From Data Problems to Data Points: Challenges and Opportunities of Research in Postgenocide Rwanda

Elisabeth King

Abstract: While interest in conducting fieldwork in conflict and postconflict societies continues to grow, literature addressing the specific challenges and dilemmas of this kind of research remains scarce. Based on four months of fieldwork and approximately seventy interviews, this article explores the complexities of conducting research in postgenocide Rwanda. I argue that what at first may appear to be data problems can also be important data points; problems such as historical memory, selective telling, and skewed participant demographics illuminate political structures, group relations, and societal cleavages. This article then illustrates this argument by examining how these challenges/opportunities help explain the difficulties involved in teaching history in postgenocide schools. These reflections on research in Rwanda suggest valuable lessons for fieldwork and data analysis in a number of settings by providing examples of pitfalls, dilemmas, and often unseen opportunities that are likely to present themselves in other divided societies.

While interest in conducting fieldwork in conflict and postconflict societies continues to grow, literature addressing the specific challenges and dilemmas of such research remains scarce. Indeed, most conventional texts on research methods presume that research takes place in conflict-free environments, and they do not consider the special challenges of conducting research in violently divided societies. Furthermore, texts on field research usually focus on avoiding potential research problems, rather than making the most of those that inevitably occur. Reflecting four months of fieldwork and approximately seventy interviews, this article explores the complexities of conducting research in postgenocide Rwanda. I argue that what may appear to be significant data problems if viewed through one set of lenses can appear as significant data points if viewed through another.

The first part of this article explains the context and design of the re-

127

search that I conducted in Rwanda, drawing particular attention to ethical concerns. The second section examines some of the methodological challenges of conducting interviews in a divided society, where history is highly contested and freedom of speech is limited. These include the nature of historical memory, the problems of selective telling (lies, public transcripts, and group narratives), and the difficulties of assembling a group of participants who are ethnically and socioeconomically representative of the country as a whole. This section also argues, however, that these apparent data problems in fact constitute interesting data themselves, since they shed light on a multitude of issues, including political structures, group relations, and societal cleavages. Finally, this article examines how the insights gained by reconceptualizing data problems as data points help explain challenges such as teaching history in postgenocide schools. Reflections on research in Rwanda suggest valuable lessons for fieldwork and data analysis in a number of settings, not only by providing examples of pitfalls and dilemmas that are inevitable in research carried out in a divided society, but also by pointing out the opportunities that are likely to present themselves.

Research Context and Design

The fieldwork upon which I reflect here was part of a project exploring the complex relationship between formal schooling, on the one hand, and violent conflict and peacebuilding, on the other (King 2008). The core of my fieldwork consisted of approximately seventy one-on-one open-ended interviews with Rwandans who attended or taught primary school in Rwanda from the colonial period to 2006.

My research took place twelve years after genocide devastated Rwanda. The postgenocide government, the Rwandan Patriotic Front (R.P.F.), has made important progress on a number of issues and is often commended for its role in Rwanda's political stability and economic growth. Indeed, praise for President Paul Kagame's government dominates international reporting and some of academia as well. Nonetheless, a contrary and decidedly less rosy picture is steadily emerging of an authoritarian government composed nearly exclusively of Tutsi returnees from Uganda who are quite deft at shaping the message that foreigners hear (Pottier 2002; Reyntjens 2004).

For my interviews, I sought participants who had experienced primary school in Rwanda in each of three chosen periods: the Belgian colonial period, 1919–62; the Republics, 1962–94, and the postgenocide period, 1994–2006. Participant recruitment was carried out through a multiple snowball technique involving simultaneous and evolving networks, whereby my participants and other contacts "recommended" me to other people, thereby vouching for my basic trustworthiness. I met with some participants in the capital, Kigali, but I also conducted interviews in Ruhengeri and Byumba in the north and Butare and Gitarama in the south, as well as the hills sur-

rounding these centers. Within my sample, I tried to vary ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic background, rural or urban places of residence, and the region in which the participants had attended primary school, knowing that these variables might account for important cleavages in Rwandan society.[1] All participants had completed primary school, but they had not necessarily continued their studies. All were sixteen years of age or older and thus had lived through the genocide. At the time of the interviews, some participants were still students or teachers, a number were farmers, some worked with NGOs or were civil servants, several were unemployed, and a few were prisoners.

Despite my best efforts at variation, a number of biases appear in my sample. For example, no participants identified themselves as Twa. Most of my participants in the north were Hutu and most in Kigali were Tutsi. Since I conducted a few interviews in English and the rest in French, my participant pool was also biased toward those with more-than-average education and a related socioeconomic status.[2]

During the interviews, I asked participants to reflect upon their primary school experiences and wider implications based on a general framework of open-ended questions. I encouraged the respondents to guide the interviews themselves and to express their understandings in their own words, sometimes asking standard follow-up questions in order to encourage more depth and detail and to ensure that several main topics were covered. I met with each participant for approximately one to one and a half hours.

Understandably, obtaining research ethics approval for such a potentially politically sensitive project was complex. Conversations about education, conflict, and peacebuilding delved into many difficult topics, including memories of violence and genocide, discrimination, and poverty. In Rwanda's authoritarian postgenocide setting, I had to make provisions to safeguard my participants and the data that I collected. Consequently, all interviews were conducted one-on-one (as Scott puts it, "the most protected format of spoken communication" [1990:162]) thereby foregoing a translator and sacrificing the knowledge that Kinyarwanda-only-speakers would have added. Participants gave informed consent orally so that there was no documented connection between them and my project, and also because the legal appearance and formality of a consent form would likely have made them feel uncomfortable.[3] I asked their permission to record the interviews digitally, showed them how to use the recorder, and gave them the control to stop and start it.[4] I reminded them that they could stop the interview at any time. I did not include the participants' names in their recordings, and indeed, I had no record of their full names at all. Instead I assigned a numerical code to each recording and kept a list of interviewees' first names and their numerical codes, which I carried with me at all times. The recordings themselves were stored as password-protected computer files and they were deleted from the recording machine as soon as they were stored. The interviews were transcribed only after I left Rwanda.

