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"Charlie Brown": Not Just Another Essay on the Gourd Dance

LUKE E. LASSITER

One evening in September, 1994, I walked down the street to have dinner with Theresa Carter, Danieala Vickers, and Richard and Diana Kauahquo.[1] We finished eating about 8:30, settled back for coffee, and began discussing a Gourd Dance song called "Charlie Brown." After several minutes, Theresa began talking about the way of life that revolves around going to Gourd Dances. I asked her to elaborate.

"I can't imagine being without it and not going," said Theresa. "It's, I don't know, it's just part of us."

"It's just like a *disease*," added Richard, slightly chuckling under his breath.

"Yeah, we have to go," said Theresa.

"It gets in you and you can't get rid of it," continued Richard. "Anywhere you see it, wherever you go, to Gourd Dancing—I'll get out there and I'll dance with them."

"You could start a Gourd Dancing Anonymous," I said jokingly. We all laughed.

After a short while, Theresa continued, "Even if I moved away, I would have to come back for the dances, for the feeling that I get from them."

"So when you're away from it, do you feel absent from that feeling?" I asked.

"Oh yeah," said Theresa. "You *miss* it. It's part of our every-

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day life that we've developed in the last years. If we didn't have it...." Theresa paused. "I get *tired* sometimes, and I *gripe*. Then I might stay away for a little bit. But then after a while you go back for the music, for the *songs*. It's just like some of our War Mothers songs."

Richard nodded his head and whistled slightly under his breath, "Boy!"

"Ah!" Theresa clutched at her heart. "You know," she continued, "they just get you, because they tell a story. And you *feel* that story. It's like the Desert Storm song. *That*, I'll *always* get this feeling, this choked up feeling, because it affected me; because my son was there then. But, I need that music, and those songs—whether I dance or not."

Later, Theresa began talking about "Charlie Brown" again: "['Charlie Brown'] is one of the songs that really brings everything out in us. *All* the feelings we have, *all* the good feelings we have. It comes through with that song."[2]

THE GOURD DANCE: ON THE NEED TO ENGAGE IN COMMUNITY-WIDE CONVERSATIONS

Theresa, Danieala, Richard, and Diana live in southwestern Oklahoma. In what many here call "our Indian world," Kiowa, Comanche, Kiowa-Apache, Wichita, Caddo, Delaware, and Chirichaua Apache peoples and their traditions converge, creating a dynamic and diverse community. Traditions such as language, worldview, religion, and community narrative help to demarcate this Indian world. Several dance and song traditions are among the most heralded. The conversation above is about one of these: the Gourd Dance.

Ethnographers and other scholars have recently written much about this dance. They have discussed its form and choreography, history, and significance to Oklahoma communities, especially the Kiowas.[3] This scholarly interest is not surprising, especially since the dance's popularity has become so widespread after its revival in the 1950s. Since then, it has nearly replaced the War Dance's prominence in some Oklahoma communities. In southwestern Oklahoma, while many weekends pass without a War Dance, no weekend passes without one or more community organizations hosting an eight- to ten-hour Gourd Dance. Indeed, the dance is now one of southwestern Oklahoma's most visible aesthetic forms.

FIG. 1. GOURD DANCERS

The Gourd Dance is a simple dance. Its attire is simple. Men most often wear jeans or slacks, a nice shirt, moccasins or cowboy boots or sneakers, and silver and bead bandoliers. They wear cloth sashes (many made of velvet) wrapped around their waists and knotted on the right; the ends—which hang past the knees—are beaded and fringed with polyester chainette. In their hands they carry feather fans and rattles made, for the most part, of tin. Sometimes they wear a Gourd Dance blanket—half red, half blue—draped over the shoulders and hanging to the knees or draped across the chest. Women dancers often wear fringed shawls over street clothes. Sometimes they wear more formal dance attire (figure 1).

The movement of the dance is simple as well—restrained and understated. For about eight to ten hours per dance, with breaks, men and women bob up and down in place in accord with the rhythm of Gourd Dance songs. The men, separate from the women, shake their rattles in time with the song, and at certain breaks in the song, they slowly move clockwise around a group of singers (figures 2 and 3). Compared to the War Dance's visibility in many other Plains communities, this is not what many expect to see when it comes to Native American dance. Many outsiders express disappointment that the Gourd Dance doesn't look "Indian." But this illustrates a very important point: The Gourd Dance experience is not entirely visual—it's not something altogether to *see*.

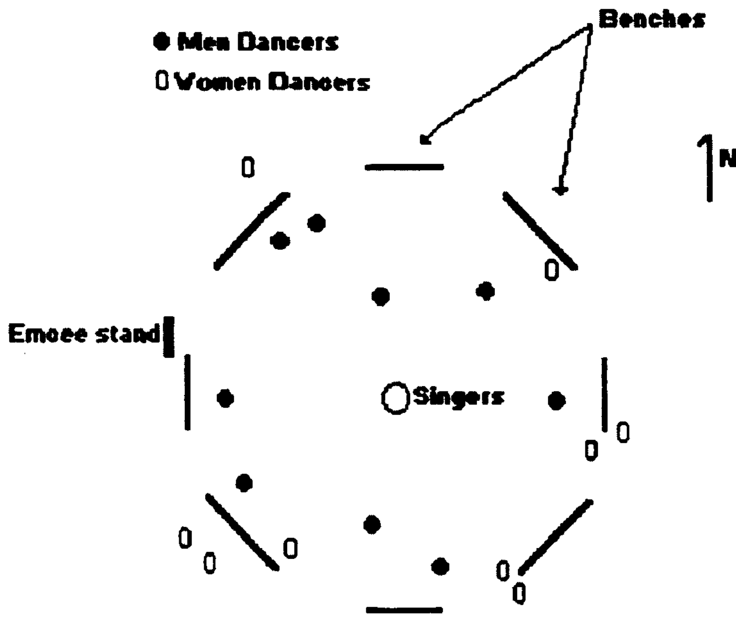

Fig. 2. General Choreography

Fig. 3. Singers

For community members, the dance's overriding meaning resides with what can be heard, not seen. "Gourd dancing is a big part of Indian life right now," says Frankie Ware, speaking about the popularity of the Gourd Dance in her community. "You go to the powwows and that's all you *hear* is gourd dancing" [emphasis added].[4]

The Gourd Dance event revolves around song. Singers and their songs are both the literal and metaphorical center of the Gourd Dance. Each and every dance cannot begin until the singers arrive; it can happen neither without them nor without the songs they sing. As the Gourd Dance is a label that refers to both a dance and song tradition, the latter tradition is that which community members most often emphasize when they talk about this dance.

The song tradition about which they talk is Kiowa. Although community members regularly dispute this detail among themselves and with other communities (for instance, the Cheyenne and Arapahos), they generally concur that the Gourd Dance is a Kiowa dance. Considering the Gourd Dance's popularity in the community, the Kiowa song tradition now enjoys immense popularity and dominance in the community. Kiowa people enjoy equal prominence in defining the dance's purpose at their annual July Fourth Gourd Dance celebrations, where they also assert their distinctive connection to the dance.[5] (Some Kiowa organizations, for example, emphasize a more formal and distinct Kiowa dress code during these annuals.) But even at these annual celebrations, participation in the dance is by no means limited to Kiowas alone: Comanche, Kiowa-Apache, Wichita, Caddo, Delaware, and Chirichaua Apache peoples all go to Gourd Dances. What unites these Gourd Dance practitioners is a common experience, established not in a singular history, but in a collective encounter with song.

