light a very important question. He asks “As more and more phenomena that surround us are recognized as a testimony of the past, acute problems of choice arise... Resources are finite; we cannot save everything and also make it accessible to a large public. How should we choose?” (Handler 137-141). This has been paramount to my research, as I have tried to take into account my role as an academic in this entire process. Not only have I made choices about what to document, but I am also acutely aware that this work (the act of collecting community information and history- and placing it into Goucher College’s digital archives) plays a role in the preservation of certain aspects (while perhaps disregarding other aspects) of Monterey culture and history. I have tried to address this by acknowledging my shortcomings and making a plan to document as much as possible in the future, while knowing that there will always be limitations to any academic research.

I knew that in order to make the content of my blog meaningful (and have it make the most impact) I must conduct research into concepts and literature surrounding the evolution of human societies, the various paths of community integration, and community building. I wanted to explore these concepts, as I tried to answer the following questions: What do locals value, and how do they integrate themselves into a new place? What are the processes of joining and shaping a community?

In trying to answer these questions, the first piece of literature I consulted is titled *Paths of Community Integration* by Avery M. Guest and Keith R. Stamm. In this article, the authors list the various paths of community integration, and posit that the different paths people choose to integrate themselves into a new community are often dictated by the different social statuses and characteristics they represent (Guest , and Stamm 585-87). This means that people have different motivations and goals when they immigrate into a new community, and often these are based on where they are in life (age, occupation, education levels, etc.). They hypothesize that those who are older and more advanced in their careers, often seek out stronger connections with others in their communities- whether they're personal connections or organizational connections (Guest , and Stamm 585-87). They are more likely to want to be involved in community social organizations, as well as political and local civic organizations. They often place finding employment as being less important than seeking out community connections, and are less concerned with the routine necessities that a younger person might categorize as being more important (Guest , and Stamm 591-92). Conversely, those younger respondents often placed finding stores, employment, and doctors as the most important factor when becoming integrated into a new community (and therefore emphasizing personal and community connections as being less important than basic services) (Guest , and Stamm 591-92). In applying this information to this project, I decided that I really needed to present my blog in such a way that would appeal to the broadest group of newcomers as possible. While there is certainly a large group of older community members who are well-established in their careers, there is a substantial demographic of younger professionals who need

access to basic necessities and community resources. Given this information, I decided that it was imperative to not only focus on the cultural traditions and history of the area that someone more established in life may appreciate, but really go out of my way to identify and categorize the various functional community resources that are necessary for basic livability. Since this project is focused on cultural connections and community, it has been my goal to integrate these resources in a way that is in line with my original project orientation. Specifically, I have tried to concentrate on businesses that started locally, and have a unique story to tell. This approach is important, as it helps to solidify and carry on the community values that were discussed in our meetings.

Another piece of literature regarding community interaction I found to be helpful in building this project is an article published in the titled *Sense of Community: A Definition and Theory* by David McMillan and David M. Chavis. In this article, the authors suggest that communities are built by both physical boundaries, and relational factors (McMillan, and Chavis 3). They state that there are four distinct characteristics which make up a “sense of community”, and that these characteristics are important factors for newcomers to any area. These four characteristics are membership, influence, integration and fulfillment of needs, and shared emotional connection (McMillan, and Chavis 3). They describe membership as the “belonging or of sharing a sense of personal relatedness” and influence as a “sense of mattering, of making a difference to a group and of the group mattering to its members” (McMillan, and Chavis 4). Integration and fulfillment of needs is described as “the feeling that members' needs will be met by the resources received through their membership in the group” (McMillan, and Chavis 4). Finally, shared emotional connection is the “commitment and belief that members have shared and will share history, common places, time together, and similar experiences” (McMillan, and Chavis 4). I really thought this piece was applicable to this work, as it is important to remember the factors that make people interested in a new community, as well as the ways in which they begin to truly feel like a member of that group. Keeping this in mind, I wanted to create something that would facilitate a strong



feeling of belonging and inclusiveness for anyone who accessed this work; regardless of whether they have lived here for a long time, or are recent immigrants from somewhere else. I wanted them to feel like although they may be new and unfamiliar with the area, they are part of a larger social construct built on shared interests, traditions, goals, and experiences.