Issues of self-presentation were also central to my research experience. In my introductory interview script, although admittedly not always in practice, I emphasized that I did not work for any government. I usually traveled by public transit and stayed in modest accommodations with nuns. I highlighted my student status and emphasized that I was there to learn from the participants, who were the important holders of knowledge and opinions. Introducing myself as a graduate student was well-received in a society where scholarship and opportunities for advancement are highly valued.[5] At the same time, economic inequality between most participants and me— and perceptions of my personal wealth and power—was a complicating factor. In many Rwandans' experience, individuals with doctorate degrees are quite wealthy and have resources and connections that can help people access higher education or jobs. I had to be clear with participants that the sole direct benefit of participation was the opportunity to contribute to a research project and to voice their opinions.

Challenges and Opportunities of Research in Postgenocide Rwanda

As I carried out my research, I was aware of several potential problems connected to these methods and procedures. Here I reflect upon several interrelated challenges of conducting and analyzing interviews in postgenocide Rwanda: the fallibility of historical memory in general and the tendency of individuals to mythologize the past; the phenomenon of selective reporting (including the telling of outright lies, politically sanctioned public narratives, counter-narratives that emerge in private, and the tendency of group members to tell similar narratives); and the difficulty of assembling an ethnically and socioeconomically representative group of participants. (These categories, of course, are useful but imperfect, and they certainly are not exhaustive.)[6] In this section I also suggest how these oft-considered data problems may be reconsidered as useful data points, or what Lee Ann Fujii calls "meta-data" (2007). Based on research on school violence in the United States, Wendy Roth and Jal Metha argue for a similar paradigm shift and the mutual utility of "objectivist" and "interpretivist" research (2002).

Historical Memory and "Mythico-History"

First, and most general, is the challenge of historical memory. Gathering accurate and reliable data is the basis of both qualitative and quantitative research methods. Yet my interviewees were asked to reflect upon experiences many years in the past, and their answers were filtered through memories of economic hardship, ethnic and regional politics, gender, exile, violence, civil war, and genocide. For example, during the Habyarimana regime (1973–94), teachers used to recite the names of the different ethnic identities in their classrooms and students had to stand when their own category was announced so that this information could be recorded.

Most Tutsi interviewees remembered this as a traumatic experience; they spoke of humiliation, fear, teasing, and feelings of inferiority. Nonetheless, I had to consider that some participants might have been remembering this practice as traumatic only in retrospect, reinterpreting it through the lens of the later genocide. As one Tutsi teacher from Kigali told me, her primary school teachers used to "ask me questions, and I would reply directly. . . . But now that I think about it, I see that they had bad intentions." When I asked her what she meant by "now," she elaborated, "Now after the genocide, I remember that" (interview, February 10, 2006).[7] I was also aware that the timing of the interview could influence the outcome (see Sanford 2009:43). I avoided conducting interviews too close to April 6, for example—the anniversary of the start of the genocide and the beginning of a national period of mourning—but I could not, for obvious reasons, anticipate present-day events in the lives of the participants that might bias their statements.

Another challenge inherent in interview-based research is the tendency of individuals to mythologize the past. Reflecting on her research with Burundian refugees in Tanzania, Liisa Malkki termed the narratives that she heard "mythico-histories"; the responses from informants were "not only a description of the past," she says, "not even merely an evaluation of the past, but a subversive recasting and reinterpretation of it in fundamentally moral terms. In this sense, it cannot be accurately described as either history or myth. It was what can be called a mythico-history" (1995:54). An example of "mythico-history" in my research comes from the memories of a group of amateur Rwandan historians who had attended primary school during the late colonial period (interview, March 27, 2006). This group relayed details about active discrimination against Hutu in schools that I later discovered had been closed by the time they were of school age. The memories that these men had presented as their own were actually those of their parents that had been incorporated into their mythico-history.

The fallibility of historical memory can be seen as an inherent problem in first-hand accounts. As Beth Roy says in the introduction to her sociological study based on first-person accounts of a large-scale riot in Bangladesh,

> It is true that the stories I heard in that Bangladeshi village were not about what happened (itself a questionable concept). What I heard was how people *saw* what happened, or, rather, how people *remembered* what they saw, or, rather, how they *talked* about what they remembered, or, rather how they talked *to me* about what they remembered. . . . " (1994:5)

Yet both Roy and Mallki encourage us to consider the distortions not as problems but as "sources of understanding" in their own right. Mallki argues that "much of the importance of the mythico-history would be missed if one were simply to seek an 'objective' evaluation of the extent to which the themes and ideas of the mythico-history were 'true' or 'distorted' rep-

resentations of reality. . . " (1995:103). Rather than thinking about memory distortions as merely faulty data, therefore, I examined *why* people remember events in certain ways and what this can tell us about what is important to them, their families, and their society. In other words, I began to examine the lenses through which Rwandans were shaping their answers, such as genocide and discrimination, as well as the intergenerational transmission of experience, as interesting data in their own right.

Selective Reporting

Thinking about historical memory in this way prompted me to consider not only unintentional historical distortions, but intentional distortions as well. A second related challenge of conducting research in Rwanda is thus what Roy calls "selective telling." Gathering reliable information is central to research, yet even experienced field researchers often fail to consider that respondents mold and withhold information (see Vansina 1996:138). I was quite aware that some, if not all, participants at some point "lied" to me or shared information selectively, often, for example, telling me what they thought I wanted to hear.

Moreover, in *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts* (1990), James Scott argues that in societies such as Rwanda, where there are dominant and subordinate groups, certain preconceived scripts or "public transcripts" evolve as a form of political control.

> The public transcript is, to put it crudely, the *self*-portrait of dominant elites as they would have themselves be seen. . . . While it is unlikely to be merely a skein of lies and misrepresentations, it is . . . a highly partisan and partial narrative. It is designed to be impressive, to affirm and naturalize the power of dominant elites, and to conceal or euphemize the dirty linen of their rule. (1990:18)

Scott argues that in most cases subordinate groups come to associate their own well-being with the reproduction of the public transcript or narrative, thus perpetuating a discourse systematically skewed toward the dominant elite. In Rwanda, in fact, citizens can be charged and jailed with a vague offense called "divisionism" which, while meant to eradicate "genocide ideology" increasingly seems to mean simply disagreeing with the government (International Crisis Group 2002; Reyntjens 2004, 2006; Senate of Rwanda 2006). As one Rwandan woman told me, "Rwandans have become liars. We can't say anything because they'll imprison us or kill us" (interview, March 21, 2006). Reflecting on her ethnographic research in Rwanda, Jennie Burnet coined the term "amplified silences" to refer to the many experiences of Rwandans that are excluded from discourse (2005:155–74). Indeed, I was often told that in Rwanda, silences speak louder than words.

