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HAKANIYUTʉ ʉNʉ HANIYU? WHY ARE YOU MAKING? EXAMINING COMANCHE WOMEN'S TEXTS THROUGH COMANCHE LANGUAGE AND CULTURAL PHILOSOPHY

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A DISSERTATION APPROVED FOR THE

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

BY THE COMMITTEE CONSISTING OF

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DEDICATION

To my father, Frank Hubbard

And in memory of my mother, the late Gaylyn Sue “Susie” Hubbard

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If any elders or their descendants who so kindly shared Comanche language learning materials with me when I was a child are still wondering if I ever used the Comanche language dictionary that they implored me to use 19 years ago: ~~U~~ra, ~~u~~ra, ~~u~~ra. The book's spine has cracked in three places. The pages are finally worn. And both its front and back covers have fallen off.

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ABSTRACT

One can examine Comanche women's spoken stories in the Comanche language for cultural and philosophical insight through the metaphor of oiling and braiding one's hair because oil (or *yuhu̲*, pronounced "you" in Comanche, meaning the nouns, oil, grease, lard, or fat) has historical roots in Comanche culture, where women would use *yuhu̲* to braid their hair to adorn themselves, to keep their hair free from their faces, to function while they cared for their families, to ready themselves for battle, or to protect their hair from lice. The metaphor of oiling and braiding hair helps us understand the culture and philosophy behind Comanche women's stories because *yuhu̲* is homphonically related to *yu* (also pronounced you), which has a plethora of grammar functions and variations. Generally, the prefix, *yu-*, means to "do right," but the suffix version, *-yu*, serves as a progressive verb marker. My study argues for a rhetorical *yu* by collectively examining the various *yu* forms and their relationships to narrative in Comanche women's stories. Like the oil *yuhu̲* in braids, *yu* binds and weaves a story to move the plot along. The sentence, *hakaniyut~~u~~ ~~unu~~ yuhaniyu*, meaning "Why are you making?" or "How do you make right?" best conveys not only *yu*'s ability to weave meaning at the sentence level, but also its fluidity in meaning, indicating its linguistic woven-ness, or braid-like, *kwisikat~~u~~*, meaning *braid*, qualities (*Taa N~~u~~m~~u~~ Tekwap~~u~~ʔha T~~u~~boop~~u~~* 96). In Comanche cultural practice, braiding is accompanied by story that contains many meanings and fosters a memorable learning experience. The translated meanings behind *hakaniyut~~u~~ ~~unu~~ haniyu* (or *hakaniyut~~u~~ ~~unu~~ yuhaniyu*) are just as woven as Comanche braiding techniques and as *yu*'s grammar roles and narrative relationships, yet many of the sentence's translations pertain to questions of process, movement, aesthetics, aspiration, and etiquette. *Yu* lends itself well as a lens for examining the culture and philosophy behind Comanche women's stories, which suggest a rhetorical *yu* that can

be applied to both Comanche texts and non-Comanche Indigenous texts. In other words, *yu* is in Comanche hairstyling. *Yu* is in Comanche language. *Yu* is in Comanche stories. And *yu* is in the Comanche artistic air, so much so, that in Comanche, *suniyut~~u~~* is "because, for that reason"—it just is. My study seeks to question how do Comanche women's stories create their own criteria for how to story "right?" Comanche language can be used to further reinforce Comanche women's notions of the story process, thereby further legitimizing Comanche women's standards of artifice, storytelling, and rhetoric that already exist both culturally, philosophically, and linguistically in modern Comanche societies.

Keywords: yuhu, oral tradition, Indigenous rhetoric, rhetoric, American Indian literature, Comanche stories, storytelling, fluidity, yu, hakaniyut~~u~~ ~~un~~u haniyu, hakaniyut~~u~~ ~~un~~u yuhaniyu, sticky, kwisikat~~u~~, suniyut~~u~~

The conditions under which *-yu=* is chosen rather than *-tʉ=*, and vice versa, are not known.

— Jean Ormsbee Charney, *A Grammar of Comanche*

Get the hairspray.

—— Mom

Suniyutʉ because, for that reason

— *Taa Nʉmʉ Tekwapʉʔha Tʉboopʉ* (Our Comanche Dictionary)

Surʉkʉse "Tsaa nʉ naboori kwasuʔi suwaaitʉ," me u niikwiiyu. Sitʉkʉse nanaʔatahputi tʉrʉetʉpihta himanu uma sihka esiʔahtamuuʔa tʉʔekanu. "Meeku nabuuni . . ." (translation)

That one grey grasshopper said, "Well, I want a painted coat." This one differently painted grasshopper took several things near his hands and painted the grey grasshopper. "Now, look at yourself in the mirror . . ."

—— Emily Riddles's (Comanche) tale of the painted grasshoppers in *Comanche Texts*

Put some duct tape on it.

—— A recurring intertribal American Indian phrase for problem solving

STORY ONE[1]

"Ouch," I said tilting my head back and wiggling on my knees.

"Would you sit still? Sorry," my mother said.

She combed out a tangle with the pink vent brush and then carefully gathered my long hair, smoothing it back with our blue, soft brush, into the highest, sleekest ponytail possible. She sprayed the top and back of my head with water from what we called "the squirt bottle."

Then cupping her hand over my eyes, she said, "Now, close your eyes," as she spritzed her favorite mega-hold hairspray that smelled of a mixture of nail polish, citrus, and baby powder, a fog so heavy that if I opened my mouth, any miniscule droplets of mist that still lingered would sting the tip of my tongue. I remember whenever her hairspray remained on the outside of the spray nozzle, it dried into a solid glue-stick-like state that we would have to pry off, run under hot water, or pick away with a safety pin to get the can to spray again—strong hair spray for an even stronger woman. And if the hairspray ran out? We used gel that made my hair heavy and slick, like it had been painted on my scalp.

Sometimes the combing of my hair would take only a few minutes, if it only had a few tangles, but then there were days when this process seemed like an hour. But that was how she showed that she cared, through giving her time, through holding high expectations for me *and my hair*, and by making something beautiful with her hands.

"It's got to be sleek and smooth . . . Sit up straight," my mother would say.

[1] My story, like the traditional Comanche stories and other Indigenous oral traditions, does not have a title. Throughout this dissertation, I will refer to these stories in the ways in which we refer to them in the community. You will not see quotation marks around them or the use of the kind of capitalization you see with mainstream titles. Instead, I vary the way I refer to each story on occasion—the story about Coyote and the sliding turkeys, the tale of Coyote and the sliding turkeys—and I capitalize words to indicate when they are used as character names, noted also by the lack of an article. It's Coyote, but it is *the* turkeys.

I would straighten my back and raise my chin. Then, she split my hair into three damp sections, and starting at the top of the ponytail, she would braid it. And she would braid my hair tight, but not too tight, each twist a hug. My hair would stick to her brown hands, her arms tiring, but she ran her hands over the strands, smoothing them again, and kept on braiding one hair section over the other, pulling in the other, one over the other, pulling in the next one, and repeat. My hair became a nice, fine chain of close links with each small tug and turn. And as she braided, she checked for "baby hairs," my tiny tufts of hair that poked out from around my scalp, the nape of my neck, and of course, my braid. If ever there were too many sticking out for momma's standards, she would untie that braid, and start over.

"Where are all these baby hairs coming from?" She asked me. I bugged my eyes out, shrugged—careful not to move my head—and sighed. Then, she tied off the end of my braid with a pink hair tie and lifted my braid above my head, holding the base of the braid near the crown of my head and wrapping the braid around and around itself into a bun,[2] stuffing it full of hairpins. No one could see them, because that's how skilled she was, but secretly my braided bun hid as many pens as a kaku's (grandma's) pincushion.

This is the first memory I can recall of my mother braiding my hair. I remember sensing her determined eyes squinting at the round structure atop my head. I remember how she sculpted my hair with the intent to produce what she felt was the "best" braid. I stared in the mirror and admired the seamless structure that was my braided bun; one could not tell by glancing at it

[2] The braid that I am describing is not a "traditional" Comanche braid. My mother was an enrolled Comanche, and my Comanche cousin taught her this braid. I am enrolled Comanche and have received many more "traditional" braids throughout my lifetime, but the first braid that I ever received was a hybrid braid that combined traditional Comanche braiding with a European style bun, which I find fitting for myself because I am Comanche and white; I was raised in a biracial household by my Comanche mother and white father, whose family immigrated to the U.S. from Europe, and I was raised in both cultures, languages, traditions, and communities.

exactly how the braid started, and one almost would not have been able to tell where it ended, were it not for the hair tie: two round berries, which were her finishing touch.

She said, “This is the hairstyle your cousin taught me.”

I was nearly four years old, and this was the beginning of many braids I would wear throughout my childhood.

I remember thinking when I got a little older, my hair longer, and my knees more antsy from kneeling for many minutes through my mother’s hairstyling, why does my hair have to look just *so*? Can’t we settle for some baby hairs? It’s just going to do that anyway, and when I get home my hair will be messy again. But much to my surprise my hair remained fixed—held together by mountains of hairspray, hairpins, and my momma’s love.

Looking back, I did not know it at the time, but aspects of my mother’s idea of “the best” braids were influenced by our Comanche culture. Almost every Comanche woman has her own definition of what any “ideal hairdo or hairdon’t” should or should not look like. But all Comanche women do share the fact they are descendants of people with a history of not only weaving hairstyles, but also weaving stories through their Comanche language.

INTRODUCTION

Comanche language[3] is essential to Comanche identity, just as any language is essential to any identity. To study a peoples' language is to gain insight into a peoples' art, culture, reasoning, and customs. According to the Comanche Nation Language Department website, the Comanche language is experiencing a critical period:

> The Comanche language is somewhere between severely endangered and critically endangered [based on the UNESCO classification system]. We [Comanches] must do something to revitalize our language before we reach the level of extinct! . . . As of today, we are losing the last remaining elder speakers at an alarming rate. There are less than 10 speakers that are either teaching and/or working in the community. The majority operate using their own personal resources. ("The State of Our Comanche Language")

Comanche[4] is one of the many Indigenous languages around the world that are at risk. Including the production of more tribal language-based works (both written and

[3] The Comanche people, or "N~~ʉ~~m~~ʉ~~n~~ʉ~~, The People," are a sovereign federally recognized American Indian nation whose tribal complex is located in Lawton, Oklahoma, a small part of the early Comanche territory. Their tribal government is a combination of a democratic republic infused with traditional Comanche leadership practices, and their economy participates in degrees of capitalism. The government consists of an elected chair, business committee of elders, a tribal administrator, and the general council who is the voting public, ages 18 and older. The Comanche tribe consists of "approximately 17,000 enrolled tribal members" and about 7,000 live near Lawton, Oklahoma ("About Us"). Located adjacent to Lawton is Fort Sill, which was home to the Kiowa, Comanche, Apache reservation. Lawton became a tent town after the Oklahoma land run when lands were allotted to tribes and the rest of traditional Indigenous homelands became open for settlement. Today, Lawton is a combination of reservation, urban city, and small town with a large military and international population. Comanches were originally a part of the Shoshone tribe, separating from them in the 1700s, and lived a nomadic Plains-lifestyle, following the buffalo to "Wyoming, Nebraska, Colorado, Kansas, New Mexico, Texas, and Oklahoma" ("About Us"). However, there are stories of Comanches traveling as far as Mexico and Canada. There are many different bands of Comanches, hence, many different language dialects that continue to grow and change.

[4] According to linguist Jean Ormsbee Charney, Comanche belongs to the Numic branch of the Uto-Aztecan language family (1). The tribes that speak this language family are the "Mono,

nonalphanumeric) contributes to the survival of Indigenous communities. Comanche is one of the many Indigenous languages around the world that are at risk. Including the production of more tribal language-based works (both written and nonalphanumeric) contributes to the survival of Indigenous communities.

In the Comanche language, there are many different forms of *yu*: *yu-*, *-yu*, *-yu-*, *yuu*, *yuʔa*, *yuʔ*, and *yuhu*. They all have different meanings, contexts, and usages but they are related homphonically based on their auditory variations of *yu*'s pronunciation (pronounced you). *Yu-* as a prefix means "do right," is featured in commands, and expresses distributive/reduplicative action (Charney 141-142, 217; *Taa Nʉmʉ Tekwapʉʔha Tʉboopʉ* 86). As a suffix, *-yu* is a be verb, progressive verb, predicate (sometimes a combination of these), as well as verbalizes adjectives, verbalizes objects of the post position,[5] expresses unrealized action, shows repetitive/habitual and/or distributive action in *ʔeyu*, and forms the interrogative pronoun (or adverb), *hakaniyutu*, meaning "why" (Charney 199-200, 148-149, 201-202, 201, 135-136, 108, 211). *Yu* sometimes appears in the middle of a word like *tsayumiʔitsi*, meaning "to take down from/to take off of" and *wʉyumiʔinu*, meaning "to knock off with a stick," though *yumi* may be

Northern Paiute, Shoshone, Comanche, Panamint, Southern Paiute/Ute/Chemehuevi, and Kawaiisu" (Charney 2). Today, the Comanche and the Shoshone, who were once the same tribe, further language discourse at their annual language fair at the Comanche-Shoshone reunion. Each year, the tribes alternate who will visit whom and which state they will meet. Charney explains that these related languages are found in "the great basin" (2). The Great Basin is Nevada, Utah, Oregon, California, Idaho, Wyoming, and Mexico.

[5] A postpositional is similar, yet different to an English prepositional phrase. Charney uses the phrase "object of a postposition," as do I (108). I have chosen to use this phrase when postpositional phrases involve a noun. According to Charney, most postpositionals "express location" and "case functions" and that "it is impossible to make a direct association between English prepositions and Comanche postpositions. For instance, a locative concept may be expressed by an English preposition while Comanche, in some contexts, uses a verb . . . or an instrumental prefix"(71). Canonge also uses the term object of the post position in *Comanche Texts* (146).

from another word altogether (Canonge 153, 156). *Yuu*, pronounced you, means "quiet," and it is associated with commands like "lie still," *yuu habiit*ʉ (McClung and Nahquaddy 91; *Taa N*ʉ*m*ʉ *Tekwap*ʉ*ʔha T*ʉ*boop*ʉ 87). *Yuu* can also appear in the middle of words, such as the word for a "small variety" of "quail," *t*ʉ*e kuyuutsi*, and the term for *roofing shingles*, *nasiyuuki* (*Taa N*ʉ*m*ʉ *Tekwap*ʉ*ʔha T*ʉ*boop*ʉ 147, 151). *Yuʔa* is from *yuʔat*ʉ, meaning "warm," and it frequently appears in words associated with warmth, like a "warm coat," *yuʔa kw*ʉ*suʔu* (*Taa N*ʉ*m*ʉ *Tekwap*ʉ*ʔha T*ʉ*boop*ʉ . . . 87; Wistrand-Robinson and Armagost 153; Canonge 156). *Yuʔa* sometimes appears as *yuʔ* in which it is associated with warmth or with something soft; for instance, *yuʔnaib*ʉ*h*ʉ, is "rabbit (soft hair)" (*Taa N*ʉ*m*ʉ *Tekwap*ʉ*ʔha T*ʉ*boop*ʉ . . .87). *Yuh*ʉ (also pronounced you, due to its whispered[6] vowel), is a noun, meaning "oil, grease, lard (fat)," and it is used to describe food, like "fried meat," *yuhu t*ʉ*k*ʉ*hmanip*ʉ or "fry bread" *yuhu nookop*ʉ (*Taa N*ʉ*m*ʉ *Tekwap*ʉ*ʔha T*ʉ*boop*ʉ 86-87).

Throughout my study, most of the examples that I examine feature forms of *yu* as a progressive dialogue marker, verb suffix, prefix, noun, or adjective (in reference to food and animals only). Linguistically, these five versions of *yu* are all different, but historically and culturally, they are related through the practices of Comanche storying, braiding, and trading in which these meanings and materials parallel and, at times, intersect; *yuh*ʉ is used in Comanche braiding, storying, and as a historic and early colonial trade substance that enabled discourse and caused change (I will elaborate on the trade aspects in chapter three). Some of these changes were increased social morale, as well as cultural and economic influence. Therefore, the

[6] A whisper vowel is written with an underline to note that when this letter is spoken, its sound is almost inaudible, implied, dropped, or whispered. When *yu* is written as a whisper vowel it is written as *y*ʉ. Most whispered *y*ʉ instances occur at the end of verbs and progressive dialogue markers in Riddles's texts.

rhetorical *yu* is a lens because in Indigenous rhetorics, various methods of meaning making "overlap" to create a layered message, "blurred," if you will, so the audience makes meaning for itself (Wieser 3). Throughout my study, I collectively look at several layers of *yu*'s meanings in relation to narrative and how their different meanings in different contexts and usages combine to create a rhetorical *yu*. Significantly, this rhetorical *yu* crosses boundaries, which I will explore in chapters two and three. Comanche and Indigenous artists, writers, scholars, and scholars of Indigenous rhetorics can use this blurring through layered meaning-making to create. Hence, from this point forward, I will refer to any and all instances of *yu* as "*yu"* because I am interested in the homophone *yu* as a rhetorical device and in how it can be used to create. Though doing this might be controversial to linguists, historically, contemporaneously in the living oral tradition, and in Comanche cultural materials, this view of *yu* is fitting.

Yu is braid-like, *kwisikat~~u~~* (pronounced quee-see-kah-tuh, meaning *braid*), and traditional Comanche braids were known for the inclusion of *yuhu* to help protect the hair from lice and to help bind the braid as it is woven together. This aspect reflects the use of *yu* in the Comanche language itself because sometimes *yu* combines subjects, objects, verbs, and adjectives all together in a single word or phrase, such as "umat~~u~~m~~u~~ʔeyu . . . Someone is selling [pecans]," "utsanakaiyuna . . . he's rich," or "yuy~~u~~kwiika . . . Sit down and be quiet [you all]!" (Charney 136, 182, 217). Charney admits that "as with many American Indian languages, a sentence can consist of virtually a single word—although Comanche differs somewhat in that an independent pronoun or noun often occurs with that word" (4). For example, "umat~~u~~m~~u~~ʔeyu" could be written "u ma t~~u~~m~~u~~ʔeyu," which translates as *he/she that selling* for "someone is selling [pecans]" (Charney 136). Just as *yu* binds to many words and phrases, Comanche language itself merges many meanings together like *yuhu* adhering to hair and compressing multiple hair

sections into a single braid. These aspects of woven meaning in Comanche language occur on a larger scale in Comanche narratives that teach lessons, cohering with Heath's and Heath's notions of "sticky" teaching, in which story makes learning memorable (Heath and Heath 1). These woven meanings convey Comanche cultural philosophies, and the grammatical functions of *yu* coincide with these philosophies. In Comanche, the word we have come to use for *because* is *suniyut~~ʉ~~*[7] (*Taa N~~ʉ~~m~~ʉ~~ Tekwap~~ʉ~~ʔha T~~ʉ~~boop~~ʉ~~* 54), basically, "it just [properly] is," or "that's the way it's supposed to be""[8] Further illustrating this Comanche cultural philosophy, the prefix, *yu-*, means to "do right." *Yu* can attach to the verb, *hani*. *Hani,* means to "do," "fix", or "make," including in the "abstract sense" (Charney 207-208), and *hani* is related to *haniit~~ʉ~~*, meaning "repair" (*Taa N~~ʉ~~m~~ʉ~~ Tekwap~~ʉ~~ʔha T~~ʉ~~boop~~ʉ~~* 4). As a result, the sentence, *hakaniyut~~ʉ~~ ~~ʉ~~n~~ʉ~~ haniyu*, can transform into *hakaniyut~~ʉ~~ ~~ʉ~~n~~ʉ~~ yuhaniyu*, "How are you doing right [properly]?"

When examining Comanche language texts, whether oral or written, one must not only consider how *yu* functions within an individual term or the syntax, but also one must consider how *yu* functions within the context of the narrative, culture, and history because meaning making in Comanche can be context dependent,[9] and we must always be aware of this. Across the twelve of Emily Riddles's Comanche stories that I translated—included in the appendix, are

[7] Pronounced sue-nee-yout. Another variation is "suniti u [prounced sue-nee-tuh ooh] . . . That's the way it is" (Anderton, McClung, and Nahquaddy 127).

[8] In Comanche culture, it is socially acceptable for an elder to respond with "it just is" to youths' questions about why something is the way it is because not all knowledge is of the public domain in Comanche societies. *Suniyut~~ʉ~~, because,* for Comanches is akin to a parent's use of *because* to a child.

[9] For instance, when examining a Comanche narrative, be it written or oral, one may notice repetition of words and phrases. At a glance, this repetition may seem awkward or unnecessary, but in Comanche narratives, it is a deliberate rhetorical trope that is essential to Comanche storying expertise.

all her Comanche stories I use so that readers can refer to them as needed—I found recurring patterns between *yu*'s appearance and narrative elements.

Yu rhetorically functions both within the context of a narrative and in the question *hakaniyut<u>u</u>* ~~*u*~~*nu*~~*u*~~ *haniyu* as a binding agent for weaving phrases in much the same way that one would braid one's hair, which is fitting because traditional Comanches'[10] use of *yuh<u>u</u>*[11] (oil) in their hair to make their braids look "keen" and to keep away lice promoted not just an aesthetic, but also good health, part of living in a balanced way. Braids keep one's hair free from one's face, allowing one to be alert and observant, to fully engage in one's actions, whether in contributing to sustenance for one's people or defending them in battle. Just as *yuh<u>u</u>* serves as a binder for adornment and survival purposes, *yu* helps hold an effective story together as it is woven from a rhetorical perspective. Coincidentally, but fittingly, almost any Comanche woman who has ever braided someone's hair or who has had her sister, mother, or auntie braid her hair knows that sometimes the best stories are told while braiding.

My dissertation will examine Comanche women's texts, such as Elliott Canonge's *Comanche Texts'* translations of Emily Riddles's (Comanche) tales; Sandra Karty's (Comanche) tales in *Comanche Children's Lullabies, Songs, and Stories*, compiled by the Comanche Nation Language Program with the assistance of the Comanche Language and Cultural Preservation

[10] For clarification, when I refer to historic, early, or traditional Comanches, I am referring to Comanches from the periods of circa 1700s-1875 before the last Comanche band moved to the last reservation, although Comanches during the reservation years were still practicing their traditions, though altered. Modern Comanches of the early to mid-1900s were still practicing their traditions, and contemporary Comanches are still practicing their traditions, though altered. Comanche culture prior to 1700 would have been more similar to the cultures of the Shoshones and Utes from whom the Comanches separated prior to moving into the Central Plains and acquiring horses from the Spanish.

[11] According to Devon Mihesuah, traditional Comanches would also use bear oil "to prepare animal hides" (D. Mihesuah 226). Oil is essential in Comanche culture for preparing the sewing of animal hides and the weaving of braids.

Committee; and Lucille McClung's (Comanche) version of the Coyote and the Prairie Dogs tale that was archived by the Sam Noble Museum's Native American Languages Collection and analyzed by A. Anderton. Each of these materials are publicly accessible through the University of Oklahoma, and I have chosen to discuss these Comanche women's stories with good intentions to represent their works and the Comanche nation in a respectful, positive way. I chose to discuss these stories because I enjoyed reading them, and I think others will enjoy them and find them inspiring, too. By including these texts, I will explore new meanings within them and encourage the use of Comanche language. I hope to further confirm that Comanche women's texts contain collective meaning making that occurs socially and linguistically in Comanche and that the various meanings, structures, and contexts surrounding *hakaniyut~~ʉ~~ ~~ʉn~~ haniyu* give cultural insight into these meanings, especially *yu*, which binds and weaves meaning at the word and sentence level, much like oiling and braiding one's hair, and relates to narrative elements. I will use the several roots and functions of words within *hakaniyut~~ʉ~~ ~~ʉn~~ haniyu* and the act of oiling and braiding one's hair as metaphors for understanding Comanche philosophies within these Comanche texts.

The Comanche cultural lens *hakaniyut~~ʉ~~ ~~ʉn~~ haniyu / hakaniyut~~ʉ~~ ~~ʉn~~ yuhaniyu* will contribute to previous rhetorical studies on Indigenous materials and to the living oral tradition and Indigenous rhetorics that inform it that are based in Indigenous ways of knowing. *Hakaniyut~~ʉ~~ ~~ʉn~~ haniyu* and *yu* will serve as a metaphor because just as *yu* is bound to verb roots and woven throughout this sentence to form adverbials and progressive verbs, *yu*'s relationship to narrative assists in weaving a story—*yu* aids in dialogue and relays plot action, likewise moving the emotions of the listener, keeping one's attention and helping one to consider one's relationship to the story. This rhetorical *yu* in Comanche women's texts "sticks" to the

audience's[12] attention and keeps listeners/readers engaged in a Comanche story (Heath and Heath 1). *Yu* is essential to this metaphor for braiding and oiling because of its historical roots in Comanche hygiene—and cooking and sewing—practices that exudes beauty, survival, complexity, artifice, and expertise.

Methodological Context

The tales within *Comanche Texts* were originally told in Comanche by Emily Riddles and translated by Canonge, and several of these tales involve characters "making things" such as food and performing cultural values that many Comanches cherish. In *A Grammar of Comanche*, Charney's recorded sentences of Comanche elders, Lucille McClung, Agnes Wermy, and Theresa Saupitty, and many other elders hold these same values. From time to time, I will draw from my own experience of growing up as a Comanche female in my own Comanche community to reiterate that these values continue. Please note that these values continue, but are not shared by all Comanches because Comanches like all humans are complex, imperfect, and unique individuals with their own perspectives, and one person cannot speak for all Comanches.

[12] Throughout my study, I refer to the hypothetical people to whom Riddles or other Comanche women storytellers may have told their stories as "listeners" or as an "audience" because Comanche stories reside within the oral tradition, meaning stories are intended to be spoken and heard more so than written and read. At times, I do refer to Comanche women storytellers' audiences as "readers" because Canonge, the Comanche Language Committee, Sam Noble Museum, and I have translated Comanche women's stories in writing. I also refer to Riddles and other Comanche women storytellers as speakers/writers because they and their communities are the ones to whom the stories belong that have been spoken and then translated into writing. Most of the time when I describe Riddles's hypothetical audience, I refer to her possible children and grandchildren during the 1930s-1950s, who may have heard her tales. I also consider "audience" as early Comanche children who may have heard these tales from their elders and then, upon becoming elders themselves, passed the stories down to Riddles's generation.

Overall, Comanche narrative, language, and metaphor will be woven together to shed light on Comanche philosophy.

My dissertation will draw on two major studies that have inspired scholarly discourse on Indigenous rhetorics and nonalphanumeric texts, Malea Powell's "A Basket Is a Basket Because . . . Telling a Native Rhetorics Story" and Kimberly Wieser's *Back to the Blanket: Recovered Rhetorics and Literacies in American Indian Studies*.[13] Both studies examine objects as metaphors, story structures, and concepts for Indigenous rhetorics. Using the basket weaving process to structure her narrative, Powell tells the story of how the American Indian rhetorical/composition studies began. She states, "When we study Native rhetorics, we study the how of that meaning-making. When we study Native rhetorics, then, we study meaning-making practices. We study how those practices constitute things like texts and baskets. . . this is what Native rhetorics scholars do—we study how" (471). As Powell shows, the act of making conveys meaning, and the basket itself conveys meaning. Wieser elaborates on what exactly this meaning looks like by stating that the progression of Indigenous stories and their meanings are not linear, but "holistic:"[14]

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[13] Wieser's name is now Wieser-Weryackwe. I will refer to her as Wieser when referring to *Back to the Blanket* and as Wieser-Weryackwe when referring to her outside of the context of the book.

[14] Comanche language uses holistic reasoning instead of linear reasoning, expressing a complex, yet flexible grammar system that relies on cultural context, intent, relationships between speaker and listener and more as many languages do. Comanche often follows a subject-object-verb structure for simple sentences, though this is not the only structure (Charney 7). For example, "Ihka nʉʉ [subject] agwe [awoʔe, object] wʉhtʉvaruʔi [wʉhtʉpatuʔi, verb] . . . I'm going to break the dish" (Charney 142-143). A direct translation would be, "Here, I dish break going to." Comanche also follows an object-subject-verb form: "Sariiʔa [object] nʉ [subject] puni [verb] . . . I see a dog" (McClung and Nahquaddy 41). But Comanche ideas can still hop around with a logic of their own, reflecting holistic thought. For instance, "Nʉ hiimataka nʉ nʉmʉ tekwaʔet . . . I know just a little Comanche," which is in subject/possessive pronoun-adverb-subject/possessive pronoun-adjective-object/verb form (*Conversational Phrases*). Depending on how one breaks down *tekwaʔet*, it could be interpreted as the verb, *speak,* or a verb that has been

> The thinker sees the connection, sees the whole picture. The problem is that the mainstream reader or listener, trying to duplicate the thinking of the holistic speaker or writer, can't see the connection. It's not that the holistic thinker is illogical; he or she simply uses a different sort of logic. . . Understanding American Indian texts means including more than one form of logical process. (10)

Thus, storied objects give insight into Indigenous logic *and* the story's meaning itself. Considering how the objects that Comanche people make convey meaning is significant to my study because my rhetorical lens examines Comanche texts through a metaphor for braiding hair, as similar creative processes are reflected in Comanche women's texts; braiding methodology, story methodology, and the narrative processes in these stories all inform one another. Many of Riddles's tales involve Comanche methodologies, depicting hunting, gathering, or making food to teach heuristics, making this text ideal for this study. In Indigenous rhetoric, this holistic process is not one that resides entirely within one individual's words or mind, but in diverse material works and within a collective of minds that are situated within a social framework throughout and surrounding the story and storied object. Both Powell and Wieser analyze how the listener/reader/viewer of a story wields just as much influence as the teller/creator does over the story's meaning (Powell 483; Wieser 11). Wieser describes listener/reader/viewer agency in "interpretive choices" based on one's cultural knowledge, and Powell alludes to this same Indigenous rhetorical phenomenon when she closes "A Basket is a Basket Because. . ." with "This story is yours now. Do with it what you will" (Wieser 11; Powell 483).

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nominalized with *et~~ʉ~~/t~~ʉ~~* to form the phrase, *Comanche language* (*Taa N~~ʉ~~m~~ʉ~~ Tekwap~~ʉ~~ʔha T~~ʉ~~boop~~ʉ~~* 61; Charney 66, 68).

Indigenous scholars continue to publish studies on the Indigenous rhetorics and stories surrounding hand-made objects. One recent influential analysis is L. Rain Cranford-Gomez's "Brackish Bayou Blood: Weaving Mixed-Blood Indian-Creole Identity Outside the Written Record." Cranford-Gomez explores Indigenous and Creole basketry as storied-objects that convey history, identity, survivance, and geography ("Brackish Bayou Blood"). She states that "reading or viewing a basket is not static; it requires thought and research, implementing knowledge making and learning practices—not the solitary viewing and dismissing of an object, but rather placing the basket within a greater context that addresses a historic cultural dialogue within a set geographic space" (100). Cranford-Gomez focuses on how space and place shapes basketry and meaning making within a specific cultural context and place, while other studies view basketry as a composition structure for storying. In *Shapes of Native Nonfiction,* Elissa Washuta (Cowlitz) and Theresa Warburton consider how Indigenous ways of knowing within Suquamish and other Northwest coast Native basket weaving sheds light on understanding contemporary Indigenous lyrical essay techniques (6, 9). Washuta's and Warburton's study reveals that Indigenous-made objects provide understanding of the structures within Indigenous texts, thereby creating Indigenous-based literary frameworks for critiquing Indigenous writers' works, instead of imposing a non-Indigenous lens. Just as Washuta and Warburton use Indigenous based structuring of objects to critique Indigenous literature, Comanche grammar structures can be used to critique Comanche texts. Other recent studies on storied-objects and Indigenous rhetoric are Alexandra Kahsenni's (Anishinaabe), "From Great-Grandmothers to Great-Granddaughters: 'Moving Life' in Baby Carriers and Birchbark Baskets," which discusses the Indigenous knowledge and the communal creating process of cradleboards, and Lana Ray's (Red Rock First Nations Anishinaabe) study, "'Beading Becomes a Part of Your Life':

Transforming the Academy Through the Use of Beading as a Method of Inquiry," which examines how the beading process is an Indigenous way of knowing, encourages community, and facilitates communication and meaning-making. Both Kahsenni's and Ray's studies explore how making traditions inform their rhetorical methodology. My study will question the creative and interpretive methodologies of speaker(s)/writer(s) and listener(s)/reader(s) (or audience in general) surrounding Comanche texts as they make meaning because, as Kahsenni notes in cradleboard making, sometimes the making of the storied objects themselves relies on community collaboration (101), just as the meaning making of a story relies on community collaboration. Though aspects of Ray's research discuss how storied objects foster communication (367), my analysis will explore how the braid metaphor helps one to understand Comanche women's texts and Comanche sociocultural practices, in addition to aspects of Comanche language.

In the last decade, studies on Indigenous languages have increased, with many of the scholars doing this work being both Indigenous and speakers of their own Indigenous languages. Although, many tribal languages are in danger of becoming extinct,[15] countless tribes and tribal-

[15] Henry Mihesuah stated that between the 1920s-1940s there were some Comanche elders who only spoke Comanche, could not speak English, and did not want to learn English (25). Some of the elders who raised me were children during the 1930s, and they could speak both Comanche and English, while some only spoke English. Today, fewer Comanches can speak both languages, meaning these major language shifts occurred in the past 80 years or less. To further paint a wider picture of the state of Comanche language during the 1940s, one must consult Casagrande's linguistic findings, which Foster reiterates in *Being Comanche*: "The whole range of bilingualism is to be found among the 2,400 or so Comanche . . . Most old people over 60 speak little or no English, while most young people under 30 speak little or no Comanche . . . Although most Comanche between the ages of 30 and 60 are bilingual, the number who are equally fluent in both English and Comanche is relatively small. They are mainly men and a few women between the ages of 40 and 55; the generation that stands midway between the old culture and the new" (qtd. in Foster 115). It is also important to note, however, that the language remains generative. For instance, the Comanche Code Talkers during WWII created new words, usages, connotations, and denotations for the Comanche language that facilitated not only in

language-allies have developed language learning programs within tribal communities. This surge in language revitalization programs has brought more opportunities for scholars to study Indigenous languages and to support tribes' language goals. For instance, Peter Greenland (Gwich'in) mentions Dechinta Bush University's Dene Zhatié language program, Dechinta Rivers, in "How Language Reclaims Indigenous Worldviews." Greenland discusses the Indigenous philosophies woven into the Dene language, and he notes that worldviews shape and are shaped by language. He explains that the Dene word for *boyfriend*/*girlfriend*, "etsuah/etsiah" contains Indigenous ways of knowing, and he states, "What I find interesting is the literal translation of these words: 'little grandfather' or 'little grandmother.' The moment I learned this, I caught a glimpse of the Dene worldview" (16-17). Many Indigenous languages contain concepts of intergenerational time, values, and even instruction for social conduct. In contrast, Ellen Cushman (Cherokee) analyzes digital archives of the Cherokee Language and wampum belts as nonalphanumeric records of history that subvert westernized notions of historical record in "Wampum, Sequoyan, and Story: Decolonizing the Digital Archive." Cushman states that the Cherokee word for *wampum* gives insight into Cherokee cultural worldview (120). Similar to the worldviews noted in Greenland's study, the Cherokee language implies Indigenous concepts of "time, place, meaning" (Cushman 121). Greenland and Cushman are uncovering Indigenous knowledge within Indigenous language translations, but other Indigenous scholars of linguistics, such as Brendan Fairbanks (Ojibwe and Kickapoo) are examining the "chemistry" of Indigenous languages to reveal how the very composition of individual words, phrases, and their contexts constitute complex interpretations on a narrative level. For example, in *Ojibwe Discourse*

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aiding the United States and Allies, but also in preserving the Comanche language for future generations. Comanche may be endangered, but it is still a living, growing language.

Markers, Fairbanks examines how discourse markers function in Ojibwe. A discourse marker is a phrase or a word that coordinates meanings throughout a discourse (Fairbanks 14-15). He gives the English examples of "oh well," "y'know," and "I mean" from Schiffrin's linguistic studies (qtd. in Fairbanks 14). He further states that "discourse markers have two major functions in Ojibwe: to add cohesiveness of a narrative ('discourse connectives') and to contribute an interpersonal nuance to an utterance ('mystery particles')" with "discourse connectives" and "mystery particles" being concepts he uses from Longacre's studies (qtd. in Fairbanks 1). I share these same two objectives in my own study, with my analysis pondering the translated meanings of the Comanche sentence *hakaniyut~~ʉ~~ ~~ʉ~~n~~ʉ~~ haniyu* by breaking this sentence down and analyzing the root meanings behind parts of it. I will look at how *yu* functions in other Comanche words and sentences—including its use as a dialogue marker—while analyzing the grammar rules of *yu*. Next, *yu*'s relationship to narrative context will be studied to reveal Comanche's nuances in grammar, narrative, and philosophy. Though Comanche language and the Ojibwe language are two separate languages, the discourse marker functions that Fairbanks describes convey understanding into Ojibwe language's meaning making that connects to some aspects of Comanche language's meaning making when utilizing *yu*.

This study will heavily rely on Jean Omrsbee Charney's *A Grammar of Comanche,* Canonge's *Comanche Texts* and the 2003 Comanche Nation dictionary, *Taa N~~ʉ~~m~~ʉ~~ Tekwap~~ʉ~~ʔha T~~ʉ~~boop~~ʉ~~* (Our Comanche Dictionary), that my Comanche elders put together as a formal, collective group that more accurately represents the way the more recent elders have spoken in the past few decades. The Comanche dictionary also more fully depicts the different Comanche dialects from the various bands by showing multiple terms and definitions for each word. Historic Comanches preferred to keep the Comanche language as part of the oral tradition

instead of writing it down, so past Comanches did not have a written spelling system, though they had other means of communication in nonalphanumeric texts, such as sign language, symbols, paintings, beadwork patterns, and markings. Nevertheless, traditional Comanche spoken grammar was very complex, and many Comanche bands[16] had their own dialects, each with their own plethora of rules for diction, tone, credibility, etiquette, and occasion. There were in practice many Comanche "languages" across the historic Comanche bands; many Comanche languages continue to exist today that are spoken by the current Comanche Nation citizens themselves, and these dialects of Comanche are all relevant and legitimate.

Comanche language involves the use of several different spelling systems, some of which the Comanche people helped form themselves, and some not so much. I will alter Charney's spelling by substituting Charney's ɨ and Ɨ for ʉ and ʉ̲ (ʉ̲ is a whispered, almost voiceless vowel[17]). I also substitute Charney's *I* for *i*. When quoting Charney and Canonge, I will keep their original spelling as much as possible because their studies reflect archaic Comanche that is not heard as much today. I will adapt some of their special characters to suit the current Comanche alphabet's special characters. I will alter quotations from Canonge's text to suit the modern Comanche alphabet. For instance, Canonge uses ʌ and ʌ̲ instead of ʉ and ʉ̲. When I

[16] Major bands of the Comanche Nation are the "Quahada [Kwahar~~ʉ~~] (antelope eaters)," "Kutsutuuka [Kuutsu T~~ʉ~~hka] (buffalo eaters)," "Penatuka [Penat~~ʉʉ~~hka/Penan~~ʉʉ~~, also meaning quick striking/stinging] (honey eaters)," "Nokoni ('Those who travel around' or 'Those who turn back')," and "Yaparuka [Yapar~~ʉ~~hka, Yapain~~ʉʉ~~] (root eaters)" (D. Mihesuah 224; *Taa N~~ʉ~~m~~ʉ~~ Tewkap~~ʉ̲~~ʔha T~~ʉ~~boop~~ʉ̲~~* 14, 98, 43, 86). However, there are many more Comanche bands than just these 5 well-known bands, such as the Talk Loud band/ Loud Talkers band (Pibia N~~i̲~~w~~ʉ~~n~~ʉ~~ʔn~~ʉʉ~~), The Buckskin Sewing band (Pikaatamu), or The Fish Eaters band (Pekwi T~~ʉ~~hka), etc. etc. (*Taa N~~ʉ~~m~~ʉ~~ Tewkap~~ʉ̲~~ʔha T~~ʉ~~boop~~ʉ̲~~* 104). The descendants of these other not frequently named bands continue to thrive today and remember the names of their ancestors' bands. To learn more about the names of these many other bands see the Comanche Nation Dictionary, *Taa N~~ʉ~~m~~ʉ~~ Tewkap~~ʉ̲~~ʔha T~~ʉ~~boop~~ʉ̲~~*.

[17] Any vowel with an underline beneath it in Comanche language is a whispered vowel. Any double vowel without an underline, such as aa or ii, is held longer when spoken for emphasis.

encounter an archaic Comanche pronunciation and I happen to recognize the modern pronunciation, I will provide the modern term in [brackets] beside the archaic term. When I translate Comanche sentences, I provide a "new" translation in modern English that is adapted to suit the English grammar system. My English translations also retain some of Riddles's rhetorical choices, such as her key repetition of phrases, because these repetitions are strategic, but I revise Canonge's English translations to coincide with how I heard my elders speak when I was growing up. Many of my elders attended boarding school, were raised in the 1930s-1970s, grew up in rural Oklahoma, spoke fluent English, and spoke either fluent Comanche or knew some Comanche.

Any Comanche language mistakes that I make are entirely my own, and I apologize in advance if I misuse, misexplain, or omit some aspect of the Comanche language as I am continuously learning about my Comanche language. My intentions are to write lovingly and respectfully of our Comanche culture, language, and people, as well as to encourage future Comanches to have the confidence to pick up the language and use it.

A gap exists in linguistic studies to which I hope my rhetorical study may contribute. Yes, Charney acknowledges that *yu* can refer to progressive verbs of speaking, and she includes discussion of some quotative aspects, such as *me* (152;189-191), but she acknowledges that "the environments in which *-yu=* occurs instead of *-h/H/pʉnni* are unknown," and she states that "the conditions under which *-yu=* is chosen rather than *-tʉ=*, and vice versa, are not known" (Charney 140, 148, 201). Neither Charney nor other leading linguist scholars of Comanche language, Lila Wistrand-Robinson and James Armagost, elaborate in-depth about *yu*'s whisper vowel function in quotes. Wistrand-Robinson and Armagost classify *yu* as "other" and state that *nu*'s and *yu*'s "exact status remains unclear" (379). Their descriptions of *yu* imply that they, too, notice

complexity with classifying *yu*'s various roles and functions. Based on my own findings from several of Riddles's tales, I cannot predict when she will use *yu* for quotes and when she will not. But if one just states that *yu* introduces quotes in the progressive form or if one only gives a few instances of *yu* introducing quotes, and one looks no further, then one is missing out on rich narrative knowledge and rhetorical methods of Comanche storytelling. My study will consider *yu*'s relationship with dialogue, with other dialogue markers, word formation, grammar, and Comanche narrative itself.

Lastly, in my study, I am only focusing on Comanche women's storytelling because they have been marginalized in literature. The oral traditions of Indigenous women have been recorded in archives, but more study and analysis of women's oral traditions is needed, and study of Comanche women's oral traditions is particularly lacking. Likewise, braiding hair is an art that is not often discussed even among Native women, but is commonly experienced, and discussing this experience can be used to uncover rhetorical devices in Comanche nonalphanumeric texts. I must also acknowledge that this study cannot speak for Comanche males' experiences or the life experiences of LGBTQ+ Comanches even though many of their life experiences also include instances of Comanche language, braiding/hairstyling, and culture in general, and their perspectives are just as significant as Comanche women's perspectives.

Chapter Overview

My first chapter, "Braiding as Metaphor," will examine Canonge's translations of Emily Riddle's stories in *Comanche Texts*. This chapter will explore how *yu* relates to narrative across her tales through the lens of braiding, *kwisikatʉ*, as a metaphor, as a homophonic pun, because *yu* is auditorily related to the oil, *yuhu*, that can be used in braids, and braiding informs the narrative

process—and sometimes these occur simultaneously. Like braiding, storying in Comanche culture is a shared experience where audience shapes the story as much as the storyteller, and a similar occurrence is present in braiding because a braider must rely on someone else's hair as their medium (unless one is braiding one's own hair, of course). I then relate *yu*'s narrative relationships to the braid metaphor to shed light on Comanche cultural philosophy and how the narrative instances serve rhetorical functions as the speaker braids the story together. I also braid in Comanche historical and cultural information that a traditional Comanche audience would know in order to help understand the context in which meaning would be made when these stories were told orally. Two recurring rhetorical aspects used in this braiding methodology are the use of *suniyut~~u~~* and *yu* as a discourse maker that contributes to a Comanche pedagogy that is much like Heath's and Heath's "sticky" teaching. Both of these serve as heuristics and cultural philosophies that are essential to understanding the many facets of Comanche storying.

In the second chapter, "Yu Grammar and Hakaniyut~~u~~ ~~U~~n~~u~~ Haniyu/Yuhaniyu," the sections examine Emily Riddles's, Sandra Karty's, and Lucille McClung's stories from one of the various translations of *Hakaniyut~~u~~ ~~U~~n~~u~~ Haniyu/Yuhaniyu* and the cultural philosophies implied from these translations, such as aesthetics and philosophies of process, movement, etiquette, and aspiration. Each of this chapter's sections are organized thematically around one of these cultural philosophies behind *hakaniyut~~u~~ ~~u~~n~~u~~ haniyu*/*yuhaniyu*, and as each section progresses, the rhetorical examples of *yu* become more abstract. I structure *yu* examples within each section to range from concrete grammar examples to more abstract rhetorical ones so that readers' concepts of *yu* build as they progress through chapter two and into chapter three. In addition, the grammar rules of *yu* are applied to the texts' examples, as well as some of *yu*'s relationships in word formation, *yu*'s narrative relationships, and its relevance to braid

methodology to explore the many nuances of rhetorical *yu* in *kwisikatʉ* and *suniyutʉ* and in *yu's* other aspects. This chapter also examines how *yu* provides further understanding into Heath's and Heath's "Teaching that Sticks," and the chapter closes with discussion about how Comanche stories exude resonance, reasoning, and liminality that reveals, yet conceals meaning and conveys effort, yet effortlessness, while blurring the roles of speaker/writer and listener/viewer and Comanche and cross-cultural elements.

In Chapter Three, "Blurring Perceived Boundaries and Exuding the Yu-esque," I examine *yu*'s ability to blur history, fairy tale, and genre as *yu* is present in the Comanche words for *history* and *fairy tale* (*Taa Nʉmʉ Tewkapʉ?ha Tʉboopʉ* 29; Wistrand-Robinson and Armagost 209). Many of Riddles' stories blur the genre categories with which Canonge labeled her tales. Riddles's stories convey a combination of history and fairy tale because though her tales are "fictional," they contain instances of Comanche history and Comanche lived experiences, expressing "truth."

Additionally, *yu* blurs notions of oral and written word. *Yu* is found in the term for *history book, narʉkuyunʉ tʉboopʉ*, which retains the phrase, *narʉ* that it is found within the term for "to tell a story," *narʉmu?ikatʉ,* combined with the term for *book*, *tʉboopʉ* (*Taa Nʉmʉ Tewkapʉ?ha Tʉboopʉ* 29, 164; Wistrand-Robinson and Armagost 225). This blending of written denotation and the oral tradition is seen in the formation of some Comanche words, suggesting that Comanche language's multiple meanings—a liminality that combines similar, yet unlike meanings—are hallmarks of the language itself that are not dependent on colonial constructs. In fact, this aspect of Comanche language at times subverts colonial notions and protects traditional Comanche ways of knowing, implying both historical accord and discord in the time of the storying.