Although I knew that although the target audience was community residents (both new and non-new residents), I also understand that since this community's economy is primarily based in tourism, this project must also account for this. It is completely logical that this work will not only affect locals, but that tourists may utilize it as well. Since I wanted to focus on the area's cultural heritage, traditions, and histories, I knew that I must consult literature which identifies both the advantages and pitfalls of cultural heritage tourism. An article I found to be especially helpful in researching cultural heritage tourism is titled *Heritage Tourism Planning Guidebook Methods for Implementing Heritage Tourism Programs in Sussex County, Delaware*, and is written by Xuan Jiang and Andrew Homsey. This article talks extensively about the benefits of cultural tourism, and serves as a guide for implementing heritage tourism programs. They posit that cultural tourism can help protect and preserve local resources such as museums, monuments, and archaeological sites, as people become more interested in visiting and experiencing different cultures. As more people visit these places, the communities that host them often experience various immense economic benefits including new businesses, increased jobs, and higher property taxes (Jiang, and Homsey 6). The authors go on to state that "In addition to its economic impacts, which include producing jobs, increasing income, and generating tax revenues, heritage tourism also has the potential to: diversify local economies , preserve a community's uniqueness, establishing and reinforcing identity, facilitate partnerships among people and organizations, foster sustainable development, strengthen community pride and sense of place, support culture and the arts, and helps revitalize the tourism industry in general" (Jiang, and Homsey 7).

Although cultural heritage tourism can have a profound positive impact on a community, it can also create a myriad of problems. In an online USA article titled *Positive and Negative Effects of Tourism*, author Carole Simm cites many negative effects. Some of the key points she brings up are that money is often taken out of tax revenue to establish and maintain basic infrastructure (roads, visitor centers, hotels), tourism jobs are often seasonal and poorly paid (yet tourism can push up local property prices and the cost of goods and services), money generated by tourism does not always benefit the community, and visitor behavior can have a detrimental effect on the quality of life for the host community. She states that this can come in the form of crowding and congestion, drugs and alcohol problems, and that prostitution and increased crime levels can occur. She also points out that “Tourism can even infringe on human rights, with locals being displaced from their land to make way for new hotels or barred from beaches. Interaction with tourists can also lead to an erosion of traditional cultures and values.” Finally, she posits that “Tourism poses a threat to a region's natural and cultural resources, such as water supply, beaches, coral reefs and heritage sites, through overuse. It also causes increased pollution through traffic emissions, littering, increased sewage production and noise” (Simm).

This understanding of cultural heritage tourism has broad implications for this project, as I needed to remember not only who the intended audience is, but also any potential negative impact this work might have on the people of this community. I have tried to remain continuously cognizant of the fact that I would be interviewing locals, and their voices may end up accessible to tourists (and ultimately used as a commodity to help entice people to visit the area). Due to this possibility, I will be taking steps to reduce any negative repercussions for the people I work with by giving them institutional review board forms which explain the potential for possible utilization of their stories in a tourism promotion context. Additionally, I have consulted various resources which have given me guidance in proceeding through the future of this project. One of these resources is UNESCO, who in a report titled *Cultural Tourism and Heritage Management in the World Heritage Site of the Ancient Town of Hoi An Vietnam*,

suggests that substantial public participation in tourism planning helps to mitigate potential negative impacts. They recommend developing participatory stakeholder strategies for tourism development and management that consider the carrying capacity of the cultural and natural resources, along with encouraging greater inclusion of the residents in decision making processes (as well as making sure they understand the perceptions of all stakeholders and adapting planning processes accordingly) in order to help alleviate any negative impact on local community members (UNESCO 72). Although this project itself was not created to promote tourism, I understand the potential for this and will continuously involve community stakeholders in dialogue and any action that will directly affect them.

Since a large part of this project has involved building and working within a partnership capacity (organizational, as well as personal), I researched the processes and effective strategies of creating strong community collaborations in hopes that I could apply what I learned to this project. An article I found to be especially useful in my own project was written by Barbara A. Holland and Sherril B. Gelmon, and is titled *The State of the Engaged Campus: What Have We Learned About Building and Sustaining University-Community Partnerships*. Although the article is based on academic student-community collaborations (in the context of internships, service-learning, practica, and capstones), it is written from the perspective of top-level university personnel. While it mainly focuses on questions regarding whether education institutions should send their students out into the community for a more hands-on approach, it also provides some very useful information about what effective student-community partnerships and collaborations should look like. In this article, the authors state that “most people understand that successful partnerships focus on mutual benefits. We describe effective partnerships as knowledge-based collaborations in which all partners have things to teach each other, things to learn from each other, and things they will learn together. We have seen that an effective partnership builds the capacity of each partner to accomplish its own mission while also working together” (Holland and Gelmon, 107). This passage really resonated with me as I proceeded through this