Rwandan governments have long been adept at manipulating what

they want foreigners—including researchers—to know. Colette Braeckman refers to Rwanda as a "Potemkin village" (2003:213), and several authors have noted that there are certain "truths" in Rwanda that are commonly understood as not to be openly shared with strangers (Gourevitch 1998; Hintjens 2001).[8] There is even a word in Kinyarwanda, *amalenga*, describing such knowledge (Hintjens 2001:41). I was aware that I had particularly easy access to government officials in Rwanda, and I suspected that part of the welcome was related to the fact that the theme of my research could have been interpreted—even if I did not present it in this way—as upholding a key Kagame government narrative: that education in the pregenocide period contributed to dividing Rwandans and that postgenocide reform is needed. The current government has made research very difficult for those with topics at odds with the regime.

Alongside public transcripts, there are also "private transcripts[,] ... critique[s] of power spoken behind the back of the dominant (Scott 1990:xii). As one elderly Rwandan Hutu woman told me, "when whites come, they [the government] do not show the people. They have planned, I would say, a tourism itinerary. ... They make the itinerary to show you who you must find, with whom you must speak." She explained that "on this path, we have put things, educated people, what they need to say, what they need to show, what they need not to show, what they need not to say. ... And all of the people who come from the outside pass like this. And they leave with an image of I don't know what. But if they dared, like you, enter into the countryside, a little, a little, a little ... (interview, March 21, 2006).

Clearly what the woman meant was that if I went into the countryside and looked for myself, I might notice a different reality. Thus, that trailing off of her sentence itself spoke volumes. Similarly, while few participants spoke directly or frankly about the coercion they had experienced, they often did so indirectly: if not in the content of their utterances then in the form. I noticed, for example, that participants often presented the government's narrative as "bookends" to their own comments, which tended to be inserted unobtrusively in the middle of their statements. In response to a question about improvements that they would like to see in primary schools in Rwanda, several began with an assurance that "all is good today," then proceeded to elaborate on a multitude of serious concerns they have with schools, and finally concluded with something like "but the government is good." The comments in between the pro-government bookends represented a hidden transcript. In moments of candor with confidantes, even Rwandan elites may contradict the dominant public transcript that they impose on others.

Along with lying and public versus private versions of events, a third form of selective telling involves group narratives. Although history is contested in most parts of the world, in Rwanda, as Catharine Newbury writes, "there is no single history; rather there are competing 'histories'" and the

competing positions are defended "with an intensity that surpasses normal clichés" (1998: 9). I always wish to be cautious about overgeneralizing and essentializing Hutu and Tutsi categories since Rwandans are as complex as anyone else and cannot be reduced to binary Hutu–Tutsi identities. Categories such as region and religion cut across ethnicity, and clans and extended families often include Hutu and Tutsi as well. There is also tremendous variation within Hutu and Tutsi groups, and these differences are perhaps rendered even more complex by the experience of genocide and postgenocide politics.[9] Nevertheless, one does often find different Hutu and Tutsi versions of a range of historical events or the causal factors behind those events. For example, one can often quite reliably guess the ethnic identity of a speaker by his or her public positions on certain issues, such as the origins of Hutu and Tutsi (for example, see Mamdani 2001:41); Hutu are more likely to claim that Hutu and Tutsi are of different ethnic or racial origins, whereas Tutsi are more likely to say that there is no difference between Hutu, Tutsi, and Twa, or that historic differences are merely socioeconomic. René Lemarchand (1994, 1996) deems these contradictory group narratives parts of a "meta-conflict": that is, a conflict about the conflict. He also notes (1996:19) that in researching Rwanda and neighboring Burundi, one finds "a mixture of fact and fiction designed to offer each community retrospective validation of its own interpretation of the genesis of ethnic conflict"—another version of Malkki's mythico-history. As one Rwandan man cautioned me, "maybe I will tell you this and another [of a different ethnicity] will tell you another story. That is the problem of Rwanda" (interview, March 11, 2006).[10] Lemarchand concludes that the possibility of getting "hard data" from interviews in Rwanda is questionable, since "the . . . political convictions and group loyalties . . . inhibit the exchange of objective information" (1970:8). Roy goes even one step further, suggesting that the problem of ferreting out the truth in such a complex environment raises thorny epistemological questions about whether the existence of merely one "truth" is ever likely at all. "If we take seriously the accounts of those involved," she says, "what emerges is a history of differing realities. Not only did people remember differently, or report differently; they actually lived the experience differently" (1999:24).

From the point of view of the researcher, then—especially a researcher working in a divided society like Rwanda—a number of potential problems or pitfalls present themselves as one sifts through the testimony of informants. One pitfall is, quite simply, the possibility of excessive credulousness, unintended collusion, or even increased distortion of the material. In her study of Bangladesh, Roy confesses that not only were the narratives she heard inevitably filtered and distorted by the speakers, but they were probably distorted to some extent by the listener as well, who could only report "what I *heard* people say to me about what they remembered" (1994:5). Similarly, selective telling and public transcripts may lead to what Stathis Kalyvas calls "partisan bias" in the researcher, which involves "explicitly or

implicitly taking sides" and is "a major contributor to the contamination of data" (2006:35). As Simpson suggests in writing about his anthropological fieldwork in Sri Lanka and his realization that his informants often controlled the direction of his inquiry, "you don't do research, research does you"—a comment that contains elements of encouraging advice (i.e., about the value of empathic listening) but also of warning (2006:125,134).

All of this is not to say, however, that contradictory evidence or clearly distorted or tendentious testimonies should be discarded or that they devalue the findings. On the contrary, such material, especially if it is collected with caution and self-awareness on the part of the researcher, contains a wealth of information about the hidden transcripts informing social behavior, as well as the self-censoring that people feel they need to impose upon themselves. Hearing and recognizing patterns in respondents' comments can allow researchers to discern what informs the patterns.[11] Group narratives can be understood as important both for what they include and for what they exclude, informing researchers about participants' social and political worlds, their understandings of societal cleavages and conflicts, their fears, feelings of threat, and grievances (Ross 2007:30–31). For example, in my interviews, Hutu respondents routinely over-reported the number of Tutsi students in their classrooms, compared to figures in archival data. Recollections may be tainted by time. Yet this tendency may also reflect a long-held grievance relating to Tutsi's preferential access to schooling during the colonial period, an ongoing fear of Tutsi dominance, or the desire to emphasize the magnitude of experienced hardship. Therefore, recognizing the phenomenon of selective telling and examining the trends themselves revealed significant "meta-data."