Lastly, the abstract qualities of *yu*, or *yu*-esqueness, as rhetorical techniques are placed in conversation with contemporary Indigenous authors' texts from various tribes and written in various genres, such as works by Louise Erdrich (Chippewa), Sara Sue Hoklotubbe (Cherokee), and Velma Wallis (Athabascan). This chapter closes with commentary on how these *yu*-esque narrative techniques constitute a rhetorical lens for critiquing works beyond those authored by Comanches and for creating new Indigenous texts that articulate Comanche readings of these other Indigenous works.

The conclusion addresses possible applications for *yu*'s rhetorical lens for critiquing and creating texts, other artforms, and innovations. *Yu*-esque traits are even found in modern Indigenous movies and cuisine. The conclusion also considers how my study can further the fields of tribal specific rhetorics and broader Indigenous rhetorics, as well as for possible applications in the teaching of rhetoric and composition. The conclusion will answer the following questions: "What lessons or messages do Riddles, Karty, and McClung hope future generations of listeners/readers will learn from their tales?" "How does examining Comanche stories through the braid metaphor help one to understand the culture and philosophy behind Comanche women's stories?" "How do Comanche women's stories create their own criteria for how to story properly, or 'right?'" "How might Comanche women's stories encourage positive Comanche role modeling and Comanche pride?" "How does *yu*, Comanche language, and/or Comanche women's stories inspire applications in surprising ways?" Most importantly, "How do Comanche women's stories promote cultural futurity?"

CHAPTER 1 BRAIDING AS METAPHOR

Chapter One Introduction

When I was growing up, one of my Comanche elders who spoke fluent Comanche shared with me that our Comanche ancestors put oil in their braids to prevent lice.[18] I remember her saying this matter-of-factly, with a tone that implied, "that is just how it was," because that was how they took care of their hair. I had no idea that almost two decades later I would be writing about this bit of knowledge and how it relates to Comanche storytelling. When I heard my elder say this statement, I did not know how to interpret it. The use of *yuhu* in historic, traditional Comanche braids seems unusual today, especially since most modern Comanches like myself use modern hair products, but to historic Comanches this practice was acceptable. It has taken me almost two decades later to see the beauty in my ancestors using *yuhu* in their braids to keep them healthy.

But why write about *yuhu*? Readers may be wondering, "Do you not know that foods high in fat content have caused terrible health effects in countless Indigenous communities? Do you not know that frybread is not 'tradition?' Why would you write about grease when western movies of the 1900s wrongfully stereotyped Indigenous peoples as 'greasy?'" I am exploring grease, oil, *yuhu*, as metaphor. Doing so acknowledges historic Comanche traditions and ways of knowing for self-care through methods that worked with nature, where Indigenous peoples made do with the natural resources around them on their terms and avoided letting almost anything go

[18] Chef David Wolfman (Xaxli'p First Nation), who cooks Indigenous fusion cuisine and hosted the *Cooking with the Wolfman* show for the *Aboriginal Peoples Television Network*, states that various Indigenous peoples "traditionally used bear grease and fish oil for cooking, but they also found other practical uses for these fats—such as keeping bugs away, heating their igloos, lighting their lodges . . ." (Wolfman and Finn 19). The Comanches were not the only tribe to find various methods for using animal fats for both hygiene and cooking purposes.

to waste. This same notion endured when precolonial Indigenous peoples' ways of life as they knew it ended—in how they made something from almost nothing, in how they made something beautiful out of painful times, in how they helped metaphorically to "stick" together their communities despite being separated through reservations, allotments, and boarding schools, and in how this "indigenuity"[19] continues.

The second reason why I have chosen to ponder *yuhu* is because when I was a teenager, my mother said something to me while we were cooking in the kitchen that changed my perspective. She said, "You know I don't know why people talk bad about our ancestors for having eaten frybread during the reservation years. They were just doing the best that they could with what they had." In that moment, I no longer saw frybread through a lens of healthy verses unhealthy, but as material culture, the manifestation of a highly innovative survival tactic carrying its own complex narratives filled with layers of meaning that express our ancestors' resourcefulness, resiliency and community care, demonstrating how they were doing their best to navigate the constraints of their times. In recognizing the tenacity, intellect, and values behind their decisions, I could see beauty in their determination to care for one another and their refusals to give up, refusals that also ensured a future for us.

In many ways, both *yuhu* and the rhetorical *yu* usurp the aforementioned social stigmas. By exploring both *yuhu* and the rhetorical *yu*, we uncover historic Comanche methods for obtaining and preparing food from nature in Comanche narratives. We show how Comanche women refused to let their families starve when food was scarce. We also reveal how metaphorically and physically Comanches used both *yuhu* and *yu* to determine themselves,

[19] "Indigenuity" combines the terms "Indigenous" and "ingenuity" and has been used widely in Indigenous communities as well as by scholars such as Dan Wildcat, LH Boesen, and Caroline Wigginton.

signifying Comanche holistic reasoning through our language, *N~~u~~m~~u~~ Tekwap~~u~~ʔha*, for problem-solving. Most specifically, we spotlight how Comanche women used both *yuhu* and *yu* to weave beautiful, life-giving stories and material culture and how they still do, empowering and amplifying Comanche women's depictions of themselves in their own narratives, on their own terms.

Comanche language is fluid, complex, and woven like the intricate braids to which traditional experts applied *yuhu*. On the narrative level, *yu* holds a story together through dialogue markers and action verbs that move the plot along, much like *yuhu* or oil in Comanche braids that binds, weaves, and keeps the braids healthy, beautiful. Historically, Comanche women wore braids to adorn themselves, to keep their hair free from their faces, to function while they cared for their families, to ready themselves for battle, and just because; modern Comanche women continue this tradition of wearing braids. Similarly to the ways in which braids and *yuhu* serve many purposes, the particle *yu* is used to signal plot twists, conflict/tensions, dialogue, irony, punchlines, highpoints, double-meaning, and conclusions in Emily Riddles's Comanche stories. Riddles's sentences reveal patterns of associating *yu* with prosperity, rhetorical tropes, poetic-like turns, heuristics, and shared meaning making. *Yu*'s layers of meaning at the word, sentence, and narrative level express *yu*'s braid-like traits, or *kwisikat~~u~~*, just as oil sticks to braids to help form layers of woven strands, giving them form; likewise, *yu* relates to a story's plot through dialogue, verbs, and sentence content that informs the narrative. When examining Comanche language texts, whether oral or written, one must not only consider how *yu* functions within an individual term or within the syntax, but also one must consider how *yu* relates within the context of the narrative because meaning making in Comanche is context-dependent.

Comanche language is not the only Indigenous language to express meaning making that relies on relating individual sentences back to the larger discourse of which it is part. Brendan Fairbanks's (Ojibwe) *Ojibwe Discourse Markers* notes that some discourse markers act as what he calls "discourse glue," functioning to relate the sentence and the larger discourse context (46). Although *yu* relates to narrative and functions rhetorically, there are moments in Riddles's tales where she conveys similar meanings both with and without *yu* being present. She chooses to use *yu* in her story when she includes humor, plot twists, tension, or irony, but sometimes she chooses not to use *yu* to express these elements, which further adds to *yu*'s nuance. Charney notes that she could not always pen down when *yu* was going to be used and under what conditions to indicate a progressive verb or a predicate (148; 201). Across several of Riddles's stories, the rhetorical *yu*'s narrative relationships hinge upon story content, the story's context, knowledge of Comanche culture, the story's setting, the storyteller/speaker's intentions and setting, and the listener's historical knowledge. *Yu*'s rhetorical and narrative relationships involve word associations, connotations, and denotations as well.

The story's context, the content, and the impression it makes on the reader all imply relationships between *yu* and narrative. Some of *yu*'s narrative relationships enable it to hold the story together, like oil binding a braid, enabling it to flow and weave, just as the physical nature of oil that is fluid and binding. Hypothetically, the braider does not have to use oil, but he or she can choose to use it; one can choose how, when, in what amount, in what order the oil will be applied, and what type will be used. Riddles made these same narrative decisions with *yu* in her stories. She does not always use *yu*, but when she does, she varies her usage of it across her narratives, which is a similar phenomenon that Charney uncovered about *yu* at the syntax level.

So, why equate braiding with storytelling? Firstly, braiding and the oral tradition both have precolonial Indigenous cultural roots, though not all Indigenous tribes wear braids[20] as their traditional hairstyle. Both processes can involve shared meaning making between an actor and a receiver, though one can braid one's own hair or write for one's own self. Malea Powell makes a similar argument in "Word by Word, Bead by Bead: Making a Scholarly Life." She implies that beading is storying, as she states, "I'm making the same mistakes with words that I usually make with beads. So, I'm gonna tear out some beads and go back to Elsie's [story], since that's the way I want the pattern to work. At least, for the moment, that's the choice I'll make" (Powell 126). The structure of Powell's essay exemplifies that stories are beads, as her footnotes and personal stories function like individual beads that are woven together to create a comprehensive beadwork pattern, or message, which is indicative of beadwork's role in many Indigenous tribes to record families' stories. Powell furthers this argument that materials are stories and that stories are materials in "A Basket is a Basket Because" because *how* she structures her essay is woven with her personal story and the history of the Indigenous rhetorics field much like a basket made of various materials. In addition, Rain L. Cranford-Gomez's article, "Brackish Bayou Blood," furthers the concept that woven baskets are legitimate historical "documents" and that baskets contribute meaning that written historical documents cannot always convey. "For us to really understand how geography and shared tribal ties play into the ways baskets are made among Louisiana Indian and Creole communities," she states, "is to uncover histories not in the written record" (Cranford-Gomez 94). This same argument could be said of why it is important to write

[20] Henry Mihesuah said of the Comanche communities' choices in hairstyles during the 1920s-1940s in Duncan, Oklahoma, that "quite a few of the men had long hair they braided. Women wore their hair all different ways. Some braided it, but a few kept it short" (25). Modern Comanches are known for wearing various hairstyles, both mainstream and traditional.

about braiding as Indigenous rhetoric because it, too, gives insight into communities' relationships and cultural history that is often not recorded in writing.

Braids are more action-oriented and often completed in secluded locations; on occasion at powwows, I have seen Comanche women braid their own hair or their relative's hair in public or at their own cars, but these are places where interviewing braiders and writing about braiding in that moment would be intrusive without receiving prior permission. But braiding is not taboo to talk about in my Comanche culture. Discussing Comanche braids is well-suited for describing process because Comanche culture both historically and today is very process-oriented. Comanche braiding[21] has embraced traditional and modern braiding techniques to include single braids for men—only acceptable for women traditionally—French-braiding and Dutch (or "box") braiding, rather than basic braiding. Other materials, such as ribbon, beadwork, or a piece of tanned hide may be woven throughout braids, rather than only the furs or yarn wrapped around braids traditionally. Since it would be rude to just ask any Comanche person how he or she styles one's hair, out of respect for my tribal community, I am writing from my own memory of my own lived experiences, as well as from hypothetical braiding situations that are based in my experiences. I am not writing about any one braider or group of braiders specifically. To refrain from writing about anyone specifically, I use the terms, braider(s) and braidee(s) to

[21] Not all Indigenous tribes' cultures involve the wearing of braids. Not all Comanches wear braids either. Many tribes have their own hair traditions that may or may not be knowledge of the public domain. Many modern Indigenous peoples prefer to wear their traditional hairstyles on occasion, every day, or not all, as many Indigenous peoples style their hair how they want it to be (or not be), many of whom embrace non-Indigenous hairstyles and hairstyling techniques. Everyone who braids hair braids differently; there are many different braiding processes just like there are many different individual writing processes. I am not arguing that the braid processes that I describe throughout this chapter are the only "right" ways to braid hair, but that the braiding process itself is creative, open to interpretation, is collaborative, facilitates shared meaning making, and promotes community care and Comanche tradition.

hypothetically refer to anyone(s) who braid and receive braids to explain various braiding processes and situations. I am writing from my own experiences of watching my mother braid her hair, of braiding my own hair in a basic braid, of having received many braids of various styles from other people throughout my teen years until I was twenty-one, and from general braiding knowledge that most people who know how to braid a basic braid already know, which I obtained as I grew up from my mother who studied cosmetology, hairstyling, and fashion prior to becoming a school teacher. As previously mentioned, braiding is surrounded by the storying process; the two processes sometimes occur alongside one another, and sometimes they intersect and inform one another.

Kimberly Wieser further explains how various Indigenous rhetorics "overlap" and that part of this can include story as argument in *Back to the Blanket*, stating that "stories, along with oratory, can rhetorically function as argument in Native cultures" (Wieser 3, xiii). Many of Riddles's tales contain arguments by implying lessons that she wants her listeners/readers to determine for themselves, and Riddles's tales express counter historical narratives that, when juxtaposed with mainstream historical discourse, create arguments. Therefore, these stories' lessons are both arguments and heuristics. An argument can be implied that if a solution works in the story, the same solution might work in the context of the listener's world.

According to Chip and Dan Heath's "Teaching that Sticks," stories are "sticky" because they foster "mental simulation" (10). Heath and Heath explain that "mental simulation can even alter visceral physical responses: When people drink water but imagine it is lemon juice, they salivate more. Even more surprisingly, when people drink lemon juice but imagine it is water, they salivate less" (10). Why am I using non-Indigenous scholars' theory of "teaching that sticks" to examine Comanche women's texts? *Yuhu* adheres itself to hair to hold the braid

together, and I am Indigenizing the Heaths' theory to show how the Comanche storying situation and braiding situation are memorable learning experiences in and of themselves and that they have insights that can benefit almost all learners of all cultures and backgrounds, as we are all human. While some of the "lessons" that Riddles teaches are Comanche-culture specific, they have universal elements. The readership of my study will consist of both Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples, and I, myself, am both Comanche and of Euro-American descent. I was raised in a bi-racial household that intermixed both cultures all the time, and I grew up in a very confluent town that intermixed Comanche communities with cultures from across the globe. Also, the history of Comanche culture has almost always been "confluent" with intermarriages, adoptions, and the taking of captives from other Indigenous tribes, Mexicans, the Spanish, and other European peoples (Gunn Allen 181). Modern teaching pedagogies, like Heath's and Heath's pedagogy of sticky teaching, bear some similarity to historic Comanche teaching methods in the oral tradition, and Riddles's storying methods challenge, yet support some of Heath's and Heath's claims about teaching that sticks. I already know that Comanche stories teach lessons; however, I had no idea that learning and sticky could go together until reading the Heath's article. Their teaching pedagogies cohere with modern research-based teaching methods that I have been taught to use in the classroom, and some of their concepts connect with Indigenous teaching methods through story.

In both storytelling and braiding there is a clear beginning, middle, and end; there are twists, turns, and tensions. But stories, like braiding, bring things together. In Comanche, *yu* holds both of those in place and makes the connections "stick" to each other and "stick" to the audience as well.

Theories gather and reorganize ideas, just as stories do, just as braiders do with hair. My theory, like all, needed untangling before I could properly begin my analysis . . . and now that all the tangles are combed out and the hair is parted, the oil can be applied, and the braiding can begin.

Positive Associations of Yuhu̲—Combing, Parting, and Oiling the Hair

In three of Riddles's tales, *yuhu̲* (oil/grease/lard/fat)[22] is associated with positive connotations of food, comfort, abundance, and prosperity. *Yuhu̲* can be used to maintain the health of hair, and it can be used as a vital food source to sustain nomadic, hunter-gatherer

[22] Although modern health experts discourage excessive fats in human diets, a debate exists amongst these experts regarding which types of fats are "healthier" for human consumption. This debate disputes the benefits of "saturated" verses unsaturated fats (Wolfman and Finn 19). "Saturated" fats include fats from animals "like butter," while unsaturated fats include "sunflower oil" or "peanut oil" (Wolfman and Finn 19). For humans, fats help regulate temperature and protect both muscles and "cell membranes" (Whitney and Rolfes 144). When the body is in motion, "fat pads also serve as natural shock absorbers" (Whitney and Rolfes 145). Fat even protects "bones and vital organs," while "provid[ing] the structural material for cell membranes and participat[ing] in cell signaling pathways" (Whitney and Rolfes 145). Fat keeps the cells and body in motion, and specifically in cells, it helps transmit signals, much like *yu* in Comanche narrative keeps a story moving, thereby moving listeners' emotions or even persuading them to take action. Additionally, fat is crucial to brain functioning and brain development, and toddlers particularly need it. From the Canadian television show, *Cooking with the Wolfman,* Indigenous fusion Chef David Wolfman (Xaxli'p First Nation) asserts that "from a chef's perspective, fat is important in cooking. Butter, lard and shortening all have their rightful place in the kitchen, as do clarified butter, chicken skin, pork back fat, olive oil and peanut oil. Fat adds flavour, softens texture and adds moisture to food" (Wolfman and Finn 19). Fat is used in making a Comanche traditional dish called *taʔoo*, meaning "pounded dried meat" (*Taa N̲u̲mu̲ Tekwapu̲̲ʔha* . . . 61), which must have some dried fat with the pounded buffalo meat to make it properly/"right." And from an Indigenous rhetorics perspective, an effective Comanche story that adheres to Comanche women elders' storying standards might include some metaphorical *yu* (if the storyteller prefers), and if told/written in Comanche language, *yu* can be strategically used to move the plot along, to add layers of meaning, and to provide fluidity to the narrative—with a dose of spontaneity and contradiction of course, as Wolfman and Finn attest that the use of fats in cooking is surrounded by contradicting arguments, which is very *yu*, as one will learn as the chapters progress.

communities in seasons when food sources are scarce. Riddles chose to use *yu* to signal dialogue and for verbs, and *yu* is featured in sentences containing plot elements. She chose to feature *yuhu* as a delicious, obtainable food goal for the characters in her narratives. Her favorable portrayal of *yuhu*, and her choice to even feature it as a key concept, parallels a braider's choice to include oil in braids to ease the process and/or improve the end product. The braiding process is different for almost everyone; some individuals add the oil and/or hair products to the hair first and then braid, while others get the braid started and add in the oil as the braid progresses. Some braiders braid the hair and then add the oil over the exterior of the braid, and yet some braiders choose not to use any oil at all. But because Riddles chose to incorporate *yuhu* throughout her stories, this "braid" will do likewise.

Yuhu creates sleek braids that get viewers' attentions, and *yu* gets the audience's attention in a story. In the Coyote and the sliding turkeys tale, Riddles states, "Ur~~uu~~ku~~u~~h~~u~~ u yuhuwehkip~~u~~ wihnu sur~~u~~ pisikwanuuʔinu . . . Of those ones [the Turkeys], he [Coyote] looked for the fattest one [turkey], then that one [the fattest Turkey] slid in a sitting position" (line 11). At this point, the audience has no idea what Coyote has done either before approaching the turkeys or while he was being the first one to slide down the hill, but Riddles describes this character as looking for the fattest turkey, which implies that he is up to something. Since the Comanche oral tradition characterizes him as a trickster, then one can assume that he is planning to obtain a turkey for dinner, especially since he is a meat-eating animal who is eyeing the turkeys. Many people enjoy stories about food, including stories about roasted turkey. Because the main character's attention is grabbed, the reader's/listener's attention is seized, gluing them to the story like *yuhu* sticking to hair.

Riddles's allusion to roasted turkey is her first strategic move in making relationship between the reader/listener and the tale. Comanche storying relies on audience attention and mental engagement with the larger context of Comanche culture and history, much like what Cranford-Gomez calls an "active" viewing of Creole and Indigenous basketry (Cranford-Gomez 100). Similarly, to listening to a Comanche story, one's viewing of cultural items, like braids or baskets, involves audience participation. Creole woven baskets require a viewer "to become an active participant in the story" because viewers must consider "history," "geography," and "identity" of the Creole and Indigenous communities that are incorporated into their works (Cranford-Gomez 100). The storyteller does most of the speaking in Comanche stories, but Comanche stories encourage the audience to finish the story based on their interpretations. In the Ojibwe language, discourse markers involve shared meaning making. Fairbanks examines Ojibwe discourse markers from a "sociolinguistic model of discourse developed by [linguistic scholar] Schiffrin" (Fairbanks 28), and he moves beyond considering how discourse relates to a speaker and an audience to discussing how texts relate back to themselves. He states that discourse markers are "relating prior text to upcoming text in ways that achieve textual coherence. In other words, they act as the 'discourse glue' that holds or binds a discourse together" (Fairbanks 46). Though I am not examining discourse markers, which are similar to tag phrases, this same concept is indicative of *yu* in Comanche language. *Yu* is not a discourse marker, but it is verbalized dialogue marker[23] that adds cohesiveness to dialogue, which then affects other plot aspects that catch the audience's attention.

[23] *Yu* can be featured in the dialogue markers, *yu~~u~~kwiiyu* and *niikwiiyu*, as a quotative element that expresses the progressive act of speaking.

How the audience's attention is held is open for interpretation based on each person's perception of Coyote and the turkey. One audience member might have empathy for the soon-to-be injured turkey. Another might feel hungry at the thought of eating a delicious turkey. This juxtaposition of Coyote and turkey could very well be the part in the story where the reader/listener decides with whom to identify. The listener's choice about with whom to be empathetic helps them frame their interpretation of the conclusion (almost a "choose your story" option). After line 11, the turkey injures himself, bringing Coyote closer to achieving his goal of a meal. In traditional Comanche societies,[24] finding a large edible animal would have been a positive find on occasions where food sources were scarce; the high protein and fat of the animal could promote prolonged satiety and sufficient nutrients long enough for one to find more food for the next meal, and more food means the more people one can feed since one must feed the whole community. But Comanches have almost always had a hunting protocol about how to hunt, when to hunt, what to hunt, just as there is protocol for how to treat their fellow Comanches. Within the contexts of hunting wild turkey, being stealthy is a "positive" attribute, which Coyote demonstrates, but because the turkeys are personified (Comanche culture often depicts animals as relatives), the turkeys could be reminding the audience to treat the animals with respect, that when one takes a turkey, one is taking a family member of all those other

[24] Throughout my dissertation I refer to mainstream societies, precolonial Comanche societies, modern Comanche societies, and Comanche communities (where logical) in the plural because these societies are comprised of many diverse societies with diverse worldviews, values, and cultures. Early Comanche societies were comprised of many bands that lived separate from the other Comanche bands; some of these bands were allies, while some of these bands fought each other, meaning not all early Comanches shared the same perspectives. And early Comanche bands had smaller social groups within them, such as older warrior societies and young warrior societies. This practice of smaller social groupings within the larger tribe of Comanches continues in today's Comanche Nation where there continue to be various military veteran organizations and various women's societies. In addition, mainstream human societies also have many smaller social groups within societies with diverse worldviews.

turkeys. Riddles's depiction of the turkey is not only culturally relevant, but also it causes the reader/listener to want to find out what will become of the turkey. Will he/she be eaten?

Yuhu can do more than relate plot events or serve as Coyote's goal; it can transform the plot. In Riddles's story about the Comanche children and the hackberries, *yuhu* makes a positive difference by supporting community celebration and the fulfillment of kinship roles. In the tale, the children's father is thrilled that a neighbor woman has bestowed his children with such expensive gifts that he announces to his community that he will host a big dance and feast. He states, "Inakwutsa hayarokwetuu pimoroo?nuu yuupunuu tai tukwusuru?i . . . And in this direction near at hand, we are going to butcher four fat cows" (line 24). "Hayarokwetuu pimoroo?nuu yuupunuu," four fat cows, are again associated with positivity, abundance, health, merriment, and communal feast because the father wants to feed the whole community. In early colonial Comanche culture, having many horses was a sign of wealth, and being able to give away many horses to others was seen as an even bigger sign of wealth. In addition, having a whole community that is well-fed is a symbol of the community's wealth. The historic Comanches traditionally ate a healthy diet, as Devon Mihesuah asserts in her chapter on the Comanches in *Indigenous Food Sovereignty in the United States: Restoring Cultural Knowledge, Protecting Environments, and Regaining Health*. Their diets consisted of buffalo, other game animals, wild fruits, vegetables, and nuts, as well as agricultural crops and breads (not fry bread) obtained from other Indigenous peoples. However, as Comanches were forced to live on reservations in the 1800s, cattle displaced buffalo. When traditional food sources became scarce, they used the resources to which they had access to survive, making *yuhu* historically associated with problem-solving; though this problem solving was, at times, temporary, it enabled communities enough sustenance and time to find better solutions for determining their foods,

economies, and lives. Hence, Riddles's has many references to cattle in her tales, but she portrays the use of cattle within the context of needing to feed an entire community either for a celebration or during times when traditional food sources were less accessible, resulting in the positive connotations of cattle with an abundance of food.

Lastly, the man's feast announcement to his community conveys that he is both performing "prosperity" by distributing his wealth to others and that he is holding up a mirror to his community because in Comanche societies public acts reflect upon the individual, one's family, and one's community; therefore, the man's community sees themselves as prosperous by partaking of the meal with the man. The man's sharing of the meal demonstrates "kinship" responsibility and is an example of both "visual," "embodied," and "kinesthetic" rhetorics (Wieser 173,171). Wieser explains that giving gifts in Indigenous cultures is "rhetorical currency" that constitutes an actual relationship that has responsibilities for the individual and for his or her community (173). In Riddles's tale, the father's words and actions constitute kinship responsibility and hold rhetorical power. The father is responsible for thanking his community and sharing his good fortune with them since one of them has shared so much with him. His children's sharing of the hackberries inspire the whole community to share, and the father's big feast further performs generosity, teaching his community that they are responsible for following his example should they also receive many gifts in the future. Modern Comanche communities teach similar values that they continue to imply[25] through gift giving, such as that communities' members have a duty to look out for one another's wellbeing.

[25] Wieser terms this Indigenous rhetorical occurrence as "indirect discourse," which is "saying something without directly saying it" (Wieser xiii).

Again, in the hackberries tale, the father's announcement of the dance and feast gets the community's attention as well as gets the audience's attention. And *yuhu* within braided hair gets viewers' attentions. Hypothetically, when one braids someone else's hair, the process is not just about the braider completing an act, but the process is about one sharing one's knowledge and skills with someone else so that the other person can feel beautiful about themselves. When someone feels beautiful, or someone else's hair looks "nice," other individuals outside the immediate braiding situation notice. If one's definition of "nice braids" is braids that are sleek and closely woven, then *yuhu* plays a role in creating said "nice braids" and getting one's community's attention. In other words, *yuhu* helps rhetorically "stick" communities and cultures together through the continued cultural practice and kinesthetic rhetoric of braiding and through the visual and embodied rhetoric of the braidee who wears the braids among his or her community members, thereby widening any braider's audience of said braids. When the braidee wears the braids among his or her community, he or she is not saying, "Look at me," but "look at us as a community. Look at what we can create. We[26] are beautiful." In this way, *yuhu* ensures cultural continuance and Indigenous futurity.

In all three stories, Riddles portrays *yuhu* in scenes that cause audiences to wonder, "What will happen next?" Will the turkey be eaten? How many people will be partaking of this feast?" *Yuhu* adds sensory appeal in the stories' contexts, where one can almost see, smell, and taste the roasted turkey and grilled beef. Either way, the storyteller has caught the audience's attention, but despite capturing the audience's attention, Riddles's stories still leave room for

[26] An individual Comanche can be a self-taught braider, braid his/her own hair, and choose not to show his/her braided hair in public, but the point is that he/she is still a Comanche individual who is creating something beautiful, participating in aspects of his/her Comanche culture, and using his/her Comanche cultural knowledge to create the braid.

listeners/readers to determine the story's interpretation. In Heath's and Heath's "Teaching that Sticks," they discuss how story appeals to audiences' senses, aiding in memory. They argue that "Everyone speaks Sticky. In some sense, it's the universal language. The grammar of stickiness — simplicity, storytelling, learning through the senses — enables anyone to understand the ideas being communicated" (Heath and Heath 8). I agree that stories that appeal to audiences' senses assist in retention of a story's key details and in recalling concepts. I agree that sensory-based learning reaches a variety of learning styles. Heath and Heath also claim that asking questions creates a "knowledge gap" that the learners must fill because "unexpected ideas, by opening a knowledge gap, tease . . . They mark a big red X on something that needs to be discovered but don't necessarily tell you how to get there" (4). While this statement takes a colonial approach to learning (i.e. "discovery" carries the connotations of treasure hunting on Indigenous peoples' homelands, and an "X" carries a host of connotations and denotations of the forced signage of broken, misleading treaties, and even boarding schools), I do agree that creating curiosity about an issue motivates learners. Riddles's tales prompt audiences to question them, but they do not tell audiences what questions to ask, nor what the "lessons," if any, "should be;" instead, they allow the audience to determine the questions and answers for themselves, respecting audience agency.

Wieser further explains how Cherokee scholar, Betty Booth Donohue, interprets the oral tradition in the Choctaw culture, which is a very similar process to audience meaning making in the Comanche oral tradition (11). Booth Donohue discusses the "Choctaw interpretive strategies":

> Events transpire, and the hearer/reader must infer possible cause and effect, significance, and chronology if such categories are necessary for comprehending the meaning of a

> narrative . . . [N]arrative assumes different meanings as the interpretive abilities of the hearer/reader change with age and experience[;] narrative, like the hearer/reader, stays in a constant state of interpretive motion . . . All of this is not to say that there is no truth to a story; it is to say, however, that truth or meaning must be perceived by a Choctaw in his [or her] own time and in his [or her] own way. (qtd. in Wieser 11)

Hence, audiences are in a constant motion of pondering—posing and revising questions and answers to these stories throughout their lifetimes—just as *yu* is in a constant state of "habitual" action within *ʔeyu* in the Comanche language (Charney 135-136), and *yuhu* is constantly morphing from oil, to gel, to solid, and back again when rendered.

In the tales of the hackberries, the rhetorical *yu* transforms the story's plot, but in Coyote and the sliding turkeys, the rhetorical *yu* gives the audience agency to determine how they will interpret the story, leading to a shared meaning making. This "sharing" recurs throughout stories, the braiding process, and Comanche culture in general. In the stories, having *yuupunuu* animals relates to having abundant food for the community to share, and in braiding *yuhu* is involved in the sharing of one's hairstyling skills with others. But in both storytelling and braiding, there is an understanding that the message or braid will be transformed by the receivers. Selflessness is involved where the listener/reader will interpret the story how one chooses, and the wearer of the braid may accessorize the braid however one chooses (or the recipient might even mess the braid up). Both the braider and storyteller must let go of the braid or story and give the wearer or reader/listener room for his or her own interpretation. Much like the moment of storying, the braid is temporary and to be enjoyed for but a brief moment, but the fluidity of the message or the memory of the braid may transform, linger, and be shared. The storyteller or braider does not have absolute authority over the story's or braid's interpretation or where it will be

heard/viewed; that authority is shared by the receivers. But, making a message, transmitting the message, and getting the audience's attention is only the beginning of storying, and in some ways, it is only the beginning of the braiding process. Once a storyteller has the audience's attention, he or she must keep it . . . and now that the oil is in the hair, we can form sections and start weaving them.

Plot Twists—Choosing a Style and Direction, the Shifting and Turning of Sections

A plot twist occurs when something surprising transpires that the audience was not expecting to happen, a turn in a story when the story begins to follow an unpredicted plot when compared to the previous story path in the narrative. *Yu* functions within plot twists much like the structure of a braid. Braids, like stories, have nuanced structures. A standard single braid appears vertical, but it is created by pulling in hair horizontally from the sides to create the vertical appearance. However, braids do not have to be vertical; they can be curved around one's head or follow a diagonal or zigzag pattern. When tracing a braid from its beginning to its end as it is woven, one can predict what the braider's next move will be based on the repetitions and patterns of movement, a link followed by another link, much like a storyteller's repetition of key phrases. But, just when one thinks one has a story or braid figured out, something surprising can happen—an unexpected turn, maybe the omission of a strand—and the story and braid begin to take a new path. In braiding, twists are the shifting of the hair sections in one's hands as one follows the direction and style of one's choice. The braid can be as traditional, modern, simple, or elaborate as one chooses. The braid can be single or double, Dutch, French, fishtailed, or even a box braid. One can braid in strands of three, four, or more. Twisting a braid grants creative style, keeps viewers engaged, and adds unity to the hair's structure. Fancy braids can garner

more than viewers' passing glances, moving viewers to study the hair, visually tracing it, and asking how it was braided. These surprising hair creations cohere metaphorically with the turn of story events in Comanche tales, as well as with Heath's and Heath's notions of "unexpected ideas" that motivate learning (4). Plot twists signaled by phrases containing *yu* captivate audiences and lend style and structure to stories.

The plot twist within the hackberries tale creates multiple stories within a story. The first half of the story arc centers on a young girl gathering berries, bringing them home, observing her mother prepare the berries, and eating them with her siblings; then the story arc turns, and another story about the children's interactions with a neighbor family begins: "Sur~~ʉʉk~~ʉse t~~ʉ~~rʉehpʉʔr~~ʉʉ~~ puu kʉhtoʔipʉha puu kahtʉiʔnʉʉ t~~ʉ~~rʉetʔtii makamaʔeeyʉ . . ." Riddles states, "Those ones, the children, were giving their leftover, excess food to their female neighbor's children to eat" (line 14). *Makamaʔeeyʉ* means "to be feeding" (Canonge 138). The audience is not given an explanation about why the children chose to share their food with the neighbor's children—they just did—but the reader is left to wonder if the neighbor were struggling to feed her own children. Then, something else surprising happens. Riddles states, "Sur~~ʉ~~kʉse ur~~ʉʉ~~ pia, 'N~~ʉ~~suʔatsa tsaa m~~ʉ~~i man~~ʉʉ~~sukaaruʔi,' me urii [utii] niikwiiyʉ. . . Their mother said to them, 'I am going to think of something to make you all feel good'" (line 16). The listener/reader learns later of the neighbor woman's considerable wealth and how she gives the children gifts of moccasins and a buffalo blanket to thank them for their kindness. Because of the woman's kindness toward the children, the children's father decides to host a community dance and feast, which leads the narrative into a third story about the community preparing for the event. The neighbor's choice to reward the children teaches the Comanche value of generosity. A common phrase amongst Comanche communities is that even when one thinks one has very little, one can

still make a difference in others' lives and help someone else by giving what one has. Today, this is often seen at powwows or other dances when families hold what are called "giveaways," often to honor a relative, perhaps a solider going off to or returning from war, perhaps tribal princesses, powwow head staff, in addition to dance hosts, dignitaries, organizations, perhaps a lost family member who is being remembered in a "memorial," and the community in general. When families give many gifts in such a way, a representative from the family or another person whom the family has asked to speak on their behalf may explain that even though his or her family does not have much, the family came together to make the gifts to give to everyone to the best of their abilities, not to show off, but to show generosity and respect toward the community.

The story path of the hackberries tale contains mini stories. Each story has its own pairing or trio of story arcs where one arc forms and another follows. If one were to take a simple braid, place it on a sheet of paper, and trace one side of it, then the outline of the braid's side would reveal mini rows of arcs[27] that coincide nicely as a metaphor for Riddles's story structures. If one considers these tales as part of a larger, on-going story tradition, then these arcs lend themselves for conceptualizing the Comanche oral tradition where characters or themes reappear in other episodes with backstory that further contextualize them. These mini story arcs act similarly to multiple hair sections that are woven within a braid, and these mini story arcs combined with plot twists provide a surprising, yet intricate story structure that is similar to nuanced braiding.

Therefore, a relatedness exists across individual stories. Powell discusses these concepts of relatedness and story "continuum" ("Word by Word . . . " 135). She states, "I probably need to tell you now that when I think about an account of my scholarly life focused on resilience, agency, relationships, and chance, I'm just as likely to think about chickens as beadwork or

[27] Similar to the shapes that rows of the letter "m" might form. For instance, "mmmm."

poems or graduate school. They're all related in my mind and in the things I've chosen to make as an intellectual" (Powell, "Word by Word . . . " 126). Powell's statement demonstrates the woven-ness of Indigenous ways of knowing across stories, as well as the realization of how one shares intricate relationships with one's fellow humans, plants, animals, environment, and objects, suggesting that the choices one makes affect each of these reciprocally, that each of these are involved in the processes of one another. This notion is known within Indian Country and in the work of cultural rhetoricians as "Relatedness." This same intricateness, this interconnected woven-ness, this relatedness, is found within Comanche stories and braiding practices, whose processes involve humans, plants, animals, environment, and objects by including them in the stories and braids themselves. For instance, *yuhu* can be found in food sources, story descriptions of animals, hair products, and other cultural materials, showing the relatedness, the braidedness of all these things.

The Comanche oral tradition shaped the first Comanches' previous knowledge and formed the filter through which they interpreted the world. This meaning making process connects with the "Choctaw interpretive strategies" (Wieser 11). Booth Donohue explains that these strategies involve listeners linking story meaning as listeners become older (Wieser 11). Similarly, in Comanche storying, listeners must associate a story's meaning across multiple stories. Many of these stories inform modern Comanches' worldviews, and this way of knowing connects to other tribes' storying traditions. Remember Booth Donohue's depiction Choctaw storying as consisting of "events [that] transpire, and the hearer/reader must infer possible cause and effect, significance, and chronology if such categories are necessary for comprehending the meaning of a narrative . . ." (Donohue 68). Heath and Heath also discuss how previous knowledge and relationships across ideas continue to inform modern learners. They explain

examples of how teachers tap into students' previous knowledge, making abstract ideas more concrete, such as relating atomic functions to the movement of planets (Heath and Heath 3). They argue that showing "the relationships that statistics illustrate," as opposed to only providing numbers, is "immensely sticky" because finding relationships amongst ideas aids in acquiring knowledge (Heath and Heath 6). And in most Comanche storytellers' stories, they emphasize not only relationships amongst ideas, but also they emphasize relationships with their fellow humans and animals, moving audiences to question how they engage with others and the world around them . . . just as following the shifting of the strands to give the braid shape, the braider must pull the strands away from one another in a slight tug that cinches the links upward and closes them together.

Conflict/Tension—The Tug of the Hair that Cinches the Links

Conflict or tension in a story is similar to the tug of the hair when braiding. Without tension in a story, the plot does not move, and without tension in a braid, the links become loose, softening the braid, which affects its overall shape and texture and leaves the braid with a lack of uniformity. Tension in a story grants unity to the story's structure, just as tension in a braid determines its shape. Story tension propels the plot and the reader forward, while tension in a braid maintains the braider's intended braid path by securing the previous links that he or she has formed and enabling him or her to keep the braid progressing. Additionally, while a storyteller chooses how much tension to put into a story, a braider chooses how much tension a braid should have to create a certain hair appearance. Some audiences prefer stories with lots of conflict, other

audiences do not; some braid wearers want their braids super tight with closely cinched links,[28] others do not want braids that could give them a headache. But most storytellers and braiders agree that almost every effective story and braid needs at least a little tug.

One such tug is Coyote's dialogue in Riddles's tale of Coyote and the sliding turkeys, in which the turkeys' unknowing cooperation with Coyote sets his plan to obtain a turkey in motion. This dialogue, signaled by "me yʉkwiiyʉ," initiates the major conflict of the story. Riddles states, "Surʉkʉse, ohaʔahnakatʉ, 'Mʉ mʉmaʔai nʉ bisikwanuuʔitu?i [pisikwanuuʔitu?i],' me yʉkwiiyʉ . . . That one, Coyote, said, 'I'm going to slide with you all'" (line 5). His dialogue gives the audience its first tense moment; the turkeys agreement to allow him to participate adds suspense as we suspect it will endanger the turkeys. *Yu* moves the plot in this instance by signaling dialogue relating to the affective plot.

Fairbanks examines a similar occurrence with Ottawa language conjuncts that shape plot, noting that the language contains conjunct verbs that mark "thematic content" to indicate information that "moves the plot forward" (Fairbanks 152). I am not arguing that *yu* exclusively marks tension, plot twists, double meaning, or even dialogue because other particles could be used to convey these elements, but across Riddles's stories, I notice a pattern of sentences featuring *yu* functioning in the context of her narratives that suggest relationships between *yu* and the plot.

Yu is not driving these narrative techniques by itself, and *yu* is not the only particle that plays a part in forming these techniques, as these techniques can be formed without *yu* in

[28] In N. Scott Momaday's introduction for Barbara Hail's *Gifts of Pride and Love: Kiowa and Comanche Cradles*, he describes the appearance of his grandmother and her close friend sewing: "They wear their long hair in tight braids" (13). The Kiowa culture may also value well-crafted braids, similar to the Comanche culture.

Comanche stories. But, in Riddles's stories, *yu* has a relationship with narrative techniques. Similar trends occur in the Comanche stories of Sandra Karty and Lucille McClung, though at times *yu* is alluded to through its omission from *niikwi* because *yu* is a whisper vowel, as it is challenging to hear *yu* auditorily, and more modern speakers deemphasize *yu* from *niikwi*. In other words, like a braider planning the trajectory of a braid, this instance of Coyote's dialogue in the sliding turkeys tale enacts his plan that determines the first half of the story's structure, making Coyote's dialogue not just dialogue, but a signifier of plot tension and a particle that helps determine plot.

Plot tension occurs within other characters' conversations. In the tale of Coyote and Turtle, Riddles states, "Ohaʔahnakat~~u~~k~~u~~se 'N~~u~~ makan~~u~~ n~~uu~~,' me y~~u~~kwiiy~~u~~ . . . Coyote said, 'Feed them [the roasted prairie dogs] to me' . . . Wakareʔeeʔk~~u~~se 'Ke n~~u~~,' me y~~u~~kwiiy~~u~~ . . . Turtle said, 'Not I'" (lines 6-7). This back-and-forth dialogue between Coyote and Turtle conveys the first tension in which Coyote wants Turtle's food, but Turtle refuses. The characters' back-and-forth dialogue mirrors a "battle" between a braider and the hair, where the braider must try to get the hair to style into a braid despite its resistance. The characters' dialogue creates the effect that these two characters are pulling in two different directions: Coyote wants to compete for Turtle's meal, but Turtle wants to eat the meal that he prepared by himself. These characters' polarized goals reflect the braid process in which a braider pulls the braid's long strands up and away from one another to tightly cinch up the already woven strands. To create this motion, the hair's strands must be pulled in opposite directions; it is this opposite pulling of strands that helps to form a closely woven vertical braid, and it is Coyote's and Turtle's opposition that drives the narrative's plot.

Yu has a relationship to the instances of tension in the tale of the grasshoppers. “U pia?kʉse, ‘Tʉa ʉnʉ o?ana manakwʉ miasuwaitu?i,’ me u niikwiiyu . . .” Riddles states, “His mother said to him, ‘It is said that you want to be going someplace’” (line 3). The first grey grasshopper’s mother confronts him about the rumors she has heard about his aspirations, implying tension between him and his mother regarding his travels. Her dialogue creates the impression that she does not want him to leave or that she is concerned that her child did not tell her first, instead she has to learn of her child’s goals from everyone else. This dialogue also signals the beginning of the grasshopper’s conflict in which he must grapple with breaking the news of his travels to his mother and then find the giant grasshopper and tell him his wish. When the grasshopper reaches the giant grasshopper who paints coats, Riddles states, “Maa ma karʉkukʉse piawosaʔaaʔra mawakatu toʔihupiitʉ, ‘Hina ʉnʉ?’ me u niikwiyu . . . As he sat on it [the hill], the largest of the grasshoppers came toward him, and said, ‘What do you want?’” (line 7). The giant grasshopper’s dialogue is marked by *niikwiyu* and creates rising tension, priming the audience to wonder what the little grasshopper will say. Will he tell the giant grasshopper his wish? How will the giant grasshopper react? Since the audience has not been introduced to the giant grasshopper until this scene, the tension between the grey grasshopper and the giant grasshopper builds suspense because the audience cannot predict the outcome based on the story’s immediate context. Will the giant grasshopper help him, or will he refuse?

The tension that the grey grasshopper experiences as he wonders if the giant grasshopper will be friend or foe echoes some instances of early colonial Comanche and intertribal encounters. Early Comanches began trading with other tribes, other tribes who were just as fierce warriors as they were. In the mid-1700s, some bands of Comanches “established peace with the Wichitas” and trade relationships with the French (Kavanagh, *Comanche Political* . . . 70).

However, Comanches have a history of both trading and raiding groups, both tribal and otherwise, with whom they conducted business for various reasons. One can assume that the trade relationships between the Comanches and Wichitas were not always ideal for both parties. Comanches were aware that if the trade relationships with other tribes went sour, then intertribal conflict could ensue with the possibility of warfare. The tension that the grey grasshopper experiences as he wonders if the giant grasshopper will be friend or foe echoes some instances of early colonial Comanche and intertribal encounters. A band of Comanches who sent out one scout or a small group of scouts to establish trade could be a big risk to the whole band or tribe.[29] Historic Comanches also understood that each tribe has different philosophies of law, consequence, warfare, and reparations, which made settling trade disputes challenging, not to mention that sometimes there were language barriers where tribes had to communicate through sign language[30] or interpreters. Comanches were aware that trading means establishing a relationship that takes into account the other tribe's expectations and considers if those can be negotiated peacefully without straining their own tribe. The tension depicted in Riddles's story not only is reflective of Comanche history, but also can be seen metaphorically in the braiding

[29] Navigating the diverse bands of early Comanches within trade relationships could also be tense because not all bands of Comanches got along, shared the same philosophies on trade, or shared the same intertribal allies. If trade relationships went "bad" between one band and another, then warfare could occur between these two bands or more bands could get involved or be pressured to get involved. Historians Thomas Kavanagh and Gerald Betty discuss that for early Spanish colonists in the 1700s, determining who comprised the bands, the relationships across bands, and what the bands' "official" names were (compared to what the Spanish chose to call them) could be challenging because kinship systems were and are complex (*Comanche Political* . . . 13;19, 63-64). Kavanagh argues that bands were very much their own individual "tribes," each with their own political systems (*Comanche Political* . . . xii).

[30] Some early Comanches used sign language to communicate with traders (Kavanagh, *Comanche Political* . . . 181). Comanches used sign language to communicate with other tribes as well. Some Comanche people, particularly older people, still use some signs to varying extents.

process because a braider must determine to what degree the hair should be tugged to create the desired style of braid. Within the grasshopper tale, Riddles does not include many tense moments, but the few moments of tension that she depicts speak volumes about Comanche history and the heuristics stories carry[31] and propel the audience to keep listening/reading.

While a braider determines how much to tighten a braid, a storyteller chooses how much tension to put into a story. After all, not every audience wants to hear an overly suspenseful story, and some individuals are "tender headed"[32] and cannot tolerate having their hair pulled while braiding—even if it means they have looser, less uniform braids. While a braider determines how much to tighten a braid, a storyteller chooses how much tension to put into a story. Juxtaposing these three tales—further braiding them, putting them together to reveal what we can with braiding methodology—one can gage Riddles's variations of "tugs" within her stories. The first instance in the tale of Coyote and the turkeys depicts a small tug where Coyote begins his plan that foreshadows a major tug when the turkey dies. In contrast, the beginning banter between Coyote and Turtle represents many little tugs in succession, whereas the story of the grasshoppers mostly focuses on just one major tug, the grey grasshopper's encounter with the giant grasshopper. The amount of tension or conflict within Riddles's tales works in tandem with the plot twists to create structure and a spontaneity that keeps the audience guessing. The bigger the tug, the more unpredictable the plot becomes. For instance, in the Coyote and the turkeys

[31] According to Wieser, stories "carry" meanings meant to bring listeners/readers "back into balance" (37). "Oral stories" hold "Indigenous knowledge about things such as geography, ecosystems, methods of harvest or hunting, or knowledge of other survival skills for that particular group in its homeland or other areas its people frequented" (Wieser 55).