project. It has consistently stood as a reminder that although I am committed to learning as much about this community as I can, I also have a unique skill set to offer both my advisory committee, and the community as a whole. While I was consistently aware of my place as a newcomer (and therefore someone not specifically knowledgeable about the local culture and how the different organizations operated with one another), I had to remind myself that as a student of cultural sustainability I was bringing to these conversations a deeper understanding of resources available, a sense of the different models that have been used as best practices, and a keen sense of why paying attention to ethics matters. On multiple occasions my committee members commented on how nice it was to have someone “fresh” come in and look at the processes, procedures, successes, and failures (and offering suggestions or advice based on what I have learned through my courses when necessary) that have taken place. *As long as I felt like I was contributing knowledge or expertise when appropriate, and listening and really engaging in these conversations and meetings, I knew my project was a true culmination of our discussions and their recommendations.*

In this article, the authors also state that “while partnerships take many purposes and forms, there are common features associated with *success* which most define as sustainability” (Holland, and Gelmon 108). They conclude that “sustainable partnerships have the following characteristics: (1) there are mutually agreed upon goals; (2) success is defined and outcomes are measured in both institutional and community terms (in my case, student and community terms); (3) control of the agenda is vested primarily in community hands; (4) effective use and enhancement of community capacity are based on clear identification of community resources and strengths; (5) the educational component has clear consequences for the community and institution; and (6) there is an ongoing commitment to evaluation that involves all partners” (Holland, and Gelmon 108).

These benchmarks are valuable tools to keep in mind when working with any group, as they provide a clear set of standards by which to measure effective collaboration. As we collaborated together, the first thing we did was decide upon a list of goals that would essentially benefit all parties equally. I knew that I needed to create a capstone product that would provide for the needs of the community in a way that was accessible and beneficial to everyone, and they gave me advice on the different things my blog should contain in order to be effective. By listing my research findings in one cohesive place, my committee and I will be able to use that information in the future to build upon and expand. Also my blog will serve as a point of free advertising for not only my committee members, but also members of the community (especially with regards to listing businesses and events). In this case, success was defined and outcomes were measured in terms that were mutually beneficial to both myself (as a student), and the community I worked with. We decided that we had a very specific set of things we wanted to see accomplished (more collaboration between organizations, better awareness and education of community cultural assets, and a resolution to issues such as language barriers and poor or inaccurate data available), and through our work together, I was able to at least address these issues with my work (and follow through with their recommendations to the best of my ability and within the scope of my project). Throughout this project I have been consistently aware that control of the agenda *must* be in community hands, in order for this to be a project that would have any *real meaning and value* for the community. This has been perhaps one of the biggest considerations throughout this project, as it has always been my intent to be an agent of cultural sustainability (specifically here in the Monterey area), in that I am working to sustain the cultures this community cares about. Thus in order to create a project that truly reflects the values and agenda of the community, the content (and use of that content) has been continuously dictated by the voices of the cultural advisors. Through meetings (both in person and email) we have worked together to identify community issues (based on the observations and conversations my committee members have had with others), decipher goals,

objectives, and desired outcomes (based on this information), and discuss possible approaches and models this project can take in the future. Through the inclusion of all interested community members in our future collaboration, we will be able to ensure (to the best of our ability) that the will of the community is carefully considered and reflected in our work. This is the only way this project will truly have any real meaning for those it has been intended to benefit.

With regards to community strengths, I tried to focus on identifying advisors who would be able to give me different perspectives based on their strengths and positions within the community. Knowing that I needed representatives from various industries and organizations, I specifically sought out individuals who would see things differently and be able to give me information that others may not be privy to. I think this approach has been integral to this project, as people see strength and weakness in different areas, depending on what their community orientation is.

Additionally, I think it is vitally important when you're doing any sort of community outreach program, to consistently evaluate progress throughout the duration of the project. This is important, because it allows for deep analysis along the way of what is- and what is not- working in the process. Thus we have continuously discussed both my research, and the progress of the overall project. Since this project has focused on the cultural needs of this community, it has been crucial to keep an open mind along the way. This has helped to accommodate any new findings and revelations made throughout the process, and address any pertinent issues which have become apparent. Evaluation will continue to be vitally important as this first part of the project is completed (phase 1 of the capstone), and we move onto phase 2.