The community discussions about the Gourd Dance, like community discussions about peyote meetings or church services, almost always push towards this encounter with song and what it means to hear and understand it. But most especially, for many community members the point of hearing song goes beyond symbolic association. To know song on its deepest levels is to *feel it*: "The whole essence of this thing is to feel good," says Billy Evans Horse, who first pointed this out to me.[6] On some levels, felt encounter with song transcends obvious differences between Kiowa or Apache or Comanche song in the community. As in my conversation with Theresa and

Richard above, when many community members talk about the Gourd Dance, they often refer to several other song traditions as a way to talk about the power of song in general.

Talk about the power of Gourd Dance songs, then, is only part of a larger community-wide conversation about song. Community members regularly talk about all of their song traditions—from dance songs to peyote songs to church hymns. Song surfaces again and again in community-wide conversations. From this talk, it quickly becomes apparent that song is one of this Indian world's more defining characteristics. For many community members, all so-called Indian song enjoys equal footing with language as the most vital tradition for maintaining a distinctive way of life. As Native language is being spoken less and less, however, song is looming as a dominant cultural symbol. Song cannot go unrecognized for anyone who lives in the community and engages in its community-wide conversations. Yet scholars who have studied here have done little in the way of articulating this exchange.

Although previous treatises of the Gourd Dance have indeed mentioned song, most of these have situated song within the narrow confines of simple functional relationships.[7] To put it another way, because scholars have not fully explored how community members talk about song, they have not yet sufficiently elaborated and interpreted what song *means* to community members. Much of the previous literature on the Gourd Dance has been instead largely historical, focused on models of change and continuity, with much space given to questionable applications of theory—which have led, I believe, to poor understandings of the Gourd Dance. James H. Howard's application of Anthony F. C. Wallace's revitalization and Benjamin R. Kracht's application of Victor Turner's *communitas* are notable examples.[8] When applied resourcefully, the theoretical models presented by scholars of the Gourd Dance are indeed important to larger ethnological discussions. These same models, however, often forego one of the more provoking components of the Gourd Dance—individual experience. By their very nature, such models systematically gloss individual experience to pose experience as pattern cross-culturally. For community members, however, the Gourd Dance experience rests not on behavior that can be seen and observed and patterned, but on what can be heard, understood, and felt on an individual level. Such experience is then negotiated, not patterned, by community-wide conversations about the dance. Engaging in

this dialogue is absolutely necessary to understanding the Gourd Dance's deepest experiential meanings. "Societies, like lives, contain their own interpretations," writes Clifford Geertz. "One has only to learn how to gain access to them."[9]

This is a methodological point to which I shall return below. But suffice it to say that scholars and community members tell two different kinds of stories about southwestern Oklahoma's Gourd Dance. Community members discuss the Gourd Dance in ways that scholars conventionally ignore, and scholars discuss the Gourd Dance in ways that community members conventionally ignore. As such, they each relate two different sets of meaningful relationships: Academic stories are meaningful to academics and community stories are meaningful to Gourd Dance practitioners. For example, Benjamin R. Kracht's article, *Kiowa Powwows: Continuity in Ritual Practice,* chronicles the Gourd Dance's emergence within the powwow culture of southwestern Oklahoma, which, to reiterate, is now dominated by the Gourd Dance.[10] Kracht offers an intriguing narrative of change and continuity, yet this narrative is set within an ethnohistorical frame, especially as based on archival documents. Several community members read Kracht's article after its publication. They found it interesting, and pointed out some discrepancies (which have been cited elsewhere).[11] This academically positioned history, however, has little relevance to their own conversations about the dance. Simply put, they do not include archival documents in their conversations. They employ another set of diverse narratives about individual experience centered on an encounter with song, which the above conversation so clearly illustrates.

In this essay, I address the disparity that these two story types represent. I offer what follows as a supplement to earlier discussions of the Gourd Dance. But the central problem discussed here, and a broader anthropological and ethnomusicological problem, is how academic conversations about experience and song differ from the community's conversations about experience and song. This problem presents serious obstacles for understanding what the Gourd Dance experience *means to its practitioners* and, in turn, what the Gourd Dance means to larger discussions of cultural change and revival. This essay is about these obstacles and the need to incorporate community conversations into academic discussions about these topics of study. Indeed, community conversations about song are central to understanding the Gourd Dance's unique community mean-

ings. This is the stuff of human diversity and why we do ethnography. Ethnographers have long regarded a community's interpretation of their own aesthetic forms as a valid and important ethnographic endeavor. To understand what Theresa Carter means when she says "[Charlie Brown] is one of the songs that really brings everything out in us," one has only to listen.[12]

"CHARLIE BROWN": ON SONG AND EXPERIENCE

In the conversation above, Theresa and Richard are talking about encounter with song. "Charlie Brown" represents only one song in the Gourd Dance repertoire, which is part of a larger Kiowa song tradition, which is in turn part of a larger community song repertoire.[13] Several dozen songs are sung at each Gourd Dance event, but these represent only a small sample of the total Gourd Dance song repertoire; singers assert that these songs are innumerable.[14] Although talk about "Charlie Brown" provides only one window into the world of song in this community, it does offer a way to understand the uniqueness of the Gourd Dance experience.

"Charlie Brown" is perhaps one of the most widely known songs among Gourd Dance practitioners. If one goes to any Gourd Dance in the country, whether in southwestern Oklahoma or in Navajo country—and many Navajos are now enthusiastic Gourd Dance adherents—one will always hear two songs: the "Starting Song" and "Charlie Brown." All other Gourd Dance songs fall somewhere in between. The "Starting Song," as its name implies, must be sung at all Gourd Dances to initiate the dance. Singers conventionally, but by no means always, sing three other songs after the "Starting Song." After these four songs, singers sing songs at random from memory. They sing them one after the other, take a break—which may be quite long during "specials," (i.e., "giveaways")—and sing another session of songs, take another break, and so on until the dance's close. "Charlie Brown" is usually sung as the last song.