[32] Tender headed is a term many beauticians in the south use to refer to individuals whose pain receptors in their scalps respond strongly to having their hair combed or tugged when their hair is being styled. Some individuals' scalps are more prone to sensitivity, which can cause discomfort, meaning anyone who is styling their hair must be careful not to harm their scalps.

tale, following the small tug of Coyote enacting the first step in his plan, the story path follows a predictable path (Coyote obtains a turkey) until the next major plot twist occurs—a bird arrives. The tugs in the beginning of the Coyote and Turtle tale are also small, but there are more of them, increasing the audience's likelihood to guess about what path Turtle will choose. Whereas in the grasshopper's tale, the big tug of meeting an unknown character creates more unpredictability, leaving the audience guessing about how this giant grasshopper is and how he will respond to the grey grasshopper, which leads to the next narrative aspect of *yu*, dialogue, which I examine as the individual links in the braid.

Dialogue—The Individual Links in the Braid

According to Charney, Wistrand-Robinson and Armagost, *yu* signals dialogue, denoting talking or speaking (Charney 152; Wistrand-Robinson and Armagost 380). *Yu* frequently earmarks dialogue in almost all Riddles's tales; it is the individual links in the braid that move it along. Dialogue moves the story's plot along through character interaction. Dialogue conveys knowledge that the reader cannot always receive from exposition, such as personality. In general, a braider can braid the same style and use the same method of braiding on several different peoples' heads, but, most of the time, the braids will not look exactly the same because individuality and difference can be seen in the braid links that are determined by the braidee's own unique character traits. For instance, depending on one's hair length, haircut style, thickness of hair, and hair texture, one's braid links may be thicker, thinner, longer, or shorter. In layered hair, sometimes the shorter layers will poke out from the braid links. Some individuals have braid links with wide circumferences. Some braid links are brown, other links are blonde, black,

red, gray, or even blue. That is the beauty of the braid links. Each individual's links are as unique as the individual is, much like the words that the characters speak in Riddles' tales.

A line of dialogue in the grasshoppers tale gives insight into character traits and moves the plot. For example, Riddles states, "'Meeku nabunni [napunni],' mek~~ɨ~~se sur~~ɨ~~ u niikwiiyu . . . 'Now look at yourself in the mirror,' he said to him [the grey grasshopper]" (line 10). From the giant grasshopper's dialogue, the audience learns that the grasshopper has helped the grey grasshopper achieve his goal of obtaining a painted coat, marking the climax of the story, and the audience learns that the giant grasshopper is kind.

Much of Riddles's dialogue contains instances of characters stating plans and stating results.[33] Many of the stories involve characters announcing that they plan to do something, and then the characters state the results of their actions. For instance, in the grasshopper story, the grey grasshopper announces that he is leaving, ""Ibu n~~ɨ~~ tabe ikahpetu manakw~~ɨ~~hu nanaʔatahpu naboori kwasuʔi t~~ɨ~~m~~ɨɨ~~kwatuʔi,' mek~~ɨ~~[34]," to buy a coat (line 2). And then he announces the outcome of his journey, ""Nohi tsaa nabuniyu [napuniyu] n~~ɨɨ~~,' mek~~ɨ~~se sur~~ɨ~~ esiʔahtamuu . . . 'I look good,' said that one grey grasshopper" (line 12). In addition, in tale of the Comanche

[33] This, too, is indicative of Comanche cultural philosophy. Our word that we translate as "hello" today, *mar~~ɨ~~awe,* literally means "report," as in a command. According to the *Comanche Dictionary* by Anderton, McClung, and Nahquaddy, *mar~~ɨ~~awekwai* is a "greeting, equivalent to tell me all about it" (26). In other words, the greeting asks about one's plans, like "What have you been up to lately?" Or, "What have you seen or heard?" Charney suggests that the Comanche language also expresses nuanced variations within the grammar itself for intention, expectation, and unrealized goals that differ yet overlap (138-139,147-148, 185-186, 201-202).

[34] The grasshopper's choice to find a coat in the direction of the "setting sun" (west) is significant. Comanches were known for conducting trade in Taos and Pueblo villages in what is today New Mexico, which would have been west of the early western Comanche bands' trading territory (Hamalainen, "The Western Comanche Trade . . . " 488). According to Kavanagh's table, "Gifts Intended for 'Northern Indians and Comanches,' Santa Fe, 1795," Comanches enjoyed obtaining "red and blue cloth" and "blankets" from Spanish colonies in what is today New Mexico (qtd. in Munoz; qtd. in Castaneda 126).

couple, the man announces that his family will eat well, “Sitɨkɨse tenahpɨ, ‘Nohi tsaahtɨkɨhutuʔi tanɨ,’ me yɨkwiiyu . . . This one man said, ‘We are going to eat very good’” (line 10). Then after the family eats, the grandfather confirms that their family ate well, “Sitɨkɨse marɨɨ ahpɨ, ‘Tɨbitsi tsaaku tamɨ tɨrɨeʔtɨɨ tɨhkaʔinɨɨ,’ me yɨkwiiyu . . . This one, their father said, ‘Our children ate really good’” (line 16). But sometimes characters’ plans are not always realized; in the tale of Coyote and Turtle, Coyote states his plans to eat roasted prairie dog, “Sitɨkɨse ohaʔahnakatɨ, ‘Ma kohtoopɨha kɨmaʔkɨ karɨhtsi nohi tsaahtɨkɨhutuʔi nɨɨ,’ me yɨkwiiyu . . . This one, Coyote, said, ‘Oh, I will sit beside the fire and eat very well’” (line 25). However, he ends up eating bones and announces his defeat, “Sitɨkɨse ohaʔahnakatɨ, “‘Ke nɨ bɨmi [pɨmi] kaabehkawaʔitɨ me suatɨ ɨnɨse tɨtaatɨ wakareʔee nɨ kaabehkanu,’ me surɨ ohaʔahnakatɨ me yɨkwiiyu . . . This one, Coyote said, ‘I didn’t cheat. I think this little Turtle cheated me’” (line 30). These instances of stating one’s plans and explaining the results of said plans reflects traditional Comanche culture in which Comanches’ nomadic lives involved “going places” and “getting things” (and sometimes, not getting things) and trying to return to the encampment (Wieser-Weryackwe, Native American Women Writers lecture). Moreover, Comanche grammar itself contains complex rules for conveying expectations and results (Charney 185-186, 201).

And these grammar rules for expectations and results that meet, exceed, or fail to meet expectations occur at the narrative level. In “A Basket is a Basket Because . . . ” Powell states that “telling a story always changes things” (474). This statement applies to Riddles’s variety of dialogue and how it shapes plot. Rather than rely on characters repeatedly stating their plans and confirming their success, Riddles changes the pattern. Across her stories, she leads the audience to assume that when a character states his or her plans that they will be completed so that when

she breaks from this pattern, her audience is surprised by characters' unfulfilled plans. This storying strategy reflects braiders efforts to plan braids verses how the braids actually form. Constraints can affect even the most well-planned braid—lacking sufficient space to maneuver one's arms, uncomfortable room temperature, or a shortage of time, among many possible factors. Each of these factors can cause changes mid-braid, and sometimes the braids just do not work. Powell's statement can be interpreted as creating awareness about how telling a story is journey-like, as we can see in navigating a challenging braid; they are processes that lead to exploring thought and finding new understandings. Storying/braiding changes the teller/braider, changes the listener/braidee in some way and leads to social change. Heath and Heath also acknowledge that a "mystery" for learners to problem-solve is driven by questions that get learners' attentions and keeps them engaged (3-4). But just as sometimes characters' plans do not always turn out how they expect in Comanche stories, sometimes no matter how much *yuhu*[35] is added to one's braids (or in my case, hairspray), they just do not turn out "right." And one does not always know why. *Suniyut~~u~~*. Because. It just is.

Punchlines—The Hairpins and Extra Yuhu for Mistakes

Sometimes hair seems to style however it wants, regardless of one's intentions and the amount of product applied. In the "battle" between hairstylist verses hair, one can become frustrated, but after these moments have passed, one sometimes finds humor in them. When braiding, mistakes happen. Even the best planned braid and the most experienced braiders endure braiding mishaps where extra hairspray or hairpins are called for to patch "errors." If the "error"

[35] Because *yu* can be voiced, whispered, or dropped from dialogue markers or emphasized as *yuu* in commands or de-emphasized as *yu* in commands, then like braiders, speakers can also choose how much *yu* to use in a story.

is too noticeable, the braid can be covered with a beret, but some errors are more of a challenge to hide, such as split ends or a short, layered hair cut that has left strands that stick out from the braid. Sometimes the braids are too tight and cause a scalp ache, or the braids are not tight enough and sag. Or worse, the part is crooked, and the braid must be unwoven and re-braided. Sometimes, no matter how hard braiders try, the braids will not cooperate. Some braiders and braidees embrace the "flaw," choosing to leave a little "error" in their hair to remind themselves not to take life so seriously; some just cover it up. Other individuals own the error and wear it anyway, while some braidees forget the braids altogether and wear their hair another way. A "bad braid day" similar to any "bad hair day" can try one's patience, but after the "bad braid days" have passed (and sometimes while they are still occurring), one can still laugh[36] at oneself, one's hair, and maybe the social situation—and laugh in hopes that next time one's braids will turn out "right." Powell discusses how mistakes are embraced as part of the composing process in both beading and storying by stating, "I'm making the same mistakes with words that I usually make with beads. So, I'm gonna tear out some beads and go back to Elsie's [story], since that's the way I want the pattern to work. At least, for the moment, that's the choice I'll make" ("Word by Word . . . " 126). She is referencing the previous stories that she shares in her essay regarding her family. Her "final draft" implies that her choice to leave these stories or "mistakes" in the published essay suggests that these "mistakes" are not "mistakes" because they are important to the process of producing the beadwork pattern, of learning about Indigenous culture, and of Powell explaining both her family stories and the history of Indigenous rhetorics. In beading,

[36] Humor can be found in the braiding process amongst the stories that braiders and braidees share in passing time, though these stories are not always funny, and sometimes the situation or environment surrounding the braiding process can be humorous. For instance, a determined mother who wants to braid her toddler's hair, but the toddler will not sit still.

sometimes beaders deliberately leave “mistakes” in their work for various reasons; sometimes it is so that the beader’s family can identify their family member’s work. Even in making frybread, frybread makers must make a few “bad batches” before they can make excellent ones. I know my family can vouch for my failed fry bread making attempts. And in braiding, “mistakes” are learning opportunities, chances to bond with the braidees by showing community care or sharing a good laugh. These hypothetical braiding “mistakes” that I am discussing are my own.

In the oral tradition, “mistakes” are part of the storying process, too. A storyteller might tell the story “wrong,” and he or she must either correct the “error” without embarrassing him or herself or disrespecting Comanche communities. Sometimes a storyteller must find a way to work with the “mistake” mid story and create a new story path. By Powell’s “tear[ing] out some beads” and “go[ing] back to Elsie’s story,” she is both embracing her “mistakes” and correcting them to suit the pattern that she wants to make (“Word by Word . . . ” 126). In modern Comanche communities, “mistakes” are important for learning about Comanche culture; the youths’ “mistakes” are expected and embraced. Making a big deal out of the errors of young people isn’t productive. It is discouraging. Instead, small “mistakes” can become chances for a good laugh and grounds for teasing from one’s Comanche relatives because that is just how they show that they care. *Suniyut~~ɨ~~*.

But why, *hakaniyut~~ɨ~~*, include humor in braiding and story? Heath and Heath affirm that emotion is essential to stickiness because “that’s what Emotion does for an idea — it makes people care. It makes people feel something . . . And that’s the role of Emotion in making ideas sticky: To transform the idea from something that’s analytical or abstract or theoretical and make it hit us in the gut (or the heart)” (8-9). Through these storying, braiding, or even frybread making “mistakes” hitting one in the gut, or in the heart, they make the lessons that much more

memorable, staying with one long after the feeling is gone. The same is true of "mistakes" characters in stories make. In Comanche narratives, the punchlines are the extra *yuhu* and hairpins that hold the story together. The punchlines that contain *yu* express various shades of Comanche humor. In most narratives, punchlines get the audience's attention and help them to laugh at many scenarios, but Comanche humor likes to add an additional dose of teasing, self-deprecation, trickster humor, and laughing despite one's pain. Comanche humor has enabled Comanche culture to thrive despite colonization's effects.[37]

The tale of Coyote and Turtle begins with a mix of illogical trickster humor. Riddles states, "Surʉkʉse oha?ahnakatʉ, 'Noo nʉ biarʉpihta [piatʉpihta] nʉ napema wʉtsʉkʉnane,' me yʉkwiiyu . . . That one, Coyote said, 'I will just tie a big rock to my foot'" (line 10). This sentence conveys humor because the uninvited Coyote has offered to compete for Turtle's meal, which was not Turtle's idea, and Coyote thinks he can make the competition more "fair" for Turtle by tying a rock to his own foot, as though the rock would cause Coyote's rate of running speed to match Turtle's rate of running speed. Tying a rock to Coyote's foot may slow himself down, but his stepping stride will still be farther than Turtle's stepping stride regardless of a rock being present, meaning Coyote is merely creating the illusion of a fair running race when he is already at a physical advantage for winning; hence, Coyote's idea is a trick. Not only would tying a rock to Coyote's foot not result in a fair contest, but also the rock would result in the cartoonish images of a Coyote actually tying a rock to his foot, which would be impossible in reality. And Coyote never specified how big the rock would be; it could have been a pebble. However, the joke is on Coyote because "sitʉkʉse u tsuhnipʉha ʉmahpaakʉhu wihi?eeyu u

[37] Gerald Vizenor asserts that Indigenous humor is a tactic of survivance in "The Ruins of Representation."

kwasitaka et~~u~~sip~~u~~ka manak~~uu~~ʔik~~u~~nu . . . This one, [Turtle] he threw the [prairie dog] bones in the lake and made their tails stick out of the ashes" (line 22). Turtle sets up Coyote's "winning" dinner to be a fake, making Coyote's surprised reaction the punchline. And *yu* sets up the punchline as Turtle throws away, or *wihiʔeeyu*, the bones, an ironic act, because the audience and Turtle know the cooked prairie dogs are ash, yet Coyote does not know.

In a plot twist-like manner, Turtle tricks Coyote instead of Coyote tricking him. When one is hairstyling, one sometimes has to "trick" the hair to cooperate with the style one is wanting. One must find a means to get the hair to shape itself into the form one wants (even when the hair does not want to form into that shape). Sometimes the hair wins, and then one must create the illusion that the hair did turn out the way one planned, even when it did not, giving all who view the hair a sense of "oh, I styled my hair like this on purpose." Sometimes the hair seems as though it plays tricks of its own; those are days when one's braids look nice before leaving the house, and then upon wearing the braids outside, they become messy, and the "joke" is on the braidee, creating an opportunity for self-deprecating humor that enables some of one's fellow humans to relate to the braidee's humor because they have endured "bad" hair days as well.

Comanche stories instill community, and some Indigenous languages' grammars relate speakers and listeners to one another. Fairbanks notes that the Ojibwe language itself relates the listener to one's spoken word, implying that Ojibwe discourse values bringing in the listener to shape the discourse. The discourse marker, *idash,* translates as "and" in English, but within the Ojibwe language, its role is more about "allow[ing] the interlocutor to break the flow of discourse centered around him- or herself in order to make the same query to the originator of the question" (Fairbanks 87). In other words, *idash* is an opportunity for the listener to respond

back to the speaker. He gives the example sentences, "'Aaniin ezhi- ayaayan?' . . . 'How are you?' . . . 'Nimino- ayaa. Giin dash?' . . . 'I'm fine. And you?'" (Fairbanks 87). Although in the Comanche language, *yu* does not function as a discourse marker that encourages the listener/reader to respond, but narratively, the Comanche language conveys a similar philosophy surrounding storying in general that enables the speaker and listener to share roles in finishing the story; it is through this relating of the speaker to the listener that constitutes aspects of community and grants the opportunity for collaborative meaning making.

One observes this philosophy enacted within braiding because the braid's production relies on the collaboration of braidee and braider. Shared meaning making takes place in using the Comanche language, given its narrative functions. Grammatically, *yu* has a knack for serving multiple grammatical roles and for swapping roles with other particles, such as *tɨ* (Charney 201). *Yu*'s grammar functions suggest role sharing, reflecting Comanche language's shared meaning making narratively in general. In turn, both story and braids relate listener/reader/braidee to speaker/writer/braider, to community, to an intergenerational continuum of story and/or tradition of braiding, and give the listener/reader/braidee the opportunity to shape the story/braid as well. What happens when one experiences something humorous? One shares it. And then someone else shares, who then passes it on to someone else who shares it, and so on. A Comanche story's characters' "mistakes" and their relationships to the punchlines are open to interpretation and can convey layers of meaning in much the same way that a braid's multiple strands overlap to create layers of woven hair.

Irony—Where the Hair Sections Overlap and Meet

Riddles's tales interweave irony that is open to interpretation, conveying various meanings. These layers of meaning are like the layers of sections in a braid, in which the individual sections are continuously connected as the braid progresses, creating multiple layers. Not only does the irony in Riddles's tales express various meanings, but also these instances of irony lend themselves well for examining the relationships amongst the speaker/writer, story, audience(s), and context(s) because these layers of meaning create opportunities for the speaker and audience to interpret the story and to collaborate to make meaning. In other words, the listener/reader influences the story as much as the speaker/writer. Likewise, in a braiding situation, braidees affect the shape of the braids as much as the braiders by how braidees care for their hair before braiding begins, how they hold or tilt their heads during the braiding processes, and how they manage the braids once they are complete. If braidees choose the "wrong" hair products, do not comb their hair, make abrupt movements during the braiding process, or after the braids are complete, rest their heads on pillows made from materials that produce static electricity, then the braids' appearances change, affecting the braiders' intended messages.

Just as braidees and the environment surrounding the braiding situation affect braids, an audience's awareness of irony combined with Comanche cultural and historical knowledge affects audience's interpretations. Riddles's tale of the Coyote and the sliding turkeys expresses various levels of irony. She states, "Sur~~u~~k~~u~~se wihnu ok~~u~~hu paak~~u~~hu w~~u~~ht~~u~~kwan~~u~~ nahubiniiy~~u~~ . . . Then that one [the turkey] there at a distance hit something in the water and was groaning" (lines 12). In terms of situational irony, the turkey intends to slide down the hill and have some fun, but instead he is impaled. However, there are two layers to the dramatic irony surrounding this sentence. The audience knows that Coyote was specifically looking for a turkey to take, that he is planning a trick about which the turkeys are unaware, though the audience does not know

what the plan entails. The turkey's impalement is an allusion to Comanche historical practices, creating irony because traditional Comanches liked to roast meat on wooden stakes. Devon Mihesuah states that the Comanches "spitted meats with a stick and roasted them over a fire of elm, mesquite, oak, willow, bois d'arc, or cottonwood" (226). She states that when Comanches prepared turkeys, they would gut them, and then "the birds were thrown onto a fire whole, then after adequate scorching the skin and feathers were peeled off" (D. Mihesuah 227). Imagine a grandmother telling her grandchildren this story in a traditional Comanche setting over roasted turkey meat on stakes while they are preparing the turkey or partaking of it. Within these contexts of possible storying experiences, the tale's irony becomes part of a heuristic, reminding one of how roasted turkey is prepared. The cooking of the meat, the hearing of the story, and then the partaking of the meal makes this story "stick" to the listeners' memories (Heath and Heath 1) because the experience appeals to their emotions and all five senses, helping the listener remember how to prepare roasted turkey traditional Comanche-style.

An audience's ability to remember a story and learn from it is influenced by their emotions about the story, their immediate story-listening situation, the community environment, and the physical environment surrounding the storying situation. According to Cranford-Gomez, the physical environment affects a basket's historical narrative because "material culture is created and influenced by the history and geography of the maker" (95). History and geography surround the basket and the maker, and the maker incorporates them throughout the basket's weaving. Comanche braids and storying undergo a similar process because history and nature are woven into Comanche storying and braiding both metaphorically and physically. The environment surrounds the braid and story and is woven into them through the braider's/storyer's choice in materials, content, and setting. Cranford-Gomez gives the example of how "a pine

needle and sweetgrass basket made by a Creole basket maker call on the viewer to become an active participant in the story" and that one must consider "the narrative of the geographic story and racial weaving of Creole experience and identity as indigenous-descended peoples" to comprehend the basket's meanings (Cranford-Gomez 100). Viewing a basket requires an "active" participation, and in Comanche storying and braiding, the audience and braidees are "active participants" who help form both the braid and the story, as does the environment in which the braiding and storying occurs. The braidee's posture and the height of the chair in which the braidee is sitting can affect the braid's outcome. The braid's added materials, like animal-hide hair ties with shells, come from the environment. In storying, the audience fills in their own details, contexts, relationships, and lessons to the story. Stories are also shaped by the storying situation, the surrounding community, and cultural history. For instance, in traditional Comanche culture, adults would share stories with their children in apprentice-like experiences where youth worked alongside their older family members, listening to their stories as they worked. This practice continues, though our work has somewhat changed, in modern Comanche culture. The lessons garnered from these stories move beyond what Heath and Heath describe as "flight simulators for the brain" (10). These storying situations provide youth actual lived experiences to accompany the stories, which foster memories.

Moreover, the immediate storying situation and environment not only factor into Indigenous materials and stories, but also into some Indigenous languages. Both the Comanche language and the Ojibwe language consider how the environment relates to discourse. Fairbanks defines this linguistic element as "situational immediacy," which is discourse that is "said in the moment to describe or make reference to the event or situation at hand" (159). Some of the Ojibwe language's conjuncts rely on the environmental context in which one is speaking to

express meaning. He scaffolds this understanding with the English language example of "when people see or hear something they perceive to be beautiful, they might say, 'Beautiful!'" (Fairbanks 159). For instance, he states that given a context where an elder has "been asked a hard a question," he or she can respond with ""Gii- wawaanimigooyang' . . . 'They stumped us!'" (Fairbanks 159). Context matters in the Ojibwe language, and it matters in the Comanche language, too. *Yu* not only serves multiple grammar roles and swaps roles with other particles, but also *yu* can verbalize nouns referring to places, such as *Cachekaiyutuʔi* in the sentence, "P~~u~~ets~~u~~ku n~~uu~~ Cachekaiyutuʔi . . . I'll be in Cache tomorrow," to express unrealized action (Charney 201). *Cachekaiyutuʔi* breaks down as Cache-at-ing-going to. Thus, Comanche language accounts for environment in the language by combining *yu* with a place name to indicate that the place and the idea of going there are synonymously fused, conveying that Comanche language, like Comanche story, considers how environment influences discourse. Likewise, irony thrives on situation, context, and the relationships amongst ideas, settings, characters, actions, and awareness just as both a braid's and a story's meaning is shaped by the relationships between speaker/listener or braider/braidee and by the environment where one is speaking or braiding.

The experience of preparing turkey and listening to a tale about cooking turkey "ground[s] an idea in sensory reality," making the ideas "concrete" (Heath and Heath 5). Heath and Heath states that making concepts "concrete" is "the difference between reading about a wine ('bold but balanced') and tasting it" (5). Since traditional Comanche women allowed their children to help them prepare and partake of their meals, both their cooking processes and stories were grounded in the realities of their cooking situations. These same cooking processes and stories were shaped by the natural environment from which they obtained their food sources,

resulting in sensory-based memories. The sensory details and emotionality of Comanche women's stories combined with the partaking of food creates a "sticky" learning situation; One that "hit[s] [one] in the gut" (Heath and Heath 1, 9). By metaphorically "hitting" listeners "in the gut, "storytellers are sticking their lessons to listeners' memories to pass on to future generations.

Imagine an early 1700s Comanche grandchild helping their grandmother prepare roasted turkey, and the grandchild feels sad for the turkey upon hearing the story of Coyote and the sliding turkeys and is reluctant to eat the meal. The story could then remind the child to have empathy for the turkey because Comanches often see animals as their relatives, hence the personification of the turkeys in the story. The grandmother could then use this story to teach her grandchild to respect the animals that they eat through Comanche hunting and cooking practices, such as not hunting more turkeys than one needs to feed one's community and using as much of the animal as one can. According to scholar, poet, artist, and Comanche elder, Jaunita Pahdopony-Mithlo, "Comanche people were economical in everything they did. There was no waste. If leather wore out, it could be replaced. Beads could be lost, but rarely worn out, and could be used and reused again and again" (68). Pahdopony-Mithlo stated this philosophy in reference to Comanche cradleboard materials and her mother's repairing of a pair of her shoes (68). But these same principles apply to Comanche hunting, gathering, and cooking. Henry Mihesuah affirms that when his father would butcher cattle, "Everybody from all over came out there. Nothing goes to waste, you know. That's how I learned to butcher" (21-22). Therefore, historical context, cultural context, the storying situation, the audience's emotions, and the wider environment affect the story's meaning. Whether or not braid recipients like or dislike the braids affects the likelihood of them asking braiders to braid their hair again in the future. If braiders braid in familiar or unfamiliar environments, these places affect whether or not braiders have

access to adequate products and tools, leading to improvisation. If braiders are inexperienced and do not have immediate access to more skilled braiders for help, then the braiders might not be able to correct any weaving errors without assistance.

Context and emotion are key elements in Comanche stories' dramatic irony, and together, irony, contexts, and emotion assist the listener in relating to the story, which is essential for listeners to finish storying the tales. For example, in the tale of Coyote and Turtle, Riddles's states, "Sitʉkʉse u tsuhnipʉha ʉmahpaakʉhu wihiʔeeyu u kwasitaka etʉsipʉka manakʉʉʔikʉnu . . . This one, he threw the bones in the lake and made their tails stick out of the ashes" (line 22). Riddles's description of Turtle placing the prairie dog tails in the ashes implies historical irony about traditional Comanche cooking methods—not about how to prepare prairie dog, as most Comanches did not eat prairie dog, but how to prepare turtles. According to Devon Mihesuah, historic Comanches would prepare turtle "by burning them alive in a fire, then cracking their shells to remove the meat" (228). Hence, Turtle's practice of roasting prairie dogs that are submerged in fire and ash is actually how traditional Comanches would have prepared him, implying an ironic joke, reminding the audience how to prepare turtle. But, if an audience is not aware of these Comanche historical aspects, then they might not identify the irony, but they might still garner cooking skills that can be applied to other cooking situations.

Comanche history, culture, and the community outside the immediate storying situation influences a story. Likewise, the braiding process is a shared-experience in the immediacy of braiding the hair and in the shared-braid experience that continues outside the braiding situation because once the braiding ends, the braidee wears his or her hair amongst Comanche communities.

While storytellers consider the audience's nonverbal cues, braiders consider the braidees by inquiring about scalp sensitivities, style preferences, part preferences, and pain tolerance. Braiders must be careful not to over comb or pull the hair. If braidees hold their heads at awkward angles or have thinner hair, then the braiders must covertly navigate finding other angles to approach structuring the braids and plan smaller hair sections to avoid making the braidees' hair appear sparce, all without offending the braidees. Braiders balance listening to the braidees talk, speaking back to the braidees, and weaving the braids, meaning there are layers of interpersonal, collaboration, and communication skills in addition to braiding knowledge, and if storying is involved, narrative and cultural knowledge.

Braids are not just braiders' works, but they are shared works in which both braiders and braidees shape the braiding process and the braids themselves. Afterall, the hair belongs to the braid recipients, and the braiders can only braid because the braidees have agreed to lend their hair and to sit still. Despite the relationships and contexts surrounding braids, the layers of sections within one braid are always connecting to one another. If one traces a section's path in a braid within one link segment, the section appears over another section, but in the next segment the same section can now appear to be under another section. Regardless of whether or not a given section "surfaces" over another section, the section is still present, woven amongst all the other layers. Many shared meanings that surround the braid influence its message, layering context over context, meaning over meaning, just like a single section woven into a braid—and just like the contextual irony and various meanings surrounding Riddles's stories. The contextual irony is always there, either surrounding the tale or woven into it; instead, one must question what specific layer of contextual irony is one examining, be it historical, narrative, linguistic, or environmental (i.e. physical environment, an immediate audience, or wider community). By

analyzing these layers of context, one gains further insight into Comanche story construction, heuristics, history, and cultural philosophy.

Climax—The Middle of the Braid

Every "good" braid, like every "good" story has a clear beginning, middle, and end. The middle of the story is associated with the high point of the plot's action (though not always), and in braiding, the middle of the braid lies between the point where the braid is started and the point where the braid is closed, usually with a hair band, tie, or pin. For some braid wearers, the middle of one vertical, simple braid can show variance in the hair's thickness, creating a "v" like appearance where the circumferences of the braid's links flow from thick to thin, though some individuals' braids remain more consistent in thickness throughout their braids. Generally, the closer the braid is to the head, the thicker the braid link's width, the further away the braid's length extends from the top of the head, the thinner the braid link's width—at least that is how my hair is. This high point in braid thickness lends itself well for conceptualizing the high point or climax that precedes the falling action in Riddles's Comanche tales. In her tales, the high points shed light on a plot's goals, create plot variation, serve as reference points for the conclusion, lend themselves for determining the conclusion, and encourage inventiveness. Sometimes links can have "errors" within them, calling for hairpins or some other means to repair the "error." The high point in a braid encourages braiding inventiveness, leading the braiders to question what braid styles are possible. The high point—or "wide" point"—in braid link circumference contributes to the braid's finished structure and serves as a reference point or point of contrast for the end of the braid, giving insight into a relatedness within braids woven structures and within Comanche storying.

Relatedness is an aspect that Fairbanks acknowledges within the Ojibwe language because it has linguistic elements, such as discourse markers, that relate meaning at the sentence, or "local" level, and at "global levels" by "link[ing] (or bracket[ing]) adjacent units of discourse or link[ing] units across wider spans of discourse" (Fairbanks 42). He gives the example of *inashke*, meaning "see" (Fairbanks 46-47). However, the Ojibwe translation is context dependent and expresses meanings that do not always pertain to actually seeing (Fairbanks 46):

> [*Inashke*] allow[s] speakers to mark special insights or knowledge that might provide the listener with perspective, to draw out distinctions, or to mark the exposition of examples or confirming speaker disposition. This highlighting function shows that *inashke* is both forward- and backward-looking since it sets off (or brackets) upcoming text in order to mark it as salient in relation to prior text. (Fairbanks 47)

And in Riddles's tales, many of the highpoints that contain *yu* relate back to narratives' conclusions, at times weaving back on themselves, much like braids do. Further considering Indigenous rhetoric's relatedness, Powell and Wieser discuss how Indigenous rhetorics express kinships across texts, which coheres with the highpoints in Riddles's stories.

In Powell's "Word by Word, Bead by Bead . . .," she depicts relatedness in the beading process. She states, "One of the things I love about beadwork is that, if you're lucky, you're frequently making things in the company of other makers. Sitting at a table, gathered on couches in a living room, under a shelter at a powwow, you work for a while and talk for a while and talk while you work and work while you talk" (Powell, "Word by Word . . . " 131). In Momaday's "Introduction" for Barbara Hail's *Gifts of Pride and Love: Kiowa and Comanche Cradles*, he similarly describes how his grandmother and her friend bead: "They bead and visit, visit and bead" (13). While beading's processes differ from the processes of storying and braiding, a

beading mindset assists one in examining how Comanche story relates back to itself, like people relating to one another in conversation as they beadwork. Highpoints connect story points as they move along, helping the reader/listener to see the connections in the tale and to understand how the story's conclusion develops. Wieser discusses relatedness at the narrative level through her referring to Booth Donohue's explanation of "Choctaw interpretive strategies (Wieser 11). Some of the high points in Riddles's tales relate to the conclusion and story structure in a cause-and-effect relationship.

Some of Riddles's stories contain successions of mini stories, each with their own high points and conclusions that, at times, convey a cause-and-effect relationship. Fairbanks explains that in the Ojibwe language, conjuncts express "cause-and-effect" relationships (Fairbanks 155). I have added italics to Fairbanks's example sentence that conveys or questions a cause-and-effect relationship through conjuncts in Ojibwe: "Onzaam ina gidaadawin *nitaa- ojibwemoyaan* . . . 'Just because I got you beat *in speaking the language*'" (Fairbanks 156). "Speaking the language" causes him to "beat" the listener of the sentence. He gives another example from Maude Kegg's *Portage Lake*, "Mii dash ezhi- gagwejimagwaa, 'Aaniin dash i'iw ezhichigeyaan,' *waabamaawaad iniw nimanidoominensiman' . . . As they looked at my beads*, I asked them, 'Why am I doing this?'" (qtd. in Fairbanks 156). In the Comanche language, *yu* alludes to cause-effect attributes through its ability to express unrealized action, such as a plan, and a few of Riddles's high points in her stories pertain to characters' plans. These future plans are points of reference to gage whether or not said plans are fulfilled by the story's end, thereby relating the middle of the story or mini story to the story's end and/or the mini story's end.

For example, in the grasshoppers tale, the story structure is a combination of mini stories that create a combination of a cause-effect and journey pattern. The grey grasshopper travels far

to find the giant grasshopper who grants him a painted coat, and this same tale tells of the grasshopper community's journey to obtaining a style of their own choice because the one grasshopper's painted coat inspires many grasshoppers to follow his trend. The first story begins with the grey grasshopper conversing with his mother. The high point is the mother confronting him about his goals. Riddles states, "U pia?kʉse, 'Tʉa ʉnʉ o?ana manakwʉ miasuwaitu?i,' me u niikwiiyu . . . His mother said to him, 'It is said that you want to be going someplace'" (line 3). The conclusion for this first story reveals that the grasshopper has acted upon his plans. "Sitʉkʉse si?anetʉ yʉtsʉhkwa tʉmʉʉmi?atsi . . ." Riddles states, "This one [grey grasshopper] flew off somewhere to shop" (line 5). The second story describes the grey grasshopper's encounter with the giant grasshopper. The high point for the second story is the grey grasshopper sharing his goals with the giant grasshopper. Riddles states, "Surʉkʉse 'Tsaa nʉ naboori kwasu?i suwaaitʉ,' me u niikwiiyu . . . That one, he [the grey grasshopper] said to him, 'Well, I want a painted coat'" (line 8). The second story concludes with the grey grasshopper, who is now a brightly painted grasshopper, stating that he likes his coat and is going to fly back home (lines 12-13). The grasshopper states, "Nohi tsaa nabuniyu [napuniyu] nʉʉ . . . I look good,'" (line 12). The grasshopper is confirming that his goal from the high point has been met.

The third mini story's high point describes how the community of grasshoppers marvel at the painted coat (lines 15-16). "Sʉmʉ?kʉse, 'Urʉ u rʉmʉʉko?i [tʉmʉʉko?i],' me yʉkwiiyu . . ." Riddles states, "One grasshopper said, 'That one, he went shopping'" (line 16). And the conclusion of this third story answers back to the high point, confirming that the group of grasshoppers also travel far away and return with brightly painted coats (line 18). Lastly, in the fourth story, another lone, unpainted grasshopper notices that there is a group of painted grasshoppers (and it is implied that this grey grasshopper would like to have a painted coat, too)

(line 20). Riddles states, "Sur~~ʉ~~k~~ʉ~~se, 'M~~ʉ~~n~~ʉ~~ esiʔahtamuuʔn~~ʉʉ~~ hakanihku nanan̲isuyakeku naboohk̲aʔ' me urii [utii] niikwiiyu . . . That one said to them, 'How did all you grey grasshoppers get painted so beautifully?'" (line 20). The conclusion relays the result of the unpainted grasshopper's statement, that he or she is teased by the other grasshoppers, implying that the unpainted grasshopper's goal has yet to be fulfilled (line 21). Riddles states, "Sur~~ʉʉ~~k~~ʉ~~se, 'T~~ʉ~~m~~ʉʉ~~y~~ʉ~~kar~~ʉ~~ n~~ʉ~~n~~ʉ~~.' Us~~ʉ~~ subeʔs~~ʉ~~ suhka esiʔahtamuuʔa t~~ʉ~~m~~ʉʉ~~koʔi̲kat~~ʉ~~ nihan̲u tsaa naboori u kwasuʔ̲u̲t~~ʉ~~ m~~ʉʉ~~hk̲a,' me y~~ʉ~~kwit~~ʉ~~ . . . Those ones said, 'We shopped around.' That one, grey grasshopper, at that time went shopping to be named, 'His Pretty [or Good] Painted Coat'" (line 21). This phrase implies that the aforementioned mini stories were all caused by the first grey grasshopper's choice to travel afar and to bring back a painted coat, which means the succession of mini stories that follow this painted grasshopper's return are the effects of the painted grasshopper's actions upon the community. He started a trend. Some of these high points contain "niikwiiy̲u̲" or "y~~ʉ~~kwiiy̲u̲," which means *said*/*saying*. However, the conclusion in the second mini story is marked by "nabuniyu / napuniyu," meaning *to look*/*looking*, but in the context of the whole narrative, "nabuniyu / napuniyu" signifies the high point of the entire tale: the grey grasshopper receiving his painted coat.

Without the high point or midsection of a story or braid, the story or braid lacks a clear connection in plot points or braid structure. Similar to storytellers, braiders usually know what style of braid they have in mind (though sometimes they make it up as they go along like storytellers do with stories). If the storytellers have told the tale before, they already know the ending. Braiders and storytellers know what moves to make to reach the middle of the braid or the high point of the story before the braid or story reaches the end. If a storyteller is making up a story, he or she can determine what high points will keep the audience's attention and when they

should occur, and the storyteller can determine based on an audience's nonverbal cues and the storying context when it is time to end the story so that the audience (or storyteller) can move on to another activity. Likewise, braiders can look at the lengths of individuals' hair and determine what braid styles will be compatible with the hair length, deciding what angles and how many sections they need to form braids and planning at what points they will meet the thickest points of the wearers' hair and at what points they must prep the braids to end. If braidees do not have enough hair length for braiders to work with, then braiders must alter their imagined braids for braid styles that will cooperate with the braidees' hair amounts—and sometimes this realization occurs in mid-braid. Much like the balance of planning and improvising in braids and stories, historic Comanches had to be prepared to improvise if their planned food goals failed. In braiding, braid "errors" are covered with extra *yuhu*, hair gel, or maybe hairpins. In storytelling, story "errors" are remedied by storytellers' continuous flow of words, confidence, smooth plot transitions, creativity, and quick thinking. So maybe hunters did not bring back deer meat for the encampment, but they succeeded in bringing back quails, wild grapes, or rationed beef—and a story or two. A high point propels the story forward, giving it possible destinations, whereas a high point in a braid propels the braid, leading braiders' to the ends of braidees' hair lengths, up to the moment where the hair can be woven no more.

While the high point and conclusion of the grasshopper tale is the grasshopper community's self-determination through fashion, this feat is indicative of the physical transformations that some Comanches endured when transitioning from boarding schools that required uniforms to occupations that either required uniforms, a dress code, or enabled agency over one's attire. For example, Louellyn White (Mohawk) describes her grandfather's treatment at the Carlisle Indian Boarding school during the school's required summer "outings" for

students in which they lived with and worked for non-Indigenous families in manual labor, agriculture, or domestic-type jobs (109). She explains that her grandfather, like many students, worked for wages that were given to the school who then held the money for the students, but based on White's explanation of how her grandfather was treated when he asked to buy a suit, sometimes students did not receive the money that they earned (110):

> My grandfather wrote to the school at least twice asking for the hard earned money he made from working on a farm. He had already left Carlisle and was doing what he had been trained to do—work, earn money, and participate in the American economic and social structure. He also indicated in his letter that he needed his money to buy a suit for his new job. It is unclear what his new job was, but he was still in Pennsylvania and by that time a young adult. But like a child asking his parents for an allowance based on good behavior, he had to justify how he was going to spend his money. (111)

This is just one instance in which Indigenous peoples throughout history have been denied a right to determine their own appearances. I think about my grandmother who worked as a nurse after graduating boarding school, and how her job required her to wear a uniform, and how buying a beautiful Pendleton coat—a blend of Indigenous colors and patterns with non-Indigenous modern coat fashion—of her own choosing, with her own money, enabled her to express herself through fashion. Comanche history associates obtaining clothing with journeying, much like the grasshopper tale and stories from other Indigenous peoples about clothing do. We have a plan. We go places to get things as a result.

High points lend themselves for exploring style through both story and braiding like a journey. Any Comanche sister or brother may braid his or her sibling's hair "just because" or to explore braiding inventiveness, testing out one's skills. Any braider can put varieties of braids in

his or her sibling's hair to play with the braiding form, just like storytellers enjoy playing with genre or form. One can braid and/or tell a story without a planned ending or intention to make any specific form, just to pass time with one's loved ones. Storytellers sometimes "make up" or invent as they tell a story, enjoying time spent talking to someone and feeding off an audience's nonverbal cues, just to see where a story leads, and braiders do the same, to see where a braid structure leads, just because, *nah suniyut*~~*u*~~. Creating journeys through storytelling, braiding, or traveling are hallmarks of Comanche culture. For instance, there are stories about why the Comanches and the Shoshones split into separate tribes, but a few of these stories surround the issue of journeying in different directions (H. Mihesuah 1). Seeing where one's journey takes one is a part of Comanche history, as well as part of human stories in general.

Examining these high points collectively reveals how characters' actions impact the other characters and the plot in general, which echoes the Comanche value of considering how one's choices affect almost everyone and everything around him or her. And the high point within the grasshoppers tale reflects how early colonial Comanches' choices in trade impacted later generations, including other tribal and non-Indigenous communities. For instance, the 1700s Comanches held preferences for "red and blue cloth," "beads," "bells," "knives," and "silver" when trading (qtd. in Kavanagh, *Comanche Political* . . . 183; Tutino 67). These trade preferences fostered economic shifts, intertribal relationships, and international relationships (Tutino 67; Betty 11). Thus, Riddles's tale implies that because one grasshopper chose to obtain a painted coat and bring it back for all to see, his actions lead to a ripple of effects in his community. A similar cause-effect phenomenon occurs when braiding. Sometimes when braiders reach the middle of the braids, the ends of the braids attempt to weave themselves, especially if the braidees have long hair. For me, the "cause" of braiding the middle of my braid leads to the

"effect" of the ends of my hair sections weaving themselves simultaneously, usually leading to tangles that must be sorted out before the braid can further progress. This same phenomenon occurs in storying; by selecting a specific high point, one is also affecting how the story will end. One episode leads to another episode as one link in a braid leads to another link.

Regardless of how one structures a braid or a story, the audience still has the agency to interpret or "do with it what [they] will" (Powell, "A Basket is a Basket . . . " 483). Though stories and braids are structured, sometimes they do not go as planned, retaining aspects that almost imply that the story and/or braid structures are not always in the storytellers'/braiders' control. For example, the back of the braid does not always mirror the front. When braiders braid, they primarily see the front of the braid as it is woven, and they only see the back part of the braid forming if they flip over the braid to peer at its back. Though braiders and storytellers intend to create specific structures or messages, their audiences may not perceive the messages and structures how they expect. A high point for some listeners/readers/braidees may be a low point for others; a conclusion for some listeners/readers/braidees may not be a conclusion for others. This openness to interpretation can be further examined in Riddles's instances of double-meaning.

Double-Meaning—The Front and Back of the Braid are Not Mirror Images

Riddles's tales include *yu*-marked double-meaning and sometimes even double-entendre. These double meanings are associated with humor or irony and communicate meanings that audiences can—even more so than usual—make of them "what [they] will" (Powell, "A Basket is a Basket . . . " 483). Braids also carry multiple messages because the front of a braid and its back are not mirror images. At a glance, a braid's front and back look similar, but by tracing the

weave pattern of one woven section, one notices that one section is woven over the other section on the front of the braid and woven under the other sections at the back. This same matter of perspective can be said of audiences' interpretations of double-meaning in Comanche stories. Double-meaning in Comanche stories entails characters' dialogues not cohering with their intentions, actions, or tone, creating discord not only within the characters' messages, but also in their social interactions. Both Fairbanks and Wieser examine aspects of double meanings within Indigenous grammar and/or oratory. Wieser considers the layering of "multimodal rhetorics—oral, written, material, visual, embodied, and kinesthetic—that contribute to meaning making" (4). Each of these rhetorical modes enhance and alter meanings derived from a combination of these rhetorical modes, but she implies that a variety of Indigenous-based rhetorics adds plurality of meaning because "narrative and metaphor in American Indian oral traditions throughout cultures; stories, languages, artifacts, and ways, rather than academic discourse, carry this knowledge, making American Indian poetics, rhetorics, and other aesthetics overlap tremendously" (Wieser 3). This very overlapping, this braiding, "blurs" as it layers, allowing for a multiplicity of ways to see the story.

In comparison, Fairbanks considers how Ojibwe grammar contains doubling. He states that "discourse connectives in Ojibwe live double lives, in that they are part-time sentence-level elements (grammatical or lexical) and part-time discourse markers, doing work above the sentence level" (Fairbanks 1). And doubling on the narrative level is what rhetorical *yu* does. *Yu* contains a doubling at the grammar level as it expresses repetitive action and serves multiple grammar roles, and at times, the meanings of the grammar roles contradict, like verbalized adjective or verbalized object of the post position; for example, Comanche language expresses "being rich" or "being short" as rich-ing ("*tsanakayuna*") or short-ing ("*paiyut~~u~~*") (Charney 182,

202). In addition, *yu*'s expression of double meanings at the narrative level keeps audiences engaged and enables them to add to the story's interpretation. These contradictions at the grammar level are essential to *yu*'s narrative relationship because *yu* likes to combine concepts that contradict at the narrative level. And contradiction is a recurring theme throughout Riddles's tales.

In the Coyote and the turkeys tale, Coyote responds to the turkeys who discover that their fellow turkey has been injured. Riddles states, "Surʉkʉse, wihnu ohaʔahnakatʉ piayakenu, 'Nohi tʉtaatʉ taa haitsi namarʉninu,' me yʉkwiiyu . . . That one, Coyote, then gave a big cry and said, 'Our very little friend has hurt himself'" (line 18). Prior to Coyote's statement, Riddles reveals that Coyote has been up to trickery because he is described as eyeing the turkeys as he slides down the hill and picks up a sharp stick with which he sticks himself as part of his plan to trick the turkeys (line 11 and 17). Coyote's statement that the turkey has hurt himself can be interpreted three different ways: Firstly, the turkey has injured himself by accident. Secondly, the turkey has injured himself because Coyote has set a trap to give the appearance that the turkey has had an accident. And thirdly, Coyote's own injuries are false ones because he has intentionally "injured" himself to decrease the turkey's suspicions of his involvement; the turkey has not intentionally hurt himself. Coyote has given the appearance that he has had an accident, too, to distract the turkeys from realizing that he has killed the turkey and caused his own "injuries." Adding further nuance to Coyote's statement is his tears because he is glad the turkey is injured as it puts him one step closer to his dinner plate. His response when the turkeys gather to examine their turkey friend is another example of double-meaning, this time double-entendre. Riddles states, "Surʉkʉse, wihnu, 'Tanʉ hakanihku [hakaniku] ma hani?' me yʉkwiiyu . . . Then that one [Coyote] said, 'How should we fix him?'" (line 19). On one hand, Coyote is stating,

"Oh, what should we do/how do we fix his injuries?" On the other hand, Coyote is salivating and planning how he will fix him for dinner. With this line, he is revealing his awful plan. He pretends that he wants to help "fix" the turkey's injuries, but he caused this problem of the turkeys' loss of their relative and wants to make it worse by eating the turkey. Coyote's double-entendre is also a punchline that leaves the audience thinking, "Oh yeah, we all know how you're going to 'fix' him . . . with a side of roasted corn." And the "we" to which he is referring is not the turkeys, but to himself and his children, to whom he plans to feed the turkey.