Other literature which has had a great influence on my research has come from sources dealing with conducting interviews and writing ethnographies. Since personal interviews will eventually be included in my blog (and later will be added to any larger community project my blog influences), I have turned to

a few key authors I am familiar with for advice and reference. These authors include Herbert J. Rubin (author of *Qualitative Interviewing*), H.L. Goodall Jr. (author of *Writing the New Ethnography*), David M. Fetterman (author of *Ethnography: Step by Step (Applied Social Research Methods)*) and Charlotte Aull Davies (author of *Reflexive Ethnography*). These readings have been rewarding in that they have provided some very basic (and more complex) steps and approaches to conducting personal interviews. Through them I have gained valuable insight on the methodology of choosing interviewees, the types of questions which reveal the most complete and sincere answers, and how to write up my findings which appropriately account for the context and reliability of my data. As we go forward with this project in the future, I feel that it is important to remember exactly what my personal objectives are (with regards to my blog-and what I want this project to eventually look like), and how I can personally meet those objectives while still remaining sincere and receptive to the people I work with. These readings in the practice of ethnography have provided me with a strong foundation I can continue to build on; both throughout the duration of this project, and beyond.

Finally, knowing that I would need to eventually need to find a way to permanently house the data I have collected, I have conducted research into various methods of marketing my research and making it sustainable for the future. I have looked at various community resources which serve as a successful repository for this work, as well as spoken with community consultants who represent local libraries and institutions. As I work with community organizations such as Historic Monterey (and possibly others) in the future, I will utilize these resources as they will generate interest in this project through their own efforts. With regards to my online blog (where I have been collecting my community data), I found a book titled *The New Rules of Marketing and PR* by David Fetterman to be useful. Specifically, he illustrates how important utilizing various approaches is (blogging, advertising, using social networking sites) to making sure your audience actually sees the product you are trying to sell. While it has never been my intent to make any sort of financial gain with this work, I deeply value the capacity this project

to facilitate significant change in the Monterey area, and I desire to promote our efforts on a level that will benefit as many people as possible. As we move forward with the final product of this research (whatever form my blog takes in the future), I will have to consistently focus on the ways technology is changing and evolving- and what that means for effective dissemination of my research.

In addition to researching ways of sustaining my blog, I have also explored some models of successful community projects which could potentially influence this project. One of the resources I found to be helpful was a collaborative project between the Doig River First Nation Elders, youth, and leaders and ethnographers, linguists, and web-designers designed to record the people, songs, experiences, and stories that connect the Doig River First Nation to the land. The material they collected over a one month period was eventually used to create an online exhibit titled "Drummers and the Land" ("Virtual Museum Canada "). This model of collaboration is helpful, because it gives great insight into how people within a community can come together to not only celebrate their collective identity, but also to record it for preservation. As the second phase of our project ensues, it will be beneficial to research this collaboration to see if there are any elements involved that we can use as inspiration for our own work. Another helpful model worth discussing in the future is the "Let's Be Shore" project, which was created by the Maryland Humanities Council's Practicing Democracy Program. The project was created to start a respectful dialogue between people living on Maryland's Eastern Shore about land use, agriculture, the economy, and water quality along the shore ("Let's Be Shore- Sharing views of what it is like to live on Maryland's Eastern Shore"). This project has made use of an interactive website (where community members can participate and contribute), and features photography and film in order to educate residents about the issues facing their community. This model of community interaction is a great example of bringing voices together through the use of technology, and serves as an excellent resource for my committee as we proceed. In addition to the two models mentioned, we will continue to



research and evaluate further examples of successful community engagement and collaboration as we try to create a project that is sustainable and useful to people of the region.

Throughout this project and my research (both in academic materials and the community itself), the many different sources I have utilized have provided me with unique viewpoints which have often challenged the way I previously thought about an issue or how to approach a situation. It has been my consistent quest throughout this project to ultimately answer one specific question: *what is the collective fabric of our shared experiences, and what sorts of literature would help me discover the answer to this?* While I feel that I have scratched the surface of this question through careful inquiry and analysis, I feel that there is great work still to be done. It is my hope that I will be able to further investigate issues within community organizing and planning processes, and that my ongoing interest and inquiry will only enhance the quality of any continued work.