Throughout a Gourd Dance, singers ideally build up the dance from slow to fast. Near the dance's close, singers begin to sing what they call the fast songs, rhythm songs, or in Kiowa, *bhawl dawgeah*. "Charlie Brown" is a *bhawl dawgeah*, and it is the culmination of the dance's gradual buildup. Singers and dancers negotiate this buildup throughout to engage a heightened feeling, a feeling based in hearing and understand-

ing song. "You have to be careful with the singing portion of it," says Billy Evans Horse about singing Gourd Dance songs, "so you can make sure that if you've got the feeling, the dancers get the feeling. And transmit it back and forth. Then your audience will get the vibes, so to speak."[15]

This sentiment, as emergent in sound, demarcates the most powerfully defined cultural boundaries. When one watches a Gourd Dance, one observes something vastly different from what Gourd Dance practitioners experience. Indeed, observation alone can be misleading. For example, at first glance the Gourd Dance event appears to be almost entirely a men's event. The men dominate the dancing and singing, while women singers sit behind the men seated at the drum. All community members stress that the Gourd Dance is a time-honored men's dance. When women dance, they must, ideally, dance behind the men—although in practice they don't always do this. Participation, however, is by no means limited to the men dancers and men singers. At any Gourd Dance event in southwestern Oklahoma, community spectators almost always outnumber the ten or fifteen or fifty dancers and ten or fifteen or fifty singers. These spectators include men and women, but women are often in the majority. Both spectators and dancers, both men and women, all participate as listeners. Although they may or may not seem to participate equally, they do share a common denominator that observation alone cannot elicit: they go to Gourd Dances to hear the songs. As Theresa says above, "I need that music, and those songs—whether I dance or not."[16]

Thus, when an outside observer listens to a Gourd Dance, or more precisely, "Charlie Brown," what he or she is hearing is not the same as what community members are hearing. For community members, "Charlie Brown," like all songs, invokes a host of referents lost on outside observers.[17] A central problem arises, however, when one seeks to cross these "sound barriers" to translate and interpret through the written text what a song like "Charlie Brown" means.

ACADEMICALLY-POSITIONED CONVERSATIONS ABOUT SONG AND EXPERIENCE: TWO EXAMPLES

Many Native American studies scholars often look to two conventional models to translate song in the written text. The first is to transcribe oral song traditions in what is generally called

Western notation; figure 4 illustrates "Charlie Brown" written in Western notation. The immediate question here is what does this communicate in the written text? What does this tell the reader about "Charlie Brown"? Obviously, Western notation communicates little about how "Charlie Brown" is performed. It does communicate to the reader that if, for example, you played this on the piano at home, you may get, at the very best, the gist of this song's sound. To be truthful, playing "Charlie Brown" on the piano is a bit irrelevant to Gourd Dance practitioners—especially when compared to an intimate listening of the song. What is equally irrelevant is for Kiowa singers to open books about their own song traditions and see them written as in figure 4. Simply put, this is not the way *they* communicate their song traditions.

To be sure, Western notation has its place in certain kinds of ethnography, but that place is not part of the sound world that includes "Charlie Brown." Western notation, which focuses solely on representing and translating *sound*, overlooks communicative context. Charlie Brown's fullest meanings material-

FIG. 4. "CHARLIE BROWN" IN WESTERN NOTATION

ize when the song comes to life at a dance among those people for whom it has its deepest meanings. Writing "Charlie Brown" in Western notation disregards the experience of hearing "Charlie Brown," which, for many Gourd Dance practitioners, is the reason why such songs are so powerful.[18]

Perhaps the main problem with using Western notation to transcribe "Charlie Brown" is that it breaks down song into smaller units of sound. Community members do not explicitly do this, except when identifying the so-called breaks, cuts, and curves in a song; they talk about song in holistic terms. When, for example, new songs "come" to individuals, or when someone makes, composes, or receives a new song, it comes as a whole. This whole is "straightened out"—meaning worked through to make the breaks, cuts, and curves acceptable to a particular song tradition—and then presented as an individual song. For community members, a song is the basic unit of sound. To understand each song is to understand a special kind of language. Like the messages imparted by a single word in spoken language, each song generally operates as a whole rather than as a collection of discrete parts; the total assemblage of sounds makes a complete and unique, yet multidimensional, symbolic statement.[19] One key to understanding the meanings of these statements is eliciting the many diverse referents, narratives, and knowledge that surround each song.

The musicological problem presented by Western notation actually reflects a larger ethnographic problem. How do we represent song in text? How do we translate one form of expression into another? Many scholars also look to song lyrics to address these questions, especially because a song's lyrics can be easily written.[20] This represents a second conventional model that many Native American studies scholars often employ to translate song in the written text.

Song lyrics are extremely effective for purposes of illustration. Much too often, however, ethnographers seem to assume that song lyrics alone circumscribe a song's meaning, that a song's text encompasses all that song communicates. In so doing, authors are essentially assuming that song and the written word belong to the same genre, and we know that they do not. Much more serious is the assumption that songs without lyrics—and several Native song repertoires fall into this category—do not communicate meaning. Consider, for example, this excerpt from John Beatty's treatise of Kiowa-Apache songs, a song tradition closely related to the Kiowa song tradition:

> A large number of songs in Kiowa-Apache have no words at all, but employ vocables or nonsense syllables. These are specifically ordered sounds carrying semantic meaning. The final song of the Blackfeet Society has in it the phrase "yo he yo he yo yo he yo he o we" which is completely without meaning.[21]

Surely, any serious musicologist would not say that the grand finale of Tchaikovsky's "1812 Overture" is "completely without meaning" because it lacks a linguistic component. But Beatty is essentially saying as much for the crescendo of a song that is as moving for Kiowa-Apache Blackfeet Society practitioners as Tchaikovsky's grand finale is for some classical listeners.[22] As with Western notation, this song's meaning cannot be found in its discrete parts, but in its expressive whole.

Beatty is not alone in his treatise of song. Many students of Native song routinely select against songs that they cannot easily write down on paper. In so doing, they completely dismiss an entire world of meaning, especially experiential meaning. The few Gourd Dance scholars, in glossing the role that song has in the Gourd Dance experience, have done just this. Like the Kiowa-Apache Blackfeet Society ceremonials, Gourd Dances often take place without a single song containing lyrics. Out of hundreds of Gourd Dance songs, only a few have lyrics. "Charlie Brown" is representative of most Gourd Dance songs. It has no lyrics. Does one then assume that no meaning has transpired? Is *nothing* going on? Considering Theresa's comment about "Charlie Brown" above, one can only conclude the contrary.

Ethnomusicologists have labeled such songs vocable songs.[23] But Gourd Dance practitioners do not use the label, calling these songs, in English, "songs without words," in contrast to "songs with words." According to these singers, both kinds of songs carry a kind of meaning that spoken language only begins to express.[24] These so-called nonsense syllables or vocables, along with spoken language, make powerful statements about experience. In the crescendo of a Kiowa-Apache Blackfeet ceremonial or when "Charlie Brown" closes the Gourd Dance, a host of symbolic statements are made through a communicative channel as meaningful and as significant as spoken language; but these are often completely inaccessible to those who do not understand this world of sound on the same levels as do Gourd Dance practitioners. Thus, when scholars ignore songs without words, or delete them from the text

because they cannot easily write them, they dismiss an entire world of meaning. To be sure, because we know that spoken language is only one component of a larger system of communication grounded in the context of any communicative event, a song's text is only one small part of what song communicates in any particular social setting.[25]

These preceding examples—the use of Western notation and the sole reliance on song lyrics—seem to suggest that because many available treatises of the Gourd Dance in particular and Native American music in general are mostly crafted for academically positioned discussions, the use of these textual devices is somewhat counterproductive to understanding the experience with song about which the people in this community talk.[26] For Gourd Dance practitioners, each Gourd Dance song has a distinct sound, purpose, use, and story or stories, all of which invoke complex meanings within the context of the community. This is the vernacular model to which I shall now turn to interpret what "Charlie Brown" means for community members.

COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS ABOUT SONG AND EXPERIENCE: ON HEARING AND UNDERSTANDING "CHARLIE BROWN"

How do I, then, translate through written text the meaning that "Charlie Brown," and other songs like it, hold for this community? The first step is to decipher what this song communicates within its community context. I noted above that in order to understand a song like "Charlie Brown," we need to understand a special kind of language; one key to understanding the meanings of these statements is eliciting the referents, stories, and knowledge that surround each song.

Richard Kauahquo, whom I cited in the conversation above, says about "Charlie Brown":

> When I hear 'Charlie Brown,' it makes me go crazy. It makes me want to get out there and just dance as hard as I can and just holler. That song right there and when daddy's comes up.... You know it belongs to your family.... You just want to get out there and just dance your heart out.[27]

Here, Richard is talking about how "Charlie Brown" references a relationship to his mother's family (and how another song references a relationship to his father's family—but that is

another song). His mother's family, the Komalty family, and many other Gourd Dance practitioners—especially Kiowas—often refer to this song as the "Komalty family song" because family members have rights to the song. That is, the Komalty family essentially "owns" the song, which for them invokes a host of particular family relationships.

One of these relationships is a narrative specific to Komalty family history. The Komaltys are Kiowas, and because they are Kiowas, the Komalty family song also embraces another history specific to Kiowa people—around whom the Gourd Dance revolves in this community. Richard tells a history of this song told to him by his mother. He relates that the Komalty family song originated soon after 1910, when, near present-day Hobart, Oklahoma, Kiowa people gathered for a Taimpego encampment. The Taimpego was one of the Kiowa's seven military societies, prominent throughout the pre-reservation era. The Gourd Dance, or *Ton-goon-get* in Kiowa, which literally translates as "Rattle Dance," was the dance of the Taimpego society.[28] As the reservation era began to define the end of the Plains lifestyle, Kiowa military societies like the Taimpego began to lose their significance. But surviving members of Taimpego and their families held their dances sporadically until after the turn of the century. At the Taimpego encampment near present-day Hobart, Oklahoma, two brothers, Kiowa Bill and Komalty, composed four new songs, one of which is the song now belonging to the Komalty family and often called "Charlie Brown." Since then, the song has belonged to the families descended from Kiowa Bill and Komalty.[29]

For Kiowa people like Richard, the Komalty family song represents an important component of an enduring tradition that has survived many changes since Kiowa Bill and Komalty received the song. Kiowas held Taimpego encampments less and less often after the turn of the century and by the early 1940s they had all but ceased.[30] Yet during the inactivity of the dance, the song tradition remained active.[31] This Komalty family song, and countless Taimpego songs like it, lived on in the memory of singers. Singers sang Taimpego and other Kiowa songs at "singings" (gatherings of singers), which they hosted at their homes on a regular basis, as they continue to do today.[32]

In 1957, a group of Kiowa men publicly revived the Taimpego Rattle Dance, calling it, in English, the Gourd Dance. They called their new organization the Kiowa Gourd Clan and

held their first celebration on July fourth of that same year. Because any dance is inconceivable without songs, the men approached singers to sing the songs for the revival. Billy Evans Horse says,

> "It began when the songs were brought back, or sung. And then the old people that were here at that time, like my grandpa, [the men who revived the dance] were asking them questions: 'What is that? What song is that?' And they [the old people] give a little history about it."
> "'Well that sounds good. How did they dance?'"
> "And so they [the old people] said, 'They dance this way.'"
> "'And how did they dress?'"
> "'Well, [they said], you could dress this way since it's modern times,' and so forth."
> "And they began to meet at homes around here, and then they were singing the songs, and grandpa would sing it to them, and they would listen and pick them up, and help him sing.... They had singing sessions at so and so's home once a week and then it began to go [the revival of the Gourd Dance]."[33]

Among the revived songs that Billy Evans refers to here was the Komalty family song.

The Kiowa men who revived the Taimpego's dance essentially established their revival on meaningful sound. Although they did emphasize particulars like dress and ritual codes, songs such as the Komalty family song were stressed above and beyond such particulars in the revival ("Well, you could dress this way since it's modern times"). In so doing, although Taimpego was originally a warrior's society, the Gourd Clan did not revive the Gourd Dance as a veterans organization. They opened the dance to all Kiowa men and their families.

Beginning in the 1960s and 1970s, as the dance increased in popularity, several Kiowa families formed their own Gourd Dance organizations—including the Kiowa Tai-Piah Society of Oklahoma, Tai-Piah Society of Carnegie (now known as Kiowa Tai-Piah Society), and the Kiowa Warrior Descendants. By the late 1970s and early 1980s, many in southwestern Oklahoma's Indian community had become enthusiastic adherents as the dance spread throughout Indian country (especially Oklahoma). Today, several dozen Gourd Dance organizations—for instance, the Comanche Gourd Clan and the Dirty Shame Gourd Club—host their own Gourd Dances several

times a year. And because they do, it is now possible to go to a Gourd Dance every single weekend of the year.[34]

Just as the songs defined the revival, song now seems to provide the most forceful boundaries by which Kiowa people assert their unique connection to the dance among many other groups who also cite specific connections to the dance. Many Cheyenne people, for example, also claim the Gourd Dance as their own. Kiowas regularly contest these assertions, pointing out that Kiowa songs—and not those of other groups—were the impetus for the revival. One Kiowa Gourd Dance organization, the Kiowa Tai-Piah Society, puts it thus:

> Cheyennes say this is their dance, but all of the old Gourd Dance songs are Kiowa. Of course, a lot of songs were recently composed and some by different tribes beside the Kiowas, but even today most of the Gourd Dance songs are Kiowa. The older Kiowa say that this is a Kiowa Dance.[35]

To be sure, the origin of the Gourd Dance is an ongoing dialogue within and among Indian communities throughout Oklahoma. But who "owns" the Gourd Dance is not really the issue here. What is significant is that song has emerged as the most meaningful component of this dialogue. For many Kiowa people, a larger Kiowa continuity story of change, revival, and continuity hinges on songs, songs like the Komalty family's. While some scholars have attributed the Gourd Dance's popularity to its simple attire and choreography or to its pan-Indian style, community members attribute its popularity to what is heard and understood in song; and most especially, they attribute its popularity to what is *felt* in song.[36]

The story behind the Komalty family song's nickname, "Charlie Brown," is a case in point. During the 1960s, a U.S. Army General named Charles Brown visited a Gourd Dance on the Fort Sill Army Base. Hearing this song, he was apparently so moved that he danced. Some Kiowa singers thus nicknamed the song "Charlie Brown." This name has stuck to this day, and it is now more widely known than is the Komalty family label.[37]

Now, I presume that General Charles Brown had little to no knowledge of this song; he was where most outsiders stand when they hear this song for the first time. But if the general had no knowledge of the song, how could he be moved at all? How could he feel it if he didn't know its referents or stories? After all, doesn't Theresa, in the conversation above, imply that

to feel a song is to feel its story? Actually, Charles Brown's behavior is not that odd to many Gourd Dance practitioners. Although this song invokes several layers of knowledge from the general—a Kiowa continuity story as told by many Kiowa people—to the specific—the Komalty family history as told by Richard—it also engages very personal narratives of experience similar to that of General Charles Brown. Gourd Dance practitioners frequently talk about how song touches and moves them. Although song knowledge is often at the heart of how it moves them, many Gourd Dance practitioners assert that one need not necessarily hear and know the stories surrounding "Charlie Brown" to appreciate the power of song. Indeed, community members attribute the Gourd Dance's popularity within the community and among other enthusiastic adherents, like the Navajos, to what is *felt in song* rather than what is translated by song.