This dialogue peppers the plot with humor and tension, giving layers of meaning for the audience to interpret as they wish. Similar to how *niikwiiyu* and *yukwiiyu* signal dialogue that contains double-meanings in these examples, the front of the braid is not like its back. One can mistake one section for another section, and in tightly woven braids, it is challenging to tell which links belong to which specific section within a given link. But, if one weaves in brightly colored ribbon in place of a section into the braid, one can see which sections within the links belong to the brightly colored ribbon, making it easier to see that the front and back of the braid are not mirror images. When the hair is one single, uniform color and texture, the braid's woven structure and repeated pattern masks the braid's incongruity, creating the illusion of identical link patterns, when they are not the same.

Riddles's choice to negatively connotate double-meaning by having Coyote speak this dialogue implies Comanche values of honesty that allude to instances in Comanche history when unscrupulous legal jargon and unscrupulous traders impacted Indigenous peoples, such as with the misleading alcohol trade practices that impacted early Indigenous reservations.[38] In 1866,

[38] There were a few attempts prior to 1875 to put some bands of Comanches on reservations but, the attempts were unsuccessful (Kavanagh, Comanche Political . . . 387-390). For clarification purposes, when I refer to pre-reservation years, I am referring to before 1875 when the last band

almost anyone could legally acquire a "permit" for trading with Indigenous peoples, but "federal Indian liquor laws [that prohibited the sale of alcohol to Indigenous peoples in Indian territory], of course, remained in effect. But no longer could Indian Office officials deter entrepreneurs from dealing with Indians simply by not granting them licenses" (Unrau 134-135). This federal trade law superseded Bureau of Indian Affairs' policies, enabling potential alcohol traders more access to reservations, which Indian agents could not stop entirely. Alcohol sales thrived near the KCA reservation (Monahan 453). The conflicted layering of laws concerning alcohol trade within reservations implies double meanings. Wieser further affirms that "While alcohol brought a whole host of ongoing issues to Indian Country and continues to plague communities" colonials and settler colonials "consistently utilized alcohol to their advantage in both trade and peace negotiations" (Wieser 170). Long before the reservation years, alcohol was used to hide the plethora of meanings within early colonial treaties by inhibiting signers' reasonings. Though no humans are perfect and no human culture is perfect either, Comanche culture values honesty.

The double meaning in Riddles's tales keeps her stories entertaining and pleasantly surprising for the audience, yet unpleasantly surprising for the characters who are being tricked, highlighting *yu*'s knack for signifying discord or contradiction, which makes plots more nuanced and lends itself to audience interpretation . . . but all braids, like all stories, "must come to an end."

Conclusion—The Closing of the Braid

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of Comanches moved to the reservation, and when I am referring to the early reservation years, I am referring to around 1875. I consider the reservation years from 1875 until the Dawes allotments in 1887-1901 when Comanches received the allotments.

The conclusion of a braid is much like the conclusion of a story—where all the hair sections meet up and are nicely tied together, creating a complete structure. Closing the braid is as important as beginning the braid. The beginning gives the braid a closely woven structure and a direction for the hair to follow, but how the braid is closed determines whether or not the braid's structure holds. While *yuhu* binds the braid, it cannot entirely secure the braid in place. The hair must receive help from an animal hide string, a rubber band, hairpins, or yarn. Whether a Comanche woman were cooking, fighting, or just wanting to "look nice," her braids had to withstand almost any physical activity in which she was participating. Braids must be as strong as the one who is wearing them; if they do not hold, then they must be redone.[39] Ensuring that the braids are securely closed is part of ensuring the braid's stability. A braid's end that is not tied together will unravel; in braiding, a weak conclusion can ruin a braid. However, in Comanche storying, the meaning of a story's conclusion does not entirely rely on the storyteller. A story that lacks an effective conclusion leaves the story unfinished, which is fine, if that is the impression the storyteller wants to achieve; instead, it is the audience who determines it. Powell's metaphor of basket weaving accounts for this audience agency. She states, "So keep this piece of this story in the palm of your hand while I pull in another strand for this Native rhetorics story-basket," as she conveys the historical moments in forming the Native rhetorics field (Powell, "A Basket is a Basket . . . " 471). She brings the audience's involvement into both the story's and the basket's production. Comanche storying and the braiding process factor in audience involvement as well. A braider may ask a braidee to hold the end of his or her braid as he or she grasps for a rubber band or deer hide ties to close the braid. Or a braider may ask a braidee to hold a section of his or her hair as the braider gathers the other sections and prepares

[39] And if braiders are pressed for time, they might not want to have to redo the braids.

to incorporate them in place. In storying, the storyteller can only weave so much. The story ends, and then the listeners/readers must gather their own interpretations and make something of them. Wieser elaborates on how Indigenous rhetors (in this case, storytellers or speakers) respect listener/reader agency:

> In most, if not all, American Indian traditional cultures, argument does not proceed the way it does in the kind of academic discourse in which the rhetor leads the hearer/reader to a specific conclusion. In many Indigenous rhetorical traditions, meaning making is equally distributed. The hearer/reader must make active choices, and cultural knowledge is a distinct advantage in making those interpretive choices, particularly when argument is done by analogy, by putting pieces of discourse into association with the actual context, what I earlier called indirect discourse. (11)

Like a securely closed braid that leaves a tiny tuft of hair loose on the end, Riddles's conclusions close her stories, yet leave an openness to interpretation, expressing elements of layered meaning that converge, while confirming characters' planned actions and relaying a sense of continuance.

In the Coyote and the turkeys tale, *yu* has a relationship to the conclusion. For example, "Sur~~u~~k~~u~~se wihnu ohaʔahnakat~~u~~ surii [sutii] b~~uu~~ [p~~uu~~] t~~ur~~~~u~~eʔtii, 'Taa t~~u~~hkap~~u~~haka tsap~~u~~ye tai t~~u~~hkaruʔi<u>k</u>a,' me y~~u~~kwiiy<u>u</u> . . ." Riddles states, "Then that one, Coyote, said to those ones, his children, 'Let's take out our meat and eat' . . . Sur~~uu~~ t~~u~~k~~u~~tsi yuuʔ~~u~~hkooin<u>u</u> . . . Those ones ate and slept just right" (lines 45-46). In this example, *y~~u~~kwiiy<u>u</u>* signals dialogue and Coyote's overall goal in the tale: to eat turkey with his children. *Yuu* can be interpreted as "just right" because *yuuʔ~~u~~hkooin<u>u</u>*, means, "to sleep unconcerned," *~~u~~hkooi* means "to sleep," and *yuu* can mean "quiet" or "do right" as the prefix, *yu* (Canonge 8, 134; McClung and Nahquaddy 91; *Taa N~~u~~m~~u~~ Tekwap~~u~~ʔha T~~u~~boop~~u~~* 86). *Yuuʔ~~u~~hkooin<u>u</u>* confirms that they succeeded in fooling

the turkeys within the story's overall context. The tale concludes with Coyote's family eating their turkey, confirming in *yu*-marked and *yu*-esque fashion that their goal has been realized. The style of this conclusion is like the end of a securely closed braid in which the animal hide or rubber band closes the braid and holds the woven sections in place, yet leaves a small portion of the ends of the hair free, combining all sections together into a single lock that tuffs out from the end of the braid. Riddles's conclusion mirrors this braid ending because the ending "ties off" any loose plot ends, yet remains open to interpretation—was Coyote right or wrong? Did he *really* sleep unconcerned or not? It is for the reader to decide, making for an ending that is "just right" to the listener/reader.

But, is a story or braid ever really finished? Many writers claim that "writing is never finished." Much like writing or storytelling, in braiding there is always room for growth, similar to in revising a story. If braids do not hold, then they must be redone; if a story is ineffective, it must be revised. For some braiders, they braid the hair all the way to the tip of the braid, but for most braiders, there comes a point where the braid cannot continue any longer, where the braid must end because there is not enough section length to use for weaving. Today, a braid may be stopped at a particular point in the hair sections, leaving about an inch of tufted hair ends dangling in a lock, but in a few months, the hair may grow longer and the majority of the previous loose ends may now be incorporated into the braid. Therefore, braids have this sense of continuance similar to continuing a story, or what Powell refers to as the "continuum" of stories ("Word by Word . . . " 135). One could talk on about a story or pause a story and resume or change it months or years later. One's future generations could add to the story, or one could place a given story in the canon or Comanche oral tradition as part of a larger series of stories regarding specific themes or characters. But at some point, the tale must close, at least until the

storyteller or listener/reader is ready to return to it later, leaving the storyteller and audience an opportunity to pursue other goals.

Rhetorical Trope—The Added Décor of a Hair Tie or Ribbon

Throughout several of Riddles's tales, *yu* marks dialogue, expresses progressive action, and functions as a noun phrase; *yu* has a relationship to plot twists, irony, punchlines, tension, etc. But *yu*'s functions in Riddles's rations tale convey *yu*'s rhetorical capabilities the most. In the rations tale, *yu* is used in almost every line. One could wrongfully assume that *yu* is only expressing progressive action in the tale, not marking any particular plot element because it is used so often. However, where *yu* is not in a narrative is just as important as where it is. The final line of this story does not contain *yu*, yet it conveys *yu*'s rhetorical functions. The final line of the rations tale is "N~~ʉ~~mʉ sokohne ta tsatuwahka n~~ʉ~~mi b~~ʉ~~akʉnu [p~~ʉ~~akʉnu] . . . Our Comanche land opened [,and] we quit" (line 15). This contrast or absence of *yu* confirms its rhetorical device status. Almost all the previous lines in this tale end in *yu*, creating the impression of constant movement and an almost birds eye view of all the ongoing action at the rations day encampments, creating the impression likened to that of assonance, anaphora, or epistrophe. These lines use multisyllabic words to describe fixing/doing/making, receiving rations, arriving and camping, throwing somethings down to dispose of them, butchering, and moving away from the camps; *hanik~~ʉ~~ʔeeyu, t~~ʉ~~himaʔeeyu, nopit~~ʉ~~t~~ʉ~~niʔeeyu, petihtaiʔeeyu, t~~ʉ~~kw~~ʉ~~s~~ʉ~~ʔeeyu, and nomiaʔeeyu*. And then all this movement contrasts with a two-syllable, sudden stop of *b~~ʉ~~ak~~ʉ~~nu* (pronounced buh-awk-nu/puh-awk-nu), meaning "and then we quit"), like a caesura, followed by "subet~~ʉ~~ . . . The end." All these fluid, descriptive progressive verbs contrast with the two breathy puffs of *b~~ʉ~~ak~~ʉ~~nu*, which ends in *-nu* (pronounced new), meaning a completed action (Charney

145). However, this rhetorical device expresses more than creative repetition or a contrast of ideas because *yu* is suggesting habitual action and historical criticism, while giving insight into the speaker's feelings and Comanche cultural philosophy. Riddles's rhetorical tropes involving *yu* cohere with the rhetoric behind the Comanche women's traditions of adding the décor of hair ties or ribbons to their braids. Of course, braidees can wear their braids without any added accessories, or they can add animal hides, animal furs, beads, burets, yarn, or more. These extra adornments convey significance into one's identity, style, family stories, or even relationship to the community. One's added hair décor implies an event's occasion or one's tribal affiliation(s). The hair accessories that accompany braids contribute further meaning to the braids' messages, just as *yu* in the rations tale sets a mood, creates an impression, and implies both historical and political messages.

In the rations story, the second to the last line is important for understanding *yu*'s functions and the narrative as a whole: "Sunihku sur~~uu~~ usuni hanimiaʔeeyu . . . Those ones always were doing and going that way" (line 14). This sentence confirms Riddles's intentions for repetitively including *yu* at the ends of each sentence—to show habitual movement, thereby creating a pattern, not just to show progressive action, but to express a break from said pattern, causing the audience to question both Riddles's intentions behind her syntax and precolonial and paracolonial food system patterns and their effects.

Riddles's staccato of " . . . *b~~u~~ak~~u~~nu* [*p~~u~~ak~~u~~nu*] . . . [and] we quit," expresses an abruptness. The sentence's length reveals contriteness, which then affects the audience's interpretations of the tale. The rations tale is one of the few stories in which Riddles admits that she is positioning herself in the story by talking about her own family. Riddles's reference to "we" is commentary on how the land allotments affected community gatherings and family

structure because she describes how four families would share one cow. Prior to the reservation, Comanches lived as bands. But the longer they spent on the reservation, the more families broke down into "single families" that were multigenerational (Foster 87-88). I sense a sadness that the communities were becoming further separated from one another and a realization that these large gatherings were for reasons that affected pre-reservation traditions because while they were glad to see so many Comanches together in one place, they were relying on a rations system for food which is not traditional. Furthermore, the stopping of the first rations system was once again another major change that impacted social interactions, food, family structure, and land access. Comanches who lived on the reservation during the 1800s were Indigen-izing the rations day to socialize, build community morale, and maintain their traditions while navigating the rations system, which was becoming a "new tradition" that then changed once more.

Her tone implies that the early reservation system was teaching Comanches to rely on this system, then the system changed, without much Comanche involvement in the decision. One of the major locations where Comanches received rations while living on the reservation was Fort Sill, and they received rations there "once every two weeks or when available until 1879, when the [Indian] agency was relocated to what is today Anadarko [Oklahoma]" (Foster 79). The Comanches who were living on the reservation continued to receive rations until allotments began (D. Mihesuah 240).

Riddles's tone implies this frustration with how quickly[40] the changes occurred with little to no transition periods. Some of the economic pressures surrounding the sudden stop of

[40] The start of the Comanche reservation ranges from about 1874 until about 1892-1901 with the Jerome Allotment Agreement, and the first rations system spanned about eighteen years between these periods. Riddles's tone implies her worldview that food decisions should be made with future generations, prolonged sustainability, and cultural/traditional continuance in mind. Both Riddles's parents and she would have seen these swift changes within their lifetimes, meaning

reservation rations were related to land allotment and the Jerome agreement, which brought to question "continued economic survival after the lapse of treaty-mandated annuities after 1898. Comanches realized that, even with the food they were able to grow themselves, the cattle they were able to obtain, and the grass money payments, they could not survive without some replacement for the annuity income and could not depend on continued agency rations" (Foster 82-83). Hence, Riddles's impassioned attitude toward the issue. Fairbanks gages speaker tone as he discusses Brinton's use of "interpersonal mode" to explain interpersonal discourse markers (qtd. in Fairbanks 22). He explains that Ojibwe discourse markers with "interpersonal" traits express "speaker's attitudes, evaluation, judgments, expectations, and demands, as well as the nature of the social exchange, the role of the speaker and the role assigned to the hearer" (Fairbanks 22). He states that the Ojibwe "veridical" discourse marker, *mii*, "reveals the attitude of the speaker toward his or her proposition, indicating that the proposition is a sure thing, viewed as fact, that there is no doubt about the verity of the proposition, or that a serious statement is being made" (Fairbanks 92). In the following example sentence, Fairbanks demonstrates how *mii* suggests certainty and attitude: "Mii-sagaawiinnigikendanziin . . . 'I really don't know' (after much thought)" (93). In the Comanche language, *noo* (pronounced no) conveys "definite, for sure" and has adverb-like qualities, not *yu* (*Taa N~~ʉ~~m~~ʉ~~ Tekwap~~ʉ~~ʔha T~~ʉ~~boop~~ʉ~~* 34). But in Riddles's rations tale, *yu*'s repetitive narrative function paired with the final completitive, *-nu*, implies attitude and creates the impression of a certainty that has been abruptly

they witnessed their traditional food systems be changed and then altered once more. For clarification, I am not arguing that the early rations system did not need changing, but Comanches of the 1800s may have preferred agency over the decision-making regarding their food systems.

halted similar to how the Ojibwe *mii* discourse marker conveys certainty, but for *yu* this function is on a narrative level.

Similarly ribbon in braids implies the braidee's mood, just as *yu* implies mood in repetition. The braidee's choice in ribbon material, color, texture, and method of wrapping the hair can convey pieces of the braidee's personality, identity, and interpretation of an occasion's significance. Ribbon made from yarn, cotton, or silk can suggest the braidee's values of Comanche tradition, whereas hot pink nylon ribbon covered in glitter suggests the braidee's values of modernity within Comanche traditions. While nice braids can convey a strong message, adding bright blue ribbon to those same braids can grant this message more flair, and Riddles's strategic use of *yu* and *-nu* do just that by calling attention to matters that are important to her.

Riddles's poetic repetition of strong action verbs at the ends of her sentences further signifies her inner-feelings through her description of outer facts—everything is moving, everything is changing. But the final lines give a stark contrast to this movement by ending with *-nu*. This *-nu* implies a finality within the context of the story, much like the "finality" surrounding the historical context of the rations system in which the system altered precolonial traditional food systems,[41] and aspects of this system continue to influence modern Comanche lives.

[41] Yes, Comanches' ancestors have a history of embracing Euro American foods and goods, but the emphasis is on the agency and continuance of the nomadic lifestyle. Kavanagh explains that between 1846-1860 (and prior to this period) Comanches were involved in "the distribution of subsistence and prestige of political gifts" while also participating in "trade in horses, buffalo products, and captives" (*Comanche Political* . . . 376). Comanches received rations before being placed on the final reservation in 1875. Rations are associated with positive and negative connotations as being both historically political "gifts" and as forced food sources. Some early Comanches liked some of the items, while some did not like them. They were possibly glad to receive items as "gifts," while not pleased that the items were ploys for limiting Comanche

The rhetorical *yu* within the rations tale highlights contradictoriness. While food was provided, it was not the most nutritious food. The beef was like buffalo meat, but not quite. The rice was edible, but it was not any food that the Comanches recognized; they thought it was cooked maggots. To this day, rice in Comanche language is *woʔarʉhkapʉ̲* or *woʔatʉʉkapʉ̲*, meaning "worm food"/worm meat (*Taa Nʉmʉ Tekwapʉ̲ʔha Tʉboopʉ̲* 150). And the soap was *yuhu̲*, but not the *yuhu̲* they knew. The settlers of the 1800s made soap from lye and animal fats (National Museum of American History). Pre-reservation Comanches had their own methods for hygiene, bathing, and perfume derived from nature. They did not need soap to clean themselves or their animal hide clothing. The soap was contextualized as food by association with the doling of food, but it was not food. This confusion was humorous, yet not humorous. Considering the rations event in relation to pre-reservation Comanches' nomadic lifestyles, the rations event involved traveling, but this traveling was in a much shorter spurt. The Comanches were experiencing a "new tradition" for obtaining food, yet it retained fragments of their pre-reservation food traditions; the Comanche communities were gathering for a feast and for butchering animals, but for bittersweet reasons because they were required to live on a reservation. And Riddles describes all these contradicting cultural phenomena by infusing *yu* in her syntax. *Yu* splices these contradictions together narratively, suggesting the rhetorical contradictions occurring in early reservation life, in which numerous outside, settler cultures were imposed upon numerous Comanche cultures in diverse bands. Occasionally, Comanches

territory and trade, but they still could choose how the items would be used, with the understanding that they could always use their traditional items derived from nature whenever they wanted from wherever they wanted. A major problem arose when the Comanches were forced to only use the Euro American items and that they could not go back to their familiar environments in nature to obtain their resources as an alternative because the land became off limits to them.

chose to blend these new cultures with their own; the early rations practice of Comanche encampment depicts a dichotomy of altering, yet preserving Comanche food traditions. Rations encampments were intended to replace hunting and gathering, yet they were vehicles for preserving Comanche communities' feasts[42] by allowing them to gather across bands in mass, which helped to preserve Comanche communities. Lastly, the location where they were required to gather for rations was a fraction of the land within their wider traditional hunting territories, but by the mid-1800s, most of their land was "not theirs" anymore. Yet, they were required to journey back to it to eat in ways that were strange to them because they were used to hunting buffalo instead of having cattle given to them, yet traditional to them in how they gathered together to partake of the food.

Yu creates almost an uncanny effect and a humorous, yet bittersweet mood, while functioning rhetorically to convey information about 1800s Comanche life in the rations tale. *Yu* and *-nu* function like the added hair accessories in a braid because ribbons, beaded hair ties, and animal hide/fur wraps convey sociopolitical messages and contradictions, too. How one parts one's hair and the direction in which one wears one's braids can convey one's marital status.[43] A beaded hair tie or burette can convey one's family linage or even indicate one's organizational affiliation, such as one of the several Comanche military or women's societies, based on beadwork patterns, symbols, and colors. Just as Comanche braid décor and storying patterns signify rhetorical meaning, Cranford-Gomez affirms that the material composition of Creole and

[42] Devon Mihesuah also notes that the rations system reinforced hunting, though it was intended to discourage it. When Comanches were introduced to sheep in 1876 to transform Comanches into farmers, Comanches would use them for "archery practice" (D. Mihesuah 237). This act, though frowned upon by modern standards, kept their hunting skills sharp.

[43] When I was a child, my mother taught me that married Comanche women part their hair on the left, whereas single Comanche women part their hair on the right. But, this could be a newer tradition that stems from westernized cultural contact.

Indigenous baskets also communicates rhetorical meaning through "patterns, dyes, and processes [that] help link tribes, families, intermarriage, and geography in dialogues between Indian and Creole communities that show shared processes of basket making as inherited cultural practices and pattern uses in southern indigenous-descended communities" (Cranford-Gomez 102). And based on a braidee's chosen style, material, and amount of adornment, one's attitude toward Comanche tradition can be gaged (such as, does one prefer the simplicity of traditional Comanche adornment, the elaborate flash of modern, urban Indigenous regalia, or a combination?).

Just as *yu* expresses contradictions, hair ribbon, animal hide wraps, and animal fur wraps create illusions about one's hair by making one's hair appear longer, shorter, thicker, or thinner. Ribbon can be woven into the braid as though the ribbon itself were a hair section, giving the impression of braided ribbon within the hair. Hair wraps can "disguise" a braid or give the impression that one's hair is braided, when it is not. If braidees are in a hurry, they can roll their hair into two separate sections and then wrap the rolled hair with two long animal hide wraps, provided they are wide and long enough, and secure them around the hair, giving the impression of braids. The longer the hair wraps, the longer one's hair appears, which can be beneficial because braiding compresses the hair, drawing hair length upward and causing the hair to look thinner or shorter when one's hair may be much longer and thicker (at least my hair looks thinner and shorter than it is when I braid it). And the higher up one wears a set of beaded hair ties, the shorter one's hair appears from a distance. And *yuhu* contains contradictions within braids because it can be incorporated into the hair prepping process preceding the addition of hair accessories, thereby wrapping *yuhu* into both the hair and the accessories, almost diffusing into the hair accessory process and sticking itself to them. And the animal hide wraps require the

animal, such as buffalo or deer, to produce *yuhu* to grow muscle, securing their skin, which later becomes the hair accessories that both adorn and secure the braid. *Yuhu* is contradictory in braids as *yu* is contradictory in Riddles's rations tale.

A storyteller's use of *yu* is strategic. The rations tale has many instances of *yu*, and her use of *yu* does not show major shifts in the plot, rather it describes habitual action, stacking action upon action in a continuous flow, creating an intentional repetitious pattern (as in going, going, going, and stop). This contrast in verb tense[44] between the majority of the narrative and its conclusion still emphasizes the story's shape. Riddles is describing habitual action that becomes complete, and she uses *yu* and *-nu* as Comanche rhetorical tropes that are likened to similar Greek/Roman rhetorical tropes, such as assonance, anaphora, epistrophe, or a narrative juxtaposition of actions. Or, one can interpret the contrast in conclusion with the larger previous lines of narrative as a poetic turn in tone, from one that is informative, yet humorous and bittersweet, to one that is more frank.

Cooking and Hunting Instructions—Paying It Forward, Braiding to Teach

Many of Riddles's tales teach both cultural and physical survival skills, qualities that the braiding process teaches as well. Stories, like braids, teach lessons that recipients pass on to others. Stories and braids are heuristics and means for aesthetic expression. Riddles's story content implies that she hopes listeners/readers will learn from her stories. Likewise, braiding is not merely about giving someone a braid, or receiving a braid, but braiding is about the hope that this knowledge of braiding will be passed down to future generations like the skills described in

[44] I do not refer to most Comanche verb endings as tenses because Comanche language does not have tenses. Action is more progressive or completed.

Riddles's stories. Heath and Heath also explain that a "sticky" idea "changes something (opinions, behaviors, values) . . . And a sticky idea is one that's more likely to make a difference" (Heath and Heath 1). This claim coincides with the lessons in Riddles's tales because they teach skills applicable to physical survival, skills that can make a difference in someone's life in a survival situation. After all, *yuhu* in Comanche braids is not only to make the braids look nice; it is for survival purposes.

As previously mentioned in the irony section, the Coyote and the turkeys tale provides clues into how traditional Comanches liked to roast meat on wooden stakes with the ironic description of the turkey being stabbed. Riddles states, "Surʉkʉse wihnu okʉhu paakʉhu wʉhtʉkwanu nahubiniiyu . . . Then that one [the Turkey] there at a distance hit something in the water and was groaning" (line 12). At this point in the story, the audience is not sure what it is that the turkey has hit until Riddles states, "Surʉkʉse, ohaʔahnakatʉ usʉ pʉma u nabiso?aruʔiha mutsipʉha huuhpihta pʉhtu u pisikwanuuʔituʔitu u tsiʔnikanu . . . That one, Coyote, removed himself from the group to place a sharp pointed stick for him to stick himself with as he slides in a sitting position" (line 17). This line bolsters our suspicion that Coyote placed a sharp, hidden stick in the creek at the bottom of the hill so that when the turkey slid, he skewered himself. Coyote hides his wrongdoing by pretending to have also stabbed himself, further confirming how his plan to harm the turkey. Though Riddles does not directly state that Coyote caused the turkey to stab himself, Coyote's line about how the turkey has "hurt himself" only make us suspect more his involvement. While Coyote's deeds are unethical, the descriptions of his actions contain information about how to herd animals into a trap that would have taught traditional Comanches hunting heuristic; as we see him demonstrate one possible method, we see how to solve a problem, how to evaluate one's surroundings and obtain food through tricking prey.

Coyote's luring of the turkey to a specific location reflects another of Riddles's stories in which she describes Comanche women driving down flocks of turkey for the men to hunt (Canonge 119-120). The Comanche women drive the turkeys from their roosting place to the edge of the timbers where their men folk shoot the turkeys with guns,[45] and then the women pluck and cook the turkeys for everyone to eat (Canonge 119-120). This herding motion of the turkeys echoes similar herding practices that pre-reservation Comanches used when herding buffalo. Historian Gerald Betty notes Josiah Gregg's description of Comanche horsemanship in *Commerce of the Prairies*, in which Gregg states that the Comanches would "train their fleetest horses to run close beside him [the buffalo]; and, when near enough . . . they pierce him with their arrows, usually behind the short ribs, ranging forward, which soon disables and brings him to the ground'" (qtd. in Betty 93). This hunting of the buffalo could be aided by groups of fellow Comanche hunters herding buffalo as a team (Hamalainen, "The First Phase . . . " 104). Betty also includes Gregg's description of a similar herding motion in which Comanches would obtain wild horses by using "a strong pen at some passway or crossing of a river, into which [wild horses] are frightened and caught" (qtd. in Betty 88). These group herding motions are also braid-like in their collaboration of various individuals who all come together and move toward a given direction yet serve several different roles with a shared end-goal. Hence, Coyote's "herding" of a turkey reflects Comanche hunting practices. And in some instances, braided rope snares or lassos further assist hunters in herding their game. Usually, braids can only be undone by working in reverse, starting at the end of the braid and undoing every strand or by cutting them. Likewise, braided rope reinforces its stability because when a braid is attached to something, just as a braid is when attached to the human head, it cannot be undone by starting at the beginning and unwinding the braid—it makes

[45] In earlier times, Comanche men would have used bows and arrows.

the end of the braid tighter and more knotted. This makes the braided rope structure ideal for carrying large loads, for working with horses and livestock, or in weaving baskets.

Besides teaching survival skills, Riddles's hackberries tale also reminds listeners of skills necessary for historic Comanche cultural survival. For instance, in this tale, Riddles states, "Sitʉkʉse ma pia pʉ huuʔawokʉku marii tayuʔnekʉnu pʉ tʉʉhtsohpeʔa kuhpitsunikʉtsi ubaʔaihtu [upaʔaihtu] u roʔkwʉrianu [toʔkwʉrianu] . . . This one, her mother, pounded it on it" (line 8). *Tayuʔnekʉnu*, means "to pound with a pestle or to crush with a pestle" (Canonge 149). The practice of grinding up buffalo meat, grains, or berries can be a lengthy, tiring process; one has to work at the crushed berries to make sure the food's consistency and texture is even and well incorporated. If one's mother, auntie, grandma, or other female elder is looking over one's shoulder as one works, and she notices that one's ground food is "not right," then she's going to tell you to fix it and keep working until the food is "just right," as in *yuu*,[46] "do right." *Yu*'s presence in the middle of *tayuʔnekʉnu* has connotations stemming from Comanche cultural context. Just as Powell's "Word by Word, Bead by Bead" argues that "mistakes" are part of the beading and writing process (126), mistakes are part of the braiding process and the cooking process. The *yu* prefix often crops up in other Comanche terms referring to food that requires grinding, such as *beef*, *yutʉkapʉ*, in which *yu* rhetorically, based on connotations, denotations, and context, implies that to create this ground beef, it must be transformed into finely ground pieces that are then morphed into a patty. Riddles's use of rhetorical *yu* in this sentence about

[46] *Yu* is present in *yuu wʉnʉrʉ*, meaning "stand still" (*Taa Nʉmʉ Tekwapʉʔha* . . . 87). In this instance, *yu* is spelled with two *u*'s and a space before the second word like a standalone word on its own. A similar spelling is in *yuu habiitʉ*, meaning "lie still," yet *yu-* is a prefix meaning "do right," that is also found in *niyukarʉ*, meaning "sit still be quiet" (*Taa Nʉmʉ Tekwapʉʔha* . . . 87, 86, 33).

preparing hackberries highlights the importance of knowing the steps of this process that historic Comanches needed to know to care for their families. In early Comanche societies, most meals were communal, and part of the sociocultural aspects of making ground foods "right" involves considering how one's cooking reflects upon Comanche communities, one's family, and oneself. In modern Comanche culture, if one ever serves grounded food to a Comanche community, and the ground food is not uniform or made "wrong," then some elders will possibly inquire about who made the meal in order to inform said cook(s) how to make the meal "right," which can embarrass one and one's family, but also present a learning opportunity. Likewise, many Comanches have their own standards for how to braid "right," so that the braids reflect positively upon their families. One's adherence to cultural tradition is often gaged by one's ability to meet aesthetic standards for various traditional processes, such as cooking, braiding, hunting, and more. However, the knowledge one gains in one area of traditional process can inform another because braids aid in survival processes as they help one avoid free flowing hair that can catch fire near flames, get caught in low-hanging tree branches, or fall out, leaving evidence of one's presence when hunting, all things that could cause injury, limit mobility, or deter hunting goals.

Both Riddles's stories and the braiding process contain knowledge relevant to hunting, gathering, and preparing food according to Comanche traditions, and the method in which this knowledge is conveyed is as pertinent as the knowledge itself. Both braiding and storying create immediate learning experiences, but storying also creates vicarious learning experiences through the situations that the characters encounter. Then, the story's vicarious experiences transmit knowledge that then prepares listeners/readers for future learning situations of which they may not be aware, giving them the skills that they need to survive, skills that can be passed down to future generations. Learning experiences that enable the taking in of information through the

senses, like cooking hackberries, eating hackberries, and listening to a story about hackberries, "ground[s]" the information by making abstract concepts "concrete" (Heath and Heath 5). Heath and Heath call this method of learning, "'the Velcro Theory of Memory' . . . the more sensory 'hooks' we can put into an idea, the better it will stick . . . Concreteness etches ideas into our brain—think of how much easier it is to remember a song than a credit card number—even though a song contains much more data!" (5). Riddles's short stories are a much "easier" method for recalling the hackberry cooking process than recalling a laundry list of steps to follow. While utility and versatility exists in braid-wearing, the braided structure also serves as a mnemonic for problem-solving by taking multiple distant ideas and synthesizing them into a whole new concept. Both these immediate and vicarious learning experiences enable one to remember what one has learned, how one has learned it, and how to teach it. Heath and Heath describe a similar learning occurrence as "flight simulators for the brain" (10). Riddles' stories do just that and more by providing both a vicarious story experience and an immediate storying experience through the oral tradition, which becomes a memory.

Lastly, storying's and braiding's creative forms and openness to interpretation encourage resourcefulness and inventiveness through the allusion to additional skills. In Riddles's hackberries tale, she explains that hackberries must be roasted on a stick, but she does not explain how to build a fire; however, the story provides enough information to highlight the importance of knowing how to build a fire, a significant survival skill upon which other survival skills hinge. Similarly, braiding involves other skills, such as combing hair, selecting the correct brushes, selecting specific forms of *yuhu*, choosing other hair products, and more that may not always be described in detail when teaching how to braid, but are as important to most hairstyling processes. Heath and Heath state, "Some concepts are more critical than others. And

as the teacher, you're the only one who can make that determination" (Heath and Heath 2). However, the heuristics within Riddles's tales subvert this notion because she does not tell the audience why certain skills are needed—she lets the listeners/readers decide. Yes, she selects specific characters with carefully chosen conflicts, key descriptions, and deliberate dialogues, but the story's lessons are open to interpretation so that the listener can choose what he or she makes of it and learn how to solve problems at the same time.

Comanche narrative expands Heath's and Heath's definition of stickiness. Heath and Heath claim that "identifying your core message involves tough choices: What's in and what's out? Once you've decided what's 'in,' how do you communicate it as simply as possible?" (Heath and Heath 2). Comanche narrative traditions would argue otherwise; the listener/reader has agency to choose a story's meaning. Yes, the storyteller chooses enough key information, but then the audience must supply the rest. Heath and Heath claim, "Our tendency is to tell students the facts. First, though, they must realize they need them" (4). But Comanche story takes a different pedagogical approach. Though Riddles's tales include suspense, foreshadowing, and plot twists that take audience's expectations and transform them, there are moments where Riddles implies for the audience to guess about how a character is and what will happen next. Heath and Heath also suggest for instructors to use "outsourcing" for credibility to the audience so that they can determine an idea's validity and "see for [themselves]" (6). While Riddles's tales require the audience to determine the stories' meanings and to finish the storying, she takes a more nuanced approach toward encouraging audiences to use the knowledge in her stories. Riddles's tales do not explicitly say, "Hey, you should go cook this now and see if the recipe works," or "Hey, you need to try this method to hunt small animal game." The influence within

the tales is more implicit; the audience is welcome to not use these skills if they prefer not to use them. In this way, they act as what Wieser calls “indirect discourse” (12).

A parent cooking alongside his or her children implies lessons about cooking through the experience itself that associate social interaction, positive memories, and delicious food with the learning experience, and this experience increases the likelihood that the children will want to repeat this recipe in the future. Such experiences increase the likelihood that the children will pass down this cooking knowledge to future generations. Riddles’s tales teach through influence that indirectly tells learners to apply the knowledge because Comanche stories respect audience agency. Comanche stories do not tell listeners/readers why a story is being told or why they need it. This Comanche narrative pedagogy leaves this information out because storytellers want the readers/listeners to figure it out for themselves. Many of Riddles’s stories carry pre-reservation Comanche knowledge, but one must realize that because of Comanche stories’ openness to storyteller subjectivity and innovation, not all Comanches would have heard the exact same version of these stories and garnered the exact lessons. Not all pre-reservation Comanches would have been familiar with identical stories and the same contextual knowledge even though many of these stories would have taught lessons applicable to daily life. How each individual Comanche would have learned these stories would have differed from person to person. As Powell states, “This story is yours now. Do with it what you will. Teach about it. Write about it. Blog about it. Forget about it. But don’t say you would have done any of that differently if only you’d heard this story. You’ve heard it now” (Powell, “A Basket is a Basket . . . ” 483), . leading one to question how skills in braiding and storying will inspire future applications in surprising ways.

Chapter One Conclusion

In the episode of *The Finder* titled "The Last Meal" disabled military veteran turned private investigator Walter Sherman is hired by a notary named Joe Turnbull to find the whereabouts of a missing chef and his recipe for a specific Cuban dish. Walter's friend and investigating partner, Leo Knox, is present when a mob boss arrives. Leo is coping with the loss of his wife and daughter and remarks, "We are the meal" ("The Last Meal" 00:30:48-00:30:54). I had no idea I would be spending so much time writing about food because I planned to write about braiding and storytelling, yet cooking has found a way into my study. This phrase "we are the meal" can be said of Comanche stories and braiding, as well as the human tendency to merge meal with story and community care. While *yuhu* is associated with hair care, it is still food, and it was still used in the creation of pre-reservation Comanche materials like preparing animal hides. *Yu* is also a rhetorical lens and aesthetic lens through which to examine the quality of making, fixing, and repairing. Like storying and braiding, the food-sharing experience is about more than the delicious food; it is about the shared-experience of partaking in a meal with others, which builds a bond between people, establishing a relationship through the company one keeps, the time one shares, and the attention and care that one gives. What makes food, stories, and braids "special" is the care that is put into creating them, and sometimes this creation process is a shared experience, too. We do not make the meal; the meal makes us. Cooking, storying, and braiding "materialize identities," as both Maureen Daly Goggin and Joanna Sofaer assert that made objects do (qtd. in Daly Goggin 17). The food, stories, and braids are about all humans, and specifically the Comanche people—their thoughts, hopes, and dreams—originally spoken for a Comanche audience, now, for a wider audience, to transmit Comanche stories, ideas, heuristics, and aesthetics using Comanche pedagogies, rhetorics, and hermeneutics, Comanche

teaching, meaning-making, and interpretive practices. The food, stories, and braids are reflections of who Comanche people and their culture are. The stories, like braids, constitute pieces of Comanche identity made manifest. Both the storying and braiding processes promote collaborative meaning making where relationships form between braiders/storyers and braidees/listeners/readers. Memories are made, and lessons are learned. And one can look into the mirror and admire one's hair and feel proud.

The Comanche tradition of braiding hair offers a heuristic for understanding Comanche stories, and the storying process informs one's understanding of the braiding process. One must evaluate and understand Comanche literature through Comanche notions of tradition, aesthetics, concepts, and cultural philosophy, such as Comanche notions of collaborative storying, heuristics, *kwisikat~~u~~*, and *suniyut~~u~~*. These are essential to understanding and utilizing a rhetorical *yu* and braiding methodology. Throughout the Comanche language, *yu* serves multiple roles at the word level, such as affix, prefix, suffix, and standalone phrase. *Yu* has multiple functions at the sentence level, such as progressive and habitual action verb. And at the narrative level *yu* has a relationship with punchline, plot twist, or highpoint, like oil that sticks to hair to help form layers and layers of woven sections to create the shape of the braid.

However, there is even further braid-likeness, *kwisikat~~u~~*-ness, where a given sentence containing *yu* serves multiple narrative functions that overlap. For example, in the tale of Coyote and the sliding turkeys, Riddles states, "Sur~~u~~k~~u~~se wihnu ok~~u~~hu paak~~u~~hu w~~u~~ht~~u~~kwanu nahubiniiyu . . . Then that one [the Turkey] there at a distance hit something in the water and was groaning" (lines 12). This one line conveys irony, cooking instructions, and a plot twist. This line conveys dramatic irony and situational irony based on the context in which the storying is told, especially if the tale is told while one is cooking turkey traditional Comanche-style. This

storying context primes one for a heuristic moment where the story's content and context encourage sticky learning about hunting, cooking, and problem-solving (Heath and Heath 1). This same line expresses a plot twist that conveys action as it unfolds, the breaking of the turkeys' repetitious sliding down the hill. In turn, the braiding process gives further insight into these multiple layers of narrative elements because braiding is repetitious and full of twists, tensions, and turns, where the environment in which one braids influences the braid's outcome.

In several sentences that include *yu*, they combine multiple narrative elements together, creating layers of meaning. *Yu* is fluid, woven, and has many grammar roles, including combining historical narratives that conflict, cross genres, and blend artforms. Riddles's tales interweave narrative and rhetorical elements in a way that appears effortless, even more so when they are spoken in real-time, yet they have been strategically formed by Riddles, generations of elders before her, and by the audiences who make of them "what they will" (Powell, "A Basket is a Basket . . . " 483). How are these stories' meanings being negotiated, retained, and transformed generation after generation? *Suniyut~~u~~*. They just do. Braids, like narratives, create seamless, intricately woven structures, yet braids and *yuhu* contain contradictions. Braiding has a dichotomy between "making an effort" and "appearing effortless." Braiders work very hard to weave braids that appear formed with ease and enable both the hair and wearer to move effortlessly. No human's hair grows braids naturally; the hair requires conscious human effort to change its shape and placement to create the braids. *Yuhu* is meant to stick the hair together while creating the impression that nothing is holding the hair together except for the hair itself. And Riddles's layers of rhetorical elements give this same impression of the hair holding itself, when rhetorical *yu* is often driving the plot and building layers of meaning.

CHAPTER 2 YU GRAMMAR AND HAKANIYUTU̲ U̶NU̲ HANIYU / YUHANIYU

Introduction

One may be wondering why the title of my study is *Hakaniyutu̲ U̶nu̲ Haniyu – Why Are You Making?*, especially since, thus far, there has been little discussion about *why* anyone is making anything. The title serves three purposes: 1. To show *yu*'s multiple functions at the word level to weave words and sentences. *Yu* can occur anywhere in a sentence (front, back, middle) and at any part of a word (front, back, middle), indicating different aspects of its meaning each time it moves; it is intricately interwoven, which is why *hakaniyutu̲ u̶nu̲ yuhaniyu* best demonstrates *yu*'s woven syntax and narrative relationships, as well as its cultural philosophies behind this sentence's various meanings. This combination of grammatical fluidity, yet structured woven-ness can also be seen/heard in other Indigenous languages, such as Ojibwe. Fairbanks claims that Ojibwe "discourse markers may essentially occur in any position within the domain of a sentence (or in its vicinity, straddling sentence boundaries)" (Fairbanks 2). And 2. To convey the cultural nuance in the Comanche language because *hakaniyutu̲* is formed from *haka, hakai, hakani,* and *hakaniku,* all terms that mean *how*[47] in Comanche (*Taa Nu̶mu̲*

[47] A common stereotypical movie phrase that Indigenous peoples historically uttered in the Western films is *how*. In conversation even today, some individuals use it to make fun of Indigenous cultures and people. Usually, this pejorative term is accompanied by one raising the palm of one's hand to signal someone as though the greeting were articulating "hello." This pejorative act oversimplifies Indigenous languages as well as sign language. According to *Taa Nu̶mu̲ Tekwapu̲ʔha Tu̶boopu̲* there are four different ways to say *how* (126). Each of these different ways to say *how* convey different degrees of meaning, depending upon usage, translation, and word anatomy. In *A Grammar of Comanche*, Charney states that *haka* can be "inflected" for "singular, dual, and plural number and for subject, object, and possessive case, and for object of a postposition" (108). For example, *hakatu̶u̲* is the plural subject form of *haka*, meaning *who* (Charney 108). Therefore, there are various shades in meaning behind *haka*. *Hakai* means "how (state of being)," while *hakani* means "how, because of," or "what happened? What kind of" (Charney 111; 216). *Hakah* also means "where" (Charney 108; 111). The next time someone says, "How!" pejoratively, one could respond with "Which one? The Comanches have several."

Tekwapu̲ʔha Tu̲boopu̲ 4). To echo, Malea Powell, Indigenous rhetoricians often ask "how," ("A Basket is a Basket . . . " 471). And that is what I will do.

In "Word by Word, Bead by Bead—Making a Scholarly Life," Powell illustrates Indigenous rhetorical concepts of "how" by sharing her childhood story about how she and her grandmother would spend the night in the chickens' brooder house to protect the baby chicks from wild animals. I see the Indigenous ways of knowing in Powell's story about how she and her grandmother raised chickens because their process emphasizes their relationships with the chicks, love and care, and looking after them as though they were their own relatives (Powell, "Word by Word . . . " 127-128). This same phenomenon is found within Indigenous cultures' philosophies and cultural practices of animal husbandry and hunting. I can see the Indigenous concepts of "how" in her interactions with the chickens.

Cranford-Gomez also shares a personal story that illustrates Indigenous concepts of *how*:

> As a child on the Gulf of Mexico, my family and I lived mainly off the ocean, rising early in the morning to catch mullet and sheepshead. Even at the age of five I worked as part of a unit, a team: my dad casting his net from the jetty, me carrying the heads from the fish he cleaned in a plastic beach bucket down to my mother, who would wade in the shallows using the heads as bait to catch crabs. My baby sister would be placed in an inner tube tied around mom's waist. We worked together. (104-105)

Cranford-Gomez's story shows process, relationship, food, and story. The *how* of her family's process of fishing, gathering, and preparing the food is Indigenous in process—how nothing goes to waste, how the children apprentice alongside the parents and learn to navigate the natural

environment, how it is resourceful, how it has duct-tape-like-solutions[48] with the bucket substituted for a traditional woven basket or pot. Most of Riddles's stories that I discuss involve characters making something—food, traps, pranks, songs, or clothes,—and each of these stories describe the process in which these "objects" are made.

This chapter will examine how *yu* forms words and grammar, thereby lending itself as a lens. Within *hakaniyut~~u~~ ~~unu~~ haniyu*, *yu* forms an interrogative pronoun for *why/how* and a progressive verb for *doing/making/fixing/repairing*, and in *hakaniyut~~u~~ ~~unu~~ yuhaniyu*, *yu* forms the prefix, "do right" (See appendix for further sentence mapping). Many Comanche elders do not enjoy being questioned about *why* Comanche traditions are practiced the way they are, though some elders do not mind being asked. but asking *how* is more in line with Comanche social etiquette, to which an elder may respond, "like this. . ." and demonstrate the process through his or her movement, asking the learner to join along and to learn by experience, and only under certain circumstances as knowledge is not of the public domain in Comanche culture. Likewise, Comanche culture appreciates an explanation that "something just is, because, *suniyut~~u~~*." But asking *how* is more in line with Comanche social etiquette, to which an elder may respond, "like this. . ." and demonstrate the process through his or her movement, asking the learner to join along and to learn by experience, but only under certain circumstances as knowledge is not of the public domain in Comanche culture. Thus, my study's title indicates that 3. Rhetorical *yu*, in all its contradictory woven-ness, or *kwisikat~~u~~* ness, makes a discourse space for navigating Comanche and cross-cultural perspectives on Comanche terms by blurring these boundaries in a variety of ways.

[48] I define "duct-tape solutions" as Indigenous resourcefulness and indigen-uity (ingenuity) later in this chapter.

This chapter will discuss how Comanche cultural philosophy is inherent in Comanche grammar, making *hakaniyut~~u~~ ~~unu~~ haniyu/yuhaniyu* (or rather, *yu*), a rhetorical lens. The grammatical *yu* is more than grammatical; they are rhetorical devices. I break *hakaniyut~~u~~ ~~unu~~ haniyu* (and *hakaniyut~~u~~ ~~unu~~ yuhaniyu*) into word stems and affixes, and I examine the various English translations of this sentence. In addition, I consider the Comanche cultural values and philosophies that underlie the sentence's translations, such as process, movement, etiquette, aspiration, and aesthetics. Comanche language is not the only Indigenous language, or human language, to have cultural values, philosophies, and ways of knowing within the language's grammar, syntax, etymology, and narrative functions. Fairbanks states, "Mystery particles, on the other hand, are full-time discourse markers, as they are always working at a level above that of the sentence, indicating a variety of interpersonal functions, such as denial of propositions, justification, reprimand, eliciting pity, correcting interlocutors, and so on" (1). These sentence functions convey grammar rules and Ojibwe cultural notions of etiquette and ontology. And I notice the same linguistic elements in the Comanche language; for instance, *yu* as a be verb, a command, and a habitual action teaches Comanche philosophies of etiquette and ontology. Hence, cultural philosophy is in Comanche texts at the grammar and narrative levels. But, because of *yu*'s whisper vowel status and contextual complexity, the cultural philosophy is also found in Comanche texts that do not use *yu,* thereby creating a *yu*-esque "air." In Comanche texts, the *yu*-esque moments, where *yu* may or may not be present, still exude elements indicative of *yu,* and *hakaniyut~~u~~ ~~unu~~ haniyu* assists in interpreting and creating texts. This *yu*-esqueness occurs by alluding to one or more of the following qualities: *yu*'s grammar roles; *yu*'s narrative relationships; the braid metaphor (*kwisikat~~u~~*)/braiding methodology; the physical properties of *yuhu*; *suniyut~~u~~*; Heath's and Heath's notions of sticky teaching; and/or *hakaniyut~~u~~ ~~unu~~*

haniyu/*yuhaniyu*'s cultural philosophies (i.e. of process, of movement, of etiquette, of aspiration, and of aesthetic).