Demographic Representativity

Including a representative sample of the population in my study was an enormous challenge. I became particularly aware of what the elderly Hutu woman had called the Rwandan "tourist itinerary" when, after over a month of interviewing in Kigali, I realized that I had conducted interviews almost exclusively with people who identified themselves as Tutsi. This was surprising, since Hutu represent about 84 percent of the population. I also had been careful to initiate a variety of networks, had inquired for contacts through a multitude of outlets, and had asked participants to recommend other potential participants who were both similar to and different from themselves. In part, my experience reflected the overrepresentation of Tutsi among urban, educated Rwandans in Kigali. At the same time, it offered insight into the image that dominant Rwandans are seeking to portray to foreigners.

Of course, speaking only with certain segments of a population presents the risk of missing important trends and it limits the possibility of discerning alternative points of view. It may also distort analysis by overlooking

interactions among a variety of actors and narratives, thereby contributing to de facto "partisan bias."[12] In my research, the unintended skewing of participants' regional provenance and social class could be remedied fairly easily, but overcoming ethnic selection bias was very difficult. While I was generally aware in advance of an interview of numerous identifying factors about a participant (gender, place of origin, current residence), I very rarely knew a potential participant's ethnicity, rendering balance very difficult to achieve. Public ethnic identification is barred in Rwanda, according to the policy incorporated in the slogan "we are all Rwandan," and researchers cannot ask for this information. Young Rwandans from across the country explained to me that they would be punished by the state if they were to verbalize their ethnicity. As one sixteen-year-old boy told me at a Kigali school, "we know [people's ethnicities], but if you speak of that, they put you in jail. Yep. If they catch you, you have to go directly to jail. . . . So today you hide that, because if they hear you say it, they can punish you" (interview, February 14, 2006). I asked several government officials as well as several teachers whether this was true. One female teacher from a rural school in south-central Rwanda replied that it was not, but that the state nevertheless "makes people believe that" and the belief itself "limit[s] the liberties of people" (interview, March 15, 2006). While variation in application of genocide ideology laws makes it difficult to verify the literal truth of the claim, this matters less than its widespread belief.

After encountering nearly exclusively Tutsi in Kigali, at any rate, I turned to the predominantly Hutu north to seek opinions from what I presumed would be mostly Hutu Rwandans. Moving north did broaden the range of my participants, although my informant base was still skewed because ethnicity was confounded by region.[13] In addition, faking one's ethnicity is also a distinct possibility in Rwanda. And as we conversed in private, the vast majority of interview participants from all regions did identify themselves as Hutu or Tutsi, without my having to ask, and others gave me strong clues at several points during the interview. Yet after independence, for example, some Tutsi presented themselves as Hutu in order to navigate the political and academic systems that otherwise would likely have excluded them. "Often enough," a Tutsi man from southern Rwanda told me, "Tutsi gave money to change their ethnicity. So we were Tutsi, but we wrote Hutu on the identity card. We gave maybe a cow to become a friend, and then they gave a Hutu card in return" (interview, March 11, 2006). Today it is easier to be a Tutsi in Rwanda than to be, as one Rwandan taxi driver put it, "of those not liked in Rwanda." To try to discern whether some might have been faking their identity, I cross-checked facts and hints within interviews against their self-identification. It is unlikely that the number of Rwandans who fake their identity is great enough to affect research validity. But since participants are often skillful at conveying only what they want the interviewer to know, I knew that I could not be entirely sure of my accuracy. Yet as with the challenges of historical memory and group narratives, the problem of

representativity in Rwanda can be interpreted as valuable data in its own right. The belief that one will be jailed for revealing one's identity or that of someone else tells us a great deal about the ways in which the Rwandan government is deploying its notion of "Rwandaness" and its strategies of unity and reconciliation. The fact that participants nevertheless readily identified themselves and others as Hutu or Tutsi in private, without my asking, suggests that these categories remain salient identity markers for people themselves, despite the government's dominant narrative. Furthermore, the direction of the "faking" is a commentary on social hierarchy. And in the most general sense, the problem kept me always aware of the need to be scrupulously careful and respectful of Rwandans' privacy and security.

Encountering data problems, therefore, need not be considered an impediment to research. Fieldwork is not only devoted to interviews (see Vansina 1996), and the value of interviews does not lie solely in their absolute veracity. The experience of trying to collect data in Rwanda, and of confronting historical memory, selective telling, and skewed participant demographics, says much about politics, society, and history in contemporary Rwanda. Overall, understanding the nature of "data problems" and why they occur is data itself, and can be as significant as specific answers to interview questions.

Turning Data Problems into Data Points: Reflections on Teaching History

The societal insights, or data, that can be gathered by means of what are considered, at first glance, data problems, can help us better understand the complexities and nuances of a number of challenges currently facing Rwanda. I focus here on the teaching of history at primary school, although the lessons I learned in the field extend to other issues as well.

In recognition of the divisive role that history played in Rwanda and the ways in which history was used as a mobilizing force in the lead-up to genocide, Rwanda's government suspended history teaching in schools in 1994. In 1999 the government suggested that history be taught for two hours each week, but it did not offer substantial guidelines, textbooks, or teaching materials (Weinstein et al. 2007:55–56). While the moratorium has never been formally revoked, some important efforts have been made to reintroduce history into schools, raising a multitude of questions and much controversy.[14]

Most of the Rwandans with whom I spoke agreed that history needs to be formally reintroduced into Rwanda's schools systemwide, although they disagreed about how to do so. Some said that they did not want the conflictual elements of their country's history taught to their children, although there was a great deal of disagreement on what should be left out, with some opinions roughly classifiable along ethnic lines. Most of my informants, by contrast (almost three-quarters of those I interviewed), from

varying regions and ethnic groups, felt that omitting details, euphemizing, or "tempering" the truth was dangerous. Interestingly, the reason given *both* for not talking about the past at all *and* for talking about potentially conflictual elements of the past was the desire to prevent a recurrence of conflict. A much higher proportion of those in the first group were poor and less educated, compared to those in the second group. That my sample was biased toward more educated and economically advantaged Rwandans may have skewed this finding.