> "When I was down on the floor," says a KTNN radio announcer, broadcasting from the 1991 Navajo Nation Inaugural Ceremony Powwow, "the dancers were all around. And when I was sitting next to the singers, and the dancers were around, it was like they were transmitting an energy that could make a person feel good.... For me, this is my first Gourd Dance I've been to. I've spent my whole life on the reservation, and this is the first one I've been to."[38]

Understanding what it means to feel song is central to appreciating the unique quality of the Gourd Dance experience. This is not to suggest that song knowledge is unimportant; for it is very important in this community. To be sure, song knowledge is precious knowledge for many. Community members debate song knowledge regularly; they often have conversations before, during, and after Gourd Dances about the songs. Deciphering this community dialogue is a difficult task, because this one song, like all of its counterparts, communicates meaning on several different levels for several different people, meanings that I have only begun to explicate here. Kiowa people regularly and heatedly debate the interpretation of songs such as this; even the song's nickname is a point of contention. I have heard one person say that "Charlie Brown" refers to an old Kiowa man who lived around the turn of the century named Kiowa Charlie. Another reports that a Comanche man jokingly labeled the song after the cartoon

character, Charlie Brown, and it stuck.[39] Still another argues that this song should be called neither "Charlie Brown" nor "the Komalty family song" because it belongs to another family.

Engaging the talk about this song thus means engaging a polyphonic community discourse, a discourse that often has many conflicting components that resist the glossing effects of patterning. In addition, many have access to knowledge that others do not, and as the saying goes, knowledge is power—singers possibly hold the highest status in the community. I am convinced, however, that the power of the Gourd Dance in this community rests in the many diverse voices and opinions about the dance's practice. At each and every dance, and in their conversations about the dance, Kiowa people and other Gourd Dance practitioners negotiate the dance's meaning.

This is the community context in which song is felt. Consequently, recurrent and common experience with songs like "Charlie Brown" establishes the base on which people talk about their personal experience with song. In most all conversations about the dance, as in the conversation that initiated this essay, talk about song often moves to how one feels it. Here we leave symbolism and song knowledge behind and enter a deeper level of experiential encounter.[40]

COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS ABOUT SONG AND EXPERIENCE: ON FEELING "CHARLIE BROWN"

Theresa says that "['Charlie Brown'] is one of the songs that really brings everything out in us. *All* the feelings we have, *all* the good feelings we have. It comes through with that song."[41] "Charlie Brown" is today the crescendo of the Gourd Dance. As the last song, it concludes the dance. When Theresa says that "Charlie Brown" "really brings everything out in us," she is referring to all of the feelings felt in song at the end of an eight- to ten-hour dance. Truly, to experience the culmination of the Gourd Dance is to sense the intersection of coexisting lives charged with feeling, sentiment, and force in the context of event.[42] "All, *everybody*, coming together," says Ralph Kotay. "It's just like if another tribe of Indians will be at the dance, you know, we *all* know one another. That's the one thing that I really like about it, because we all get together, we enjoy that one thing, our Indian music, our Indian dancing" [Kotay's emphasis].[43] And Napoleon "Nipper" Tiddark says, "*That's* the Gourd

Dance. That's the music. That's the drum.... If they *didn't* feel good, if the Gourd Dance wasn't good, [and] the music wasn't *good,* they wouldn't do it" [Tiddark's emphasis].[44]

Outside observers can easily know what it is to hear a Gourd Dance song. Gourd Dance practitioners, however, distinguish between hearing, understanding, and feeling a song. For community members, to understand a song, one can know its story, who made it, where it came from, who it belongs to, what it says, and what it means. For singers, especially, this includes knowing all the varied versions and interpretations of a song. But this is very different from sensing and feeling a song, which for many community members is knowing song on a much deeper and more intimate level of experiential encounter. This may be extremely difficult for many outside observers to appreciate and understand. Yet "feeling song" should not be underestimated. Universally, encounter and perception are central to every human experience; we perceive encounter with our world through that which we feel as imparted by our senses.[45]

Ethnographers have always been interested in the similarities and differences of cultural experience. But because they more often than not look to the patterned expressions of experience (e.g., behavior), they have conventionally steered clear of the unwieldy world of emotion and feeling. As a result, little is known about the phenomenological meanings of experience cross-culturally.

Like the negotiation of knowledge, community members regularly negotiate feeling song on several different levels—both in conversation and in the communicative exchanges at Gourd Dances. Theresa makes a symbolic identification with song when she says: "[the songs] just get you, because they tell a story. And you *feel* that story."[46] This is an emotional connection. But she and others explain that what is felt in song is built upon a deeper relationship with endowed power, a power that is not entirely built upon symbolic association. These community members say that to sense and feel song is to catch and touch something that exists both inside and outside of song simultaneously.

Community members offer several different perspectives on this feeling. Billy Evans Horse and I have spent several years discussing what Gourd Dance practitioners say is felt in song. He explains that "each feeling is different, contingent on the individual. And it's just that unseen spirit that's there, when

the song is let out."[47] For him, the "something" that exists inside and outside of song simultaneously is what is called in the Kiowa language *daw*, or what Billy Evans and many others simply call in English, "spirit." *Daw* is the root of the Kiowa word for song: *daw-geah*. *Daw* roughly translates into English as "power." *Geah* means "to catch" or "to gather," hence, the literal translation of song as "Catching Power." Everything that is instilled with power has as its root *daw*. The Kiowa word for God, for example, is *Daw-K'ee*, which literally translates as "Throwing Power." To sing, Billy Evans explains, is to catch or gather the power thrown by *Daw-K'ee*. Because Billy Evans, and many other singers, sees himself as a vehicle for *Daw-K'ee*, the power invoked by song is an actual extension of *Daw-K'ee*. The *daw*, or power felt in song is spirit (see figure 5).[48]

Many others in this community talk about song in these same terms, using *spirit* to describe the sense that song embodies a godly reality and communicates an awareness. Native American Church practitioners talk about peyote songs manifesting spirit in peyote meetings; Christians talk about Indian hymns (and other church songs) manifesting the Holy Spirit in churches. Although the expressions of these godly realities are obviously different in their respective contexts, Billy Evans seems to suggest that the way song embraces God's power in peyote meetings, churches, and dances ultimately makes them comparable. "[Song] is a gathering of medicine words," says

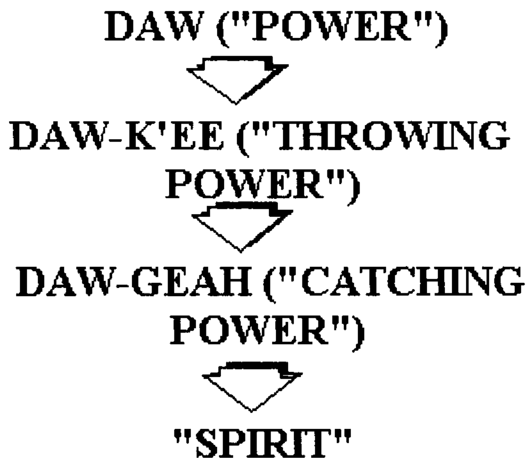

FIG. 5. SPIRIT

Billy Evans. "'Medicine words' means 'God's word.' And it gives you that power."[49]

For Billy Evans and many other community members, what is being caught in song is much more than merely a concept as it may appear here. It is encounter with something that is very real and tangible, something that is felt in sound as imparted by the senses, something that most everyone refers to as the spirit of the song. Richard Kauahquo says, for example, "It's just like Holiness [churches]. You catch the spirit when you hear these songs, these Gourd Dance songs. The spirit hits you, and man, you just get out there and dance. And especially when that 'Charlie Brown' comes up."[50] When community members talk about spirit like this, they don't talk about it as a concept. They talk about it as a reality.