Process—How are you making right?

*Yuhu nookop*ʉ is *fry bread* (*Taa N*ʉ*m*ʉ *Tekwap*ʉ*ʔha . . .* 86). *Yuʔt*ʉ*hkap*ʉ is *beef* or *meat* (*Taa N*ʉ*m*ʉ *Tekwap*ʉ*ʔha . . .* 93). *Yuhu t*ʉ*k*ʉ*hmanip*ʉ means *fried meat* (*Taa N*ʉ*m*ʉ *Tekwap*ʉ*ʔha . . .* 86). And *tayuʔnetsi* is *to pound with a pestle*, while *yuʔnai pasap*ʉ, means *partially sun-dry* (Canonge 149; *Taa N*ʉ*m*ʉ *Tekwap*ʉ*ʔha . . .* 87). In these phrases, *yu* signifies more than an ingredient like oil or a hint about how the meal is prepared; rather it gives these words the connotations that the preparing of these items takes physical effort, "elbow grease," based on word associations and the contexts required to produce these items. The act of kneading the dough, butchering the cow, grinding and preserving the meat, takes time, know-how, and experience because anyone can cook fry bread, but not just anyone can cook it *just right*. There is an aesthetic, one that has been passed down for generations. True, fry bread and beef are not precontact "traditional"; yet, poetically, the Comanche language latched on to these notions of processed foods and ear-marked them with *yu*, almost like saying: "butchered like buffalo, but not quite buffalo*ʔ*meat"; "transformed by intricate industrial processing that follows elaborate steps just as Comanche precontact food traditions follow elaborate steps yet differently*ʔ*meat"; or "significant effort was made to create*ʔ*meat." *Yuʔt*ʉ*hkap*ʉ. Traditional Comanches did not have conveyer belts; they did not have large stainless-steel vats or vacuum sealers. Yet the Comanche women had a tradition of butchering, dressing, and drying meat on poles, which was very much a process that had to be done *just right*, *yuu*, or else their community starved.

On the other hand, *yuʔnaitsi* or *yuʔnai tɨhtsi* means "easy, easily" as in "Yuʔnaitsi ma nahaniitɨ . . . It is easily made" (Wistrand-Robinson and Armagost 153). While *yu* earmarks words as effortful or challenging to make, *yu* also marks what is "easily made" from a precontact Comanche perspective based on associations across these words. Traditional Comanche women did not have sewing machines; they made everything by hand, and to many of them, this process was *yuʔnaitsi*. They sewed all the essential items that their families needed—clothes, blankets, tools, teepees, and any other items they might need that could be fabricated in this way. They assisted in hunting game and butchering buffalo, and they cooked almost all the meals for their communities. These feats may not sound so "easy" today, but to them, it "just was"; it was their way of life. Perhaps when they were young and first learning, these skills seemed difficult, but once they learned them, they became easy and made the lives of those around them easier. One may think that going to a grocery store is "easy" for the consumer, where one picks out what one needs, pays for it, takes it home, and the item needs little to no modification. But the processes behind supporting grocery stores and an industrial diet are quite elaborate and sometimes challenging for all peoples and resources involved. "Easy" and "difficult" are matters of perception. There is a saying in English that what is easy for some may be difficult for others. Perhaps both early Comanches and modern Comanches could agree that regardless of one's opinion about whether or not hunting, butchering, or sewing is "easy" or "difficult," they could agree that these tasks often involve lengthy amounts of time. Therefore, *yu* fosters the Comanche's own version of sprezzatura[49] in these terms, giving the impression of ease when

[49] According to *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*, when Sir Thomas Hoby translated Castiglione's *The Courtier* in England in the 1500s, he translated *sprezzatura* as "recklessness," but the term is "a device for manipulating appearances and masking all the tedious memorizing of lines and secret rehearsals that underlie successful social performances. There is a paradox here, still evident in many social settings: success requires the painstaking mastery of complex

effort was made, like a braid that gives the impression of the hair holding itself, when effort was made and *yuhu* was used to make it appear so, further adding to *yu*-esqueness or an "air of *yu*" in Comanche stories and art as well as throughout Comanche culture.

Hakaniyutu unu yuhaniyu asks, "How are you making right?" This question considers how something is made, its process, and the suitability of that process. This theme of process is prevalent in Sandra Karty's "Tatsinuu?pi" (Star) tale in the 2007 *Comanche Children's Lullabies, Songs, and Stories* book, compiled by the Comanche Nation Language Program with the assistance of the Comanche Language and Cultural Preservation Committee. One unique feature about the Comanche Language Program's book is that the stories are transcribed in both the modern Comanche alphabet and in a generalized English[50] translation of the narrative. The star tale describes the processes of making, repairing, and finding, qualities relevant to both early Comanche hunter-gatherer societies and to modern Comanche societies. The star tale depicts a modern Comanche couple who obtains a glass Christmas star, breaks it, and seeks to replace it, but the story has a twist as the woman's husband passes away before he can give the replacement

codes of behavior, yet there is no surer recipe for failure than to be seen . . . to be trying too hard[;]" *Sprezzatura* is "a natural easy grace" (Greenblatt 704-705). In other words, *sprezzatura* is effort that is made to give an air of effortlessness, which I argue is a hidden meaning, almost a hidden humor, behind *yu*'s associations with both effort and effortlessness because when one notices someone complete a difficult task, one might ask him or her, "Wow, how did you do that?" To which he or she might respond, "Oh, it was easy," when the task was not, inspiring one to try to complete the task, too. Depending upon one's response (joy or frustration, etc.) to trying the task and the outcome of trying (success, failure, or a continued effort to try) will aid one in determining if one is in on the joke or is the joke, but regardless of one's response, the task expert may still laugh, as teasing is often a sign of care in Comanche culture, for he or she has already mastered the skill and is now of liberty to teach it should he or she choose.

[50] I am unsure if Sandra Karty's translation process was a line-by-line translation or if she spoke the tale entirely in Comanche and then spoke the tale entirely in English (or vice versa). The variance between the lullaby book's Comanche and English translations may be due to the contextual flexibility within the Comanche language itself. To examine Karty's tale line-by-line as I examined Riddles's tales, I have provided both my translations of the star tale and the general English translations of the star tale from the lullaby and stories book.

star to her, leaving the remainder of the story depicting the process through which she endures and finds the surprise star. In *yu*-esque fashion, the audience observes the husband's striving to replace the star, but his efforts remain hidden from his wife until the story's end.

To examine how Karty conveys process in the star tale, one must consider the plot regarding Comanche grammar. "Sitɯkɯse osɯ pɯi wahimaʔeku tsaaku sukɯ tatsinuuʔpita makɯkwatobiʔetɯ sikɯ pɯ ooʔrɯ kahnikɯ kueʔkɯ uraniʔeyu . . ." Karty states, "This one put that tree up well and was going to the closet and finding the wrapped-up star on top" (34, line 9). The general English translation is, "She would put that star up there" (Karty 36, line 6), and "then one day, she told him to clean out their closet" (Karty 36, line 9). *UraniʔeyU* is broken down as *ura-ni-ʔeyu* (find-in that way-ing) and means "finding," and while *yu* marks a progressive verb, the suffix *ʔeyu* denotes repetitive action. Charney states, "The suffix -*ʔeyu* indicates that an action is repeated . . . It is followed by a final aspect marker, generally -*yu*= or -*tɯ*=" (135). For instance, "Umatɯmɯʔeyu . . . Someone is selling [pecans]" (Charney 136). This sentence implies that someone is selling pecans repeatedly, and *uraniʔeyu* conveys how the woman's husband is looking for the star repeatedly in their closet; in other words, given the context of the tale and *ʔeyu*'s grammar role, *uraniʔeyu* expresses to what degree the man carried out his actions. This Comanche grammar implies the Comanche cultural value of process by explaining the extent of an act and of how many successions the act consisted.

Karty's descriptions of the man's actions create an added layer of ironic foreshadowing because the description of characters repeatedly going to the closet and looking for the Christmas star creates a pattern of images that foreshadows the tale's ending. The tale concludes with the man placing the present in the closet and then later passing away before he can give it to his wife. Then his children find the star in the closet, thinking it a forgotten present, and give it to

their mother. Karty's descriptions of how the man goes to the closet to find the star serves as a clue that she weaves into the tale about its conclusion, giving insight into her storying process that is braidlike because she takes different pieces of key information and repetitively, yet seamlessly links them together, hoping her audience will make mental connections amongst these hints once the story ends, or the "braid" is complete. Similarly, to braiding layers of woven hair sections, Karty uses ironic foreshadowing through her patterns of images to layer her story with many meanings that are both within the Comanche language itself and outside of the story itself. If Karty were to tell this tale near the Christmas holiday, then the tale would take on both a contextual irony and act heuristically, implying for the audience should consider *how* they are celebrating the holiday with their loved ones—are they taking the time to appreciate their loved ones and the time that they share?— just as the immediate braiding situation and wider communities surrounding a braiding situation affect the braid's message. If the immediate braiding situation has sufficient lighting, cool air conditions, or an assortment of hairstyling tools, then these factors can positively affect the braid's outcome. Other outside factors may include the surrounding community's response to said braids—does the community appreciate the braids?[51]— which further affects the braid's meanings. Fairbanks examines a similar "situational immediacy" within Ojibwe discourse markers (158-159). He gives the examples of someone saying "Beautiful!" in response to an external condition, or how in an "in the moment" occurrence, an elder may say "Gii- wawaanimigooyang . . . 'They stumped us!'" to respond to a challenging question (159). These utterances rely on the environmental context in which one is

[51] In Henry Mihesuah's *First to Fight*, his daughter-in-law, Devon Mihesuah, who is a historian, explains how Henry Mihesuah's father was forced to attend Fort Sill Indian Boarding School, and when he was a student there "his long braids were cut off and he was forbidden to speak Comanche" (H. Mihesuah 8).

speaking to shape meaning. As Ojibwe discourse markers consider the immediate speaking situation that enhance meaning, Comanche narrative does so, too. Karty's story process leaves room for her audience to interpret the tale of their choosing, priming them to consider their relationships with others during the holiday season, while she exerts her agency to use Comanche language to shape the story's meaning.

Karty provides further understanding into process through her descriptions of how the woman's husband attempts to repair the star. "Sur~~ɨ~~k~~ɨ~~se haa hakanikuk~~ɨ~~ nawits~~ɨ~~n~~ɨ~~ hakaniʔyu ma hanin~~ɨ~~ meksur~~ɨ~~ uka pits~~ɨ~~ m~~ɨ~~ matsipakitui sur~~ɨ~~ munin~~ɨ~~ . . . That one was repairing it and said that he was going to glue it together, but struggled and was unable to fix it," Karty states (35, line 14). *Hakaniʔyu* is an interrogative pronoun meaning "why," but it is related to *hakani*, meaning "how," "because of," "what," "what happened," and "what kind of" (Charney 108, 111, 211). *Hakaniʔyu* is related to *hakaniʔyut~~ɨ~~*, also meaning "why" (Charney 216). Charney explains that *hakani* "is used to question manners of being and doing. The suffix *-ni* is an adverbial manner suffix"[52] (216). Notions of process are woven into *hakaniʔyu* / *hakaniyut~~ɨ~~*, further elevating the meaning of Karty's sentence. These two terms explain how the man tries to repair the star and why he chose to replace it so that the audience, much like the man's wife, would not question his manners of being and doing, which characterizes the man as caring. The general English translation does not describe that the husband was trying to glue the star back together. The act of gluing the star creates narrative tension by depicting the struggle to fix the star much like the tug in a braid that cinches links together, thereby tugging at the audience's emotions while creating unity amongst details and plot structure as the tugs in a braid secure braid links.

[52] The suffix *-ni* also means "like" and "in this, that fashion" (Charney 170).

The Comanche translation of this line offers an additional interpretation because the same lines can be translated as “That one, yes, in that way asked why don’t you fix it; he said he was going to glue it together, but struggled and was unable to fix it” (line 14). *Nawits~~ʉ~~n~~ʉ~~* is close to *nawitsak~~ʉ~~ ~~ʉ~~n~~ʉ~~*, meaning “why don’t you,” and the added context of *hakaniʔyu* is associated with *hakaniʔyut~~ʉ~~*, meaning “why,” resulting in “why don’t you” (*Taa N~~ʉ~~m~~ʉ~~ Tekwap~~ʉ~~ʔha T~~ʉ~~boop~~ʉ~~* 31). Lastly, *matsipakitui* is close to *mats~~ʉ~~ʔbaki* / *mats~~ʉ~~bakiʔi,* meaning “to stick something to, to glue,” or to “adhere to” (*Taa N~~ʉ~~m~~ʉ~~ Tekwap~~ʉ~~ʔha T~~ʉ~~boop~~ʉ~~* 19;120; Canonge 138). Hence, the Comanche version retains not only plot tension, but also insight into Comanche problem-solving skills (Indigen-uity /ingenuity) that is indicative of traditional Comanche customs in which “wrongs” must be “righted,” resources are not thrown out unless it is necessary (such as using all the buffalo), and one makes do with the resources readily available before seeking more. In the star tale, the man breaks the star, so he attempts to fix it with glue that he already has before considering buying a replacement. Sometimes these traditional notions present themselves in modern times through “duct tape solutions,” where one uses duct tape to fix items that are not typically fixed by duct tape, such as freezer shelves, lawn chairs, cars, and pants. Duct tape can sometimes provide repairs or patches that aid in conserving time, money, and even one’s own patience—I, myself, find duct tape to be very helpful with repairing things.

One instance of Comanche duct-tape-style solutions is found in Devon Mihesuah’s “Comanche Traditional Foodways and the Decline of Health,” in which she provides the recount of “Francis E. Leupp, commissioner of Indian Affairs from 1904 to 1909” that expresses “what Quanah [Parker] told him about flour and salt” (238). Leupp claims that Quanah Parker said, “Indians are resourceful; and as those settlers, crossing the next rise of ground looked back at us, they saw every Indian engaged in slitting his bags at the bottom, emptying the salt and flour on

the ground, and drawing the bags, now open at both ends, over his calves for leggings" (qtd. in D. Mihesuah 238-239). Even Comanche history has moments in which Comanches have repurposed technologies around them to problem-solve for their own purposes.

But not everything can be repaired with duct tape or by reusing flour and salt sacks, as the Comanche boys in Riddles's tale about the stolen pumpkins show. Riddles begins by describing the process that some Wichitas are using to prepare their pumpkins. She states, "Surʉʉkʉse bʉʉ [pʉʉ] nʉmʉhanihne atakwaʔsʉʔaiʔetʉ rʉasʉ [tʉasʉ] pʉʉ [bʉʉ] nakwʉsiʔa wʉhtsitoʔaʔetʉ pahpaʔaku u kooʔiʔetʉ u rohtsaniʔiʔeeyu [tohtsaniʔiʔeeyu] . . . Those ones [the Wichitas] had Indian corn and partially roasted dried corn, and they had peeled pumpkins with a knife, cut it up, and were hanging it up" (line 4). *Rohtsaniʔiʔeeyu* / *tohtsaniʔiʔeeyu*, means "to hang something up" (Canonge 149). In this sentence, *yu* conveys progressive action, to emphasize the hanging up of the peeled pumpkins as this action is occurring, and *ʔeeyu* signifies repetitive action. But *ʔeeyu* also denotes distributive action. According to Charney, "Distributive aspect [is] often present when this suffix [*ʔe*] is used. It is followed by a final aspect marker, generally -*yu*= or -*tʉ*=" (135). The same example sentence of "Umatʉmʉʔeyu . . . Someone is selling [pecans]" expresses distributive action (Charney 136); this sentence can mean that someone is selling pecans to several people or that many people are receiving the pecans. *Rohtsaniʔiʔeeyu* / *tohtsaniʔiʔeeyu* conveys that the Wichitas are repetitively peeling and cutting pumpkin slices, that the peeled pumpkin slices are being hung repetitively, and that the peeled pumpkin slices are being hung to be distributed. These process patterns are all contained within this one phrase, and this one phrase carries the weight of how gradual the process of peeling and hanging pumpkin slices is. This distributive meaning not only emphasizes how each object (the peeled pumpkin slices) receives the action, but also how the Wichitas know that each dried

pumpkin slice will correlate with someone, in other words, a person would eat each of the pumpkin slices. In the story, the Wichitas are aware that they are making more than just things, but meals that will be partaken by humans, resulting in the emphasis of individually distributive actions.

The Wichitas in the tale were more than likely preparing various foods for themselves, not just for the Comanches. The Wichitas' history of living on the great Plains dates to 800 AD (Garrett Pool). Comanches often shared encampment space near Wichita villages near the Wichita mountains, which today is Fort Sill, for many years before the establishment of the reservation and military post (Kavanagh, *Comanche Political . . .* 423). The kinship ties between the Comanches and Wichitas spans hundreds of years (Kavanagh, *Comanche Political . . .* 423). And this kinship continues today. The Wichitas "were the main importers of garden produce and tobacco to the Comanches, and they were the primary exporters of Comanche horses, mules, and products of the hunt. The Wichitas also served as middlemen between the Comanches and French . . . " (Hamalainen, "The Western Comanche . . . " 492). Since the Wichitas traded with the Comanches, the Comanches often gave them permission to hunt in Comanche territory (Hamalainen, "The First Phase . . . " 106). But their trade relationships were often contradictory because at times the Comanches maintained allyships with the Wichitas, and at other times, they fought them. Around 1770, Spanish lieutenant governor Athanase de Mezieres "attempt[ed] to establish peace" with the Wichitas and Comanches, but the Comanches "turned upon their former allies" without stating why they nullified their allyship (Kavanagh, *Comanche Political . . .* 80). However, sometimes the Comanches would join forces with the Wichita to fight other tribes, as they did in "1833" to battle "Cherokee hunters" (Kavanagh, *Comanche Political . . .* 235). One should be aware that when the Comanches and Wichitas decided to be friends or foes

that these choices varied across the two tribes' many bands; it is possible that some bands of Comanches and Wichitas were allies, while other bands simultaneously were not. Friendships and animosities could have varied across several families within one band where some families in a band maintained positive ties with the other tribe's band, while other families did not, which occurs in Riddles's pumpkins tale between the one Comanche family and the Wichita man. These individual families' intertribal relationships can affect an entire band, multiple bands, or tribe, and intertribal allyship and feuds can vary even within one family.

Riddles's audience may or may not be aware of the history of Comanche and Wichita trade relationships, which affects reader's/listener's interpretations much like how mainstream societies influence braids' meanings based on whether or not they value braids. As both Wieser and Booth Donohue assert, an audience's familiarity with Indigenous historical contexts shapes the meaning that they will derive from a discourse (Wieser 11; Donohue 68). Wieser explains that "sometimes Indigenous languages actually require one to contextualize and infer. Even when utilizing English, Native communities value the rights of the individual to make his or her own interpretive decisions" (11). Cranford-Gomez also argues that when "reading" a Creole or Indigenous woven basket, it requires "placing the basket within a greater context that addresses a historic cultural dialogue within a set geographic space" (100). Even if Riddles's audience is not aware of these historical underpinnings, and even if mainstream societies are not aware of braids' significances to some Indigenous communities, these contexts and ironies are still present and layered upon one another, complicating each individual's interpretation of Riddles's tale by encouraging each listener/reader/viewer to question one's criteria of what is/are the "right" story/stories and what perspectives would be most pertinent to explore in relation to the story/stories.

Riddles continues her descriptions of the Wichitas' pumpkin preparing process that may or may not be accurate from a Wichita cultural perspective. "U w~~u~~htak~~u~~miʔeku u kwisiʔeeyu . . ." she states, "They were drying it partially and braiding it [the peeled pumpkins]" (line 5). *Kwisiʔeeyu*, means braiding and signals progressive, repetitive, and distributive action, meaning they were braiding many dried pumpkin slices repeatedly and that each braided pumpkin was made for each individual to eat, or for each individual to eat multiple slices. I must admit that like Riddles, I, too am considering the tale of the Comanche boys who stole pumpkins from a Comanche cultural bias because I do not know the Wichitas' cultural significance behind braiding the dried pumpkins (or if braiding dried pumpkins is an accurate Wichita tradition), but I assume that braiding the dehydrated pumpkins is not necessary for one to eat the dehydrated pumpkin right away because one could eat dehydrated pumpkin slices as soon as they dry without braiding them. The braiding process that Riddles describes is an additional step in the preparation process, one that implies community care and effort, just as braiding human hair requires care and effort. And sometimes when one's hair is braided, one does not have to re-braid one's hair for the next day because the braids keep one's hair in a specific structure for a long period, and braided pumpkin[53] can function similarly by preventing the dehydrated pumpkin from shriveling and preserving the slices for winter storage. Having many pumpkin slices condensed into braided form—similarly to how braiding hair compresses masses of strands into a compact structure—reduces the amount of space needed to store them. The process of braiding dried pumpkin slices then suits a community's needs to ensure long-term access to nutrition,

[53] Traditional Comanches prepared "sweet onion (allium)," which they sometimes "braided then roasted over a fire" (D. Mihesuah 230). However, I do not know if the Wichitas braided pumpkin slices specifically for roasting or for other cooking purposes. Because this tale is told from Riddles, who is Comanche, her description of braiding foods may provide cultural insight into both her storying and into Comanche food traditions.

positive morale from being cared for, and ample living space during winter months, which allows a community to focus time, attention, and resources on other needs, wants, or interests.

If Riddles told this story to an audience who was preparing or partaking of dried pumpkin, then this story's messages would "stick" (Heath & Heath 5) to their memories by teaching them the steps for preparing this meal by appealing to their emotions and five senses while creating a kinesthetic experience. Heath and Heath suggest that appealing to learners' senses aids in memory because "the more sensory 'hooks' we can put into an idea, the better it will stick" (5). This "kinesthetic" rhetoric is essential to "meaning making" in Indigenous discourse (Wieser 4). Hearing a story about preparing dried pumpkins while one prepares them enables one to take in information and interpret it in a variety of ways, constituting an experience that becomes a memory. A storyteller's immediate storying situation and physical interactions with the audience affects a story's meaning, adding a layer of contextual irony and emotional appeal. According to Heath and Heath, "Emotion . . . makes people care" (8). *Yu* is a means to remember cooking processes, storying processes, and history, and *yu*'s *kwisikatʉ* characteristics span beyond fusing words together to aesthetically making a story memorable, resonating with an audience emotionally. Here as well, Comanche storying is braided, stuck together with *yu* like braids are stuck together with *yuhu.*

Within Karty's star tale and Riddles's tale of the Comanche boys who stole pumpkins, Comanche grammar signifies the extent of actions, successions of actions, graduality of actions, and the human recipients of the actions; these notions of process concern themselves with the recurring themes of longevity, care, morale, and selflessness, all themes that reflect the process philosophies within the Comanche grammar in these Comanche women's tales. The processes in both stories and in braiding consider longevity by preparing in advance for the future. For

example, in the star story, the man hopes to create a happy Christmas by finding a replacement star long before the holiday, and the tale ends with him storing away the replacement star for the future. In turn, the Wichitas prepare for the winter ahead by drying pumpkin slices that will save future cooking time and storage space because the slices are dehydrated and compressed in advance. Likewise, in braiding, braids can last over a course of hours or days, allowing one time in the future to devote to other tasks, and giving one the space one needs to move freely. The star, braided pumpkins, and braids encourage morale by "making special" the décor, meals, and appearances of Comanche communities. The processes within storying, cooking, and braiding help one make time for learning while multitasking, which also give one more time for future tasks; they all help one to "make" moments "special" by enabling one to enjoy the processes and the passing of time as one progresses with the tasks. These same notions of longevity, community, care, morale, and making special are seen in Weckeah's (Comanche) description of the doll and cradleboard that her mother made her along with her other set of "finger-sized doll rags" that her mother made for her and her siblings' toys (106):

> They were dressed in Comanche cloth clothes. There was a mother, father, big brother, little sister, and a baby in a *haabik~~u~~no* (night cradle). My brother and sister had a set of these dolls too, and we played with them together, pretending to go after wood in our wagons made of empty matchboxes . . . We even built mini bows and brush arbors. That's how my brother and I learned to make arbors. (106)

These toys were more than items to entertain or to look nice; they helped to teach Comanche culture by replicating aspects of it on a small, kinesthetic scale for future generations to carry on both physically and mentally. Karty's story, Riddles's story, and the braiding situation further convey community care by attempting to fix the woman's cherished star, by hanging up pumpkin

slices with the intentions to feed others, and by enabling someone to see oneself as beautiful just as Weckeah's dolls helped her and her siblings to see the beauty of Comanche community and aspects of cultural processes reflected in their dolls.

Thus, the tales' descriptions of repetitively finding the star, hanging up pumpkin slices, and braiding them coincide with the repetitive actions of braiding hair by putting forth effort to make their communities function with ease in their ever-changing environments. *Yu* is in Comanche words; *yu* is in Comanche braids, and *yu* is in Comanche cultural philosophy. Powell states, "I probably need to tell you now that when I think about an account of my scholarly life focused on resilience, agency, relationships, and chance, I'm just as likely to think about chickens as beadwork or poems or graduate school. They're all related in my mind and in the things I've chosen to make as an intellectual" ("Word by Word . . . " 126). She is not stating this to emphasize a mental stream of consciousness; she is reiterating the relationships amongst Indigenous rhetoric and how Indigenous ways of knowing are involved in each of the things that she lists—like the way *yu* and *yuhu* finds their way into many areas of Comanche discourse, cultural materials, and traditions, even diffusing across Comanche cultural "boundaries" into other tribal discourse. Therefore, *yu* is a lens to examine Comanche art and stories.

In examining *yu*'s functions within Karty's and Riddles's tales, I examined these women's storying processes, which led me to reflect on my own processes for examining their texts. By considering Karty's translation process, I had to consider my own method for translating her text line-by-line. And by considering Riddles's storying bias, I had to consider my own bias in comprehending Comanche-Wichita trade histories and in being unfamiliar with Wichita agricultural practices. Indigenous stories relate the listeners/readers to the story. Powell gives an example of this concept as she weaves the audience into her Native Rhetorics story by

using basket weaving as a metaphor, addressing the audience directly: "So keep this piece of this story in the palm of your hand while I pull in another strand for this Native rhetorics story-basket" as she tells of the historical moments in forming the field of Native rhetorics ("A Basket is a Basket . . . " 471). She even states that "community tradition-bearers" and "young scholars" are a "part of the weave" ("A Basket is a Basket . . . " 483). Cranford-Gomez also emphasizes the shared roles of both the maker and the viewer/ "reader" in basket weaving because it "requires movement and making processes on both the maker and the 'reader'" (100). And Fairbanks considers shared meaning making, explaining that "in dialogic discourse, speaker and hearer jointly interact" to form meaning (16). This interaction includes physical movement (Fairbanks 16). *Yu* is a rhetorical lens for considering the storying situation because it lends itself well for analyzing how the storyteller and audience share the storying process to create meanings, as I myself have had to pause and consider how both I and my analysis relate back to these Comanche women's tales, which coincides with the moment in braiding when the ends of a braid attempt to weave themselves as one braids the top of the braid, or when creating two braids, the ends of the first braid-in-progress grab the free ends of the hair set aside for the second braid, pulling in small sections of the free, flowing[54] hair into the first braid's weave. And *yu* is a lens for considering narrative processes, the composition process, and for critiquing works by Comanche authors. "Traditional ways of 'talking in a good way' utilize the same oral rhetorics and poetics that are still very much apparent in creative writing," Wieser argues, "that they also can be useful for oral and written scholarly discourse in Native studies" (9). Comanche story technique is rhetorical technique; Comanche language's contextuality grants understanding

[54] *In the Ways of My Grandmothers*, Beverly Hungry Wolf (Blackfoot) states that "while doing work, many women tied the ends of their braids together and threw them behind, out of the way" (219).

into the rhetorical tropes in Comanche story. Both Karty's and Riddles's storying processes harness *yu*'s denotations, its grammar, as well as their own knowledge of the historical, environmental, and immediate contexts, to shape their stories just enough for the audiences to finish storying them in hopes that they will learn something, maybe problem-solving skills, or duct tape solutions/indigen-uity, or to make of them "what [they] will" (Powell, "A Basket is a Basket . . . " 483). Likewise *Yuhu* occupies multiple states when it is rendered as a solid, gel, and oil, and this versatility is mirrored in *yu*'s grammar, narrative relationships, and rhetorical functions, where the speakers/writers/braiders and listeners/readers/braidees choose to use *yu* as a tool for invention similar to the glue the man uses to repair the star in Karty's tale, where they can choose what form of *yu* to use, where they can choose whether or not *yu*'s implicit meanings surface in the story/braid, and where they can all decide, like braiders, how much *yu* or *yuhu* to use.

Movement—How are you fixing/repairing?

Yuu habiitu, "lie still" (*Taa Numu Tekwapu?ha* . . . 87). *Yunahkatu*, "quiet, still, without movement" (*Taa Numu Tekwapu?ha* . . . 86). *Yuhu wehkipu*, "look for the fattest animal" (Canonge 156). These juxtaposed phrases spark images of traditional Comanche times when young warriors would practice hunting small animal game, when being still[55] meant the difference between providing the community food or not eating at all because one may lie still and look for the fattest animal, but it has to be the *right* fattest animal. One must not only consider having abundant food for the community for generations, but also ensure the animal

[55] Before the Comanches hunted buffalo with horses, the Comanches were part of the Shoshones, "who hunted bison on foot along the northwestern margins of the Plains" (Hamalainen, "The Western Comanche . . . " 487).

communities persist for generations, too. Before one can move forward, one must first know how to be still, to observe and understand the animal in its home. Perhaps this is why traditional Comanche women wrapped their babies in a *haabikʉno* "night cradle [cradleboard]" during the first few years of their lives (Weckeah 106), so the child must listen and observe the community first, accompanying the mother almost everywhere she goes, before becoming a more active part of it (Pahdopony-Mithlo 103-108). To produce a braid, one must sit or stand still, and it is from this stillness that one's hands weave, *-yu*, and produce a braid. The promise of a good story can motivate almost anyone to sit still long enough to have one's hair braided, which upon being completed enables the wearer to move about, *-yu*, without the distraction of one's hair in one's face. Just as Comanches have rules about hunting and procedures for incorporating children into Comanche culture or braiding, there are even processes for how to safely slice meat. One wrong move–and a meal or a hand could be ruined. Through these word associations, one can already detect that *yu* has close ties to survival and movement.

Hakaniyutʉ unʉ haniyu asks "How are you fixing? How are you repairing?" Since early Comanche women lived a nomadic life, meaning they were always on the move, they had to be prepared to fix the teepee or pack up and move it whenever the band determined it was time to move to the next encampment grounds. These Comanche women almost always carried their "tool kit" of knives on their belts everywhere they went, should they have need to butcher meat or defend their families in battle. They also wore a long strip of animal hide (which once trade with colonial cultures occurred, it became covered in metal), to help them carry large bundles like firewood, and they wore pouches and carried purses filled with the other important items that they needed. I like to imagine what our traditional Comanche women carried around with them.

When I think about "fixing or repairing," I think about how my mother would fix plates of food for elders at powwows. She would have me follow alongside her, and carry the plates how she would carry them, bend and give the plates to the elders, going where she would go. I remember how she taught me to shake my elders' hands, not by telling me, but by showing me through her actions: To an elder she just met, she would hold out her hand and firmly grasp the elder's hand and give it a single, small shake. If the elder was someone with whom she was acquainted, she would begin with a handshake, then pull the elder's arm toward her, where she would slightly shelter the elder under her free arm in a half-hug. And if she knew the elder very well and was related to them, then she would hug the elder with both of her arms. In this manner, she would greet and feed all the elders who could not walk—or who did not have any children or grandchildren present to help them—until they all received a plate of food. Not all Comanche women cook or sew (and a Comanche is no less a Comanche, a woman, or a Comanche woman for not sewing or cooking), but many of the Comanche women I knew and with whom my mother brought me to visit in their homes were often busy fixing something—beading, sewing, quilting, or cooking. Maintaining culture and community through one's efforts is a tradition that has remained intact, that has almost always been a part of Comanche societies' means of care that endures.

The Comanche language, at times, expresses this kind of effort through series of movements at the word level. In Riddles's tale about the two Osage men who surprise a Comanche woman while she is cooking, she states, "Ma bit~~u~~hkak~~u~~se sit~~u~~ ma kw~~u~~h~~u~~ ma tsayumi?i̲tsi p~~u~~hi makanu̲ . . . He arrived; his wife took down [the meat and] fed them" (line 8). *Tsayumi?i̲tsi* is a plural verb that means "to take down from/to take off of" (Canonge 153). *Tsa* can mean "good" or "fine," while *tsah-* is a prefix meaning "to pull forward or pull up by hand"

(*Taa N~~ʉ~~m~~ʉ~~ Tekwap~~ʉ~~ʔha* . . . 64-65). In the 1993 *Comanche Dictionary* by Comanche speakers, Lucille McClung and Albert Nahquaddy, prepared by Alice J. Anderton, states that *tsaat~~ʉ~~* can mean "pretty," as in "Tsaa totsiyaa (pretty flower)" (70). *Tsayumiʔi* means to "take down, unload, remove" (*Taa N~~ʉ~~m~~ʉ~~ Tekwap~~ʉ~~ʔha* . . . 66). As previously mentioned, *yu* is to "do right," but it can also denote "quiet" and be featured in commands like "yukar~~ʉ~~ . . . Sit down and be quiet!" where it is located at the front of the sentence (Charney 217). *Miitsi* means "soon, near, shortly, in a while" (*Taa N~~ʉ~~m~~ʉ~~ Tekwap~~ʉ~~ʔha* . . . 20). According to Canonge, *iʔi* conveys plurality, or more than one (153). And Charney notes that *-tsi* "is an intensifying suffix"; For example, "T~~ʉ~~vitsi ~~ʉrʉ~~ u . . . He's very [really] nice" (Charney 173-174). *Tsi* can also serve as a "same subject marker" on verbs to reference that the act being described is associated with the subject of the sentence (Anderton, McClung, and Nahquaddy 70). Therefore, *Tsayumiʔitsi* contains layers of meaning that denote agency, movement, and show *how* the Comanche woman completed this task. Given the collective meanings, this term means that she was "taking down and pulling the multiple bundles of meat near to her with her hands, unloading them with a pleasant attitude, very quickly and beautifully." And the verb ending, *tsi* further emphasizes that she is the subject and primary actor of the verb, implying agency, which gives this character her own moment as a primary character who is fixing a meal for her family. This one phrase, *tsayumiʔitsi*, expresses motion, direction, degree, tone, speed, intensity, and quantity.

Fairbanks discusses a similar grammar occurrence in the Ojibwe language. He gives the example of the preverb, *izhi* (Fairbanks 88). Fairbanks relays findings from Valentine and Nichols that define this "relative root" as one that "speci[fies] various relations between a verb and some element, which may serve to indicate the predicate's source, reason, manner, location, quantity, degree, or extent" (421;141). This explanation of *izhi*'s functions is similar to the

functions of Comanche verbs and their affixes. *Tsayumiʔitsi* is a series of motions and meanings that are woven together and elevate its meaning from an English translation of "to take down" to an in-depth description of the degrees, intensity, direction, and emphasis of these series of motions. Though the level of braided meaning in *tsayumiʔitsi* cannot be generalized to apply to all Comanche words, many words do function in this manner. Comanche language is not the only Indigenous language that layers these types of meanings into a single word. Examining how Indigenous languages compact meanings into one word gives insight into what Wieser defines as "how Indigenous people read story," and "how we encode meaning traditionally when we want to persuade (rhetorics)" (Wieser xiii). These processes occur in Comanche language and in other Indigenous languages at the grammatical and word-formation levels and affect narrative and other rhetorical discourse.

To scaffold Comanche holistic reasoning behind *tsayumiʔitsi* into English linear reasoning, one can consider Heath's and Heath's example of how creating acronyms and associating them with previous knowledge helps one organize information, encode meaning, and recall it (2-3). They give two examples of information, one in "raw data" form and another in acronym form to illustrate how sticky meaning helps readers learn because it is tied to their previous knowledge: "J FKFB INAT OUP SNA SAI RS" verses "JFK FBI NATO UPS NASA IRS" (Heath and Heath 2-3). They argue that because the second set of information is related to previous knowledge, then it is more memorable, and in early Comanche culture, the fusing of prefixes, suffixes, and stems with other parts of speech function in much the same way, not only helping one to organize ideas and make associations, but also to constitute the previous knowledge or Indigenous ways of knowing itself (though not all particles in Comanche language function this way). Comanche language moves beyond simply reflecting traditional knowledge

to actually shaping the traditional knowledge. Scientists claim that while humans can engage in unsymbolic thinking, humans also engage quite a bit in symbolized thinking, thinking organized by and expressed in words, even when those words are part of our internal monologue (Thompson). Comanche language aids in organizing, expressing, and remembering traditional knowledge.

Heath and Heath explain that an acronym "shows us how we can communicate a lot of information in compact fashion" (Heath and Heath 3). Likewise, Comanche language's compacting of movements and images into some words serves a similar function. Another example of Comanche language compacting motion is the example sentence, "Kahnivehtu [kahnipehtu] pohiyakwai . . . He walked toward the house" (Charney 133). *Pohiyakwai* can be broken down as "pohiya-kwa-i" meaning "walk"-"motion away from speaker" (Charney 132-133). Note, while some Comanche verbs (and occasionally nouns) can compact motion, not all Comanche words function in this manner. *Yu* assists other particles in the Comanche language in weaving multiple meanings together into one word, enabling speakers to recall processes and concepts with historic roots. This occurrence constitutes what Heath and Heath deem as "sensory" memory cues (5). The sensory memory that *tsayumiʔi̱tsi* conveys is how traditional Comanche women conducted themselves when preparing to cook buffalo meat.

Narratively, Riddles's sentence that contains *tsayumiʔi̱tsi* functions as a false conclusion because her husband hunts the buffalo and brings its meat to his wife to prepare so that they can eat, indicating he has obtained his goal; therefore, the story could end with a rhetorical/poetic

trope of Comanche oral tradition. Instead, the story continues, with her husband going to look at a hill while two Osage men arrive to capture their encampment.[56]

Lucille McClung also strategizes tension and repetition in her version of the Coyote and the Prairie Dogs tale. "Sitʉʉse miatsi, pʉhʉ kahni tohtʉmitsi, pitʉsa pitʉtsi, sitʉʉ nʉkaayu; suse marii nahubiyarʉ . . . They went and locked up their houses, and came back and danced; and he sang for them . . . Pʉ puiha ʉʉtsutsi sitʉ nʉkaayu; sitʉse wihnu Kaawosa mahrii nahubiyaarʉ . . . Their eyes were shut, and they danced; and then that Coyote sang for them," she states (McClung 1, lines 6-10). *Nʉkaayu* means "dancing" and is a progressive verb. While this instance of *yu* is not grammatically repetitive in this instance, McClung repeats the phrase, "Sitʉʉ nʉkaayu . . . They danced," three times in the tale. Hence, this phrase is *yu*-esque because its description of repetitive movements drives the plot like *yu*'s progressive, repetitive action role and like the repetitive weavings to form a braid. McClung breaks this repetition of *sitʉʉ nʉkaayu* with the statement, "Mai papikʉ, wʉhtʉkwai sitʉ ohko kwaʔʉnʉkwaʔeeyʉ . . . He was going [around] clubbing them on their heads, and they were falling" (2, line 15). *Kwaʔʉnʉkwaʔeeyʉ*, meaning "falling," directly contrasts with the repetitive dancing; *Kwaʔʉnʉkwaʔeeyʉ* is a repetitive and distributive verb that emphasizes how each prairie dog falls down and as a group, they fall down repeatedly in succession, and although this term means *falling*, the context of the sentence with the distributive action marker, *ʔeeyʉ*, illustrates how each prairie dog receives a club on the head, again and again, one after the other, causing them to fall. The pronunciation of

[56] According to Johnson and Hook, the Osage's "hunting territory extended to the west, which brought them into contact—and continuous enmity—with the Kiowa and Comanche of the High Plains" (135). Historic Comanches were known for raiding the Osage, "and they were viewed with trepidation by most tribes and certainly by non-Indians" (H. Mihesuah 2). Peaceful relationships later developed between the Comanches and the Osage. Intermarriages occurred amongst the Osage and the Comanche (Kavanagh, *Comanche Political* . . . 322).

kwaʔ~~ʉ~~nu~~ʉ~~kwaʔeeyu~~ʉ~~ is kwah-uhn-kwah-aye, and the sound of this phrase implies a reduplicative initial sound at the beginning, *kwah*. In Comanche, the repetition of the initial sound of a verb or "the first syllable of the verb" conveys "repetitive and distributive" action, too (Charney 141). Charney gives the following example, "N~~ʉ~~nn~~ʉ~~se wihnu upasaʔeku hunupetu nunuraʔeyu . . . When it (mud) dried, we ran for the creek. Et~~ʉ~~se sekwip~~ʉ~~ n~~ʉ~~n~~ʉ~~met~~ʉ~~ yuhyumakiʔeyu . . . the mud is sliding[57] off us" (Charney 142). *Nunuraʔeyu* is "running off," and *yuhyumakiʔ*eyu is "falling away" (Charney 142). As reduplicatives, these terms convey the repetitive actions, as they are happening, of each person running to the creek repeatedly and of the mud sliding off the individuals repeatedly. As distributives, the terms suggest that each person ran to the creek and that each person is thoroughly covered with mud, while the mud is falling from each individual, with each droplet of mud likewise falling away again and again. Poetically, these reduplicative examples take on a meaning of communal simultaneousness—that all are running to the creek at the same time, all are covered with mud, and that the mud is falling from everyone at the same time. Fairbanks defines this simultaneousness, where actions follow dialogue closely (and vice versa) as "temporal immediacy" (157).

Based on its reduplicative nature, *kwaʔ~~ʉ~~nu~~ʉ~~kwaʔeeyu~~ʉ~~*, signifies that all the poor prairie dogs are falling at about the same time repeatedly. Though *kwaʔ~~ʉ~~nu~~ʉ~~kwaʔeeyu~~ʉ~~* is not a complete initial repetition like *yuyu* in *yuhyumakiʔeyu* (after all, it is not *kwah-kwah*), the sound when *kwaʔ~~ʉ~~nu~~ʉ~~kwaʔeeyu~~ʉ~~* is spoken is auditorily close to a reduplicative repetition. And this sound gives insight into the movement taking place in the tale because McClung's tales were intended to be spoken aloud in the Comanche oral tradition, not written. Poetically, the sounds that *w~~ʉ~~ht~~ʉ~~kwai*

[57] The emphasis on multiple people receiving the repeated action of mud falling from them signifies the importance that Comanches place on shared experiences in which the whole community can partake simultaneously like gift giving or storytelling.

(pronounced wuh-tuh-kweye, meaning “to club”) and *kwaʔ~~ʉ~~nu̲kwaʔeeyu̲* make when they are spoken together in the sentence sounds similar to the wham and crack-sound a club makes as it hits something, and *~~ʉ~~nu̲* sounds similar to “ouch” in Comanche, *~~ʉr~~ʉʉ* and *anaa* (*Taa N~~ʉ~~m~~ʉ~~ Tekwap~~ʉ̲~~ʔha* . . . 83,140). Thus, *w~~ʉ~~ht~~ʉ~~kwai* and *kwaʔ~~ʉ~~nu̲kwaʔeeyu̲* suggest that Comanche language speakers used poetic devices in Comanche language, such as onomatopoeia or alliteration. Heath and Heath illustrate how to convey knowledge by “anchoring the information in what students already know” (3). They give the example of a schoolteacher who teaches his or her class about the definition of an onomatopoeia, and the teacher associates this lesson with “old Batman shows” that have “Kazam!” and “Pow!” to illustrate fight scenes (Heath and Heath 3). While both the teacher and Heath and Heath explain how to help students acquire new knowledge by associating it with knowledge that students already have, I am considering how onomatopoeia, itself, is a teaching mechanism that is embedded in some Comanche words. For traditional Comanches, these words, like *w~~ʉ~~ht~~ʉ~~kwai* and *kwaʔ~~ʉ~~nu̲kwaʔeeyu̲*, constituted their “previous knowledge,” combined with the oral tradition stories, that were passed down generationally by spoken word. At times, Comanche words compact images of motion and stack sensory related information, like onomatopoeia, into the holistic ways they “stick” to an audience.

This sensory information continues to be passed down to current generations through language and story. Comanche language not only assists in forming knowledge, organizing knowledge, transmitting knowledge, and making knowledge memorable, but it contains many words with auditory-visual and experiential elements that aid in learning information and retaining that knowledge. For instance, to me, poetically, the Comanche word for *horse*, *t~~ʉ~~h~~ʉ~~ya* (pronounced tuh-huh-yah or tuh-huh-yuh) contains onomatopoeia that sounds much like a

horse's hoofs, breaths, and snorts as it gallops. The term for *dried corn soup* is *atakwas~~ʉ~~* (pronounced ah-tuh-kwah-suh). Poetically, this term sounds to me like the noises one would make as one slurps down soup, or the sound a boiling pot of stew makes as a few drops boil over and sizzle as they land on the side of the pot or fall into flames. The word for *squash*, *t~~ʉ~~ehnaʔkwi̲si̲* (pronounced tuh-eh nahkwees) sounds to me like the sound that cooked squash makes as one bites into it. These sounds are beautiful, and though I may be the only person who is making these associations, these words remind me of memories of eating with my family, an act that harkens back to Comanche ancestors who would also gather together and eat our traditional foods. Poetically, some Comanche words contain pieces of our ancestors' memories from their lived experiences, as though the words themselves are historical artifacts. And to me, by placing these words back in their cultural contexts, they become memorable, important, relatable, and contextualized, and our thinking and learning can become more culturally-centered. It is important to make connections to one's contemporary Comanche culture and to Comanche history to enable one to both remember the language and the cultural, historical, and narrative significance associated with it, which further adds to its memorability. The word for *pecans*, *nahk~~ʉ~~tabaʔi* (pronounced knock-uh-tah-bye), to me, sounds like the noise that pecans make when they are knocked from a tree with a stick and hit the branches, tree trunk, and ground as they fall, which is exactly how the Comanche women gather pecans in Riddles's tale of the Comanche woman who gets stuck in a tree.