## Conclusion

As I have reflected on the process of putting together this project, I am struck by not only the scope of the work itself, but also the implications and effects it has had on my own life. Through research and personal reflection, I have learned not only about my new community, but also about myself. I have gone outside of my comfort zone and sought out new connections- both personal and professional.

I have learned that this community has been built on the hard work and sacrifice of countless people. From the Native Americans who called the area home first, to the different groups who came looking for work and a new life- this place has evolved throughout the years as profitable industries have changed and people have built their life stories and identities here. From stories of success to heartache, the people and families who represent this community have experienced many trials and tribulations- all of which have added to its unique diversity and heritage. This project has specifically sought to identify the

ways in which people have overcome and adapted to their surroundings, and focuses on the ways in which cultural connections are established and sustained throughout time.

Through local research and collaboration with community leaders, I have strived to build a model of pragmatic approaches that make real and tangible cultural sustainability work possible. It is my distinct hope that I have been able to scratch the surface of the Monterey area's legacy in a meaningful way that sets the foundation for future dialogue and work- both in this region and elsewhere.

I have been driven throughout this project by the idea that when we have a greater awareness and understanding of who we are- and the deep connections that we share, we are better informed and able to make decisions about our future together. These decisions are then ultimately guided by who we once were, who we are now, and who we would like to be- both as individual communities, and members of a bigger world.

It is my hope that by featuring these events and places, I have helped to give them the recognition that allows for deeper understanding and awareness of their importance within this community. I chose these opportunities because I am passionate about the history and cultural traditions which are perpetuated in these community examples, and I hope that by highlighting them I encourage people to understand the value of the individual contributions we all make to our communities.

Through my experiences, I have learned that one of the best ways to identify and nurture traditions of knowledge and practice is to ask the right questions. Who are the culture bearers? What can they offer the communities they live in? What are their stories, and what are they passionate about? Through the construction of a community cultural advisory committee, I was able to ascertain the insider voice I was looking for; *these are the voices that would make my project meaningful to the community overall.*

Through a very pragmatic approach and specific steps (conducting surveys, holding stakeholder meetings, conducting ethnographic fieldwork, etc.), we were able to identify community goals and

values and apply this knowledge in a way that would not only benefit the community presently, but also well beyond the length of this project (and ultimately, my permanent departure from the area).

As a student of cultural sustainability, I have had the distinct responsibility of aligning my work and actions with field discourse, practices, and processes in a way that will hopefully stand as an example for my colleagues (both present and future). Through this work, I have learned the importance of encouraging others to become involved in their own communities through awareness, interest, and passion just as I have had the privilege of doing. Through this project and my own work within this community, I have gained an immense appreciation for what it means to truly energize those marginalized members of society, so that they are more inclined to participate not only in their own communities, but also their culture on a deeper level. It is my hope that this project, which is essentially a small piece of a larger cultural context and dialogue, will stand as an example of what one individual can do in an unfamiliar landscape.

Through this work, I have gained a better understanding of what people can achieve both individually, and collectively. I have seen that when people become more connected with one another and their personal landscape, they are more inclined to take steps to preserve these relationships and connections over the long term. As we come together through shared interests and goals, our efforts can have a dramatic effect on cultures which sustain not only ourselves, but also the planet.

When we strengthen our community ties (whether we're only staying for a short amount of time, or planning on becoming a permanent member of a community), we become excited about not only our shared past, but also our future together. Along with community awareness comes pride, and an understanding that we are all in this together. When we experience a deeper sense of place (both individually and collectively), we are more drawn to civic engagement and better understand the necessity to preserve community cultural values. This project has taught me that even the smallest

actions can lead to broader results and larger movements. This sentiment can be applied to not only future community projects like this one, but also help contribute to peace and social justice. When we come together as a community and understand that we are all individually valuable members of a larger society, we truly have the capacity to positively influence others in a way that encourages cultural health and equity in a diverse and unequal world. As I reflect again on Angelou's words "I long, as does every human being, to be at home wherever I find myself", I am reminded that although the first phase of my capstone is concluding, this process of soul-searching and finding meaning and value in unfamiliar land is truly an ongoing endeavor. Sometimes it is the mere process of building networks and asking the right questions which will yield the answers which you find most helpful; not only as a student, but as a member of any community. When we reach out to strangers and engage with them in a truly meaningful way, we eventually find that we're not the outsiders we perceive ourselves to be; but rather members of the larger community context. Thus we are not merely researching the stories; we are helping to tell them-and we are part of them. It is only when we realize this that we will truly be "home".

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