Nevertheless, both groups affirmed that the national history should be rewritten as one "true" history. As one woman told me, "my idea is that we find a group of researchers that we put together, that they study the real history of the country. Even if it takes years, we'll teach the history that is true" (interview, January 28, 2006). The Kigali-based Institute for Research and Dialogue on Peace similarly found that a great number of Rwandans desire an "objective and true history" (2005:176), and Anna Obura's interviews revealed that children feel that "school can and should give unbiased and objective explanations on social relations and on the history of Rwanda" (2004:16). During a teacher training exercise, Freedman et al. found a similar desire for the presentation of hard historical facts (2009). Nevertheless, the divergent transcripts that exist and the high level of societal distrust suggest that arriving at an agreed-upon narrative, be it inclusive or exclusive of certain events, will be very difficult.

For example, the events of 1959 draw contrary interpretations along ethnic lines. Many Hutu explain the events as a "social revolution" that overthrew four hundred years of injustice. Alternatively, many Tutsi emphasize positive precolonial relations between Hutu and Tutsi and consider the events of 1959 as having been provoked by Belgians, rather than as a genuine "Rwandan Revolution." Some (mostly Tutsi) Rwandans explain the events of 1959 as "genocide."

Examples of group narratives organized along regional and class lines were evident when I discussed the secondary school ethnic and regional quotas of the Habyarimana government. Many Hutu participants from the south spoke about having been disadvantaged by the government's northwest favoritism. Tutsi, however, emphasized the ethnic dimension of quotas, arguing that they were the group hardest hit. Some authors also note the existence of a "fourth ethnic group," or class, of Rwandans who were able to circumvent the quotas by virtue of their financial resources, education, or European "savoir faire" (De Lame 2005:97; Uvin 1998:128). Such group-based narratives, arising from both selective telling and divergent experiences, make writing a single history curriculum especially tricky.

Furthermore, some Rwandans, especially Hutu, commented that "each government sings its own song" or "each government has to defend its raison-d'être" (interview, March 22, 2006). In a statement reflecting the views of many, one Hutu man commented, "so now they [the government] say that the past history is false. So they've hired people to remake history. But

what's to say that the current researchers are not attached to the government and current politics? There's a question! . . . I don't know if ever this government leaves if another won't just as quickly suppress it [the current government's version of history] (interview, March 22, 2006). In their research on education and memory, Timothy Longman and Théonèste Rutagengwa similarly found that "many people felt that those in the ruling elite were manipulating remembrance of the genocide to maintain their own positions rather than truly seeking to unify the country" (2004:176). While it may seem logical in a postgenocide context to avoid multiple or opposing narratives in classrooms, many studies argue that, paradoxically, children must be confronted with conflict and have practice with it in order to be able to manage conflicts peacefully in their own lives. While this debate continues, a growing number of scholars conclude that "the wish to generate peace education through consensus . . . can very well backfire and encourage stereotypes, delegitimization, and intolerance" (Wahrman 2003:252).[15] They suggest that different narratives can contribute to sustainable peace when they encourage learning about each side's framings, identify alternative narratives including points of convergence, foster mutual affinity between groups, highlight stories of past cooperation, frame experiences in nuanced ways, and promote common views of the future (Al-Haj 2005; Ross 2002; Wahrman 2003).

Given the salience and importance of the multiple, and often contradictory, narratives that emerged in my interviews, building a nuanced history into curriculum seems imperative. But the question of how to arrive at a nuanced narrative in Rwanda is even more complicated than in other divided societies such as Northern Ireland or the former Yugoslavia. A common idea is to bring the multiple sides to the table for debate; Mahmood Mamdani suggests that interpretations should be allowed to "compete in the marketplace of ideas" (2001:278–79). But given the practice of self-censorship that most Rwandans engage in, it is unlikely that many people would participate openly in such a process. With ethnic identification outlawed, Hutu and Tutsi sides of history cannot be discussed in a public forum.

Since the genocide, a number of committees have been convened to develop history curricula for Rwandan schools, resulting thus far in two key products that may affect primary schools in particular. In 2004, with funding from UNICEF, Rwanda introduced a civics textbook, *A Guide to Civic Education*, into primary classrooms. This text includes several historical modules currently being taught in Rwanda's schools and foreshadows how history texts and curricula are likely to develop. The units titled "National Unity in Rwanda" and "Genocide and Reconciliation" are telling. They discuss the existence of national unity in Rwanda prior to colonialism and how divisions in Rwanda were part of a colonial divide-and-rule strategy. The units provide overviews of "the institutionalization of lies and crime," "loss of cultural identity," "mismanagement of resources," "ethnic ideology," and "social inequality" during the colonial period and after independence. In

explaining the "Rwandan genocide," the text dates the first manifestations of hate, injustice, and divisions to the "massacre of Tutsi of 1959." It also mentions the 1963 and 1973 killings of Tutsi. The text discusses the development of the *interahamwe* youth militia by the government of the Second Republic with a mission to murder Tutsi, to pillage and burn their homes, and to massacre their families as R.P.F. spies. It contends that the genocide of 1994, in which "more than one million Tutsi and moderate Hutu" were massacred in ninety days, had been meticulously planned for a long time. The text reviews some of the torturous killing methods. It says that genocide was the work of military and paramilitary groups, politicians, and the media. The authors mention that Hutu judged as traitors for hiding Tutsi were forced to kill them or were killed themselves. It also describes the consequences of genocide, asserts "empathy with refugee problems," and promotes "unity and reconciliation" (Republic of Rwanda 2004:29–38). This singular narrative is similar to that disseminated through *ingando* solidarity camps, *gacaca* trials, and memorials. This curriculum emphasizes the R.P.F.'s version of history, including precolonial harmony, the role of colonial governance in dividing Rwandans, and the long-term preparation for genocide.

In 2006 an American NGO called Facing History and Ourselves, as well as the University of California at Berkeley's School of Education and Human Rights Center, the National University of Rwanda, and the Rwandan Ministry of Education, collaboratively created a pedagogical guide for teaching history in Rwanda's secondary schools. Facing History specializes in teaching methods for controversial history in divided societies. Its approach encourages reflection, dialogue, multiple points of view, and engaging critical learners. The guide is broken down into modules with diverse research presented such that teachers and students can engage in conversation and critical analysis about four periods of Rwanda's history: the precolonial period, colonialism (1897–1962), postcolonial Rwanda (1962–90), and later postcolonial Rwanda (1990–94) (Republic of Rwanda 2006). The guide also presents one theme for each of the periods, with the precolonial period examining "clans," the colonialism section focusing upon the "Mortehan Reform," the postcolonial section titled "Regional and Ethnic Segregation," and the later postcolonial chapter called "Education Policy and Genocide Ideology."