Wieser describes this holistic aspect of Indigenous meaning making as the merging of various rhetorical methods (4) and its reception as traditional hermeneutics (xiii). These instances of onomatopoeia and other sensory information enable speakers of the Comanche language to use several forms of both meaning making and memory, what Heath and Heath

describe as the difference between "think[ing] of the Mona Lisa versus [recalling] the taste of watermelon versus the capital of Kansas" (6). Comanche language, though not always, packs pieces of sensory detail into one word so that it is memorable and assists the speaker in being prepared for whatever one may encounter and to spark creativity for whatever purpose a person may need; this is why Comanche words for animals[58] often (though not always) describe their color, movement, appearance, smell, or a sound that they make, what they eat, or where they can be found, unique characteristics about them, whether or not the animal is dangerous, and how one should interact with it. Thus, both *wʉhtʉkwai* and *kwaʔʉnʉkwaʔeeyʉ* illustrate how the club is moving away from Coyote as he swings it again and again, making loud wham and crack sounds, and how the club's motion becomes more random as the prairie dogs run, given the context of the sentence. And *yu,* within *kwaʔʉnʉkwaʔeeyʉ,* is just one of the countless Comanche language particles that assists in weaving these sensory-related meanings together.

The contrast of McClung's term, *kwaʔʉnʉkwaʔeeyʉ,* combined with her three repetitions of *nʉkaayu*,[59] "dancing," are a rhetorical trope like a slippery slope or anaphora, implying that the prairie dogs' excess of "wrong" movements led to their demise—the point beyond repair. This rhetorical trope is McClung's bright blue ribbon that weaves throughout the braid to call attention to key behaviors in the plot. McClung did not have to use *yu* to describe these movements, as Riddles explains how the prairie dogs danced and were clubbed without *yu,* but McClung strategically chose to use *yu* to emphasize these actions, just as braiders must decide

[58] For example, one Comanche word for *racoon* is *nʉmamoʔo,* which breaks down as nʉmʉ-mah/maa-moʔo, meaning person-with the hand-hands, implying a memorable characteristic of this animal is that it has human-like hands and opposable thumbs (*Taa Nʉmʉ Tekwapʉʔha Tʉboopʉ* 147, 177, 35, 16; Charney 85, 118).

[59] McClung also alternates voicing *yu* in *nʉkaayu* and whispering it in *kwaʔʉnʉkwaʔeeyʉ*, meaning her emphasis and deemphasis of *yu* in this rhetorical trope is intentional.

how much *yuhu* to use and when for braiding and what accessories to pair with the braids. And the description of the prairie dogs falling is the high point and plot twist because like the middle of a braid that is a point of reference for the end of the braid, the falling prairie dogs confirm that Coyote's goals have been realized. Just as braiders select creative parts, directions, and patterns for braids' paths, McClung chose to transform the prairie dogs' story paths from one of dancing to one of running for their lives, and Riddles uses similar rhetorical strategies in her tales.

Similar to McClung's story, Riddles's tales convey movement. Across the 12 Riddles stories that I translated, I noticed a pattern between when Riddles uses *yukwihtsi* verses when she uses *yukwiiyu* to signal dialogue. This pattern may only be reflective of Riddles's storying style, and to further confirm its relevance to the Comanche language in general, more linguistic studies will need to be conducted. However, for our purposes here, it is clear that these patterns indicate Riddles's rhetorical moves. Both these terms mean "to say," saying, or says (Canonge 156). *Yu* makes *yukwii* progressive, resulting in "saying." *Tsi* is "an intensifying suffix," as in "tuvitsi uru u . . . He's very nice" (Charney 173-174). *Yu* in *yukwiiyu* can be dropped and substituted for *tsi* plus an action description to emphasize both dialogue and action, which can be progressive or completed. For example, in the sliding turkeys tale, Riddles states, "Surukuse, wihnu tuehuhtsuu, 'Ma haitsinii nu narumuʔikutuʔi,' me yukwihtsi yutsunukwa . . . Then that one, the little bird, said as he flew, 'I am going to tell it to his friends'" (line 34). Riddles did not have to use *tsi* and an action description, but she chose to use them in place of *yu*. *Tsi* helps emphasize that the bird's actions followed his or her dialogue to make meaning; he or she states that he or she is going to go tell everyone, and he or she does. As several of Riddles's sentences containing *yukwihtsi* follow, the syntax order of this sentence is in dialogue-dialogue marker-action form. Fairbanks terms a similar phenomenon in the Ojibwe language as "immediacy" where an act or

dialogue closely follows another act and/or dialogue in a brief amount of time (Fairbanks 157). And the Comanche language has a similar occurrence between dialogue and action that pertains to *tsi* and *yu*.

Most of Riddles's sentences that feature *yʉkwiiyu* feature dialogue without action, but in two sentences across 12 stories, she pairs *yʉkwiiyu* with action. However, the order of the action differs from *yʉkwihtsi*'s action order, by following an action-dialogue-dialogue marker form. For example, in the sliding turkeys tale, Riddles states, "Surʉkʉse, wihnu ohaʔahnakatʉ piayakenu, 'Nohi tʉtaatʉ taa haitsi namarʉninu,' me yʉkwiiyu . . . That one, Coyote, then gave a big cry and said, 'Our very little friend has hurt himself'" (line 18). Coyote completes the action of crying, and his dialogue follows immediately afterwards.

Riddles's dialogue patterns with *yʉkwiiyu* verses *yʉkwihtsi* suggest a pattern between the type of dialogue, the dialogue marker, and the type of action in relation to all three's syntax order. This pattern is not a solid "rule," as Riddles herself breaks this "rule" from time to time, but it is a stylistic choice she makes in how she structures her sentences when *yʉkwiiyu* or *yʉkwihtsi* is involved. Why would Riddles vary the placement of the action in relation to *yu*'s or *tsi*'s presence in a sentence? To answer this question, one must examine the content of the dialogue, context, and its relationship to the action and the character who is speaking and acting. *Yu* reveals and conceals accord and discord between a character's action and dialogue in a given sentence. When Riddles substitutes *tsi* and an action description for *yu*, she uses *yu*'s absence to imply how character's words and actions cohere, regardless of double meaning. In the sentence, "Surʉkʉse, 'Namaruniʔnʉ,' me *yʉkwihtsi* [emphasis mine] nahubiniiyu . . . That one [the Turkey] said groaning, 'I hurt myself'" (line 15). There is a double meaning, as the story implies that the turkey did not intentionally hurt himself, as Coyote caused it, but still, the turkey's words and his

actions cohere—hence, the seamlessness of *yu* not appearing because the turkey *did* hurt himself. He unknowingly slid himself into the trap. His words and actions agree. In the tale of Coyote and Turtle, "Sit~~u~~k~~u~~se wakareʔee, 'Hinakia kaabehkaruʔi ~~u~~kihtsi,' me *y~~u~~kwihtsi* [emphasis mine], uwakatu kimanu." Riddles states, "That one, Turtle said, 'I wonder what trick he's trying now,' as he came towards him (line 14). Turtle says that he wonders what scheme Coyote is trying to pull, and he moves near him to find out, meaning his words and his actions are in accord. This sentence is in a dialogue-dialogue marker-action form. I noticed this pattern 6 times across the 12 stories.

When Riddles uses *yu* in *yukwiiyu* instead of *tsi*, the structure of her syntax changes to an action-dialogue-dialogue marker form, emphasizing the discord between characters' actions and their words. Riddles's use of *yu* in *y~~u~~kwiiyu* creates the effect of characters "doing one thing, but saying another." In another example in the sliding turkeys tale, "Sur~~u~~k~~u~~se, wihnu suni uhka b~~u~~i [p~~u~~i] m~~uu~~hka, 'Miaruʔi n~~u~~,' me *y~~u~~kwiiyu* [emphasis mine]. . ." Riddles states, "Then those ones, they did that way [placed their friend in the water], and that one [Coyote] said, 'I am going to go'" (line 22). A discord occurs between Coyote's actions and his dialogue because he acts like he is helping the turkeys mourn the loss of their friend by placing him in the stream's current so that it carries him away, and he says that he is going to leave. However, he does not go elsewhere as he suggests; he merely goes downstream from where they are and retrieves the turkey. In other words, his actions say that he is paying respect by placing the turkey in the water and by giving the impression that he is leaving to both emotionally and physically let the turkey go, but his words imply that he is enacting a plan. If Coyote was genuinely mourning, then he would have left without retrieving the deceased turkey.

I only observed two instances of *yʉkwiiyu* paired with action in action-dialogue-dialogue marker form in a single sentence. However, I found one instance were *yʉkwiiyu* spans two sentences in the sliding turkeys tale. Riddles states, "Surʉkʉse nah hʉʉsʉ urʉʉmaʔai pisikwanuuʔitsi wihnu me yʉkwiiyu . . . That one [Coyote] slid with those ones [the Turkeys] just a few times, and [one Turkey] said . . . 'Orʉtsa [otʉtsa] raa [taa] haitsi pʉnʉ ʉkʉnaa pisikwanuuʔi,' me u *niikwiiyu* [emphasis mine]. . . 'That one [Coyote], our friend, he slides himself first,' he [one Turkey] said to him" (lines 7-8). Across these two adjacent sentences, the syntax pattern is still action-dialogue-dialogue marker, but the content does not follow the previous "rules" mentioned for describing a discord between a character's actions and dialogue. On initial reading this sentence shows a discord only in Coyote's actions and words, because he pretends to be their friend, but he is not speaking. Afterall, Coyote uses the guise of being a friend to setup his trap. Given the story context, the two lines do not show a discord in the actions and dialogue of the turkey who is speaking. Within traditional Comanche culture, these two lines would show a discord, indeed, in the turkey's actions and dialogue.

Within historic Comanche communities, one was held responsible for bringing in intruders into the encampment who might compromise the band's safety. Not just any individual could stride into a historic Comanche camp, especially uninvited. If an individual held a kinship with someone(s) from the camp and used that kinship to enter it, then the Comanche persons who trusted the outsider as "kin" were held responsible if this adopted or "fictive" kin had ill intentions for the camp, even if the Comanche person was unaware of the outsider's intentions because Comanche culture requires Comanches to consider how their words and actions affect one's whole community. Keeping the encampment safe was a joint community effort by both men and women. Children were warned not to get into trouble with just anyone as to do so could

affect the encampment. Yes, Comanches had practices of being hospitable to guests and of expressing interests in meeting new peoples for trade, but they were warrior peoples. This turkey calls Coyote "Haitsi," which means "a man's male friend" and denotes a kinship (*Taa Numu Tekwapuʔha*. . . 4). This is a strategic and powerful rhetorical move that Wieser calls "the rhetoric of relatedness" (164). The turkey's failure to detect that Coyote is untrustworthy conveys that he holds a discord in his animal instincts because he failed to detect danger and warn his turkey community, which correlates with a hypothetical historic Comanche warrior having a discord in his or her warrior mentality because one cannot call oneself a warrior and be gullible. To arrive at this discord, one must not only consult the narrative context, but also the traditional Comanche cultural context.

As I mentioned earlier, Riddles's usages of *yu* are stylistic suggestions rather than "rules" because *yu* does not like to be boxed in. The moment one assumes that one has determined *yu*'s behavior in a scenario, it changes. I found one[60] sentence out of the twelve stories to test my claim that *yʉkwiiyu* emphasizes a discord between characters' actions and words. This example is in Riddles's tale of the Comanche woman who is caught in a tree. "Sʉmʉʔkʉse waʔihpʉ, 'Nʉtsa sohoroʔituʔi [sohotoʔituʔi],' Me *yʉkwiiyu* [emphasis mine] sʉmʉʔma toʔinu . . . One woman said, 'I am going to climb,' as she climbed one [tree]," Riddles states (line 7). This sentence takes *tsi*'s syntax structure without using *tsi*, forming a dialogue-dialogue marker-action form *and* using *yʉkwiiyu*. *Yu* still hints that the woman's actions are different from her words because although the woman is saying that she will climb and then climbs, her expectations for

[60] *Niikwiiyu* emphasizes to whom a character is speaking, as in "a character said to him/her," or "a character said to them." In the oral tradition, who is speaking and to whom is being spoken lends credibility to a statement, especially if said individual is considered a cultural expert or in good standing in Comanche communities.

that climb are not met as the process of an ideal climb is to climb up and then to climb down. This woman begins to climb, and then she falls and gets stuck; she can neither continue climbing, nor get down. Although Riddles uses a dialogue-dialogue marker-action structure, her use of *yu* implies that the woman's dialogue and her actions will have a discord, as the lines that follow her dialogue confirm. *Yu* in the dialogue "gives it away" that the outcome will be different from the woman's expectation, and it emphasizes the discord in the character's words and actions, conveying her character traits—either she is someone who cannot finish what she starts, or she struggles with carrying out tasks with a "natural, easy grace," an effortlessness.[61]

Riddles strategic use of *yu* enables characters' dialogues and actions to flow together like oil, where characters' actions immediately flow into their dialogues and their dialogues immediately flow into their actions, and her choice to add extra *yu* in *yʉkwiiyu* serves as a minute tell for discord like when someone tries to stick a broken piece of pottery back together—the piece almost appears to fit back except for the smallest bit of paste that seeps out—or when one

[61] In the tale of the grandmother who picks wild grapes with her grandchild, the story centers around their surprise encounter with a wild bull, to which the grandchild responds. "Sitʉkʉse tʉehpʉʔrʉ 'itʉtsa narʉʔʉyatʉ pimoroo tahʉwakatu kimaarʉ' mekʉse sitʉ *yʉkwihtsi* [emphasis mine] pʉhʉ waikinʉkahtu pohpinu . . ." Riddles states, "This one child said, 'It's a dangerous bull coming towards us,' he said to this one [his grandmother] as he jumped into their wagon" (Canonge 116, line 11). This sentence is in a dialogue-dialogue marker-action pattern; *tsi* confirms accord in the grandchild's dialogue and action because a bull is present. In the tale of the Comanche woman who hides her money in a can that blows away in a storm, she prepares to break the news of her lost money to her husband. "Sitʉkʉse wihnu tʉkʉhmaninu pʉ kumahpʉʔa, 'Kima tʉhkaruʔi tah,' me *niikwiiyu* [emphasis mine]. . ." Riddles states, "This one then prepared a meal for her husband and said, 'Come, let us eat'" (Canonge 49, line 25). This sentence follows an action-dialogue-dialogue marker pattern; *yu* confirms a discord in the woman's actions and dialogue because she hides that her money is missing as she cooks and eats breakfast. Though these instances and some instances in the text above use *niikwiiyu* instead of *yʉkwiiyu* (both meaning *says/saying*) the relationships between sentence patterns and accord/discord in characters' words and actions remains.

attempts to patch a braid and the hairpin *just* pokes through one's hair . . . or when one uses too much *yuhu,* and a white film appears over one's hair.

In Comanche language, the movement is part of the message. This phenomenon is important in oral tradition because when one listens and watches a speaker tell a tale, the speaker uses nonverbal cues for expression to illustrate the story. This is an example of what Wieser describes when she states that "in the visual/oral-aural/holistic cognitive model, visually encoded story usually accompanies the oral tradition" (16). *Yu* signals progressive dialogue, but where *yu* is not is just as important as where *yu* is, echoing an Indigenous narrative phenomenon where "skilled storytellers intentionally leave out portions of stories known to the audience to highlight them by their absence" (Wieser 11). The audience must "supply the missing parts of a narrative and comprehend the point of the work by means of his or her own intellectual efforts" (qtd. in Wieser 11). *Yu* carries out a similar function syntactically; in other words, its absence highlights and emphasizes the actions that cohere with the dialogue, forming accord, thereby enabling the action and the dialogue to highlight *yu*'s absence in return, strategically calling attention to its seamlessness that then reflects upon the narrative's construction as a whole. Therefore, within the social interactions of speaker/braider or audience/braidee, the absence of *yu*/*yuhu* primes the audience/braidee to then supply it linguistically (or in a braiding situation, materially)—and to supply *yuhu* metaphorically, or rather "fill it in" with their own storying/hairpins or accessories, which then sticks the audience's/braidee's relationship to the story/braid.

For example, in Riddles's rations tale, she ends each line in *yu* intentionally, priming the listener/reader with its repetition and rhythm, leading them to expect it, but then her final line diverges from this pattern by removing *yu* and replacing it with *nu,* which causes the audience to question "Where did *yu* go? And why is it replaced with *nu*?" This question entices the storying

process in the audience who then must finish the story. And in this pondering, the audience may wonder, “Why would Riddles draw attention to this final line?” making Riddles’s rhetorical trope successful because it calls the audience’s attention to a major moment in the story to which she wants her audience to notice.

When *yʉkwii* substitutes *yu* for *-tsi* plus an action description, *-tsi* is *yu*-esque because it implies that *yu*’s absence is a placeholder for immediate action that accompanies dialogue and forms accord. When *tsi* is present in *yʉkwii*, it highlights the place where *yu* could have gone, both concealing and revealing *yu*. For example, in Riddles’s sliding turkeys tale, she states, “Surʉkʉse, wihnu tʉehuhtsuu, ‘Ma haitsinii nʉ narʉmuʔikʉtuʔi,’ me *yʉkwihtsi* [emphasis mine] yʉtsʉnukwa . . . Then that one, the little bird, said as he flew, ‘I am going to tell it to his friends’” (line 34). In this sentence, *tsi* is in *yu*’s place and is accompanied with the action description, “as he flew,” indicating that the bird’s act of flying off to report Coyote’s mischief to the turkeys is an immediate, emphatic act that expresses how the bird’s words and actions agree; both the bird’s dialogue and actions imply that he is so mad that he is going to go tell everyone right now, and he does. Riddles could have used *yu*, but she substituted it for *tsi* and an action description, and her choice to swap *yu* for *tsi* and vice versa primes the reader/listener to examine characters’ words and actions for accord and discord throughout the tale.

Tsi reveals this seamlessness in characters’ actions and dialogues as well as the seamlessness in Riddles’s storying technique, much like *yuhu* creates a seamless braid. But, when one is admiring the braid’s seamlessness, one is actually admiring the transparent *yuhu* that is holding it together so well that it does not call attention to itself, but to the hairstyle. Therefore, *yu*’s absence in *tsi* plus an action description enables readers to admire the cohesiveness of characters’ actions and dialogue when they are indirectly examining the grammatical

seamlessness of *yu* whose relationship with *tsi* enables it to be invisible due to substitution in order to call attention to characters' actions and dialogues that are in accord. If one were to see the *yuhu* in the braid, then the hypothetical braider would have made a "mistake" resulting in a goopy, messy braid because the *yuhu* is not supposed to be seen. Likewise, the direct appearance of *yu* in *yukwiiyu* plus action and dialogue indicates a discord. I am not arguing that *yu* in *yukwiiyu* is a "mistake" that Riddles made, but she used it intentionally for audiences to notice the characterization and plot unfold. Regardless of the further need for linguistic study, one can see that in Comanche narratives both dialogue and action are important and marked or not by *yu*.

This *yu*-esqueness is crucial to the incorporation of quotes in Comanche so that the dialogue flows with the plot's exposition like oil flows over hair. The dialogue flows into the action, and the action flows into the dialogue; the two combine to make meaning, making characters' actions not speech acts, but acts of speech. The merging of dialogue and action reflects the Comanche culture's value that one's actions and one's words should correlate and be "true," as Wieser suggests is commonly an Indigenous cultural value (107). Wieser illustrates the historical significance of this value as she describes Andrew Jackson's contradictions about the Indian Removal Act as having a "disconnect between his words and his actions" (107). Although Comanche language coveys double-meaning and contradiction with the use of *yu*, *yu* also links spoken words and actions together that are in accord through its role as a dialogue marker, progressive verb, and a placeholder for *tsi* plus an action description.

The tales of Riddles and McClung involve characters navigating "sticky" situations that shed light on descriptions of movement, as well as Comanche grammar's own woven-ness, *kwisikat*. In Riddles's tale of the two Osage men, a Comanche woman is fixing a meal for her family. McClung's version of the Coyote and prairie dogs tale portrays the prairie dogs' disaster

that results in a moment beyond repair. By considering how key Comanche words function within each of these tales, one gages different levels of *kwisikatʉ*. Movement descriptions are inherent in some Comanche words, not only because of *yu*'s progressive verb status, but also because Comanche language likes to verbalize several parts of speech. And *yu* signifies movement through its progressive dialogue marker status and its relationship with *tsi*.

And *yu* meshes multiple Comanche words and their meanings together into a single word, as is the case in Riddles's tale of the two Osage men, where *Tsayumiʔitsi* is formed by *tsaa/tsah/tsaatʉ/yu/tsayumiʔi/miitsi/iʔi/tsi* to convey how the Comanche woman beautifully moves to gather the bundles of meat. These word roots and affixes are held together by *yu*, weaving together these motion sequences to express layers of meaning in one word. These layers of words enable the tale's descriptions to resonate with readers/listeners emotionally by appealing to their senses and by enabling them to choose the meanings that most resonate with them, highlighting *yu*'s fluidity. How does one pick which meanings are "just right?" *Suniyutʉ*. Then how does a Comanche storyteller convey an intended meaning to an audience given Comanche language's complexity? *Suniyutʉ*. The audience must finish the storying with the strands that the storyteller has shared. English is similar—one English word can have hundreds of years of variations in its use, definitions, connotations, spellings, and pronunciations that are ever-growing, transforming, lost, recovered, altered, repaired, invented, and shared across languages . . . and so does Comanche language. And in McClung's prairie dog tale, the contrast of *nʉkaayu* (dancing) and *kwaʔʉnukwaʔeeyu* (falling) gives insight into how *yu* bridges the Comanche oral tradition and written text, as well as how speaking and hearing Comanche words provides knowledge cues that are overlooked by only reading the texts, such as the sound effects that pair with the imagery of the prairie dogs falling that gets lost when one does not read the

story aloud. How is *yu* able to bridge the written and the oral? Maybe it is embedded in its whisper vowel functions of its final aspect suffix, *-yu/-yu̲,* making it audible, yet inaudible, written, yet implied. *Suniyut~~u~~̲.*

Etiquette—How do you do right?

Yu kar~~u~~. Ni yu kar~~u~~.[62] *Sit still*. *Be quiet*. My mother loved teasing me with these Comanche phrases because I was always a talkative child. "I raised you to speak your mind," she would say, "Back in my day children were to be seen and not heard." Yet, my Comanche elders taught me that when participating in Comanche traditions, sitting still and being quiet are the first rules, and sometimes the hardest rules a Comanche child must learn. At least it was for me because sitting still and remaining silent in Comanche culture is a far more prolonged experience than it is in mainstream cultural situations. It requires discipline. Whether it is a dinner, a business meeting, or some other community gathering, Comanches have no problem making a social event last hours or even days. *Yu* gives these commands an air of "do right," "act right," "straighten up," "quit cuttin' up." "M~~u~~n~~u~~ yuu naaka! (Ya'll behave!)" (Anderton, McClung, and Nahquaddy 91).

The sentence, *hakaniyut~~u~~̲ ~~u~~n~~u~~ yuhaniyu* can be interpreted as "How do you do right?" which brings forth not just questions of methodology, but also questions of behavioral protocols or etiquette. What does it mean to do something "right" or to conduct oneself "right" according to the Comanche culture depicted in Riddles's tales? Comanche etiquette rules can be observed

[62] Sometimes this phrase is written as *yukar~~u~~* and *ni yukar~~u~~* to emphasize *yu*'s prefix stasis that means "do right." Though, I have seen this same phrase written as "ni yu kar~~u~~" with *yu* as a standalone word on a *Comanche Language I* worksheet from the Comanche Nation College around 2007 which I have also listed in the works cited.

at both the narrative and sentence level in Comanche grammar. For example, the prefix, *yu-*, conveys etiquette because it is predominately featured in commands and phrases about being, as in "*Ni yu kar~~ʉ~~*," *be quiet* or "*yun~~ʉ~~mit~~ʉ~~ /yuy~~ʉ~~kar~~ʉ~~*," *live well /behave/ be good* (*Taa Numu Tekwapuʔha Tuboopu* 87). Grammatically, *yu* expresses "be, become sentences," such as "*~~U~~nnha hak~~ʉ~~ n~~ʉ~~miyu* . . . Where have you been?" (Charney 199-200). And almost anyone who has grown up in a Comanche society knows that if one's mother, grandmother, or auntie has ever said this phrase to him or her, either in English or Comanche, then one has done something to get into trouble and needs to "act right."

Riddles's tale of the Comanche woman who is caught in a tree has social commentary about etiquette. To understand how this tale provides social commentary, one must interpret the tale not as a single story, but as two juxtaposed stories in progress that merge. By parsing out the tale as two stories, one can see a dichotomy based on traditional notions of etiquette between the group of Comanche women and the Comanche couple, an "honorable" man and a "dishonorable" man, and a woman who makes a "mistake" and a woman who is "shamed." These dichotomies suggest other juxtaposed ideas, such as what does it mean to correct small social "errors" verses big social "errors"? What does it mean to provide community support versus to cause a separation from community? What does it mean to be an observant community member verses an incoherent, unobservant one? What were some of the 1950s Comanche women's views on sobriety versus drunkenness? Riddles brings forth all these concepts almost without telling the audience what to think about any of the characters, again, an example of these narratives acting as what Wieser calls "indirect discourse" (xiii).

Yu helps make commands in Comanche grammar, and Riddles's tales teach lessons of etiquette without commanding audiences to abide by traditional Comanche social protocols.

Implied commands are concepts in other Indigenous languages, like the Ojibwe language. Fairbanks explains how *mii* works with *izhi* to act as a "command softener . . . to the point that they are really not imperatives any longer, but suggestions" (97). Ojibwe culture, much like the Comanche culture, gives commands, but still respects the individual's agency to refuse the command. Though Comanche culture respects individual agency, this aspect does not mean that individuals who refuse a command will go without consequence, especially if an individual's conduct hinders a community's harmony, a concept that is carried on from the early days when community collaboration was essential to protecting Comanche encampments.

Considering others is the very lesson that the Comanche woman who is caught in a tree must learn. "'Sʉmʉʔkʉse waʔihpʉ, 'Nʉtsa sohoroʔituʔi [sohotoʔituʔi],' Me yʉkwiiyu sʉmʉʔma toʔinu . . ." Riddles states, "One woman said, 'I am going to climb,' as she climbed one [tree]" (line 7). *Yu* is signaling the dialogue of the woman who gets her dress caught in the tree and cannot not climb down from it. Riddles uses this woman's dialogue and her "sticky" situation to imply that this woman tried too hard to show off, and as my mother would say, "She tore it," meaning the woman failed. Considering the *yu*-esqueness of this moment, the woman tried too hard to appear effortless, thereby revealing her great effort. This moment serves as tension within the narrative. Like the tug in braiding hair, Riddles strategically makes this first tug big, but not too big, providing a contrast with the final big tug to show a difference in two women's behaviors and their social consequences. Similarly to how braid links orient a braid's trajectory and show individual nuance, the dialogue in this tale conveys that the woman's goals are not realized and that she dares to climb so high that she calls undue attention to herself, jeopardizes her safety, and cannot continue helping her fellow women pick pecans. Instead, they have to stop

their work to help her, a consequence that she, her fellow women, and one Comanche man must bear.

With the Comanche man's help, the women resume their pecan picking and continue their travels. "Set~~ʉʉ~~ waʔihp~~ʉ~~ʔan~~ʉʉ~~ kohtoohtsi t~~ʉ~~k~~ʉ~~hmaniiyʉ . . ." Riddles states, "Those women made a fire [and] were preparing a meal" (line 16). *T~~ʉ~~k~~ʉ~~hmaniiyʉ* means "to prepare a meal" (Canonge 151). However, Wistrand-Robinson and Armagost claim that *t~~ʉ~~k~~ʉ~~ manip~~ʉ~~* is a standalone phrase for "meal" (239). And this phrase functions as a progressive verb and verbalized object of the post position. *T~~ʉ~~k~~ʉ~~hmaniiyʉ* is composed from *t~~ʉ~~k~~ʉ~~* (food) and *t~~ʉ~~hka* (eat) (*Taa N~~ʉ~~m~~ʉ~~ Tekwap~~ʉ~~ʔha . . .* 73,113). *Ni* also expresses "in this fashion." An alternative word is *t~~ʉ~~k~~ʉ~~ hanit~~ʉ~~*, meaning "cooking" (*Taa N~~ʉ~~m~~ʉ~~ Tekwap~~ʉ~~ʔha . . .* 73). *Hani* denotes "do" or "make." According to Charney, *-nii* is also a motion suffix that means to "motion around, random," or "to indicate that an action is ongoing" (131-132; 134). *Ma-* is an instrumental prefix, meaning "with the hand" (Charney 117-118). *Ma-* can function as an "indefinite object prefix" and as a "demonstrative stem and a third person pronoun. In its functioning as a context-specific 'it,' *ma-* is more definite . . . *ma-* also tends to be used when the implied object is human, in those cases it is usually translated as 'someone'" (Charney 128). For example, "*matsaso?i . . .* to scratch a pan, someone" (Charney 128). Thus, *t~~ʉ~~k~~ʉ~~hmaniiyʉ* holds the meaning, "The women were going around, continuing to make food with their hands in this manner." This one word shows *yu*'s fluidity because it conveys a sentence that leads to different interpretations like pouring oil onto hair and weaving layers of sections. In the story, the women's cooking is the point where the two juxtaposed stories begin to collide like the point in a braid where the sections overlap one another, as the first story does not end with a feast; instead, the story merges with an ongoing story about a Comanche couple who rudely interrupts the women's cooking.

Like the motion of shifting hair strands to follow a nuanced braiding path, the tale twists and no longer focuses on the women, but on one Comanche woman, who is drunk, and her husband. The woman who is drunk throws their packaged foods into the fire. "Surɨkɨse u kumahpɨ, 'Hipeʔse waʔihpɨ senihku tɨkɨhmaniʔeeyu?' . . ." Riddles states, "That one her husband [said], 'Since when does a woman prepare a meal in this different way?'" (line 22). In *Tɨkɨhmaniʔeeyu* ("to prepare a meal"), *ʔeeyu* signifies repetitive, distributive, and habitual action, as in her husband asks, "Since when do Comanche women have a tradition of cooking in this manner?" (Canonge 151). This line denotes social commentary, suggesting that traditional Comanche women did not have a tradition of preparing meals while drunk, implying that such behavior is unacceptable. And this line is *yu*-esque because it reveals and conceals both the man's abusive treatment of his wife and his wife's drinking problem, suggesting that the two issues are related. However, the man's question about how his wife is preparing their meal sets up the final punchline of the tale where he becomes the "joke."

Riddles closes her tale with, "Surɨɨkɨse waʔihpɨʔanɨɨ, 'Pia rɨa [tɨa] noo u makwinumɨtsi,' me u niikwiiyu . . . Those women said to him, 'It is said big [and] loud, for sure, you are making her drunk'" (line 23). This punchline is the extra *yuhu* and hairpins that hold the braid together. The women help hold one another together, providing each other support, and in turn, they are part of holding Comanche communities together. Within the story's context of the women who are laughing at the drunken woman, this "punchline" is not funny, but it becomes humorous because the women scold the man for scolding his wife, turning the argument around on the man, who now has multiple women with whom to contend. They speak up and call attention to the discord that the couple is causing their community in hopes that it will strike the man to change, to consider how he treats his wife, to think about how he is enabling her

drinking, and to reflect on how he is allowing her to be publicly shamed. The women who collectively speak the final dialogue defend the woman who has a drinking problem and remind her husband that he is not an innocent party in the issue, making him the joke. Though he tries to make his wife the joke, the women of his community will not allow it. Similar to how the front and back of a braid are not mirror images, there is a correlation between the point at which all the characters are silent and when the audience begins laughing, further elevating the effects of this double meaning because the tale approaches its' close with a group of women laughing (the audience silently listening), one man speaking his final line (the audience silently listening), the group of women speaking their final line, followed by all the characters becoming silent (and the audience begins laughing).

The audience is able to laugh at the final line because Comanche female empowerment remains intact as the women refuse to sit in silence when they notice one of their own sisters being abused, which enables the audience to laugh despite any pain that they may be experiencing. Wieser shares the story of how her grandmother, whom she was told was of Choctaw descent and was a retired head nurse, would use narrative to help her fellow nurses that "she suspected were victims of domestic violence" (13-14). Her grandmother would tell the nurses the story of "women sewing up husbands in tarps or sheets during their drunken blackouts, before beating them with broomsticks" (Wieser 14). She explains that her grandmother would allow the nurses to decide for themselves the meaning of the story, permitting them to mull over the meaning of the phrase, "Every man has to sleep sometime" (14). I heard a similar story in the early 2000s when I was about fourteen years old at an Indian Health Services banquet in Oklahoma City that a group of Comanche elders, my mother, and I attended. An Indigenous woman who was an expert on the study of domestic violence was the

keynote speaker, and she shared “The Tale of the Crooked Braid.” I cannot recall the woman’s name, her tribe, her title, or even how the story ended, but I remember how quiet the room became when she started telling the tale of an Indian woman who was “beaten every night by her husband, and every morning he expected her to braid his hair for him—and every morning she would braid his hair with her bruised hands, but for every night that he beat her, the next morning she would make his braid just a little bit more crooked and a little bit more crooked. And for a while, she would send him out the door looking like that every day, and he never even knew that he was going around with a crooked braid for all to see.” But considering how most Comanche stories, like the tale of the Comanche woman who was caught in a tree, are open for interpretation, I can only assume that the point of this woman’s tale was a combination of make of it “what [one] will” and “everyman has to sleep sometime” (Powell 483; Wieser 14).

Riddles twists her second mini tale’s ending from a tale of a woman’s demise to one of Comanche sisterhood resiliency. Wieser argues that kinship entails actual responsibilities that must be fulfilled to maintain the kinship bond (173). And the women’s final responses in Riddles’s tale are one instance of Comanche women fulfilling their kinship responsibilities, thereby indicating that the Comanche sisterhood is just as valued as the Comanche brotherhood is in Comanche societies. Like Riddles’s rations tale, both Wieser’s grandmother and the expert who spoke at the IHS banquet use the last line of their tales to take a turn in tone, weaving in a bright blue ribbon into the braid to call attention to the important issues of substance abuse and domestic violence.

The final line of Riddles’s tale sheds light on the historical irony that surrounds this tale. For instance, early colonists’ first depictions of Indigenous peoples in Euro American publications described Indigenous peoples as savages and drunks, and Riddles’s tale usurps this

stereotype. Riddles counters these negative depictions in a balanced way by juxtaposing one woman who is drunk with a community of strongminded women, noting that not all Comanche women are drunks or share the same views on alcohol. Riddles' further juxtaposition of the husband who enables his wife's drinking with this group of women implies that the man's wife is more than an alcoholic, she is a beloved sister who has more to her story than just drunkenness.

In Comanche culture, etiquette is closely associated with ontology because etiquette extends to more than social protocols, but also to how one carries oneself. In the Comanche language, *yu* has a relationship to both concepts. For example, *yunʉmitʉ, to live well* or *behave*. *Yu*'s attachment to *nʉm,* which is from *nʉmʉ/nʉmʉnʉʉ,* meaning Comanche person/Comanche people, shows that the ideas of personhood and conduct are closely related. Again, *yu,* can mean "do right," but it is also within the word for *easily*, "yuʔnaitsi," (Wistrand-Robinson and Armagost 153). And *yuʔnaitsi* culturally implies an air of effortlessness. *Yu* is a part of Comanche ontology; it is not just central to paracolonial related words. From a traditional Comanche perspective, Riddles's tale conveys the social consequences of one being caught trying too hard to appear effortless, resulting in unrealized goals. Her choice to tell this tale about characters' mistakes is not without effort stylistically. She intentionally conveys lessons in which audiences can learn from characters' mistakes so that they can appear effortless in Comanche societies—*yuʔnaitsi.*

Riddles's strategic storying technique appears effortless too; on the surface her tales seem simple, but they hold volumes of cultural knowledge. Based on her Comanche syntax, she uses complex planning, reasoning, and contextualizing. She put in effort to tell these tales in the manner that she told them, and she memorized them throughout her lifetime. Wieser acknowledges how Booth Donohue confirms that audiences' understandings come from their

"efforts" to make sense of the stories because they "supply the missing parts of a narrative and comprehend the point of the work by means of [their] own intellectual efforts" (qtd. Wieser 11). Riddles's story itself addresses the subject of effort because the women put in great effort to gather pecans and to cross cultural, economic, and physical boundaries to get what they want—a feat during the early reservation years that was *ke yu?naitsi*, not so easy.

Aspiration—How you doing?

Hakaniyutʉ ʉnʉ haniyu asks, "How you doing?" *Hani* expresses "abstract" notions of "to do" and "to fix" (Charney 208). *Hani* conveys "Philtsa nʉrʉnowaikinha [nʉtʉnowaikinha] nʉhannikʉ?i . . . Phil fixed my pickup . . . Tavenni [tabenni] tannʉ ke hinna hannigwaitʉʉ [hanniwaitʉʉ]. . . We're not going to do anything this afternoon . . . Pʉesʉ nʉʉ tʉhkʉhanimai . . . I've already finished cooking" (Charney 208). These last two statements interpret *hani* "abstract[ly]" as plans to do something or the completing of a task (the cooking is implied in *making*/*doing*), whereas the first sentence characterizes *hani* as fixing something (a truck) (Charney 207-208). When someone in my community asks someone "How you doing?" in Comanche, this question is not asking "What are doing? . . Hina ʉnʉ haniyu?" This question is not asking "How do you feel? . . Hakai ʉnʉ nʉʉsukatʉ?" And this question is not "How are you?/How are you being/How you be? . . Ʉnʉ hakani nakʉ?" *Nakʉ* as *naka* translates as "continue to be" or "hear, listen" (*Taa Nʉmʉ Tekwapʉ?ha* Tʉboopʉ . . . 25) Poetically, "Ʉnʉ hakani nakʉ?" can be interpreted as "You how be?' Or, "You how listen?" Or, "Listen, how you be?" Or, "I want to hear how you be?" Or, "How you be listening [to your elders]?" Therefore, *hakaniyutʉ ʉnʉ haniyu* can ask about one's mental state, specifically one's abstract plans and ideas. *Yu*'s ability to express unrealized action is essential to describing futurity. According to

Charney, "Predicative -*yu*= occurs with some of the final aspect suffixes, such as unrealized -*tuʔi*" (201). For example, "Pʉetsʉku nʉʉ Cachekaiyutuʔi . . . I'll be in Cache tomorrow" (Charney 201). There are instances where *yu* pairs with the "prefinal aspect suffix" -*wai* to express "unrealized" action (Charney 147-148). For instance, "Sitʉkʉse, 'Ʉnnhase noo yʉtsʉgwaiyu [yʉtsʉwaiyu]' . . . He (said), 'Are you able to get up?'" (Charney 148). *Wai* also expresses "to want," as in, "Hina ʉnʉ niʔwai? . . What do you want?" (Flores 00:00:30-00:00:33). In *Taa Nʉmʉ Tekwapʉʔha Tʉboopʉ*, "want" is *suʔwaitʉ, nihwaitʉ, nihwai* (170). *Yu*'s ability to pair with *hani*, *wai*, and *tuʔi* indicates a relationship amongst these particles and the ideas of doing, wanting, and discussing unrealized goals, and this relationship shows how aspiration is inherent in the grammar, thereby making *yu* essential for examining characters' aspirations in Riddles's and Karty's texts. If one ever wanted to know about historic Comanches' goals, one must examine Comanche tales. Many Comanche tales feature characters whose aspirations center around traveling places and feeding their communities, and these are just some of the many goals that the tales depict.

While *yu* is central to characters' dialogue when they speak their goals, where *yu* is not in a tale is just as important as where it is. For example, in Karty's "Tatsinuuʔpi," (Star) tale, she states, "Sitʉkʉse sitʉ waahimatui se kuhmapʉ kʉ oko nʉ tatsinuuʔpita u tʉmʉkʉtui sube ʉnʉ oko ma kueʔkʉ ma haniʔtui meku ʉ niikwi . . . This one, her husband, put the Christmas tree up; he said he was going to buy a star for sure at that time for her [his wife]" (34, line 3). But, the general English translation is " . . . and the first Christmas they had in their house he went and bought his wife a glass Christmas star to put on top of their tree, and they used it all them years" (36, line 2). Though *niikwi* does not contain *yu*, it alludes to it, and most of the time in Riddles's dialogue, *yu* is a whispered vowel, meaning it is almost inaudible when it is spoken.

Although these lines do not contain *yu*, the phrase, *niikwi,* is *yu*-esque because the *-yu̲* suffix that usually accompanies *niikwi* is implied. The Comanche dictionary lists *niikwi* and *niikwiitu̲* as their own separate words for "say, said" and "speak to, address, told" (*Taa Nu̲mu̲ Tekwapu̲ʔha* . . . 33). I suggest an allusion to *yu* because Riddles, McClung, and Karty all set their stories in the "long ago" past, *soobeʔsu̲ku̲tsa* or "soobesu̲," and they all frequently use the past progressive, such as "situ̲u̲ nu̲kaayu . . . these ones were dancing," or "uraniʔeyu . . ." a character "was finding," implying the logic that these progressive actions were happening in the past, resulting in *a character was saying, niikwiiyu̲* in addition to *a character said, niikwi,* with both *niikwiiyu̲, niikwi,* and *niikwi̲* being pronounced similarly (McClung 1; Karty 34).

Riddles and Karty could have chosen a variety of dialogue markers to use: *suru̲ku̲se/ suru̲u̲ku̲se/suru̲kwu̲ku̲se, meku̲se suru̲u̲, meku̲se suru̲u̲ speaker's name, meku̲se, me yu̲kwiiyu̲, me u niikwiiyu̲, niwu̲nu̲tsi, niwu̲nu̲u̲yu̲, speaker's nameʔku̲se, meku̲se suru̲ u niikwiiyu̲, meku̲, situ̲ku̲se speaker's name, me yu̲kwitu̲, yu̲kwihtsi, and tekwu̲ninu̲*[63]—yet both storytellers strategically chose to either use *yu* as a whispered vowel or to omit it, thereby alluding to *yu*'s placement. A speaker's choice to keep *yu* as a whispered vowel or to omit it is strategic. The dialogue in the star tale both alludes to *yu* and states a character's plan (like an unrealized goal). Sentences involving characters' unrealized goals are *yu*-esque, implying that other narrative elements not containing *yu* directly can also be *yu*-esque, suggesting the possibility for *yu* to be a rhetorical lens.

Karty, like many other 20th and 21st century Comanche speakers, may have deemphasized the *yu* from *niikwi* because it is implied or a whispered vowel that is almost inaudible. Further

[63] Of the Riddles stories that I have examined, *tu̲ʔa̲weku̲nu̲* is not introducing quotes, but in the grasshopper's tale and in the tale of the two Osage men, *tu̲ʔa̲weku̲nu̲* serves as *told* in indirect quotes.

linguistic research into Comanche speakers' emphasizing and deemphasizing *yu* in dialogue markers could be future linguistic research. While Riddles uses *yu* as a dialogue marker, she may have spoken *yu* with a more pronounced sound that Canonge detected in his translations. This difference between Karty's and Riddles's use of *yu* dialogue markers may be dialectical or due to a difference in times (1950s verses the mid-2000s). However, Karty's and Riddles's difference in *yu*'s usage coincides with how braiders choose whether or not to use *yuhu*, and if so, how much *yuhu* to use in braids and when to apply it. Riddles chose to use a lot of -*yu* in dialogue, while Karty preferred to keep -*yu* more subtle in the dialogue. *Suniyut*. *Yu* is visible yet invisible, audible, yet inaudible.

Comanche sentences can be *yu*-esque by alluding to *yu*'s grammar roles, to *yu*'s sociocultural philosophy, such as aspiration, and to *yu*'s narrative relationships. For instance, in Riddles's pumpkins tale the boys' sister chooses to settle the dispute between her brothers and the Wichita man by volunteering to marry the Wichita man's son, bringing peace to both families. Riddles states, "Sumuʔkuse uruumatuna samohpu, 'Nutsa nah suhka renahpuʔa [tenahpuʔa] tuaʔa kuhmaruruʔi,' mekuu . . . One of those one's sisters said, 'I am going to just marry that man's son'" (line 25). This sentence is *yu*-esque because the sister's dialogue states her unrealized goal, which becomes realized, transforms the plot, and makes her the central character. *Yu* diffuses across word meanings, cultures, and contexts, and likewise, the sister's dialogue conveys how she crosses the boundaries of intertribal conflict, reparations, kinship systems, and peace negotiations to obtain her goal.

Traditionally, Comanche women were permitted to marry whomever they chose. However, they were discouraged from marrying an individual from the same Comanche band (Betty 19). A Comanche woman's marrying of someone from another band, tribe, or ethnicity

was the "norm," which reflected the "confluent" aspects of Comanche culture that incorporated cultural elements from other tribes and Euro American countries (Gunn Allen 181). But this incorporation of intertribal and European culture into Comanche culture also resulted in Comanche culture diffusing into other Indigenous and Euro American settlements, especially through trade and intermarriage. Cranford-Gomez discusses how cross-cultural intermarriages influenced the composition of basketweaving (101). She states, " . . . kin ties, intermarriage, and culture exchange resulting from blending bloodlines reflect the similarities in the choices and processes of natural resources and basket patterns" (Cranford-Gomez 102-103). These cultural exchanges include effects on materials, methods used to produce the items, and the discourse, or "basket patterns," or braid/story patterns themselves. Thus, the sister in the pumpkins story is not just moving herself across kinship lines or cultural expectations to obtain her goal, but she is moving her own ideas and customs across intertribal territories with the potential to influence other communities and their traditions for generations.

And her dialogue expresses humor because the young man she intends to marry is not present and does not know that he is about to get married, and the audience does not know his perspective on the matter, implying that she may have been planning her escape long before the opportunity presented itself. And she does not *ask* to get married, she *tells* them. Her word choice for "to marry" is the historic Comanche term "said of a woman,"[64] *kuhmaruru?i/kumaru*, which is related to the Comanche word for *husband*, *kuhmap* (*Taa N m Tekwap ?ha . . .* 134;127). In other words, she states that she is taking a husband. Her word choice suggests that she is going to shape his identity as her husband more so than the marriage shaping her into a

[64] The Comanche language also has terms for marrying to describe anyone who marries, *kuhmabai*, meaning *married*, *nanakw hti*, meaning *marry*, and *nanakw nkw*, meaning *married couple* (*Taa N m Tekwap ?ha . . .* 134).

wife; she is not objectified in this tale as "property" to be exchanged. Like a twist in a braid turns and shifts the strands in braiders' hands, the sister shifts the plot because the audience expects the boys to give the man their horses, but when their sister speaks, she changes the story like shifting a braid pattern in mid-braid from a three-strand pattern to a four-strand pattern. And the humorous battle between the boys and the man is likened to wrestling with one's hair to get it to form a braid, but it will not. Then one applies extra *yuhu* to style it, and the braid works. The sister's dialogue is the *yuhu* that solves the conflict and forms the braid. And her words act as animal hide wraps that cover the braiding "errors" and make the hair appear flawless. Her dialogue itself is humorous because she uses trickster humor to appear as though she is solving the boys' problems, when she is acting from her own interests, blurring "obligation" verses "will." Mirroring *yu*'s contradictory nature that reveals, conceals, diffuses, flows, yet weaves, Riddles's tale submits, yet subverts historic, early Comanche and 1950s mainstream American expectations for Comanche women by creating the guise that the woman is marrying to satisfy reparations and to bring honor to both families, but she is marrying of her own accord.

The sister's dialogue reflects an early Comanche history of "wife stealing." Comanche women who committed adultery or eloped could be labeled as "stolen brides," but many of these Comanche women left of their own choosing. According to a lecture by Dr. Kimberly Wieser-Weryackwe, "Nobody stole anybody. She [a Comanche woman] left because she wanted to . . . You can't just walk into a Comanche camp and 'take' a Comanche woman with all her cousins, brothers, and uncles around without being noticed." Betty discusses the effects of "wife stealing." He states that in the 1800s, Berlandier noticed many "isolated huts" from Comanche individuals "who had exiled themselves from their tribe" (qtd. in Betty 134). Betty explains that "the transgressors had to flee from angered husbands and relatives in fear for their lives" (134).