This idea first began to sink in for me in 1992 when I wrote a paper on the Gourd Dance as a graduate student at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. The essay focused on conversations that began in 1988 between Billy Evans Horse and me. It was supposed to revolve around the encounter with spirit. Yet it lacked a real feel for the experience about which Billy Evans spoke in our recorded conversations. After Billy Evans read the paper, we talked at length about the text. "This sounds too beautiful," he began.[51] For over an hour, Billy Evans struggled to help me understand just what he meant by spirit and what it meant to experience it. After seeing that I was not fully understanding his point, he went to his room and came back with his peyote rattle. He sang a peyote song. When he finished singing, he said, "Now *this, this* is spirit." He began singing again, stopped again, and said, "Now *this, this* is spirit." From our talk, a newer and deeper collaborative understanding began to take shape, an understanding that focused on the experience of hearing, understanding, and feeling song in its very performance—not merely as concept, but, to reiterate, as a real, tangible entity.

When one compares such testimony with the ethnographic literature, one finds that scholars more often than not approach such subjects in very different ways. Despite compelling arguments, ethnographers continue to explain such entities as spirit through metaphoric or psychological models, dismissing that they really exist as they do for their consultants.[52] For those like Billy Evans Horse, spirit is not a metaphor; it *is*. Scholars may suggest, for example, that *Daw, Daw-K'ee*, and spirit don't really exist as empirical realities; they exist because community

members believe they exist. It is a part of their cultural world. And because culture is very real, spirit is very real. But, again, for those like Billy Evans Horse, encountering and touching spirit in sound is as real as picking up a rock. Encounter with spirit through song informs belief, not the other way around.

In distinguishing between the long-established traditions of disbelief within the academy and its incongruence with traditions of belief in the communities in which academics study, critical theorists initiated the discussion of these problems several years ago.[53] I don't mean to suggest that metaphoric or psychological models are unimportant to ethnography. But in order to understand the complexities of song in this community, one must elaborate spirit as the reality that community members say it is. Academically positioned models like revitalization or *communitas* do more to obscure this reality than explain what it means to community members.[54] Community models for explaining spirit are absolutely valid to the academic production of knowledge—especially in terms of belief and experiential encounter. Indeed, our very job as ethnographers, as Bronislaw Malinowski put it, is "to grasp the native's point of view, his relation to life, to realise *his* vision of *his* world" [Malinowski's emphasis].[55]

This may sound perfectly in line with the traditions of ethnographic inquiry. "We are in no place to assume that spirit exists or doesn't exist," as the argument may go. Yet, as several ethnographers have pointed out, there continues to be a clear ethnographic separation between the dialogues that define understandings in the field and those understandings we present our readers in the ethnographic text.[56] In the course of moving from ethnographic practice in the field to ethnographic writing in the academy, an academically created tension develops. The frame for ethnographic fieldwork is close, intimate relationships, where dialogue between the ethnographer and his or her consultants moves to common understanding. Yet in the ethnographic text the ethnographer more often than not distances him- or herself from those very relationships and dialogues to shape the final text.[57]

As is well known, this tension often sets up a clear separation between the ethnographer and his or her "subjects," between Self and Other, and between the academy and the ethnographic site. Although they begin as dialogues, many ethnographies become monologues written about the "native point of view" for a non-native audience. Control of this con-

versation about culture rests solely with the ethnographer.[58]

Certainly not always but often enough to be problematic in this process of distancing themselves from field dialogues, ethnographers often gloss cultural realities like spirit, failing to recognize how the expressions of these tangible realities play into peoples' everyday lives everywhere. Much too often, because we may not accept these realities like our consultants do, we mute a critically important facet of their experience. Whether we realize it or not, anthropologists may end up explaining away these realities, rather than elaborating on them, and in essence may help to explain away some of the more provoking aspects of human diversity. "It is time," writes Edith Turner, "that we recognize the ability to experience different levels of reality as one of the normal human abilities and place it where it belongs, central to the study of ritual."[59]

With this understood, it may be tempting to place the encounter with song on a sacred/secular continuum, equating spirit with sacred or religious experience.[60] Indeed, Gourd Dances often open and end with prayer, and many community members compare what is felt in song with religion. "Those [Gourd Dance] songs, they feel good about it. It's just like our religion," says Ralph Kotay.[61] Billy Evans Horse further cements this analogy: "I feel good about worshiping God in these songs."[62]

Placing the Gourd Dance on an academic pole opposite the secular, however, quickly becomes problematic for my consultants as a mode of explanation in the written text. "Sacred has a different meaning to me," said Billy Evans Horse when we first discussed it.[63] He and others emphatically pointed out that although community members use terms like *sacred* or *religious,* these terms have very different meanings to them than they do for academics. "When *we* say it's 'sacred,' it means we respect it," says one individual.[64] "We have to take care of it, to pass it on to our children. It's our way of life, and it goes with us all the time, every day." I found that many community members resent outsiders overemphasizing the so-called sacred aspects of their dances, including the Gourd Dance. "I think this spiritualism stuff is taken too far," says one individual when we talked about it, "I don't like it." Another individual responded to this problem by citing a professor who talked about the sacred dance arena in class: "It's not sacred! It's social! We go to have a good time."

Through our conversations about spirit, it is obviously apparent that the *sacred* label undermines the experiential com-

plexity of the Gourd Dance and denies the shared and negotiated experiences that surround the dance and its songs. While academics may decide to use *sacred* to distinguish ritual from that which is secular, they may ignore the fact that the meanings of terms such as *sacred* and *religious* are contested, situational, and multifaceted within their community contexts. Sentiments about the Gourd Dance range from public assertions that the Gourd Dance is religion to personal testimonies like this one: "A religious dance? It may have been years ago. To me, today, it isn't. It's just a social dance."