Although their final product is neither a textbook nor a curriculum, and is destined only for Rwanda's secondary schools to which most Rwandans do not have access, Facing History's guide serves as a significant starting point for the reintroduction of history to Rwandan schoolchildren without focusing on a single narrative. The organization has paired its launch with training for two hundred and fifty high school history teachers in Rwanda, and the guide's approach may well trickle down to primary schools through teachers with secondary education. Whether and how this initiative will translate into wider history teaching remains uncertain, however, and its

implementation thus far has been relatively limited.

Indeed, its future seems to have been stalled by the government (Freedman et al. 2008; see also Weinstein et al. 2007), even though the guide, while differing significantly from the 2004 initiative and offering the possibility of a more open approach to history, can also be interpreted as quite consistent with the government narrative. For example, the choice of themes seems curious and may have been shaped by the public transcript. These are not necessarily the most contentious issues in Rwandan history, and attributing such importance to issues such as "clans," or the connection between "education policy and genocide ideology," supports the current government narrative. This particular periodization of the past, with the colonial period as the pivotal moment, also reflects the centrality of the colonial period to the R.P.F.'s narrative (see Freedman et al. 2008), and thus is in line with the Kagame government's position.

Given the importance of group narratives and experiences, any singular historical narrative will problematically exclude and deny the memories and experiences of many Rwandans and will magnify Burnet's "amplified silences." For example, when they were asked about how the 1994 genocide should be taught in schools, some Tutsi participants favored recalling the "Tutsi genocide," whereas other interviewees, largely Hutu, argued that more than Tutsi suffering needs to be recognized. Many Hutu spoke of feeling left out of expressions of mourning and fearing further delegitimization by being left out of the history curriculum as well. One Rwandan Hutu woman told me that "the other history that we must teach" must do more than focusing on Tutsi genocide victims and survivors. "For example, I lost three quarters of my family during the war. . . . But we [Hutu] don't have any right to say that we lost people" (interview, March 21, 2006). Indeed, the history initiatives make no mention of the Rwandan Patriotic Front's crimes, thus excluding the experiences of many Rwandans who suffered at their hands during the war preceding the genocide, during the genocide, and since (see Des Forges 1999:701–35; Eltringham 2004:100–46). Several Hutu Rwandans explained that by failing to recognize their pain and to acknowledge their mourning, the limited content of the current curricula makes it difficult for them to relate to and to embrace the suffering of Tutsi Rwandans.

A second example of the exclusion engendered by the dominant singular narrative concerns precolonial history. In the civics initiative and mainstream narrative, the precolonial period is presented as a harmonious golden age, ruptured by the divide-and-rule strategies of the colonial powers. This is factually incorrect, according to leading scholars; there were a number of sociopolitical divisions in precolonial Rwanda, including Hutu and Tutsi, that were hardened, but not created, by colonial rule (Newbury 1988; Vansina 2004). Moreover, the narrative is inconsistent with the transmitted memories of much of the population; the presentation of the 1959 revolution as overthrowing four hundred years of injustice is one example.

In what Susanne Buckley-Zistel calls a "chosen amnesia," past conflict between Hutu and Tutsi "are eclipsed from the discourse" (2006b:131).

The "meta-data" that I gathered similarly provides as much insight into other pressing problems as it does into the requirements of a new school curriculum. For example, the dominance of group narratives, public transcripts, and censorship speaks to the challenges of reconciliation. As one Hutu participant at the first National Unity and Reconciliation Summit said, "We do not say it loud enough, but the question of Hutu memory is a prerequisite so that people can sit together and sincerely discuss the real problems of this country" (Vidal 2006:46).

Conclusion

Data collection and analysis are much messier processes than they usually appear to be in academic writing. This is particularly true of data from interviews in conflict, postconflict, or other divided societies. In this article, I discuss several challenges of field research in postgenocide Rwanda. First is the problem of historical memory. Asking Rwandans about experiences up to fifty years in the past and prior to civil war and genocide resulted in faulty recollections as well as reinterpretations. Second is the problem of selective telling and how participants conveyed falsehoods in interviews, as well as public narratives instead of personal experiences or opinions. I also considered group narratives deriving both from selective telling and differing experiences. Finally, there is the problem of representativity and selection bias, and how demographic balance along regional, class, and especially ethnic lines can easily become skewed.

Most methodological texts would stop here and emphasize how these issues present problems for data accuracy. I argue, however, that what many consider faults with data are in fact important data themselves that illuminate the research milieu and contribute much to its analysis. For example, had I not witnessed participants' fears of diverging from the government line, or experienced the "tourist itinerary" wherein I interviewed almost exclusively Tutsi in Kigali, I may not have realized the success of the R.P.F.'s effort to censor and control the historical narrative and public expression.

I then illustrated the applicability of my reinterpretation of challenges as opportunities by examining how the societal insights, or data, gathered through what appeared to be data problems shed light on the challenges confronting postgenocide history teaching. For example, had I not confronted deviations in historical memory, varying group experiences by region and class, or the salience of selective telling along ethnic lines, I might not have recognized the magnitude of the challenge for creating a history curriculum that is acceptable to most Rwandans.

The specific challenges of conducting interviews in divided societies remain unrecognized by most methodological literature. In texts that acknowledge such difficulties, the possibility of translating data problems

into data points is usually overlooked. While divided societies differ enormously, and the experiences discussed above attest to the importance of context, this article illustrates not only the research and ethical dilemmas, but also the myriad opportunities, that are universal to research.

Acknowledgments

References

Al-Haj, Majid. 2005. "National Ethos, Multicultural Education, and the New History Textbooks in Israel." *Curriculum Inquiry* 35 (1): 47–71.

Avery, Patricia G., et al. 1999. "Teaching an Understanding of War and Peace through Structured Academic Controversies." In *How Children Understand War and Peace: A Call for International Peace Education*, edited by Amiram Raviv, Louis Oppenheimer, and Daniel Bar-Tal, 261–77. San Francisco: Jossey Bass.