Though neither the girl, nor the Wichita boy are previously married in the pumpkins tale, the girl may realize that had she eloped, she would live in exile, cause a feud, and possibly be shunned by both families. For nomadic historic Comanches, living in isolation could be dangerous because there is little safety from the attacks of foe tribes or Euro Americans who may have tried to take their belongings, their territories, or take them captive. Hence, the girl in the pumpkins tale knows that there is "safety in numbers" and appeals to the cultural value of community harmony while wielding kinship influence to obtain her goal of marriage on her own terms without consequence, thereby determining her own future.

Braids, dried pumpkin, jerk meat, and stories are means to prolong enjoyment into the future. And rendering fat is a means to preserve *yuhu* for future meals, which was a common practice in early Comanche culture. The lard storing process, necessary to brain function and particularly to toddler's brain development, carries notions of futurity. Devon Mihesuah states that "during the Great Depression, the Mihesuahs consumed and canned their garden produce, ate beef when they could get a cow, as well as having pork cured with brown sugar. They ate chitterlings, saved the grease, and saved hog lard in iron pots" (D. Mihesuah 241). When resources were scarcer in the Great Depression, the storing of foods aided in survival, and the practice of storing hog grease is one that echoes early colonial Comanche's storing of buffalo *yuhu*. Thus, *yuhu* helped Comanches to make future plans and to bring those plans to fruition, especially for food substances and for having enough nutrition to sustain oneself so that one has enough physical strength to fulfill other goals. Both Riddles's and Karty's texts convey aspiration, and their texts express *yu*-esque qualities by implying one or more of *yu*'s grammar rules, narrative relationships, sociocultural philosophies (i.e., aspiration, aesthetic, movement, process, or etiquette), woven-ness/*kwisikat~~u~~*, *suniyut~~u~~*, and Heath's and Heath's sticky teaching.

Sticky teaching pertains to *yu* making a story memorable. *Kwisikatʉ* involves aspects of the braid metaphor and *yu*'s ability to weave grammar particles together. One can consider how *yu* diffuses across cultural "boundaries." For example, much like *yu*'s whispered vowel status, both the sister and her motivations move across intertribal territory in Riddles's tale, and they remain concealed until Riddles chooses to reveal them, making this narrative technique *yu*-esque. *Yu*-esqueness can also be expressed through traits related to *yuhu*'s physical properties (fat solids, gel, and/or oil).

Aesthetic—Why in this fashion are you making that right?

Yuʔa namʉsoorʉ means to wear warm clothing, and it brings forth connotations of how warm clothing provides insulation like fat and fur provides extra warmth to an animal in winter, and based on poetic auditory, homophonic associations, *yuʔa* sounds similar to *yuhu* (*Taa Nʉmʉ Tekwapʉʔha* . . . 87). *Yuhu* is a reminder that if one is wearing animal hide that the hide is related to not just the animal's fat, but the whole animal, a life that was taken so one could be warm. And the *yu* in *yuʔa namʉsoorʉ* is related to the idea that the animal hide clothing, or any clothing in general, was made with great care, effort. *Ke yuʔnaitsi*, not so easy. Early Comanches had to make almost everything themselves, including their clothing. If a Comanche woman wanted to survive in historic times, she had to know how to sew. I think about my mother's, grandmothers', and my other female elders' high standards for sewing, how everything sewn must be *just right* because there is this understanding that one's work reflects upon one's whole family, and if the items are made for someone from another family, then it reflects upon an even larger part of the community. These high expectations coincide with historic expectations for women's abilities to

sew teepees, clothing, and other essential items. No one wants a lodging that falls apart or clothes that look tattered and crooked. Sewing, especially with animal hide, takes expertise.

Comanche women not only sewed for their communities, but they sewed for other communities through trade, and they drove aspects of Comanche economies.[65] Kavanagh relays how "Father Dominguez in 1776" stated that "when the Comanches are at peace and come to trade, they bring a thousand or more animals'" (qtd. in Kavanagh, *Comanche Political* . . . 127). In the 1700s, "Comanche men, women, and children procured the hides they brought to New Mexico" (Betty 100). This tradition continued when the Comanches were placed on a reservation around 1875 at "Fort Sill" where "trading partnerships developed with Kiowa, Comanche, and Apache women. The men hunted, and the women processed buffalo meat, hides, and robes for household use and for trade" (Garrett Pool). And Comanche women are still sewing for their communities today.

Yuʔwanapi is "cotton cloth" (*Taa Nʉmʉ Tekwapʉʔha* . . . 87). Trade introduced cotton cloth to the Comanches. I do not know how early Comanches felt when they first saw this material. Maybe some of them liked it. Maybe some did not and preferred animal hides.[66] But I

[65] I am describing Comanche economies in the plural because each band had their own set of complex relationships with other Comanche bands, tribes, and Euro American colonies with whom they traded. Each band had their own political environments and leadership according to historian Thomas Kavanagh in *Comanche Political History* (xii). Since historic Comanche societies cannot be examined as one homogenous group, then Comanches' trade and politics cannot be examined as one homogenous group either.

[66] *In the Ways of My Grandmothers*, Beverly Hungry Wolf (Blackfoot) states, "if you have ever worn a hide dress for several days and nights, especially during summer, you will readily see why my grandmothers eagerly obtained cloth from the traders, even at fairly high cost. The first cloth was heavy wool, which could not have been a tremendous improvement in comfort and coolness, though it could be easily washed. But when the lighter cotton calico materials became available, women's dressing was revolutionized. In summer they were finally able to dress and work in comfort" (219). I must add that when I was growing up, I heard my Comanche women elders joke amongst themselves while they were dressed in traditional regalia, that even in a cotton dress in Oklahoma summer weather, they still felt too warm.

do know that early colonial Comanches would raid Spanish camps and take the conquistadors' red and blue capes and make dresses out of them. According to Kavanagh's chart, "Articles Purchased for the Allied Nations, Santa Fe, 1811," in "1789 Comanches expressed a desire for 'Queretaro cloth'" (qtd. in *Comanche Political . . .* 184). And I do know that the elderly women who helped raise me loved dresses made from cotton cloth; they would say to me, "Wear the simple, small print cotton. It looks real traditional, like the old folks used to wear." I have seen contemporary Comanches make some marvelous looking items from a yard of paisley cotton cloth—clothes, pillows, oven mitts. To sew these items requires great skill. But this *yu* in *yuʔwanapi* poetically reminds one that great manufacturing processes, effort, had to occur to produce that cotton[67] cloth *just so*.

Hakaniyut~~ʉ~~ ~~ʉn~~ yuhaniyu asks, "Why in this fashion are you making that right?" *Right* suggests aesthetic quality, and aesthetic relates to the Comanche cultural standards of an effective braid. *Yuhu* creates beautiful braids and meals, just as *yu*'s relationship toward narrative crafts effective stories. And grammatically, *yu* transforms adjectives into verbs, which are significant for describing aesthetic. According to Charney, "The predicating suffix *-yu=* verbalizes adjectives and post positional constructions" (201). For example, "Sur~~ʉ~~se [sut~~ʉ~~se] paiyut~~ʉ~~ t~~ʉ~~as~~ʉ~~ kanaviitsi . . . He will be short and skinny," and "Utsanakaiyuna n~~ʉʉ~~ supanaʔit~~ʉ~~ . . . I know he's rich" (Charney 202; 182). The phrase, *paiyut~~ʉ~~*, means "short-ing," and *utsanakaiyuna*, is "he-[is]-rich-ing." *Yu*'s verbalizing of adjectives and nouns suggests that adjectives and verbs in the Comanche language are synonymous at times, and this knowledge is

[67] Cotton is a controversial material with a very complex history, especially regarding the exploitation of African slaves, lands, natural resources, and Indigenous peoples and other peoples of color worldwide.

essential for considering the importance of quality and process when discussing aesthetic in Comanche works.

What are some aesthetic criteria in Comanche women's tales? Riddles's, Karty's, and McClung's stories do not focus on the women's physical appearances; their stories are told in an every-woman sense, and they focus on characters' wits, actions, and dialogue—how they carry themselves, how they make others feel, how they treat themselves, and the goals they set. And each quality that these Comanche storytellers describe has *yu*-esque moments.

Yu's crossing of cultural boundaries within the language coincides with *yu*'s verbalizing of adjectives and post positionals and its presence in words that imply effort and ease because *yu* crosses perceived "boundaries." *Yu* crosses more than one cultural boundary because it is featured in Comanche words with both historic and paracolonial origins, especially terms pertaining to ontology, such as the word for *to live well, yunʉmitʉ*, or the word for *cotton cloth, yuʔwanapi̲* (*Taa Nʉmʉ Tekwapʉ̲ʔha* . . . 87). Other words with historic origins are *warm, yuʔatʉ, rabbit, yuʔnaibʉhʉ*, and *small quail, tʉe kuyuutsi* (*Taa Nʉmʉ Tekwapʉ̲ʔha* Tʉboopʉ̲ . . . 87,147). Words with paracolonial roots are *heater, yuʔa nakohtoo, ordinary plate, yutʉsona̲, roofing shingles, nasiyuuki*, and *fry bread, yuhu nookopʉ̲* (*Taa Nʉmʉ Tekwapʉ̲ʔha* . . . 87,151,119). And then *yu* lies in a liminal boundary between Comanche traditional and colonial cultures in the words for *meat* and *beef, yuʔtʉhkapʉ̲* (*Taa Nʉmʉ Tekwapʉ̲ʔha* . . . 93). There is also liminality that resides within Comanche words that does not hinge upon paracolonial constructs that I will discuss in chapter three. *Yu* is a versatile, aesthetic lens by which to examine works.

In the lily roots[68] tale, *yuhu* is the Indigenous women's tool for invention. Riddles describes their various cooking methods:

> Sʉsʉmʉ karʉʉkʉ tsuhnipʉmaʔaihku ma karʉkʉnu . . . Some of them boiled it with bones. . . Sʉsʉmʉʔkʉse pʉmʉ u yuhukʉ u kwasʉkʉnu . . . Some of them cooked it in grease . . . Sʉmʉʔkʉse, "Nʉtsa nah nʉ ahwepʉha kusiwʉhpimaruʔi" mekʉ . . . One said, "I am just going to roast and bury my dug-up lily roots in ashes" . . . Sitʉʉkʉse hubaʔainu . . . These ones brewed coffee . . . Sʉmʉʔoyetʉ tʉmarʉʉmoaku yuhunohkonu . . . Everyone made lots of fried bread. (lines 11-15)

This scene is *yu*-esque because they are using *yuhu* in its various physical states to be creative. They blend different cooking techniques, such as boiling, frying, and roasting. This meal inspires the men to blur the boundaries of the reservation to obtain cattle, though the audience does not know whether the cattle were obtained by working with the cattlemen or not. The women work all day to prepare a meal that appears effortless. They produced a nutritious, delicious meal without meat, a main staple food for historic Comanches' diets, thereby using resourcefulness to make something out of almost nothing. Their meal resonates with the men, and it inspires them to try to change their circumstances. These descriptions of how to prepare this meal are surrounded by the context of reservation life, making these meal instructions emotionally

[68] *In the Ways of My Grandmothers*, Beverly Hungry Wolf asserts that past Indigenous peoples ate "camas" (204). However, the edible water lily bulbs that the Indigenous women in the story are picking might be "camas lily (Camassia esculenta)" that is "present in Comanche County, Oklahoma" (D. Mihesuah 229). Riddles describes the women in the tale as non-Comanche Indigenous women, but their cultural practices allude to aspects of Comanche culture. Maybe another tribe taught the Comanches how to prepare camas? The Comanches have stories of how certain cultural items/practices were introduced to the Comanches and how the Comanches brought aspects of their culture to others.

charged and memorable, implying that if one is ever starving and near a lake, one could gather lily roots and eat them (or at least gather the nearest edible items and be as creative as possible).

This tale diffuses across cultural boundaries because Riddles claims the tale is not about the Comanches, so these survival skills may be relevant to other tribes. Since the tale is told in Comanche, the tale holds Comanche survival skills on Comanche terms. And the women's choices to pair coffee and frybread, paracolonial foods, with their lily roots, cause their meals to diffuse across cultural boundaries, though by necessity and by choice because these items have a history of being both forced upon the Comanche diet through the reservation and by choice. Many Comanches enjoy drinking coffee. The women's meal helps hold their community together during hardship and inspires them.

Riddles characterizes both the lily roots and *yuhu* as survival tools. *Yuhuk~~u~~*, *grease*, is used to problem solve their community's starvation, and it is a creative mechanism from which the women "make special" their meals by boiling, frying, and roasting the lily roots in grease. These cooking practices are the same techniques that historic Comanche women used to prepare camas lily (D. Mihesuah 229). And the women's pairing of the meal with fry bread, which may not be very nutritious, is a cooking practice that is historically accurate (*Taa N~~u~~m~~u~~ Tekwap~~u~~ʔha* . . . 119). Mihesuah explains that camas lily's "root-like bulbs were a highly sought-after trade item, as they are nutritious, and when roasted or boiled, taste similar to pumpkin or sweet potato but much sweeter. The sun-dried bulbs can be mashed, shaped into 'loaves,' then baked again for storage" (Mihesuah 229). The women were not only avoiding starvation by serving the lily roots with fry bread, but also they may have been preserving the lilies so that they could have future meals.

The lily roots themselves mask and reveal the Natives' starvation because while the meal looks beautiful, the men are reminded that this "special" meal, though full of care, lacks meat. Being low in protein and iron, their biological systems recognize that this meal/not meal is missing vital nutrition compared to their traditional diets of buffalo, thereby hiding and showing their community's lack of food while still masking their community's vulnerable health-state with the women's strong acts of digging up roots and working hard to prepare them, which performs strength and shows the community that they are still strong and have the will to survive. Their meals remember the historical discord because they are contextualized by reservation life, meaning these historical changes cloud future retellings of how this meal tradition grew across generations in the oral tradition, but the sheer act of telling this tale and eating this meal in the future clashes with these histories by also contextualizing them as tools that led to survival and provided comfort. This historical discord conflicts with pre-reservation Comanche relationships with animals and plants that they relied on more so than European cattle and industrialized flour.

Both Powell and Wieser convey that relationships provide context surrounding historical narratives. Powell considers the "relationships" fostered through her interactions with "chickens," "beadwork," "poems," or "graduate school" because "they're all related in [her] mind and in the things [she has] chosen to make as an intellectual" (Powell, "Word by Word," 126). Wieser considers relationships as constituting context because they are a part of "relatedness" that enables one to detect distinctions and "commonality" in Indigenous rhetorical discourse (xii). As readers/listeners consider the lily roots tale, they must decide how to place the contexts that clash and cohere across various points in history in relation to the tale because "sometimes Indigenous languages actually require one to contextualize and infer" (Wieser 11).

The importance of context to other Indigenous languages is communicated in Fairbanks's explanation of how "inashke" means "look" in Ojibwe, but its translation is context dependent and can express a variety of meanings that do not pertain to actually seeing (46-47). Thus, to comprehend "inashke['s]" relationship to its denotation and usage, one would need to consider how the term is used within the contexts of various Ojibwe communities' conversations (Fairbanks 46-47). To consider different interpretations of the lily roots tale, one must consider how various Comanche societies across various periods would interpret the tale and the discourse that would ensue from the communities' familiarity (or unfamiliarity) with the tale and how the tale coheres or challenges a period's existing discourse or "talk of the day." What cultural elements or sociopolitical issues persist or shift across these periods, and how do they relate to the content in the tale?

I do not mean any cultural disrespect by imposing westernized notions unto Comanche tales, but to me, when I read or hear a Comanche story, I feel as though I am listening to or reading stories from a time capsule that is maintained, yet altered with each generation who encounters the stories. Each generation fills the tale with bits of information that are added, deleted, repurposed, revised, yet retained to still make one complete, fluid story as it is passed down generation after generation, from speaker to speaker. This is why one finds a mortar and pestle and a cow in the hackberries tale because the tales shift as the culture shifts. But what astounds me the most is how aspects of the stories remain the same with every retelling, and how aspects of the cultural practices in the tales remain—like the humor and the cooking in the lily roots tale. The beauty of this lily roots tale is that the women make this meal themselves and send messages of community care and tenacity, and humor, as one woman reminds her fellow women "Ketu?ka mubisitu . . . don't blow your noses . . . " (line 7). Of course, mud, dirt,

pollen, and mist would be present, all elements that can irritate one's nose, but the woman's command is a warning to pick the "right" water lilies because some varieties of lilies are poisonous ("Are Peace Lilies Poisonous?"). Based on modern Comanche culture, I cannot help but assume that this command is coming from an older woman who has a leadership role. This line may be spoken by a matriarch figure, and her joking-yet-not-joking line to the younger women implies a "Go ahead and laugh and talk amongst yourselves now, but if one makes a mistake and blows one's nose after touching a poisonous lily, you won't be laughing later; you will be wishing that you listened to me and paid attention to your work." Her humorous line is *yuhu* or a hairpin that holds the braid together by making light of their already precarious situation, thereby helping to hold her community of women together. I find this line humorous because I know what it is like to return home with my family from a large outdoor Comanche powwow and everyone's shoes are covered in red dirt; and everyone's noses are full of dirt, too, so much so that we blow red dirt from our noses for days. Maybe our modern Comanche women do not pick lily roots so much anymore, but many of them enjoy preparing meals for their loved ones and looking after their fellow women, and they still enjoy a good laugh.

Just like *yu*'s appearance in words with both reservation era and early Comanche era origins, this pairing of reservation era and early Comanche era foods have seamless, *yu*-esque qualities that send rhetorical messages. Cranford-Gomez describes this same trait as she conveys her family's story. She states, "The story of my father's family reads with sounds of water, smells of gumbo and smoked mullet, cornbread, and sassafras tea. It is a story of documents true and false, stories told and retold; some are hidden, some whispered, and some are just done the way they have always been done" (Cranford-Gomez 95). Food signifies its history and rhetorical messages so seamlessly. Much of modern Indigenous food, like the women's lily roots meals,

reflect both early Comanche era and reservation era foods. This is Comanche history—how these two histories contradict, yet blend, and continue to blend today as Comanche people encounter ongoing settler colonialism. Our food exudes this history in ways that are visible and invisible, audible and inaudible, with miscibility and suspension, with flavor accord and discord, even with masked flavors, seamlessly sticking together all these ingredients, while arguing that Indigenous ways of knowing will thrive—just as the Indigenous women's lily roots meal argues that they refuse to give up. Thus, *yuhu* contributes to their survival, to their creative ideas, and to the community's morale.

Comanche stories also need to be interpreted like most world literature, based on how they relate to humanity and transcend boundaries because Comanche stories discuss topics relevant to humans in general. For example, Riddles's illustrates the moment that the grey grasshopper obtains his painted coat:

> Surʉkʉse "Tsaa nʉ naboori kwasuʔi suwaaitʉ," me u niikwiiyu . . . That one, he [the grey grasshopper] said to him, "Well, I want a painted coat . . . Sitʉkʉse nanaʔatahputi tʉrʉetʉpihta himanu uma sihka esiʔahtamuuʔa tʉʔekanu . . . That different one took several things near his hands and painted the grey grasshopper . . . "Meeku nabunni [napunni]," mekʉse surʉ u niikwiiyu . . . "Now look at yourself in the mirror," he said to him [the grey grasshopper] . . . Sitʉkʉse siʔana wʉnʉrʉ nabuihwʉnʉbʉni . . . This one [grey grasshopper] stood somewhere examining his appearance . . . "Nohi tsaa nabuniyu [napuniyu] nʉʉ," mekʉse surʉ esiʔahtamuu . . . "I look good," said that one grey grasshopper. (lines 8-12)

This scene conveys *yu*-esqueness by implying liminality because it portrays the painting process, which like the braiding process, has moments where the process occupies more than one state,

where the braid, or a painted coat, is past the beginning stages, yet it is not quite finished. This same transitory state is reflected in rendering *yuhu* were gel forms between the layers of oil and fat solids, implying "here is where the composing happens," in media res. This scene depicts the effort that the giant grasshopper puts forth to create the painted coat, which precedes the coat's image of effortlessness. The description of the little grasshopper receiving his/her painted coat transcends culture and time because many humans relate to wanting an item of self-adornment, putting forth great effort to achieve it, and finally obtaining it after waiting for it for a long time. The gratitude one might feel toward the individual(s) who help one to achieve the goal is another emotion that transcends cultural boundaries.

Part of the tale's stickiness resides in how it reminds one of the people in one's life who have behaved like this grasshopper. *U* means "he/she/him/her/it/its" (*Taa Nʉmʉ Tekwapʉʔha* . . . 78). Therefore, the grasshopper who is receiving the painted coat and the grasshopper who is creating the painted coat can be anyone. When I read this scene, I think about my mother, who studied cosmetology, hair, and fashion before she was an educator. She took great pride in her Pendleton coat that was worn by her mother before her. It was a long grey coat with large silver buttons down the front that had bold swathes of red, green, and black in sweeping zigzag-like designs. At a glance, Pendleton coats are a beautiful blend of Indigenous and modern fashion influences rolled into one, but I later learned as a young adult that for many years Indigenous peoples did not design the Pendleton products themselves and that Pendleton's history of business practices are variously viewed as both controversial and respectful[69] by many different

[69] The Pendleton Company collaborated with the Comanche Nation to design an official Comanche Nation Pendleton blanket in the mid-2000s. Anytime a company uses the Comanche Nation's symbol, they must receive copyright permission from the tribe. The limited edition, numbered Comanche Nation blankets are greatly prized by many of the peoples in my tribe. The

Indigenous peoples. The history of Pendleton's business involves the contradictions of stereotype and appropriation, but also of collaboration with tribes and a history of becoming "traditional" in many tribes' cultures. The Pendleton company was founded by Thomas Kay, a British weaver, in 1863 and by his grandsons, the Bishop brothers in the 1900s ("Company History"). The Pendleton official website acknowledges that in 1895 they were known for making "bed blankets and robes for Native Americans" ("Company History"). I agree with Indigenous scholars such as Cherokee blogger Adrienne Keene ("Let's Talk About Pendleton," *Native Appropriations*) who are hesitant to label the Pendleton Company as practicing blatant cultural appropriation because of the company's associations with modern Indigenous traditions that have a connotation of respect for the tribes themselves. The Pendleton company has made efforts to aid Indigenous communities. For example, Pendleton started a scholarship fund for Indigenous scholars who are studying at tribal universities ("Pendleton WM Launches . . ."). They have made "commemorative blankets for organizations like the National Museum of the American Indian and the National Indian Education Association. They work with Native artists to design the special edition blankets, and even donate some of the proceeds to the causes" (Keene). However, the Pendleton Company hints at cultural "borrowing" that may not involve tribes' permissions in which they admit that they "studied" the designs of tribes from the Southwest:

> A study of the color and design preferences of local and Southwest Native Americans resulted in vivid colors and intricate patterns. Trade expanded from the Nez Perce nation near Pendleton to the Navajo, Hopi and Zuni nations. These Pendleton blankets were

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giving and receiving of Pendleton-brand items for gifts in my tribe is viewed as an honor and is associated with wealth.

> used as basic wearing apparel and as a standard of value for trading and credit among Native Americans. ("Company History")

Nevertheless, when my mother wore her Pendleton coat, we were not thinking about controversy regarding appropriation. We were proud.

The only thing we were thinking about was how lovely she looked in her coat—how her bright toothy grin would appear behind her red lipstick, the same color red as the coat's designs; how she would admire her reflection in her full-length mirror, how she would ask me to help her pull her long, black, pin straight hair from her coat to help her hair avoid static electricity, and how she would bring two small sections of her hair to her shoulders, while the rest of her hair remained to the back. She would run her navy-blue comb down each of the two sections, and she would give her reflection one last look-over before she headed out the door to go teach. I remember her two front coat pockets, each with a small, round silver buckle, that always held her glasses, a small pack of tissues, peppermints, and occasionally caramel candies and her spare hair clip. She always liked to wear a silver Comanche horse pendant on the coat's lapel which was a gift from her relatives.

While the coat described in Riddles's grasshoppers tale may not be a Pendleton coat, the grasshopper's far travels to obtain the coat is *yu*-esque because the creation of the coat crosses cultural boundaries and depicts an even cultural exchange between two grasshoppers, likened to the cultural exchanges between peoples across diverse cultures. And considering how "all humans" factor into a given subject matter is important (Wieser xiii). By the giant grasshopper's helping the little grasshopper, the giant grasshopper has formed a friendship with the little grasshopper, and he/she weaves a bond with the little grasshopper community, who begins flying to him/her in hoards to receive painted coats. In addition, in a *yu*-esque manner, the grey

grasshopper conceals his grey color, but through his wearing of a painted coat, he/she reveals his/her self-expression that is conveyed through his/her fashion to send the messages that he/she wants to send to all who view him/her. When the little grasshopper looks at his/her reflection, his/her statement of ""Nohi tsaa nabuniyu [napuniyu] n~~ʉʉ~~," mek~~ʉ~~se sur~~ʉ~~ esiʔahtamuu . . . "I look good," said that one grey grasshopper" is *yu*-esque (line 12). The phrase, *nabuniyu/napuniyu* is broken down as nabuni-yu, na-buni-yu, or na-buniyu (buni may also be spelled punni/puni, depending on the dialect). According to *Taa N~~ʉ~~m~~ʉ~~ Tekwap~~ʉ~~ʔha*, *nabuni* means "mirror," and *nabunit~~ʉ~~* means "to look at oneself" (23). *Puniit~~ʉ~~ / punin~~ʉ~~ / puni* means "see, look at, watch" (*Taa N~~ʉ~~m~~ʉ~~ Tekwap~~ʉ~~ʔha . . .* 49; Anderton, McClung, and Nahquaddy 56). Charney explains that *na-* is a "reflexive/reciprocal construction" meaning "myself," "himself [herself/itself]," and "themselves" (103-104).[70] For example, "Narohtʉkwaʔi [natohtʉkwaʔi] nʉʉ . . . I hit myself" (Charney 103). Therefore, *nabuniyu/napuniyu* means myself-mirror-look at-ing. While the *-yu* is expressing progressive action, *yu* helps to fuse all these terms together. But one important aspect of *yu*'s functioning in *nabuniyu/napuniyu* is that it is one of the very few verbs across 12 of Riddles's tales that she did not make a whispered vowel[71], *yu̥*[72]. Though Riddles did not write

[70] Like the reciprocal relationships amongst characters in Riddles's tales, reciprocal relationships are in Comanche grammar. "He sees me" is actually written as me-see-he, "n~~ʉ~~ puni u" (Anderton, McClung, and Nahquaddy 56). "He sees her" is a palindrome, "U puni u" (Her sees he) (Anderton, McClung, and Nahquaddy 81). Considering the reciprocal meaning in Comanche language, "u puni u" is relaying that they see each other.

[71] Across 12 of Riddles's tale that I translated, I only found two instances of verbs ending in a suffix *-yu* that were not underlined for a whispered vowel AND were not typos. One example is in the grasshopper's tale, *nabuniyu* (line 12), and the other example is in the lily roots tale, *tahkweʔyuʔi̥tsi* (line 6). I am not including words were *yu* is located at the front or middle of a word, only the back of the word. *Tsayumiʔi̥tsi* in the hackberries tale and in the tale of the two Osage men features *yu* near the front of the word, not the back. And *hakaniʔyut~~ʉ~~* in the hackberries tale is more adverbial for "why" instead of a verb.

[72] This missing underline from the whispered vowel may be a typo from Canonge; if it is a typo, then it is certainly a happy, but meaningful accident.

Comanche Texts herself, the stories and words are hers. I interpret the missing underline from the whispered vowel as intentional, as though Riddles spoke *yu* at the end of *nabuniyu* when she was telling this tale, which would make the grasshopper's act of looking at himself in the mirror more emphatic compared to other verbs with *yu̲* as a whisper vowel, just as she chose to pronounce *yu* with *tsi* in *tahkweʔyuʔi̲tsi* in the lily roots tale to highlight and further emphasize the act of the women removing their shoes and wading in the lake. For me, Riddles's voiced *yu* creates the impression that she is holding up a mirror to Comanche communities to reveal their beauty, thereby helping them to see themselves as beautiful, determined, generous, and creative like the grasshoppers are in her tale.

But what about the question of "why in this fashion are you making that right?" Let me begin by answering this question with other questions, as some of my elders would do when they thought someone was being too inquisitive. Why does the giant grasshopper paint a coat for the little grasshopper? Why do the Indigenous women in Riddles's tale make elaborate meals of lily roots? Why would Riddles agree to let Canonge record, translate, and publish her tales? Why would generations of Comanches even pass these stories down to future generations? *Suniyut~~u̲~~*. For many reasons, all of which I could not begin to relay because I cannot speak for every Comanche, but among them, one can assume it is to help Comanche communities to know their histories, languages, cultures, and to see themselves as thriving. Using *yu* as a rhetorical lens to examine Comanche texts, and even for composing them, encourages storying sovereignty. Of the many facets of *yu* discussed in this section, *yu*-esqueness reveals how Comanche texts cross cultural boundaries, reveal and conceal survival techniques, convey liminality, blur historic Comanche cultural expectations, resonate with audiences, remember both historical discord and accord, and highlight Comanche notions of beauty. These techniques support storying

sovereignty by enabling Comanche speakers and writers to be in control of their own narrative, to depict themselves, their people, their culture how they want the world to see them, and to provide counter narratives about their experiences throughout colonization.

Chapter Two Conclusion

There is an aesthetic to the amount of *yuhu* used in a braid. The oil, hairspray, pomade, or hair gel has to be in just the "right" amount because too much gives the hair a glue-like, plastered appearance, and then the *yuhu* calls attention to itself, making it not aesthetically "right," as though the braider tried too hard. Too much oil, and one's hair looks soggy and feels too greasy. The best braids seamlessly incorporate *yuhu* into the hair in just the "right" amount.

In Comanche grammar, *yu* is noticeable, yet not, unless the speaker wants to call attention to it for emphasis, like oil in a braid. It holds the story/braid together seamlessly. For the braider, the oil conveys, yet conceals the braider's intentions for the message that he/she sends to both the braidee and to all who see the braidee's hair. For some braiders that goal is to create an effortless-looking braid that looks so nicely made that no one knows how hard he/she worked on it, except for the braidee. And *yu*'s rhetorical aspects function in a similar way; they show the finished story without calling too much attention to the *yu* that is holding it together. To the knowledgeable, the oil can *just* be detected. One gains understanding into *yu*'s rhetorical functions, its' *kwisikat~~u~~* and *suniyut~~u~~* aspects, by examining Comanche words with their narrative and grammar contexts. With *yu* there is resonance, problem-solving, and liminality; there is a blurring of Comanche and cross-cultural perspectives and a dichotomy of revealing/concealing and effort/effortlessness, aspects to which the stories of Riddles, McClung, and Karty contribute.

This blurring of boundaries is in *hakaniyut̲u̲*, which is inclusive of "how," "why," "what," "what happened," and "what kind of" (Charney 216). A cross-cultural blurring occurs in *yuhu nookop̲u̲, fry bread,* and *yuʔtu̲hkap̲u̲, beef,* terms associated with paracolonial cultural elements (*Taa Nu̲mu̲ Tewkap̲u̲ʔha Tu̲boop̲u̲* 119, 93). *Yu* factors into terms of early and historic Comanche ontology, too, such as *yunu̲mitu̲* /*yuyu̲kar̲u̲*, *live well* /*behave,* and *nu̲miyu*, *walking*/*being* (*Taa Nu̲mu̲ Tewkap̲u̲ʔha Tu̲boop̲u̲* 87; Charney 200). Comanche language Comanche-izes the colonial cultural elements by using Comanche grammar and sociocultural philosophy to navigate meaning. A similar blurring occurs in author-audience roles and genre. For example, Canonge lists Riddles's tale of the Comanche woman who is caught in a tree as a fairy tale, but the story speaks volumes about Comanche women's experiences.

The blurring of the author-audience roles in storying stems from both *yu*'s grammar functions and *yuhu̲*'s role in the braid metaphor. As a whispered vowel, *yu̲,* is audible and inaudible, and within a braid, *yuhu̲* is visible, yet invisible. *Yu* verbalizes adjectives, nouns, post positions, and more, which blurs parts of speech. *Yu*'s duality and blurring suggests that a similar blurring occurs in the Comanche storying situation where the author serves as audience by first listening to the audience and then weaving them into the story, and the audience serves as author by finishing the story from their interpretations, just as Powell tells her reader to "keep this piece of this story in the palm of your hand," or how Booth Donohue discusses that determining a story's meaning requires "a constant state of interpretive motion" (Powell, "A Basket is . . . " 471; Donohue 68). One glimpses this role-sharing in Karty's star tale where she uses foreshadowing so the audience can predict the story's outcome like a braider handing a hair section to the braidee to hold in his or her hand as the braider turns the other sections and asks the braidee to hand him or her the section that he or she is holding so it can be woven into the

braid. Then, the braider hands the braidee another section to hold. In this way, Karty lets the audience finish the story.

Each of the speakers' tales convey degrees of *yu*'s revealing and concealing. *Yuhu* enables a seamless braid by keeping itself invisible, and *yu* reveals and conceals its' weavings of other particles, like *hani*, *wai*, and *tuʔi*, that involve acting, wanting, and planning, which makes the discussion of aspiration inherent in Comanche language. *Yu* shows yet masks its relationship with *-tsi* plus an action description to express movement paired with dialogue that hints at whether or not the dialogue and action form agree (accord) or diverge (discord). Narratively, *yu* aids Comanche words in revealing and concealing insight into characters' personalities and their survival techniques shown through their dialogue that is signaled by *yu* or is *yu*-esque.

Another side to *yu*'s revealing and concealing is its association with effort and effortlessness, traits that can be hidden and revealed as well. While *yu* attaches to word stems to express effort and effortlessness, these same themes are in Comanche women's texts. *Tayuʔnetsi* means *to pound with a pestle*, implying effort, yet *yuʔnaitsi* means *easy*. *Yukwiiyu* in Riddles's tale of Comanche woman who is caught in a tree conveys that the woman intends to climb high into a tree, but her dress gets caught, communicating that she is trying too hard to impress. Her failure to appear effortless breaks from the Comanche sociocultural philosophy of appearing effortless.[73] Riddles's lily roots tale lists cooking techniques that feature *yuhu* as a main ingredient, implying a *yu*-esque effort surrounding the women's work, which creates an

[73] A few Comanche-English slang phrases that describe the behavior of trying too hard to impress are "too on all the time" or "high yigh." These are phrases I heard my mother use to describe overzealousness and ostentatiousness. I am assuming that my mother made up the term *high yigh*, and it was catchy with her female Comanche friends, who would smile, nod, and laugh when she used the term. She is the only person I ever heard use this phrase. I have heard other Comanche women use the phrase, "showboat" to refer to similar meanings.

effortless-looking meal that gives the impression of abundant food when their community is starving. Although the grasshopper's tale does not use *yu* to describe the giant grasshopper's act of painting, this scene is *yu*-esque because the giant grasshopper makes an effort to make the little grasshopper appear effortlessly beautiful.

Yuhu's and *yu*'s qualities coincide with Heath and Heath's lens on "teaching that sticks," as well as Comanche heuristic properties that already exist in Comanche storytelling. Thus, *yu* can be alluded to through tales' resonance with the audience, creating an "air" of *yu* or *yu*-esqueness. In Riddles's tale about the two Osage men, the description of *tsayumi?itsi* merges various Comanche words and affixes together, contextualizing the woman's actions with layers of meaning that appeal to readers' senses and resonate with them on various levels. Her tale of the Comanche woman who is caught in a tree closes with an emotional dialogue that is signaled by *niikwiiyu* from a group of Comanche women who call the man's attention to his wrongdoing; this scene speaks to any Comanche woman who has ever verbally defended her sister(s) or a cause for which she feels strongly. This scene resonates with a Comanche woman or any human who has ever had someone verbally advocate for him or her or for oneself. In addition, Riddles's lily roots tale depicts the moment that the *yuhu* inspires the women's various dishes of lily roots, which in turn resonates with their Indigenous community and boosts their morale.

Yuhu's practical use in preventing lice, or as in the lily roots tale, in easing starvation further elevates *yu*'s ability to inspire problem-solving (duct-tape solutions/Indigen-uity). In Riddles's lily roots tale, *yuhu*'s versatility pairs well with many cooking styles and ingredients; it sparks the women's creativities to make something from almost nothing. This same resourcefulness is in Karty's star tale, where the man attempts to fix the star with glue to *matsipakitui*, "to adhere it together," before buying a new one. In the pumpkin's tale, the

Comanche sister plans early to marry a young Wichita man, but she uses her resourcefulness to both problem-solve a feud and achieve her goal by seizing the first opportunity, which is *yu*-esque.

Yu plays a significant role in blurring genre, making it ideal for examining "genre" and liminality in Comanche texts. The gel that forms between *yuhu* solids and oils correlates with concepts of genre blurring and liminality. *Yu* relates to a narrative in multiple ways. For instance, in Riddles's tale of the Comanche woman who is caught in a tree, the group of women state, "Pia rʉa [tʉa] noo u makwinumʉtsi . . . It is said big [and] loud, for sure, you are making her drunk" (line 23). This one line contains punchline, plot twist, irony, double meaning, rhetorical trope, and dialogue. *Yu'*s liminality is in its grammar, as it can hold more than one grammar role at a time. For example, in Riddles's pumpkins tale, she states, "U wʉhtakʉmiʔeku u kwisiʔeeyu . . . They were drying it partially and braiding it [the peeled pumpkins]" (line 5). In this sentence, *yu* functions as both a progressive, distributive, and repetitive verb, and one can interpret *yu* as a habitual verb because this practice is a traditional occurrence for the Wichitas in the story. Additionally, *yu* has liminality within itself as a whisper vowel because some speakers emphasize, whisper, or deemphasize *yu* at words' ends. This difference is in how Riddles, McClung, and Karty use *yu* in the dialogue marker, *niikwiyu* (*niikwi*/*niikwi*), and in some verb endings.

Considering *yu*'s liminality within *hakaniyutʉ ʉnʉ haniyu/yuhaniyu*, it conveys more than one sociocultural philosophy. In Riddles's tale of the Comanche woman who gets caught in a tree, she states, "Sʉmʉʔkʉse waʔihpʉ, 'NʉtsaSohoroʔituʔi [sohotoʔituʔi],' Me yʉkwiiyʉ sʉmʉʔma toʔinu . . . "One woman said, 'I am going to climb,' as she climbed one [tree]" (line 7). The woman's dialogue denotes process, movement, etiquette, aspiration, and aesthetic because

this dialogue describes how one climbs, how to respectfully work with others, as well as what is the "effortless" way to obtain pecans according to traditional Comanche women, and it reminds the audience of the women's goals to sell pecans in Wichita Falls. Multiple meanings underly Riddles's one sentence.

Liminality in meaning exists where a Comanche phrase expresses multiple meanings. For instance, in the pumpkins tale, when the sister says, "*kuhmaruru?i*," this phrase means "to marry," but it also means "to take a husband." These liminal translations coincide with the Comanche language having multiple terms to describe one meaning and multiple meanings for one word, which is indicative of the many dialects across many bands. And then there is liminality that is more abstract. In the lily roots tale, the women's meal is more than a means to stave off hunger; it is to boost community morale and to persuade the men to take action (hopefully an ethical action) to obtain food, making the meal's message liminal.

There is much more meaning conveyed in Comanche language that my brief translations in the appendix cannot convey from a first gloss, but only by parsing over each Comanche word, breaking them down to their smallest particles and considering their woven relationships, one can uncover layers of contextual meaning that Comanche elders were aware of when the language was historically most widely spoken. There is so much more about *yu* that I do not know. *Suniyut~~u~~*. Why the dichotomy of effort/effortlessness within *yu*'s denotations occurs is not recorded. I cannot predict when Comanche speakers will use *yu* for quotes and when they will not, but I can identify that *yu* attaches to certain word roots, particles, and dialogue descriptions. Regardless, the audience makes of the stories "what they will," meaning they supply the contexts surrounding the stories and their understandings of Comanche words' denotations and connotations. As with any language, there are many Comanche languages, formal, informal, and

many dialects with shifts in spelling and pronunciation. And I am optimistic for all that will be created with the continued growth of the language. These Comanche women storytellers, Riddles, Karty, and McClung, harness the language beautifully to describe what matters to them on their terms, which is relatable to many humans across almost all cultures—home, family, community, morale, wellbeing, food, safety, comfort, and even clothing.

CHAPTER 3 BLURRING PERCEIVED BOUNDARIES, EXUDING THE YU-ESQUE

Introduction

I cannot look at the words, *yu?tʉhkapʉ* (beef/meat) and *yuhu nookopʉ* (frybread) without considering them more deeply, not when volumes have been written on Indigenous food ways. Beef and frybread provided Comanche people sustenance to survive the reservation years, but beef and frybread were also major factors in altering the Comanche nomadic lifestyle and traditional food systems. I cannot look at the phrases, *narʉkuyunapʉ* (fairy tale) and *narʉkuyunipʉ* (history) without thinking about the countless lawsuits that Indigenous peoples across the Americas have been involved in where their oral histories were deemed "hear say," not legitimate "truths" or evidence. Therefore, I cannot look at these phrases that contain *yu* and dismiss it as mere coincidence that these same terms are fraught with complex historical significance and are also marked with *yu*. Why mark these words with *yu*? Is it to signal irony, double meaning, or contextual tension? Afterall, many of Riddles' tales feature *yu* in sentences containing irony or conflict.

When I think about how important food and story are to Comanche culture, I cannot think of *yu*'s appearance in *beef, frybread, history,* and *fairy tale* as coincidence. These terms denote contextual discord, suggesting these terms' meanings are contextualized by two or more narratives that cohere, yet counter one another. *Yu* calls attention to Comanche counter narratives to both remember colonization and their survival, but on their own terms. And as Cranford-Gomez states, "Native people adapted, resisted and negotiated, were not swallowed up by the western systems of indoctrination; rather, we learned to modify and navigate their waters" (99). *Yu*'s contextual discord denotes that the Comanche oral tradition has always understood that there are more than two perspectives to a story—there are countless perspectives. *Yu*'s presence

in *history* and *fairy tale* acknowledges how subjectivity cannot be completely removed from a story; even the objective is subject to cultural influences, as well as explicit and implicit bias.

Subjectivity is essential to how Comanche communities story, and subjectivity finds its way into Indigenous literary and rhetorical studies. Wieser states, "From American Indian perspectives, I have the right to speak only for myself here" (xv). Powell affirms that subjectivity is part of Indigenous rhetorics because she explains how imparting her stories contributes to a "continuum" ("Word by Word . . . " 135). Wieser, Powell, and Cranford-Gomez each take moments to share their own stories to illustrate how the concepts of "relatedness"/kinship, oral tradition, Indigenous ways of knowing, and Indigenous notions of process connect with individuals' lived experiences shared by larger collectives of Indigenous peoples (Wieser xii, 11; Powell 126; Cranford-Gomez 102). Even Fairbanks uses his first-hand experience to relay how his community of elders uses the Ojibwe discourse markers, *mii*, *izhi*, and *awenh* in social interactions (97-98). Fairbanks also illustrates how discourse markers and conjuncts function with examples from narratives, such as *Portage Lake: Memories of an Ojibwe Childhood* by Ojibwe elder, Maude Kegg (194, 156). Wieser includes instances of oratory from Cherokee leaders in *Back to the Blanket* (171). Collectively, these scholars' choices to include individual's narratives and, at times, their own narratives, in their scholarship signifies how they are expanding the notions of objective[74] research in the fields of Indigenous rhetorics and linguistics by embracing narrative and the subjective to uncover "truths." Heath and Heath state that "stories" are "sticky" (10); in fact, they claim that almost any story "even boring stories" are sticky, meaning they are loaded with learning potential for almost anyone who encounters them

[74] I am not arguing that objective research is not important. I am arguing that subjective research is just as important as the objective research.

(10). To support their claims, Heath and Heath include brief summaries of stories from teachers who have applied their sticky teaching methods in the classroom and saw success with students' learning gains (3).

The Comanche oral tradition knows that stories and historical narratives shift and that it is important to acknowledge an individual's perspective and to understand how a person's perspective has formed on a matter because it affects how individuals story. The Comanche oral tradition values listening to diverse points of view on a story to gage the collective responses, meaning the Comanche language uses *yu* in *nar~~u~~kuyunap~~u~~* (fairy tale) and *nar~~u~~kuyunip~~u~~* (history) to remind one that there is always more than two sides to a story; to arrive at a "truth" in a Comanche story, one must consider many perspectives, and one must consider how the speaker's and listener's kinship to the story and to each other affect the story. Two people from the same tribe could endure an experience together, yet both individuals could story this experience completely different, relaying two different perspectives. The Comanche oral tradition argues that it is impossible to story with no subjectivity. Subjectivity is important even in the discussion of serious issues within the oral tradition because each perspective is significant, and there is no one experience that speaks for all Comanche experiences. But one can appreciate a person's story, as well as almost all individuals' stories because collectively their stories paint a wider community picture. Embracing multiple narratives is essential, regardless of their written or oral status, and regardless of "genre" because in the Comanche oral tradition they all have forms of "truth." *Suniyut~~u~~*.

Because the Comanche oral tradition embraces many conflicting stories, the Comanche story canon affirms individuals' lived experiences instead of discounting their stories as uncredible. Some Indigenous story traditions require listeners to determine their own

understandings of a story (Wieser 11). Powell's philosophy of "This story is yours now. Do with it what you will" coincides with similar storying principles within Comanche and non-Comanche Indigenous storying traditions ("A Basket is a Basket . . ." 483). And Fairbanks's asserts that meaning making is a shared experience where listeners and speakers collaborate and actively shape meaning by what Schiffrin's describes as, "knowing, meaning, saying and doing" (qtd. in Fairbanks 16). Comanche perspectives on issues must be acknowledged because their perspectives have been marginalized in literature.

Blurring History, Fairy Tale, and Genre

Nar~~ɨ~~kuyunap~~ɨ~~ means "fairy tale" (*Taa N~~ɨ~~m~~ɨ~~ Tewkap~~ɨ~~ʔha T~~ɨ~~boop~~ɨ~~* 29; Wistrand-Robinson and Armagost 209). While *nar~~ɨ~~kuyunip~~ɨ~~* and *nar~~ɨ~~kuyun~~ɨ~~ t~~ɨ~~boop~~ɨ~~* mean "history/ history book" (*Taa N~~ɨ~~m~~ɨ~~ Tewkap~~ɨ~~ʔha T~~ɨ~~boop~~ɨ~~* 29; Wistrand-Robinson and Armagost 225). *Yu*'s affinity for blending contradictions brings listeners/readers and speakers/writers together to negotiate narratives' meanings and to consider the challenges of labeling Comanche stories as "fairy tales," "histories," "facts," and/or "fictions," so that audiences can "make of the stories what they will."