The tendency of outsiders to ignore such community complexity often leads them to talk about such deep experience in traditional Judeo-Christian terms, in which so-called religious feelings should emerge only within a delimited realm of dogma or belief. Experiencing song does indeed turn the mind towards the sacred on many levels. Yet Gourd Dance practitioners in southwestern Oklahoma do not situate this experience within a distinct religious system. Although feeling song can be as deep as religious experience—thus perhaps prompting many to compare it with established religion—it exists unto itself without the trappings of a set system of dogma. Instead, it occurs within what Gourd Dance practitioners call a good dance, a realm which also turns the mind towards pure fun and recreation as do other "Indian doings"—like handgames or family reunions. As community members often point out, the call for such godly expressions as song surfaces in every aspect of their lives—from church to eating to softball games to everyday hardships. This in itself suggests that Gourd Dances, while being diversions from the everyday, the secular, are at the same time much more than weekend rituals with distinct boundaries; rather, they are intrinsic to peoples' everyday lives.[65]

So where does all of this leave us? Where do we place spirit in our understandings of the Gourd Dance experience in southwestern Oklahoma among Kiowas and other Gourd Dance practitioners? Academically positioned models that explain the Gourd Dance and its songs have been useful for understanding what the Gourd Dance experience means in southwestern Oklahoma, but they have not gone far enough. I believe it is time to include the significance of song in our discussions, especially in terms of how community members talk about it. To do so necessarily means defining felt encounter with song as ethnographic fact. Ultimately, understanding spirit in these phenomenological terms may point us towards understanding

something about the nature of experience itself. To be sure, experience is that fundamental human medium through which we all encounter life. Narratives about experience, in turn, reveal the realities that distinguish us from one another. Talking about the encounter with song in a collaborative framework thus opens a window into human diversity. At the same time, it may even open a window into those similarities of experience that may transcend difference. Indeed, the general felt it.

NOTES

1. Portions of this essay and some of its figures also appear in Luke E. Lassiter, "Towards Understanding the Power of Kiowa Song: A Collaborative Exercise in Meaning" (Ph.D. diss., University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1995) and shall appear in a forthcoming manuscript published by the University of Arizona Press. Portions of the research that appear in this essay were carried out under the auspices of the University of North Carolina Graduate School's Off-Campus Dissertation Fellowship (Chapel Hill), the American Indian Inter Tribal Cultural Organization's Graydon Frick Memorial Scholarship (Rockville, Maryland), and the Whatcom Museum Society's Jacobs Research Funds (Bellingham, Washington).

2. Theresa Carter, Danieala Vickers, Richard and Diana Kauahquo, recorded conversation with author, Anadarko, Oklahoma, 6 September 1994.

3. See, e.g., Maurice Boyd, *Kiowa Voices: Ceremonial Dance, Ritual, and Song* (Fort Worth: Texas Christian University Press, 1981), 112-22; Clyde Ellis, "Truly Dancing Their Own Way: Modern Revival and Diffusion of the Gourd Dance," *American Indian Quarterly* 14:1(1990): 19-33; and "A Gathering of Life Itself: The Kiowa Gourd Dance," in *Native American Values: Survival and Renewal*, ed. Thomas E. Schirer and Susan B. Branstner (Sault Ste. Marie, MI: Lake Superior State University Press, 1993), 365-74; James H. Howard, "The Plains Gourd Dance as a Revitalization Movement," *American Ethnologist* 3:2 (1976): 243-59; Thomas W. Kavanagh, "Southern Plains Dance: Tradition and Dynamism," in *Native American Dance: Ceremonies and Social Traditions* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution, 1992), 107; Benjamin R. Kracht, "Kiowa Powwows: Continuity and Ritual Practice," *American Indian Quarterly* 18:3 (1994): 321-48; Lassiter, "Towards Understanding the Power of Kiowa Song," 165ff.; and William C. Meadows, "Remaining Veterans: A Symbolic and Comparative Ethnohistory of Southern Plains Indian Military Societies" (Ph.D. diss., University of Oklahoma, 1995), 177-80, 184-201.

4. Frankie Ware, recorded conversation with author, Apache, Oklahoma, 8 July 1992.

5. Cf. Ellis, "Truly Dancing Their Own Way."

6. Billy Evans Horse, recorded conversation with author, Carnegie, Oklahoma, 11 July 1991.

7. See, e.g., Boyd, *Kiowa Voices*, 123-29. I also admit complicity to situating song within the narrow confines of simple functional relationships. See Eric Lassiter, "'They Left Us These Songs ... That's All We Got Now': The Significance of Music in the Kiowa Gourd Dance and Its Relation to Native American Cultural Continuity," in *Native American Values: Survival and Renewal*, ed. Thomas E. Schirer and Susan M. Branstner (Sault Ste. Marie, MI: Lake Superior State University Press, 1993), 375-84.

8. James H. Howard's "The Plains Gourd Dance as a Revitalization Movement" was among the first articles written about the Gourd Dance, and is cited widely. Howard essentially argued that the Gourd Dance shared observable patterns with revitalization movements; thus, he argued, the Gourd Dance was a revitalization movement. In the same article, due to lack of "identifiable leadership," Howard recast the Gourd Dance's "revitalization" as an "articulatory movement" after Nancy O. Lurie, "The Contemporary Indian Scene," in *North American Indians in Historical Perspective*, ed. Eleanor B. Leacock and Nancy O. Lurie (New York: Random House, 1971), 418-80. But these shared attributes alone do not make the Gourd Dance a revitalization movement. See Anthony F. C. Wallace, "Revitalization Movements," *American Anthropologist* 58 (1956): 264-81. Wallace's theory of revitalization focused primarily on how groups consciously create a more satisfying culture through a process of "mazeway reformulation," the response to "mazeway disintegration" created by increased social stress on a social system. Revitalization is necessary, as Wallace put it, for "effective stress reduction." The revived Gourd Dance did not fulfill such a role in any way. During the most dramatic social changes on the Plains, the dance ceased at the same time that another dance thrived: the Ghost Dance. And that movement was clearly a revitalization movement. For the Kiowas, the Gourd Dances' revival revolved around public performances of the dance in the 1940s and 1950s. This performance and the community memory it evoked was the impetus for imparting the revival, not the social instability of the 1940s and 1950s—a time when "cultural stress" was apparently reduced by the economic and cultural rehabilitation characteristic of the period. I have discussed this problem more extensively elsewhere. For a fuller discussion of the Kiowa revival and the problems with Howard's application of the model, see Lassiter, "Towards Understanding the Power of Kiowa Song," 188-209. For a discussion of Benjamin R. Kracht's application of *communitas* to the Gourd Dance, see Luke E. Lassiter and R. Clyde Ellis, "Applying Communitas to Kiowa Powwows: Some Methodological and Theoretical Problems," *American Indian Quarterly* (forthcoming).

9. Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), 453.

10. Kracht, "Kiowa Powwows."

11. See Lassiter and Ellis, "Applying Communitas to Kiowa Powwows."

12. Carter, et al., 6 September 1994.

13. To hear "Charlie Brown," you can download the song from *http://bsuvc.bsu.edu/~lelassiter/*. Refer to *Song2.WAV*. This sample—"Charlie

Brown," recorded by the author, Wichita Park, Anadarko, Oklahoma, 17 April 1994—is a 100-second sound bite (1.1 MB) and is not a rendition of the entire song. For a rendition of the entire song, several commercial recordings are available. See, e.g., side 2, selection 3, on "Gourd Dance Songs of the Kiowa," CR-6148-C, Canyon Records, 4143 North 16th Street, Phoenix, Arizona, 85016.