Avery, Patricia G., John L. Sullivan, and Sandra L. Wood. 1997. "Teaching for Tolerance of Diverse Beliefs." *Theory into Practice* 36 (1): 32–38.

Bickmore, Kathy. 1999. "Teaching Conflict and Conflict Resolution in School: (Extra-) Curricular Considerations." In *How Children Understand War and Peace: A Call for International Peace Education*, edited by Amiram Raviv, Louis Oppenheimer, and Daniel Bar-Tal, 233–59. San Francisco: Jossey Bass.

Braeckman, Colette. 2003. *Les nouveaux prédateurs*. Paris: Fayard.

Buckley-Zistel, Susanne. 2006a. "Dividing and Uniting: The Use of Citizenship Discourses in Conflict and Reconciliation in Rwanda." *Global Society* 20 (1): 101–13.

———. 2006b. "Remembering to Forget: Chosen Amnesia as a Strategy for Local Coexistence in Post-Genocide Rwanda." *Africa* 76 (2): 131–50.

Burnet, Jennie. 2005. *Genocide Lives in Us: Amplified Silence and the Politics of Memory in Rwanda*. Ph.D. diss., University of North Carolina.

———. 2009. "Whose Genocide? Whose Truth? Representations of Victim and Perpetrator in Rwanda." In *Genocide: Truth, Memory, and Representation*, edited by Alex Laban Hinton and Kevin Lewis O'Neill, 80–110. Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press.

Chrétien, Jean-Pierre. 2003. *The Great Lakes of Africa: Two Thousand Years of History*. Translated by Scott Straus. New York: Zone Books.

Cole, Elizabeth A., and Judy Barsalou. 2006. "Unite or Divide? The Challenges of Teaching History in Societies Emerging from Violent Conflict." Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace.

Davies, Lynn. 2004. *Education and Conflict: Complexity and Chaos*. London: RoutledgeFalmer.

De Lame, Danielle. 2005. *A Hill among a Thousand: Transformations and Ruptures in Rural Rwanda*. Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press.

Des Forges, Alison. 1999. *Leave None to Tell the Story*. New York: Human Rights Watch.

Eltringham, Nigel. 2004. *Accounting for Horror: Post-Genocide Debates in Rwanda*. London: Pluto Press.

Freedman, Sarah Warshauer, et al. 2008. "Teaching History after Identity-Based Conflicts: The Rwanda Experience." *Comparative Education Review* 52 (4): 663–90.

Fujii, Lee Ann. 2007. "The Truth in Lies: Evaluating Testimonies of War and Genocide in Rwanda." Paper presented at the Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Chicago, August 29–September 2.

Gourevitch, Philip. 1998. *We Wish to Inform You That Tomorrow We Will Be Killed with Our Families*. New York: Picador USA.

Hintjens, Helen M. 2001. "When Identity Becomes a Knife: Reflecting on the Genocide in Rwanda." *Ethnicities* 1 (1): 25–55.

International Crisis Group. 2002. "Rwanda at the End of the Transition: A Necessary Political Liberalisation." Nairobi: International Crisis Group.

Institute for Research and Dialogue on Peace. 2005. "Histoire et conflits au Rwanda." Kigali: Institute for Research and Dialogue for Peace.

Jefremovas, Villia. 1997. "Contested Identities: Power and the Fictions of Ethnicity, Ethnography and History in Rwanda." *Anthropologica* 39 (1–2): 91–104.

Johnson, David W., and Roger T. Johnson. 1994. "Constructive Conflict in Schools." *Journal of Social Issues* 50 (1): 117–37.

Kalyvas, Stathis. 2006. *The Logic of Violence in Civil War*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

King, Elisabeth. 2008. *The Role of Education in Violent Conflict and Peacebuilding in Rwanda*. Ph.D. diss., University of Toronto.

Lemarchand, René. 1994. *Burundi: Ethnic Conflict and Genocide*. Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Center Press.

_____. 1994. *Burundi: Ethnocide as Discourse and Practice*. Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Center Press.

_____. 1970. *Rwanda and Burundi*. New York: Praeger.

Linden, Ian. 1977. *Church and Revolution in Rwanda*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Longman, Timothy, and Théoneste Rutagengwa. 2004. "Memory, Identity and Community in Rwanda." In *My Neighbor, My Enemy: Justice and Community in the Aftermath of Mass Atrocity*, edited by Eric Stover and Harvey M. Weinstein, 162–82. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Longman, Timothy. 2006. "Memory, Justice and Power in Post-Genocide Rwanda." Paper presented at the meeting of the American Political Science Association, Philadelphia, August 31.

Malkki, Liisa. 1995. *Purity and Exile: Violence, Memory, and National Cosmology among Hutu Refugees in Tanzania*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Mamdani, Mahmood. 2001. *When Victims Become Killers: Colonialism, Nativism and the Genocide in Rwanda*. Kampala: Fountain Publishers.

Maquet, Jean Jacques. 1961. *The Premise of Inequality in Ruanda*. London: Oxford University Press.

National Census Service. 2002. "Results in Brief: The Rwanda 2002 Census of Population and Housing." Kigali: Government of Rwanda.

Newbury, Catharine. 1988. *The Cohesion of Oppression.* New York: Columbia University Press.

———. 1998. "Ethnicity and the Politics of History in Rwanda." *Africa Today* 45 (1): 7–24.

Obura, Anna. 2004. *Peace, Reconciliation and Conflict Resolution: Framework Proposal–Rwanda.* Kigali: Department for International Development.

Pottier, Johan. 2002. *Reimagining Rwanda: Conflict, Survival and Disinformation in the Late Twentieth Century.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Prunier, Gerard. 1997. *The Rwanda Crisis: History of a Genocide 1959–1994.* London: C. Hurst and Company.

Republic of Rwanda. 2004. *A Guide to Civic Education: Life Skills for Rwanda Primary Schools, Upper Primary Level-P4-P5-P6.* Kigali: National Curriculum Development Centre.

———. 2006. *The Teaching of History of Rwanda: A Participatory Approach.* Kigali: National Curriculum Development Centre.

Reyntjens, Filip. 2004. "Rwanda, Ten Years On: From Genocide to Dictatorship." *African Affairs* 103: 177–210.

Ross, Marc Howard. 2002. "The Political Psychology of Competing Narratives: September 11 and Beyond." In *Understanding September 11*, edited by Craig Calhoun, Paul Price, and Ashley Timmer, 303–20. New York: The New Press.

