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Lee Ann Fujii and I became fast friends, colleagues, and disciplinary comrades soon after we met at the 2004 Institute for Qualitative and Multi-Method Research (IQMR). IQMR presentations and workshops sparked fourteen years of conversation about the discipline, our positionality with respect to the discipline and research participants, methodologies, the "field," and much more. Lee Ann made me laugh and encouraged me to think harder as we talked over coffee and chocolate at home in Oakland, New York, Washington, DC, Indianapolis, and Toronto; met up at APSA annual meetings; and practiced yoga together.

Deprived of her vital physical and phone presence, I still hear Lee Ann's voice as I think through a recent experience in South Africa:

> Sitting in a hotel room in a small North West province town on Tuesday evening, July 31, I receive an SMS from a tribal office assistant informing me that the *kgosi* (senior traditional leader or chief) and former regent are no longer available for interviews the next morning and will be away until Friday. This is the third time that this kgosi has postponed her interview, and I think she has deliberately run down the clock to avoid being interviewed before my Friday evening departure from South Africa. This kgosi has been welcoming in other ways, however, facilitating my entrée by introducing me to residents at a community-wide meeting and instructing the tribal office clerk to assist me. She also vouched for me with the woman traditional leader of a different community, speaking about me in a way which led that kgosi to agree to an interview.

Lee Ann encouraged and assisted scholars to analyze these sorts of research experiences without settling for simple explanations. She would have been disappointed if my interpretation focused solely on the hindrances to securing interviews that positivist researchers often label "access problems." Revisiting her article "Shades of

Truth and Lies" reminds me that my interactions with the kgosi are meta-data, "spoken and unspoken expressions about people's interior thoughts and feelings" (Fujii 2010, 232). "Meta-data," Lee Ann wrote, "are integral to the research enterprise and constitute valuable data in their own right," and are important indicators of "how the current social and political landscape is shaping what people might say to a researcher" (Fujii 2010, 232).

How might this meta-data inform this research on women's involvement in traditional governance? Evasions, silences, rumors, and other meta-data can help attentive scholars to better understand and address the risks research participants may confront and to interpret other data generated through interviews and other formal research interactions (Fujii 2010, 232). For example, the meta-data that emerged from my interaction with the kgosi suggest that recent political uncertainty affects both the traditional leaders and their citizen-subjects whom I sought to interview, as well as those more directly involved in democratic politics and governance (Turner 2014; Williams 2010). Senior traditional leaders are selected by the "royal family" of their community and then appointed by the provincial premier. The July 2018 North West province research occurred in an environment marked by the December 2017 recognition and derecognition of numerous traditional leaders, the February 2018 resignation of then-President Jacob Zuma, the May suspension and subsequent resignation of Provincial Premier Supra Mahumapelo, the April and May national takeover of several provincial departments, and fierce struggles for political control of the province and the nation. The kgosi and other potential participants might have felt that an interview presents undue risk in this context, as being responsible for bringing local problems or concerns to a broader public might lead to reprisals.[1]

Institutional Review Board (IRB) guidelines do not sufficiently address these potentially well-founded yet emergent concerns. This study was deemed to present "minimal risk" to participants, I abided by the IRB-

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approved informed consent protocol, and no reportable "unanticipated or serious adverse events" occurred.[2] My ethical obligations extend well beyond these procedures, however (Fujii 2010, 2018; MacLean et al. 2018). I share the participants' worry about present and near future sociopolitical risk and their dissatisfaction with a "consent protocol [that] positions the researcher as someone who already knows more about the participant's world than the participant" (Fujii 2012, 718).

My own research demonstrates how individuals negotiate perceived participation risks in different ways. I conducted individual interviews with two other women kgosi and several community residents who sometimes evaded or declined to answer especially sensitive questions. Other participants sought to mitigate risk by incorporating others into our interactions, in effect creating an accountability mechanism for both of us. Two participants chose to be interviewed in the presence of their friends or relatives. One large group chose to be interviewed collectively with a few people speaking on the entire group's behalf; these spokespeople appeared to adhere to a preestablished script. Securing witnesses may reduce participants' risk by ensuring other locals can attest the participant has not brought their kgosi or community into disrepute.

Another reading of my unsuccessful efforts to secure an interview with this kgosi would focus on her governance strategy. The kgosi has been involved in provincial and national traditional leadership structures since shortly after her appointment, and government officials often call meetings in other places at short notice. The repeated cancellations could be indicators of the extent to which the kgosi is physically present in her community. Her repeated cancellations may have had little or nothing to do with her willingness to be interviewed. These meta-data are open to multiple—perhaps concurrent—interpretations.

A Fujii-informed scholar also would consider these interactions from a relational perspective. Deeply critical of "the usual advice…to build good rapport," Lee Ann contended that we should try to build productive "working relationships" in which researchers and participants "arrive, explicitly or implicitly, at mutually agreeable terms for interacting, conversing, listening, and talking with one another" (Fujii 2018, 12, 15). She insisted, "relational interviewers…treat everyone as 'ends' in themselves and not as a 'means' to some other end" (Fujii 2018, 6). In writing about these different interpretations, I am engaging in the sort of reflective research that Lee Ann Fujii consistently advocated.

The ethical principles Lee Ann emphasized require researchers to acknowledge that power infuses every aspect of the research enterprise, recognize the "privilege that all researchers enjoy in gaining entrée into people's worlds," and attend to our positionality (Fujii 2018, 16). I bring to each research encounter both the substantial privileges associated with American citizenship and full-time tenured academic employment, as well as the complex signifiers of cis-gender femininity and embodied blackness, intersecting identities Lee Ann and I often discussed. These attributes shape how I am seen and how I see others, but do not determine the tenor of my individual interactions with women traditional leaders—themselves local elites with formal authority—their citizen subjects, and other participants (Fujii 2015; Turner 2016).

Describing research encounters and reflecting upon them in light of Lee Ann Fujii's interventions makes my research process more transparent, albeit in a different sense than the DA-RT initiative she critiqued (Fujii 2016). But how might this "reflexive openness" affect the participants discussed in this text (MacLean et al. 2018)? As a practitioner of what Lee Ann termed "micro-level fieldwork," I am pulled among dueling ethical impulses to protect participants' identities, to make full use of the data generated through these research encounters, and to share my scholarship with participants (Fujii 2008). Lee Ann Fujii was a brilliant scholar whose methodological work raises a host of questions with no easy answers. The best I can do to honor her is to keep returning to these questions, and to the incisive, humorous, and supportive way she kept asking us to honestly confront ourselves, our scholarship, and our participants.

I miss her so much.

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2 Quotations are from the U.S. Office for Human Research Protections Common Rule procedures for expedited review (2009) and the Butler University IRB Notice of IRB Protocol Approval (2018).

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