14. Ernest Doyebi, recorded conversation with author, Anadarko, Oklahoma, 6 August 1991; and Billy Evans Horse, recorded conversation with author, Anadarko, Oklahoma, 11 June 1991.

15. Billy Evans Horse, taped conversation with author, Carnegie, Oklahoma, 28 June 1990.

16. Carter, et al., 6 September 1994.

17. It is interesting to note that the first major article on the Gourd Dance, Howard's "The Plains Gourd Dance as a Revitalization Movement," gave much attention to form and choreography and little to music.

18. Several ethnomusicologists have discussed this issue before. For a fuller treatise of Western notation, including its potentials and problems, see, e.g., Bruno Nettl, *The Study of Ethnomusicology: Twenty-nine Issues and Concepts* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1983), 65-81.

19. Admittedly, I am simplifying the linguistic process here to make a point. How song communicates meaning is actually a little more complex than this. Many songs, for example, have semantic components that operate much like phonemes, discrete sounds that distinguish one song from another.

20. See, e.g., Boyd , *Kiowa Voices*, 123-9.

21. John Joseph Beatty, *Kiowa-Apache Music and Dance*, University of Northern Colorado, Museum of Anthropology, Ethnology Series, no. 31 (Greeley, 1974), 12.

22. Although Beatty begins this quotation by suggesting some level of non-referential meaning, he then effectively undercuts this assertion, declaring the sounds "completely without meaning." To discuss song diffusion, he chooses to reduce the symbolic relationships evoked by these songs to sound analysis, and ultimately ignores how Kiowa-Apache people experience their songs.

23. See, e.g., Charlotte Frisbie, "Vocables in Navajo Ceremonial Music," *Ethnomusicology* 24(3) (1980): 347-92.

24. Doyebi, 6 August 1991; Billy Evans Horse, taped conversation with author, Carnegie, Oklahoma, 10 July 1990; and Ralph Kotay, taped conversation with author, Apache, Oklahoma, 15 July 1992.

25. Several authors have addressed the relationship between language and non-linguistic components of communication. See, e.g., Dell Hymes, *Foundations in Sociolinguistics: An Ethnographic Approach* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1974). Hymes argues that in any given communicative event, language is only one component of a larger system of communication grounded in the context of community and event. "Songs without words" force us to consider this larger system of communication. Hymes identifies the participants, channels, codes, context, forms, attitudes, and the event itself as communicative components simultaneously present at any given

event. Understanding their relationships, their capacity and state, and their activity within the entire system, Hymes argues, brings one closer to understanding how communication achieves meaning.

26. An exception may be Boyd's *Kiowa Voices.*

27. Carter, et al., 6 September 1994.

28. Horse, 11 June 1991.

29. Carter, et al., 6 September 1994; and Horse, 11 June 1991. Cf. Meadows, "Remaining Veterans," 58-223.

30. Cf. Meadows, "Remaining Veterans,"151-3.

31. Cf. Kenneth Goldstein, "On the Application of the Concepts of Active and Inactive Traditions to the Study of Repertory," *Journal of American Folklore* 84:62-7 (1971).

32. Horse, 11 July 1991.

33. Horse, 11 July 1991. See also Ellis, "A Gathering of Life Itself"; and Lassiter, "'They Left Us These Songs'" for a fuller treatise of this revival as founded on song.

34. See Lassiter, "Towards Understanding the Power of Kiowa Song," 188-224, for a much more extensive discussion of the Gourd Dance's organizational development in the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s.

35. Kiowa Tai-Piah Society, "Annual Celebration: July 1, 2, 3, 4, 1990." Photocopy in author's possession.

36. See Howard, "The Plains Gourd Dance as a Revitalization Movement," 255ff.; and Ellis, "Truly Dancing Their Own Way," 25ff.

37. Carter, et al., 6 September 1994; and Ralph Kotay, personal communication with author, Apache, Oklahoma, 22 February 1995.

38. KTNN, taped copy of live coverage of "Navajo Nation Inaugural Ceremony Powwow" radio broadcast, AM 660, Window Rock, Arizona, 15 January 1991.

39. M.A. Anquoe, "Now You Know," *Kiowa Indian News*, vol. 25, no. 1, 3.

40. For a fuller discussion of the knowledge surrounding Gourd Dance songs, including Charlie Brown, see Lassiter, "Towards Understanding the Power of Kiowa Song," 210ff.

41. Carter, et al., 6 September 1994.

42. I borrow the view of ritual as "the intersection of multiple coexisting social processes" from Renato Rosaldo, *Culture and Truth: The Remaking of Social Analysis* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1989), 11ff.

43. Kotay, 15 July 1992.

44. Napoleon "Nipper" and Cora Tiddark, taped conversation with author, Apache, Oklahoma, 14 July 1992.

45. Cf. Edward M. Bruner, "Experience and Its Expressions," in *The Anthropology of Experience*, ed. Victor W. Turner and Edward M. Bruner (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1986), 3-30.

46. Carter, et al., 6 September 1994.

47. Horse, 20 June 1991.

48. Horse, 11 June 1991; idem, 11 July 1991; idem, taped conversation with author, Carnegie, Oklahoma, 6 September 1994.

49. Horse, 6 September 1994.

50. Carter, et al., 6 September 1994.

51. Billy Evans Horse, taped conversation with author, Carnegie, Oklahoma, 30 June 1992.

52. Cf. David E. Young and Jean-Guy Goulet, eds., *Being Changed by Cross-Cultural Encounter: The Anthropology of Extraordinary Experience* (Ontario: Broadview Press, 1994).

53. See, e.g., David Hufford, "Traditions of Disbelief," *New York Folklore Quarterly* 8 (1982): 47-55

54. See Howard, "The Plains Gourd Dance as a Revitalization Movement"; and Kracht, "Kiowa Powwows."

55. Bronislaw Malinowski, *Argonauts of the Western Pacific* (New York: Dutton, 1922), 25.

56. See, e.g., Rosaldo, *Culture and Truth*; Paul Stoller, *The Taste of Ethnographic Things: The Senses in Anthropology* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1989); and Barbara Tedlock, "From Participant Observation to the Observation of Participation: The Emergence of Narrative Ethnography," *Journal of Anthropological Research* 47 (1991): 69-94.

57. Tedlock, "From Participant Observation to the Observation of Participation."

58. James Clifford, "On Ethnographic Authority," *Representations* 1 (1983): 118-46.

59. Edith Turner, "A Visible Spirit Form in Zambia," in *Being Changed by Cross-Cultural Encounter: The Anthropology of Extraordinary Experience*, ed. David E. Young and Jean-Guy Goulet (Ontario: Broadview Press, 1994), 94.

60. See Kracht, "Kiowa Powwows."

61. Ralph Kotay, taped conversation with author, Apache, Oklahoma, 6 September 1994.

62. Horse, 11 July 1991.

63. Horse, 11 June 1991.

64. Quotations that do not appear with a name denote an anonymous contribution.

65. Horse, 11 June 1991; Carter, et al., 6 September 1994; idem, taped conversation with author, Anadarko, Oklahoma, 19 July 1994; Kotay, 15 July 1992; and Tiddark and Tiddark, 14 July 1992.