———. 2007. *Cultural Contestation in Ethnic Conflict.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Roth, Wendy D., and Jal D. Mehta. 2002. "The Rashomon Effect: Combining Positivist and Interpretevist Approaches in the Analysis of Contested Events." *Sociological Methods and Research* 31: 131–73.

Roy, Beth. 2004. *Some Trouble with Cows: Making Sense of Social Conflict.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

Rubin, Herbert J., and Irene S. Rubin. 2005. *Qualitative Interviewing: The Art of Hearing Data.* Thousand Oaks, Calif.: SAGE Publications.

Sanford, Victoria. 2009. "What Is an Anthropology of Genocide? Reflections of Field Research with Maya Survivors in Guatemala." In *Genocide: Truth, Memory, and Representation*, edited by Alex Laban Hinton and Kevin Lewis O'Neill, 29–53. Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press.

Scott, James. 1990. *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts.* New Haven: Yale University Press.

Senate of Rwanda. 2006. *Rwanda Genocide Ideology and Strategies for Its Eradication.* Kigali: Senate of Rwanda.

Uvin, Peter. 1998. *Aiding Violence: The Development Enterprise in Rwanda.* Bloomfield, Conn.: Kumarian Press.

Vansina, Jan. 1996. "Epilogue: Fieldwork in History." In *In Pursuit of History: Fieldwork in Africa*, edited by Carolyn Keyes Adenaike and Jan Vansina, 127–40. Portsmouth, N.H.: Heinemann.

Vidal, Claudine. 2001. "Les commémorations du génocide au Rwanda." *Les Temps Modernes* 613: 1–46.

Wahrman, Hillel. 2003. "Is Silencing Conflicts a Peace Education Strategy? The Case of the 'Jewish State' Topic in Israeli Civics Textbooks." In *Education of Minorities and Peace Education in Pluralistic Societies*, edited by Yaacov Iram, 219–54. Westport, Conn.: Praeger.

Weinstein, Harvey M., Sarah Warshauer Freedman, and Holly Hughson. 2007. "School Voices: Challenges Facing Education Systems after Identity-Based Conflicts." *Education, Citizenship and Social Justice* 2 (1): 41–71.

Wood, Elisabeth Jean. 2006. "The Ethical Challenges of Field Research in Conflict Zones." *Qualitative Sociology* 29: 373–86.

Notes

1. The figures below attest to both my relative success and difficulties in this effort.

Participants by Ethnicity and Gender

Gender	Ethnicity				
	Hutu	Mixed*	Tutsi	Unidentified	Total
Female	16	2	15	4	37
Male	15	1	10	6	32
Total	31	3	25	10	69

N=69

*Participants listed as "mixed" identified themselves as having mixed Hutu-Tutsi parentage. It is possible that participants listed as Hutu, Tutsi, or unidentified also fall into this category but did not offer this self-identification.

Participants by Region and Ethnicity

Ethnicity	Region			
	Kigali	North	South	Total
Hutu	3	19	9	31
Mixed	0	2	1	3
Tutsi	21	0	4	25
Unidentified	5	2	3	10
Total	29	23	17	69

N=69

Participants by Region and Gender

Gender	Region			
	Kigali	North	South	Total
Female	19	10	8	37
Male	11	12	9	32
Total	30	22	17	69

N=69

2. The most recent Rwandan census reports that only approximately 5.5% of Rwandans speak English or French (National Census Service, 2002). Government figures warrant consideration, since the government may have reason to skew them. More generally, most Rwandan research projects are tightly controlled, and findings are approved by the government prior to release.

3. For a similar decision in fieldwork in El Salvador, see Wood (2006). See also Rubin and Rubin (2005:105–6).

4. Nearly all participants granted permission to record the interviews. Of course, I did not record the individuals who did not wish to be recorded. A few participants stopped recording at some point during the interview and later resumed it. One participant stopped the recorder during the interview and chose not to resume recording.

5. For another author with a similar experience, see Malkki (1995).

6. Based on research on violence in Rwanda, Fujii (2007) makes a complementary argument identifying five types of "lies" that frequently appear in interview data: rumors, inventions, denials, evasions, and silences.

7. Quotes from Rwandan interview participants are the author's translation from French.

8. The so-called Potemkin villages were fake settlements built by the Russian minister Grigory Potyomkin to impress Empress Catherine II during her visit to Crimea in 1787.

9. For example, innocent Hutu are frequently grouped together with the guilty, and life is particularly difficult for those of mixed ethnic families, who often are refused acceptance by all sides (see Burnet 2009:89). There are also important differences between Tutsi and Hutu who grew up outside of Rwanda and those who spent their lives in the country. While often associated with the R.P.F., Rwandans who grew up in Rwanda often feel that the (mostly foreign Tutsi) government ill-represents their interests (Burnet 2009:83; Vidal 2001:44). Tutsi who stayed in Rwanda are sometimes suspected by new arrivals as having been genocide collaborators. Tutsi from different countries of exile—Uganda, or Zaire, or Burundi—also have had markedly different experiences, and language learned in exile has created new cleavages. Hutu also had vastly different experiences of refuge in Tanzania and in Zaire, for example.

10. For more on the challenges of Rwandan historiography see Chrétien (2003); Des Forges (1999); Eltringham (2004); Jefremovas (1997); Lemarchand (1994, 1996); Linden (1977); Malkki (1995); and Newbury (1998).

11. In order to recognize the systematic use of narratives, I transcribed all interviews verbatim, totaling over 1500 pages. I then coded responses on topics and themes. This allowed me to examine responses by demographics in pivot tables. I also searched transcripts for specific phrases and vocabulary.

12. This is a critique commonly leveled against the well-known book *Premise of Inequality* (Maquet 1961), for example, since the author interviewed only Tutsi associated with the royal court to explain relations among Rwandans.

13. This was consistent with my experience pretesting my interview guide in Toronto, and with the experience of other researchers. See, for example, Buckley-Zistel (2006a:112).

14. Neither education nor curriculum takes effect in a vacuum. History curriculum interacts with wider societal conditions, as well as other educational issues such as access, (de)segregation, and pedagogy. While I focus on the history

curriculum here, I am mindful that it does not evolve in isolation. See also Cole (2006).

15. See Avery et al. (1999); Avery, Sullivan, and Wood (1997); Bickmore (1999); Davies (2004); and Johnson and Johnson (1994).