Nar~~ɨ~~kuyunap~~ɨ~~ and *nar~~ɨ~~kuyunip~~ɨ~~* signify subversiveness because historic, modern and contemporary Comanches understood and understand the fluid, everchanging nature of the oral tradition (and of written text).[75] The translations, "fairy tale" verses "history," are not westernizing the Comanche language, but the Comanche language is reinforcing that separating

[75] Cranford-Gomez states, "When the state of Louisiana was hit by Hurricane Katrina and later Hurricane Rita, vital records and historic documents were flooded, damaged with mold, and lost to the violent wind and water. Although these records are important and have a multilayered history, they do not tell the only history of Louisiana" (104).

the subjective perspective from the objective perspective, regardless of genre, is almost impossible because anytime almost anyone stories, someone somewhere will chime in, "you're not telling it right." These terms reflect the history of how in the 1800s and 1900s children of Indian boarding schools were forced to learn how to read and write in English and to adopt a westernized historical perspective that sought to discount their traditional ways of knowing. In 1871, the Fort Sill Indian Boarding School opened (D. Mihesuah 240). Many Comanche, Kiowa, and Apache students attended this school. Captain Richard Henry Pratt's first students prior to establishing the official Carlisle school were Comanches, as well as Cheyennes, Kiowas, Arapahos, and Caddos whom he "educated" from 1875-78 in Fort Marion, Florida (Fear-Segal and Rose 6-7). Pratt developed the school with the aim of assimilating Indigenous children into mainstream society (Fear-Segal and Rose 1). However, the Carlisle School's goals were not to enable Indigenous children to obtain "equal" socioeconomic standing with Euro American citizens; instead, the school's goal was to ensure that Indigenous children became working class citizens (White 109).

The narratives surrounding boarding schools are duplicitous in that Captain Henry Pratt altered his description of the Carlisle Boarding School's purpose based on whom he was addressing. Pratt touted different narratives to the public verses the students' parents. He convinced Indigenous communities that boarding school would "provide [children] with a good education and so benefit their people when negotiating with whites" (Fear-Segal and Rose 5). He told Euro Americans that he was helping Native children to move "from 'savagery' to 'civilization'" (Fear-Segal and Rose 2). But his practices carried out messages of assimilation that were detrimental to Indigenous cultures.

The students and faculty themselves also have variations in narratives. For example, there are student accounts by Luther Standing Bear (Lakota) and by Zitkala- Ša (Dakota) (Fear-Segal and Rose 19). Indigenous students who survived boarding school share their counter narratives to the history of Carlisle Boarding School both in writing and orally, meaning the historical narratives of Carlisle retain *yu*-esque liminality and blur genre. The students' many narratives range from stories of trauma to stories of building positive friendships and make-shift families with their intertribal peers. However, a teacher from Carlisle falsified an autobiography to further mask the harsh realities of the school (Fear-Segal and Rose 19). A non-Indigenous teacher, Marianna Burgess assumed the pseudonym Embe and wrongfully attempted to write a narrative from the perspective of an Indigenous girl named "Stiya," creating the false autobiography, "*Stiya, A Carlisle Indian Girl at Home: Founded on the Author's Actual Observations*," as propaganda for the boarding school (Fear-Segal and Rose 19). Her false narrative was both an attempt to story Carlisle and to wrongfully condone assimilation. This blurring of history and fairy tale is directly related to the historical narratives surrounding boarding school education, while also being rooted in Comanche oral tradition, making this discourse *yu*-esque.

The narratives that sought to usurp Comanche storying agency were not successful in completely convincing Comanches because they had their own on-going story traditions that continue to live alongside the dominant historical narrative. The Comanches' responses to encountering stereotypes about them in boarding schoolbooks was to continue their own traditions orally; our people are our "books." Fear-Segal and Rose argue the following:

> Whites were always in control of the historical production at Carlisle, and the resulting sources, archives, narratives, and histories handed down come from a unified perspective.

Yet increasingly we are learning that the archives can be revisited to reveal hidden facts, that different voices carried in oral sources can be listened to for alternative truths. (21)

Narrative can be oral, cross genres, and still hold "truth"; *yu* upholds this notion. *Nar~~ʉ~~kuyunap~~ʉ~~*, *nar~~ʉ~~kuyunip~~ʉ~~*, and *nar~~ʉ~~kuyun~~ʉ~~ t~~ʉ~~boop~~ʉ~~* twist the cultural inaccuracies that Comanches encounter about themselves in textbooks, mainstream movies, and television shows that attempt to story over them and neglect Comanches' differing perspectives by *yu* earmarking these three words to remember Comanche perspectives on Comanche terms.

Canonge categorizes Riddles's tales based on genre for folklorists' purposes, but in doing so, he misinterprets the wealth of knowledge behind the Comanche language's ability to blur genre, history, and fairytale. The Comanche language takes a nuanced approach to conceptualizing stories' "truths." Wieser explains why "truths" blur across various modes of Indigenous discourse. She states, "Over the millennia, truths were recorded in narrative and metaphor in American Indian oral traditions throughout cultures; stories, languages, artifacts, and ways, rather than academic discourse, carry this knowledge, making American Indian poetics, rhetorics, and other aesthetics overlap tremendously" (3). Indigenous discourse has a history of spanning across many modes of expression, and Powell discusses how this practice continues into the modern Indigenous rhetorics field where these traditional Indigenous rhetorical methods continue. She elaborates on how Indigenous rhetorics itself blurs genre:

> Boundaries and territories—we've been as guilty of making and maintaining them in Native literature studies as in any other field. It's a hard absence to puzzle through, that's for sure. Whatever happened, these days, the story of Native rhetorics is pretty exciting. We're surfacing our entangled relationships with scholarship in literary studies, art, music, history, political science, philosophy, and other interdisciplines like American

> studies, queer and gender studies, disability studies—both as a way to work the interdisciplinary reach of what it means to study any Indigenous knowledge-making practices and as a way to surface the increasingly rhetorical orientations of scholars practicing in those disciplines. ("A Basket is a Basket . . ." 482-483)

Yu facilitates the crossing of genres, the fusing of narratives, the intermingling of cultures and worldviews together, but on Comanche terms. This blending of genre is not just a Comanche story occurrence. According to Wieser, "LeAnne Howe's tribalography offers some solution for Native studies scholars who want to connect different forms of knowledge. It takes into account how American Indian writers bring together multiple genres, modes, and voices, layering meaning the way meaning is layered in place for Indigenous people over the course of what most mainstream thinkers call 'time'" (Wieser 156). Yes, some of Riddles's tales seem fanciful, but many of her tales span multiple genres and use multiple types of meaning, making them more than entertainment.

Morris Swadesh from the National Autonomous University of Mexico explains in Canonge's introduction that Canonge categorizes Riddles's tales as "coyote stories, fairy tales and fables, humor in ridicule, manners and morals, adventure, [and] obtaining and preparing food" to make the book accessible to folklorists and ethnographers (Canonge vii). However, many of Riddles's stories fit multiple categories. He labels the grasshopper tale as a fairy tale, and he labels both the tale of a gambling woman[76] who hides her money in a can and loses it (then finds it again) and the tale of a Comanche woman and her children who escape drunks as fairy tales (Canonge ix-x). Yes, the personification of grasshoppers who wear clothes is

[76] Neither the tale of a gambling woman who hides her money in a can, nor the tale of the Comanche woman and her children who escape drunks have been translated and included in the appendix.

"fanciful," but the latter two stories could have happened to someone. Someone could have hidden his or her money in a can that blew away in a storm. Many humans store money in unconventional piggybanks, and early Comanches did not have banks and traded with food and goods instead of currency. Comanches did not have a currency that fit westernized definitions of currency.[77] Someone could have witnessed a drunken brawl and shootout between non-Indigenous peoples. Canonge labels this same tale of a Comanche woman and her children escaping drunks as "humor in ridicule" in the text's pagination (45), but from a modern Comanche perspective, there is nothing funny about a Comanche woman and her children running away to the woods in the middle of the night to take shelter from a drunken shootout. I do agree that the tale's punchline about the woman and her children mistaking a sleeping cow for a log on which to sit is quite funny. Yes, the woman "ridicules" her son, asking him to be quiet and sit still as they are hiding, but her intention is to save their lives. How could these tales be considered "fairy tales?"

Canonge labels Riddles's tale of the Comanche woman who is caught in a tree by her dress as both a fairy tale and fable in the table of contents and as humor in ridicule in the texts' pagination (ix-x, 45). But Riddles's final dialogue speaks volumes about the genre(s) this tale could be. She states, "Sur~~ʉʉk~~ʉse waʔihp~~ʉ~~ʔan~~ʉʉ~~, 'Pia r~~ʉ~~a [t~~ʉ~~a] noo u makwinum~~ʉ~~tsi,' me u niikwiiyʉ . . . Those women said to him, 'It is said big [and] loud, for sure, you are making her drunk'" (line 23). I can see how someone could climb too high and get stuck in a tree (as a child, I, myself, got stuck on an elevated fallen log that was wedged at an incline between two other trees, and at the time, some older Comanche youths had to help me get down from it). I can see how a hypothetical woman might act strangely if her husband has been enabling her drinking

[77] Wieser explains that the giving of gifts in Indigenous cultures is rhetorical "currency" (173).

problem or coaxing her into abusing drugs. I can see how her sisters would stand up to the man who has been mistreating her or plan an intervention to help the woman. I can see how Comanche women would rally together to travel somewhere to complete a shared goal, as the women of my community often travel in groups across the country for cultural and political purposes. In the story of the woman stuck in a tree, the depiction of the man's standing on a horse to rescue the woman demonstrates cultural pride in Comanches' excellent horsemanship skills. Betty relays Josiah Gregg's description of how early Comanches would ride their horses and throw "long-handled spear[s] or lance[s]" at buffalo (qtd. in Betty 88). Gregg notes that they would ride their horses alongside the buffalo as they hunted them with a bow and arrow (qtd. in Betty 93). Devon Mihesuah describes some of the horsemanship skills of the Comanches:

> [Comanches] could hold onto a horse with their legs as their body dropped down to one side, effectively using the horse as a shield; all this while also carrying a shield, bow, and lance. As a horse and rider rode past him, Catlin [a Texas painter] saw only the rider's foot atop the horse's back . . . the riders used a woven hair halter that helped support their bodies when they slipped to the side of their horse, but the strength and agility needed to accomplish this feat is still considerable. (D. Mihesuah 225-226)

In the 1800s, "Army Captain Randolph B. Marcy" saw Comanche "women on horseback at full speed chase and capture antelope by lassoing them" (D. Mihesuah 226). Many aspects of the tale of the Comanche woman who is caught in a tree are realistic, which make the tale unsuitable to be labeled a fairy tale because to do so demeans Comanche peoples' life experiences and culture.

Labeling Comanche tales with westernized genres instead of conceptualizing Comanche literature in ways reflective of the Comanche oral tradition continues to subject Comanche stories to a westernized lens. Although Riddles's tale is sprinkled with teasing humor, her story

is very teaching about etiquette, and the tone of the women's words, "Pia r~~ʉ~~a [t~~ʉ~~a] noo . . . It is said big [and] loud, for sure . . ." implies that they are infusing teasing humor with a seriousness, almost an angst about the abuse of their fellow Comanche woman, making this tale far more than a joke. This tale provides a critique about etiquette in Comanche societies; therefore, this story is not merely a fairy tale.

Yu functions to blend genres (fairy tale and history). Riddles uses her storytelling as opportunities to both entertain and convey historical "truth," making them *yu*-esque. Wieser explains that many forms of Indigenous meaning making are "layered" (156). One can find historical "truths" in Riddles's "fiction" and "fiction" in Riddles's historical "truths," yet her stories reflect both early Comanche experiences and some Comanche experiences of the 1940s, and her stories still ring "true" for modern Comanches. Her stories are a part of a continuum, just as Powell's stories are (Powell "Word by Word . . ." 135).

One observes this historical accord, yet discord across periods in Comanche elders' stories. There is a blurring of fact/fiction in both Riddles's tale of Coyote and the turkeys and the tale about the Comanche women herding turkeys from the woods. Mihesuah's personal story about his father's farm-raised turkeys serves as a historical "truth" that put the "truths" within Riddles' fictional tales into perspective. The tale of the Comanche women herding turkeys describes how the women chased the turkeys through the woods to aid the Comanche men in hunting the turkeys for their dinner:

> Sur~~ʉ~~k~~ʉ~~se, "Ehka kuyunii?a huuhkabanai tahk~~ʉ~~aru?i," mek~~ʉ~~ . . . That one [woman] said, "We are going to drive out those scattered turkeys in the woods . . . Suni urii [utii] tai m~~ʉʉ~~hkase taa nanahtenan~~ʉʉ~~ p~~ʉʉ~~ ta?wo?i?a himahtsi ohto ma huuhk~~ʉ~~ma?ru wihnu robo?ihutu?i [tobo?ihutu?i] . . . In that way, our men relatives are going to stand at the

edge of the woods, shoot their guns, [and] take several [turkeys] . . . Soobeʔsʉ nʉnʉ sunihku puhitooʔa rʉkʉwasʉʔetʉʉ [tʉkʉwasʉʔetʉʉ] . . . Along time ago we killed turkeys to eat that way" [*puhitooʔa* is a term for *turkey* and means leaf-to-graze or grass-to-graze (*Taa Nʉmʉ Tewkapʉ̲ʔha Tʉboopʉ̲* 48; Canonge 145)]. (lines 7-9)

Her tale is one of several stories that reflect modern Comanche life experiences, meaning her tale conveys a combination of fact and fiction. For instance, this story has fictional characters, but it contains history about how early Comanches hunted turkeys. This story coincides closely with elements in Mihesuah's retelling of his life experiences of growing up on a farm in Duncan, Oklahoma in the 1930s and 1940s. Mihesuah describes how his father taught him to raise turkeys:

> We had lots of farm animals around the place. Those turkeys weren't too smart. The little ones would stay out in a storm and drown. Their mothers tried to round them up and couldn't. We tried to catch them too, but we'd step on some of them. We had about seventy-five head all the time. We'd herd them out in the cotton fields where there were all kinds of bugs out there, grasshoppers especially. The turkeys fed all the way to the end of one row then we'd herd them back again down the other side. Then when we got to one side by the creek, they wanted to go to water, so we had to let them go until they came back home. Then we'd do it again the next day. The turkeys didn't have many predators back then when there were people on every quarter land with five or six kids and their dogs. Not like now when you can wander for two miles and nobody's living there. There weren't many varmints, and everybody had dogs to keep them away. We sold the turkeys in the fall around Thanksgiving so we'd have money for clothes, books, and Christmas presents . . . Whites scrounged off the Indians, too. I can remember one

> time this Anderson family came to get some corn from us. Dad always knew exactly how many turkeys we had, just like you know how many chickens you have out there in your yard. Well, one was missing after they left and Dad knew it was gone. One day Dad was waiting for them, and they had a turkey tied onto the side of the cab. So he told them, "You got my turkey, I see it. You take him, but don't you come back no more." He'd help people, but wouldn't tolerate stealing. (Mihesuah 22-25)

Riddles's descriptions of how the Comanche women herded the turkeys through the woods coincides with Mihesuah's descriptions of how he and the turkeys' mothers would round up the turkeys and herd them through the cotton fields. Instead of pushing the turkeys to the edge of the timber, as Riddles's characters do, Mihesuah herds the turkeys to the ends of the cotton field rows so they can graze on grasshoppers. This *how,* this fascination for how animals carry themselves in general still rings "true" today. Although Riddles's tale is "fictional," it depicts an actual Comanche practice for hunting turkeys that was later repurposed by Mihesuah's father to Indigenize the farming of turkeys, implying that his father was keeping some Comanche approaches to interacting with the turkeys by building kinships with them, treating them with respect, allowing them to live as similar a life that they would have had in nature as possible, and interacting with them in a caring way that reflects how their own mothers treat them. The women in Riddles's tale are not farming turkeys, but the same level of respect in their interactions with the turkeys is evident because Comanche hunting principles value treating animals with respect.

Riddles's tale of the Comanche women who herd turkeys connects with her tale of Coyote and the sliding turkeys, yet another story that connects with Mihesuah's story as well. Riddles continues describing how the Comanche woman helps the Comanche men to hunt the turkeys:

Sitʉʉkʉse maa yʉkwihkatʉ wihnu sokoko pohbianu [pohpianu] . . . These ones [the turkeys], they sat then jumped from there . . . Sitʉʉ waʔihpʉʔanʉʉ marʉʉmatu tunehtsʉnu . . . These women ran after them . . . Sitʉʉkʉse kuyuniiʔnʉʉ huuhkʉmaʔku tunehtsʉnu. These turkeys ran to the edge of the woods . . . Huuhkʉmaʔku ma kʉahka sitʉʉ tenanʉʉ tʉmarʉʉmoaku marii wasʉnu . . . They came out of the edge of the woods; these men killed many of them [turkeys] . . . Pʉʉ kahnikʉ bʉi [pʉi] bitʉhka [pitʉhka] setʉʉ marii noʔinu . . . They arrived at their houses and plucked them [the turkeys] . . . Wihnu marʉʉ nanawaʔihpʉʔanʉʉ ma makaʔmukitsi kohtoohtsi sehka kuyuniiʔa sooko kwasʉkʉnu . . . Then our women relatives prepared a fire for those turkeys [and] cooked them there. (lines 14-20)

Riddles's tale of the Comanche women and the turkeys correlates with her tale about Coyote and the sliding turkeys because her description of the turkeys' jumping movements is similar to her descriptions of the turkeys' abrupt sliding. Both her tales involve tricking the turkeys; the Comanche women trick the turkeys to head in the direction at which their menfolk are waiting for the turkeys so they can shoot them, and in both tales, characters roast the turkeys over a fire. For example, in the sliding turkeys tale, she states, "Piakohtoohtsi sihka kuyuniiʔa bahtsinoʔitsi [pahtsinoʔitsi] u kuʔinubuni . . . He made a big fire, picked this turkey clean, and he was roasting it" (line 29). Hence, Riddles's tales teach about the turkeys' mindsets and behaviors to explain how one could hunt them and prepare them for food in survival situations.

Likewise, Riddles's tale about Coyote and the sliding turkeys coheres with Mihesuah's story. Both tales associate the turkeys with repetitious behavior. For example, "Soobeʔsʉkʉtsa rʉa [tʉa] kuyuniiʔnʉʉ bisikwanuuʔibʉni [pisikwanuuʔibʉni] . . . A long time ago, it is said some Turkeys were sliding . . . Suni urii [utii] nayʉkwibʉnikukʉse ohaʔahnakatʉ urʉʉka bitʉnu

[pitʉnu] . . . They were continuing along that way, when Coyote approached them" (lines 1-2). Riddles explains that the turkeys were sliding repeatedly, and Mihesuah explains how each day he would herd the turkeys down the rows of cotton, repeating this action row after row, and day after day. Both tales depict the turkeys alongside a creek. For instance, "Surʉkʉse wihnu okʉhu paakʉhu wʉhtʉkwanu nahubiniiyu . . . Then that one [the turkey] there at a distance hit something in the water and was groaning" (line 12). In Riddles's tale, the turkeys are sliding down to a creek, and in Mihesuah's story, he guides them to a creek. And both stories depict the turkeys as accident-prone: In Riddles's tale, one turkey gets stabbed, and in Mihesuah's story, the turkeys are stepped on or accidently drown in the rain. Both storytellers portray the turkeys as not being too bright. Riddles states, "Orʉtsa [otʉtsa] raa [taa] haitsi pʉnʉ ʉkʉnaa pisikwanuuʔi," me u niikwiiyu . . . That one [Coyote], our friend, he slides himself first," he [one Turkey] said to him" (line 8). She implies that the turkeys are too trusting of Coyote, whereas Mihesuah states that the turkeys who would not seek shelter from the rain "weren't too smart" (22). Similar to both Riddles's tales, Mihesuah's story involves the subject of trickery, but in Riddles's tales, the turkeys are tricked, and in Mihesuah's story, his father is tricked by a non-Indigenous man who steals one of his turkeys. But similarly to the little bird and the flock of turkeys who confront Coyote about stealing their turkey friend, Mihesuah's father confronts the man who stole from him, saying "You got my turkey, I see it. You take him, but don't you come back no more" (line 25). Thus, there is "truth" in Riddles's fiction because it reflects real-life events that Comanche people have experienced in the far past, recent past, and today.

Another instance in which Riddles's stories reflect Comanche history and culture is her hackberries tale. The way in which Riddles describes how the mother prepares the hackberries in the story reflects actual cooking practices of Comanche women:

> Sitʉkʉse ma pia pʉ huuʔawokʉku marii tayuʔnekʉnu pʉ tʉʉhtsohpeʔa kuhpitsunikʉtsi ubaʔaihtu [upaʔaihtu] u roʔkwʉrianu [toʔkwʉrianu] . . . This one, her mother, pounded it with a wooden mortar and pestle near at hand, rendered bone marrow, rendered fat, and poured it on it . . . Tʉrʉehbarʉkwihtsipʉha [tʉtʉehparʉkwihtsipʉha] tsahkobiʔhuniihtsi ukʉhi yaaʔetʉ uma u matsʉbakiʔetʉ marii himimiʔa . . . She took the little new tree shoot-switches and broke them with her hands there and stuck it [the pounded hackberries, marrow, and fat] to it [the switches] and gave it to them . . . Sitʉʉkʉse tʉrʉehpʉʔrʉʉ pʉʉ kohtoopʉbaʔa u uʔtsiyaaʔeeyu . . . These children made a fire and were roasting it on a stick . . . Nanisuyakeku u otʉkwasʉkʉʔeeyu . . . They cooked it until it was brown and beautiful . . . Surʉʉkʉse rʉrʉehpʉʔrʉʉ [tʉrʉehpʉʔrʉʉ], "Tʉbitsi tsaa ma bihnakamatʉ [pihnakamatʉ]," me bʉʉ [pʉʉ] piaʔa niikwiʔeeyu . . . Those ones, the children, said to their mother, "This tastes sweet and really good." (lines 8-13)

Similarly, Weckeah (Comanche) shares a memory of her mother preparing the hackberries meal for her, closely coinciding with Riddles's hackberries tale:

> In winter when the hackberries were just right, my folks would gather them. Kaku [grandmother] prepared some goodies for me made of pounded hackberries rolled in just enough beef tallow to form them into large marshmallow-sized balls and put them in a container. They looked so pretty all flaked with red from the hackberry skins. They tasted so good when she toasted some for me on a peeled green limb held over the campfire. (105)

Weckeah also shares that she grew up in the 1920s (103). She would have been about the age of Riddles's grandchildren during this period; Riddles would have been in her 50s. By juxtaposing these two tales, one can determine that Riddles's tale reflects Comanche history, Comanches'

lived experiences, and actual cooking instructions that are woven into her fictional tale, revealing "truth."

Lastly, Riddles's pumpkins tale closely coincides with a tale from Henry Mihesuah's childhood in 1930s rural Duncan, Oklahoma:

> We used to play tag on the horses down on the creek at night. Liked to have killed us. We'd steal watermelons from a guy next to us who had good ones 'cause he grew them in sandy soil. One night me and J.T. Dobbins and Hoot Gann went to get watermelons on a farm that was two miles south of us. We had them melons tied on both sides of the saddles. We was coming back with our stolen melons and that farmer came after us in his Model A and we started running them horses with the watermelons swinging, and Hoot's horse tripped, fell, and the watermelons busted. Hoot got up with watermelon all over him and we took off. (Mihesuah 26)

Mihesuah was born in 1922, and he would have been about the age of Riddles's grandchildren and great grandchildren (H. Mihesuah 12). Mihesuah's story is his story; it is, indeed, the story of his life experience. But, when I first read it, I thought if one substituted the watermelons for pumpkins and removed the Model A, his story sounds like the beginning of Riddles's tale of the Comanche boys who steal pumpkins from a Wichita man:

> Sur~~ʉʉ~~k~~ʉ~~se, "Yee ik~~i~~se ihka hanibihta nar~~ʉ~~mi kimaay~~u~~," me niw~~ʉ~~n~~ʉ~~tsi sur~~ʉʉ~~ tunehs~~ʉ~~n~~u~~ . . . Those ones ran and said, "Hey, here, here, the corn owner is coming" . . . Sur~~ʉ~~k~~ʉ~~se ur~~ʉʉ~~ [sur~~ʉʉ~~] pabi, "Ma pamutsaaʔmatuka tunehts~~ʉ~~," mek~~ʉ~~ . . . Those one's older brother said, "Run to that bend in the creek" . . . Sit~~ʉ~~k~~ʉ~~se tenahp~~ʉ~~ marii miak~~ʉ~~n~~u~~ . . . This man chased them. (lines 18-20)

Mihesuah's story is very similar to Riddles's tale, indicating that her tales remain relevant generation after generation. Riddles may have allowed her potential audience of grandchildren to story this tale about the pumpkins by drawing from her observations about them, their interests, and their life stories, as well as the stories that other Comanche women have shared of their children and grandchildren to her. Riddles's tales hold pieces of legitimate Comanche history within the oral tradition, especially in the Comanche thematic canon of horse stealing stories that are often told and not written.

Blurring Oral and Written and Considering Liminality

While *narɨkuyunapɨ* is "fairy tale," *narɨkuyunɨ tɨboopɨ* is "history book," *narɨmuʔikatɨ* is to "tell, relate," and *narɨmuʔipɨ* is "story, tale" (*Taa Nɨmɨ Tewkapɨʔha Tɨboopɨ* 29, 26; Wistrand-Robinson and Armagost 209, 225, 56). The Comanche word for written *history* denotes that the history is written because of *tɨboopɨ*, meaning *book,* but the term retains *narɨ,* which is in "to tell a story," *narɨmui,* and is also associated with *narɨmuʔikatɨ* (*Taa Nɨmɨ Tekwapɨʔha* . . . 164, 29). The *mu* in *narɨmui* emphasizes that the telling is "with the lips" (Charney 118-119). *Narɨ* is found in *nanarɨmuinɨ*, meaning "to tell each other stories (plural)," (*Taa Nɨmɨ Tekwapɨʔha* . . . 164). And the beginning marker, *na,* in *nanarɨmuinɨ* is the same beginning marker found in the word for *relatives, nanɨmɨnɨnɨ* (*Taa Nɨmɨ Tekwapɨʔha* . . . 149). *Na* denotes "reflexive/reciprocal" meaning, such as "myself" (Charney 103). Thus, *na* implies self-responsibility in telling a story, as well as reciprocal meaning in which one tells everyone a story, and this story reflects upon one's family and oneself; hence *na*'s association with relatives, *nanɨmɨnɨnɨ*, because in Comanche culture one learns of one's kinship through family stories that are passed down generationally, how *nanɨmɨnɨnɨ*, myself-relatives, suggests that one's relatives

are a part of one's self. In other words, *story*'s associations with *relatives* indicates how story builds a kinship between a storyteller, a listener(s), and the wider community, as well as how story can be plural, or collaborative in the Comanche culture. *Yu*'s collaborative nature within these words brings listeners/readers and speakers/writers together to negotiate story meanings, blending both oral and written forms.

To better understand how *yu* makes a discourse space, one must consider how early Comanches obtained *yuhu*. Early Comanche women obtained *yuhu* from rendered animal fats by roasting or boiling buffalo meat or by gathering the fats from the buffalo when it was butchered and then cooking them down and separating the fat solids from the fat oils once it cooled. When rendering roasted or boiled animal fats, the fat properties breakdown into three separate levels after it has cooled—broth and oil in the bottom layer, gel-like fats in the middle, and fat solids at the top. *Yuhu* as a gel is liminal because it is neither a solid, nor a liquid, but plasma; however, even the solid fats become liquids again in higher temperatures. In addition, the placement of the gelled *yuhu*, is a liminal one, sandwiched between the bottom layer of oils and the top layer of fat solids—metaphorically, *yuhu* lends itself for interpretation as a liminal rhetorical space. In terms of rhetorical discourse, liminal[78] discourse spaces can be plasma-like by creating grey areas or places where discourse clashes, contradicts, or blends in surprising ways. This act is what *yu* does in the Comanche words for *history* and *fairy tale*, and it is what *yu* does in Comanche

[78] According to *Cambridge Dictionary*, *liminal* is "between or belonging to two different places, states, etc." When using the term *liminal*, I am referring to the spaces (verbal, written, or cultural) in which Comanche notions of spoken narrative contradict and/or blend with written text, genre, other layers of meaning, or have cross-cultural aspects. Arnold van Gennep coined the term *liminality*. However, I am not using his theoretical framework directly. I am borrowing his terms, *liminality* and *liminal*, and using the dictionary definition of *liminal* for my study's purposes.

grammar; it creates a space where the exchange of ideas can be negotiated on Comanche terms both in speaking and in writing, implying Comanche rhetorical sovereignty.

Hamalainen states the following of the 1700s-1800s Comanche trade practices pertaining to food:

> The hunting-oriented Comanche purchased large quantities of corn, vegetables, and bread with bison products. Consequently, they provided substantial amounts of hides, meat, and tallow for a multitude of groups —Wichita, Kansa, Iowa, Pawnee, French, British, Americans, Spaniards, and Comancheros (New Mexican traders operating on the Llano Estacado)." (Hamalainen, "The First Phase . . . " 105)

Tallow is animal fat; It was a much sought-after trade item by many peoples of many nations, and the Comanches would supply it to these various peoples, enabling the Comanches to cross into other tribes' territories and the colonies where they would obtain the items that they wanted in return. *Yuhu* really was a means of Comanche cultural exchange that they used to get the things that they wanted, to use for whatever purposes they wanted on their own terms; *yuhu* was a means for Comanches to initiate dialogue, establish relationships, and to exchange ideas and materials.

In the early settler-colonial era, if there were moments when neither translators were available, nor parties aware of Plains Sign Language, then the Comanches' movements and materials carried greater significance, merging movement and material together to negotiate meaning on Comanche terms. During those early colonial trade exchanges, the tallow or *yuhu*, like braids, conveyed the messages of affluence, influence, and self-determination. The tallow, like braids, is rhetorically speaking, *niikwiiyu*, and weaving, *kwisiʔeeyu*, similarly to how Cranford-Gomez states that "baskets speak. They speak of the lands, materials, their makers,

what they do, traditions, and who came together to help teach the makers the ways in which to construct these baskets. Baskets tell stories. Basket weavers blend cultural tradition with a knowledge of the natural world that is both extensive and intimate" (100-101).

Yu expresses liminality by occupying more than one state, meaning, or role. *Yu*'s liminality in grammar allows it to be audible, yet inaudible, visible, yet invisible, to alter parts of speech, forming verb-adjective/ verb-post position fusions, and to form relationships with other particles that allow the particles to swap roles with one another and to occupy more than one role. At the narrative level, *yu* expresses layers of meaning through its relationship with irony, punchlines, double meaning, and rhetorical tropes. The placement of *yuhu* in a braid is liminal because is incorporated over and throughout the braid, occupying multiple places simultaneously, even sticking itself to ribbon and hair ties.

Even *suniyutu* and *kwisikatu* retain liminality that pertains to *yu* because "it just is" and "weaving" are metaphoric for *yu*'s ability to blur elements and to occupy multiple states narratively. Within the concept of weaving (*kwisikatu*), *yu* implies seamlessness through its binding together of things, and *yu* blurs author/audience roles, diffuses across Comanche and non-Comanche cultural boundaries, crosses genre, expresses effort/effortlessness, conceals, yet reveals, and remembers contextual accord and discord. All these characteristics of *yu* mirror the woven, fluid aspects of Comanche discourse itself in which meanings hold layers of interpretations, a trait that is inherent in Comanche language. Cranford-Gomez notes that within Louisiana Creole Indigenous history and basketry there is "multilayered history" and "multiplicities" (104, 101). Many Indigenous tribal ways of discourse utilize multiple modes of meaning making surrounding Indigenous narratives. Wieser explains that Indigenous meaning

making is "layered" (156). In turn, these layers of narrative meaning create liminality that is *yu*-esque.

These meanings give insight historically, culturally, and narratively into the Comanche language. These meanings denote what Powell calls a "hidden history" in Indigenous rhetorics ("A Basket is a Basket . . ." 486). These hidden histories behind the language give clues into how past Comanches navigated having European cultures and English language forced upon them.[79] The 1875 KCA reservation limited Comanches' political and cultural determination, and boarding schools were vehicles for discouraging Comanches to speak Comanche language, thereby attempting to limit Comanche rhetorical sovereignty. But many Comanches succeeded in learning their language, and they recorded their histories in the spoken language, right within the Comanche words themselves, just as their elders before them recorded their histories. Their word formations were tools to record clues about their histories. Thus, *yu*-esqueness within Comanche tales creates a liminal discourse space where narratives are negotiated on Comanche terms, implying Comanche rhetorical sovereignty and giving insight into Comanche history, culture, and story, and this liminality that is inherent in the Comanche language—it is not just a response to colonialism, as Riddles demonstrates that the expression of plurality in word meaning is a Comanche narrative tool to express meanings that arose in early Comanche culture.

What do I mean by *yu*'s or *yu*-esqueness's ability to facilitate navigating narratives on Comanche terms? Comanches have always made meaning of the world around them through their Comanche language that is complex, highly contextual, uses holistic reasoning, and uses

[79] Not all individual Comanches' life histories denote only engaging in European culture by force because some Comanches embraced European culture more so than others, as Comanche identities and positionalities in regard to colonialism have always been complex and confluent. But a significant number of Comanches encountered early European cultures and the English language by force, through uneven cultural exchanges.

many cultural lenses that differ from those of non-Comanche languages. Therefore, early boarding school instructors who assumed that Comanche language speakers were lacking in sophistication of thought were wrong.[80] Comanche language speakers have all these capabilities and more; they just use a different means of logic. Comanches who attended boarding school were told that they needed to learn how to read and write in English and that written history in English was "true" whereas the oral Comanche history was "false." These same students encountered written "lies" about them and their cultures, stereotypes, inaccuracies, and broken treaty promises in books. In *Carlisle Indian Industrial School, Indigenous Histories, Memories, and Reclamations*, Fear-Segal and Rose include a narrative that Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz tells about Taos Pueblo's first person to be enrolled at Carlisle Indian School, Sun Elk, who was there from 1883 to 1890 (12): "They told us that Indian ways were bad. They said we must get civilized . . . And the books told how bad the Indians had been to the white men . . . And so after a while we also began to say Indians were bad. We laughed at our own people and their blankets and cooking pots" (qtd. in Fear-Segal and Rose 12). Hence, the students learned that humans can use written language to "lie," too. Wrongfully making fun of a culture's food is like wrongfully making fun of a culture's people. Imagine how an 1800s Comanche mother or grandmother might feel tirelessly working to prepare a meal for her children, whom she has not seen in almost a year because they have been away at boarding school, only to have her children make fun of her, her food, her knowledge, and her cooking process—her *how*—to her face.

Gerald Vizenor's theory of survivance also conveys this conflict between oral and written history, in which he gives the example of Charles Aubid's (86-year-old Anishinaabe elder)

[80] Carlisle Boarding School "curriculum" was purposely designed to suit what they wrongfully termed as Indigenous "incapacities" (Fear-Segal and Rose 10).

federal court testimony. When he testified in federal court regarding the tribal sovereignty "to regulate the *manoomin,* wild rice, harvest," he spoke in his tribal language with the help of translators, explaining that he was "a young man when federal agents told Old John Squirrel that the Anishinaabe would always have control of the *manoomin* harvest" (Vizenor 1-5). However, Justice Lord argued that Aubid's statement was "hearsay," and he claimed that "the court could not hear as evidence what a dead man said, only the actual experiences of the witness" (Vizenor 5). Aubid "pointed at the legal books on the bench, and then in English, his second language, he shouted that those books contained the stories of dead white men" (Vizenor 5). Vizenor states that Aubid said, "Why should I believe what a white man says, when you don't believe John Squirrel?" (qtd. in Vizenor, *Survivance,* 5). Following Aubid's statement, Justice Lord allowed other Anishinaabes to speak in court (Vizenor, *Survivance,* 5). Aubid's court room testimony exemplifies how many Indigenous peoples navigate spoken and written history, code-switch across languages, and reveal and conceal facets of Indigeneity on their own terms in a very *yu*-esque fashion.

Comanches who attended boarding school, likewise, understood that speaking from the subjective perspective can convey "truth" just as writing can. They knew that subjectivity alters a message, yet reveals the story's "truth," giving insight into the speaker and his or her relationship to the story, as with every retelling, pieces of the tale change, but pieces remain the same. Powell explains that almost every time the story of how the field of Native American rhetorics formed is told, the story changes ("A Basket is a Basket . . . " 471). The oral tradition has variation in stories, just like braiding methods vary from person to person, and these variations are embraced in Comanche culture. For instance, the Comanches have many stories about why the Comanches and Shoshones split as a tribe. Devon Mihesuah explains that some tales claim the division was

due to drought, while other tales claim the division was over a meat[81] dispute or health reasons (H. Mihesuah 1). Historian Gerald Betty argues that the Comanches traveled over the Rocky Mountains when they broke away from the Shoshones and moved toward the central plains (62). The rendition that I was told as a child was that the split was over a travel disagreement on whether or not to cross a mountain range. Regardless of these differences across these stories, what remains in each is the "truth" that the Comanches and Shoshones were once one tribe, that they broke away for different reasons, that they have remained thus, and that this split occurred long before the reservation years. Heath and Heath state, "Some of the stickiest ideas in the world are stories. Aesop's fables have endured for about 2,500 years, and they will easily survive another 2,500 . . . Our culture is defined by the stories we tell—in movies, in books, in the media" (9). The same is said of Indigenous oral stories, too.

When boarding school instructors told Comanche students that their histories were "fairy tales" or "false," it implied that they were told that they had no history because it was not written, but they did have history. Again, as Cranford-Gomez discusses her paternal relatives' histories, she states that "It is a story of documents true and false, stories told and retold; some are hidden, some whispered, and some are just done the way they have always been done" (95). These are all characteristics of *yu,* Comanche narrative, Comanche braiding, Comanche language, and Comanche history. From a Comanche perspective, differences and similarities exist between spoken and written texts, but both are vital means for transmitting human

[81] According to Devon Mihesuah, "Another version of the separation of Comanche and Shoshones is that while living in the Great Basin, the group divided into factions over a dispute involving the distribution of a bear they killed. The two factions separated: the one that traveled north became Shoshones, and the one that moved south became Comanches" (H. Mihesuah 1).

knowledge over time, as past Comanche speakers embedded these hidden histories orally and these meanings have withstood the tests of time.

When conceptualizing this dichotomy between written verses oral narratives, it is not a matter of "true" verses "false," as early boarding school instructors insisted, but it is a matter of a difference in cultural subjectivities. And Comanche language provides counter narratives. As Powell discusses the history surrounding the "Native rhetorics story-basket," she mentions the field's "traditional" story that is widely known, her story that was not as widely known at the time (but certainly is today), the story of the formation of Native rhetoric and composition studies that is widely known, counter stories of lesser known speeches and articles regarding Indigenous rhetorics, and she brings in "community tradition bearers" and "young scholars" as a "part of the weave" ("A Basket is a Basket . . . " 471, 472, 483). *How* Powell shares this history is in a layered, woven, counter narrative way that is indicative of Indigenous storying practices. From some Comanche perspectives, counter narratives assist in controlling their own narratives, to conceal and reveal which meanings that they want to share, and to allow the audience room to make of their stories "what [they] will" (Powell, "A Basket is a Basket . . ." 483). Comanche narratives respond to colonialism, but they also continue early Comanche storying because Riddles' tales have many examples of *yu*-esqueness with plural meanings about Comanche culture, meaning counter narratives, hidden meanings, and liminality are hallmarks of Comanche language that have existed in the language before colonialism.

It is not that fairy tale and history do not exist in Comanche culture (as many of Riddles's tales are far-fetched for entertainment purposes), but fairy tale and history overlap where the "truth" of a tale resides on audience subjectivities, and the tale's transmission relies on the speaker's subjectivity. Many of Riddles's tales imply a hidden history and *yu*-esque liminality

behind her word choice. In the rations tale, she states, "Sur~~uu~~se s~~u~~su~~u~~mu~~u~~ʔn~~uu~~ waʔihp~~u~~ʔan~~uu~~ suhka wanakotseʔa petihtaiʔeeyu . . . Some of those women there were throwing the soap down to dispose of it" (line 7). On the surface, *wanakotseʔa*, means *soap*, but this term is comprised of *wana* and *kotse*, which mean *cloth* and *wash/washer* (Wistrand-Robinson and Armagost 140). Why is *soap* in Comanche *cloth-washer*? Is it because *cloth-washer* is instructions for how to use the soap, such as scrubbing with a cloth? This term implies the hidden history of how Comanches in the early reservation years "chose" to use soap. Within the context of Riddles's tale, the Comanche women were disposing of the soap, suggesting that they did not see it as necessary. Comanches did not need soap because they had their own customs for hygiene; they had their own plants for managing body odor. Before the use of cloth material, Comanches made their clothing from animal hide, and one of the best ways to keep animal hide clean is by scraping in with a rock (today, a specialized chalk rock is used). Animal hide cannot be cleaned with soap and water or else it will ruin. Thus, one of the few uses for soap that Comanches who lived on the early reservation had was to wash their clothes that were made from cloth material in the soap, and cloth material was not used for Comanche clothing until they began trading with non-Indigenous peoples and raiding early Spanish camps. Hence, the word, *wanakotseʔa*, is *cloth-washer*. This term has a hidden history. Another interpretation of this term is the derogatory stereotype that early colonists held toward Indigenous peoples, which was that they assumed that they were "dirty" because many tribes, like the Comanches, did not have soap, resulting in the presumptuous doling of rationed soap to Indigenous peoples. Wieser discusses the stereotype of "dirty" Indigenous peoples that was stated by Lieutenant Henry Timberlake concerning his interactions with Cherokee leaders:

> Smoaking was always very disagreeable to me; but as it was a token of their amity, and they might be offended if I did not comply, I put on the best face I was able, though I dared not even wipe the end of the pipe that came out of their mouths; which, considering their paint and dirtiness, are not of the most ragoutant [tasty], as the French term it. (Rozema 42)

Again, much like most tribes, the Comanches had many hygiene practices, and through Comanche-settler interactions, the Comanche women became aware of this stereotype that the early settlers held toward Indigenous peoples. Hence, the women's act of throwing away the soap was a symbolic act of refusing to believe that stereotype.

The acts of throwing the soap away or choosing to use it for washing clothes instead of for bathing denotes resistance because these acts suggest that the Comanche women were creating the guise of using the soap, but only under the conditions of their own choosing—that it would be used on non-Indigenous materials, not on themselves. The soap was rejected because the Comanches knew that they were not dirty and had no need for soap or even cotton cloth. To the Comanches who were forced to take soap as rations, it was belittling to them, as though they were being treated like children and told *yuu* "act right; do right." Although the Comanches during the early reservation years had the reservation and European cultures forced upon them, the Comanches found ways to still have agency, and hiding their history within the language was one of those means.

Wanakotseʔa has *yu*-esque liminality by meaning soap and "to wash cloth," like the *yu* whisper vowel that is detectible yet not. This term carries the stories of earlier Comanches' attitudes toward soap, reservation life, the Indigenization of European cultural concepts, humor, pain, and self-determination. Just as *yu* substitutes for *t͟u* or *tsi* plus an action description, most

Comanches substituted their traditional hygiene practices with soap by force because once they were placed on reservations and in boarding schools, they could not access the previous places where they would obtain the necessary plants pertinent to hygiene. Similar to *yu*'s ability to verbalize objects of the post position, *kotse*, *wash*/*washer*, modifies *wana*, *cloth*, to emphasize the act of washing the cloth; this emphasis is on the verb carrying out the action upon the object, or that the cloth is being washed (emphasis on the object receiving the verb's action). While *yu* introduces irony, punchlines, and double meaning, the story's context and *wanakotseʔa* denote humor and subversiveness that reveal and conceal the definitions *soap* and *cloth-wash*, as well as their historical connotations.

Considering *yuhu*'s placement in the braid metaphor, the concept of soap was not an idea that "stuck" to Comanche culture at first; there was cultural resistance to it (i.e. the women throwing away the soap in the ration's tale). But, with time, soap became integrated into Comanche culture by force, woven into almost each Comanche person's daily life just as *yu* is woven into Comanche cultural philosophy, the phrase *hakaniyutu unu yuhaniyu*, and even Comanche hair hygiene practices as *yuhu*. In response to these cultural shifts, Comanche elders found a way to simultaneously weave their commentary on soap like a bright blue ribbon woven into a braid within the very formation of the word *wanakotseʔa* to call future generation's attentions to their elders' early reservation experiences that were being silenced in the dominant Euro American historical discourse of their elders' times. How *wanakotseʔa* is formed by the fusion of a noun and verb denotes process, just as *hakaniyutu unu yuhaniyu* denotes process and asks "How are you making right?" It is as though the elders who witnessed the beginning of the reservation knew that beef and soap rations' incorporations into Comanches' daily processes would be the beginning of countless changes to their lifestyles, changes that they would soon

observe amongst their children and grandchildren who would return home from boarding school carrying these notions of soap, European-style foods, and life routines that were different compared to their parents' and grandparents' traditional Comanche lifestyles, so much so that children and parents would become cultural strangers. Thus, *cloth* and *wash* imply a discord between two cultures who value cleanliness, but whose ideas on "how to make right" in terms of hygiene differed, and early reservation Comanches ensured that their perspectives on "how to make" hygiene "right" would not be forgotten by infusing it into Comanche words and weaving it into story.

In her tale about the Comanche woman who is caught in a tree, Riddles gives insight into Comanches' paracolonial concepts of economies. She states, "Waahkusiʔokweʔkʉhi uma tʉmʉʉnu tʉmarʉʉmoaku puhihwituanu . . . In Wichita Falls [grey flowing cedar creek], they traded it [pecans and] got a lot of money" (line 13). This tale alludes to the period of 1875-1901 during the reservation years. Despite the "formal rules" that discouraged Euro Americans and Indigenous peoples from crossing the reservation's boundaries in the 1800s, the "Comanches traded at Anglo stores across the Red River in Texas . . ." (Foster 83). Hence, the story's reference to money, traveling to the Red River for trade, the buying of groceries, and later a wagon. The women's trading of pecans was their means to cross the reservation's boundaries and to engage in cultural exchange. Coincidently, pecans are also known for having a high fat content, *yuhu*.

Both the terms *tʉmʉʉnu* and *puihihwituanu* have double meanings with historic Comanche roots. *Tʉmʉʉ* means "to buy or trade," and *puihihwi* means "money, occasionally any kind of metal" (Canonge 151, 145). These two terms indicate that when Comanches first encountered westernized commerce, they used their language and their own trading traditions to

equate *buying* with *trading* and *currency* with *metalworks*, which is significant because these systems, Comanche trading and westernized commerce, were not identical in practice, though they have traits that overlap; the Comanche culture blurred notions of westernized commerce with their own trading traditions, signifying Comanches' wills to exert agency despite the westernized buying and currency concepts that sought to usurp Indigenous economies. Early Comanches did not have a widespread interest in obtaining coins, paper money, or gold because they wanted to keep their own economic traditions that they already established. Foster confirms that "the other significant economic input into the reservation community was cash. At the beginning of the reservation period, Comanches had little access to money and little need of it" (81). Instead, they were interested in obtaining the things that they wanted by exchanging things that they had, could readily obtain, or make from nature that the other band, tribe, or colony wanted, but could not access easily. Kavanagh's chart, "Gifts Intended for 'Northern Indians and Comanches,' Santa Fe, 1795," indicates that early colonial Comanches wanted to obtain knives, weaponry, metal tools, and many other Euro American items of their own choosing (qtd. in Kavanagh, *Comanche Political* . . . 183). Many of the items that they obtained stemmed from "the eighteenth-century expansion of New Spain's globally linked silver economy" (Tutino 67). Some Indigenous peoples, such as the Navajo, worked in the silver mines (Tutino 69). Because of these historical occurrences, the Comanche language refers to *buy* as *trade* and *money* as *metal*.

In addition, Comanche language at times relates a complex material with its natural element or source from which it is derived. For instance, the English language refers to a *boar* as *pig*, but refers to the meat derived from a pig as *pork*, deemphasizing the source from which the

pork originates. But, in Comanche *pig* is *mubi pooro,* meaning *nose-weapon*[82] and *pork* is *mubi poro tɨhkapɨ*, meaning "pig meat," emphasizing that the meat is from the pig (*Taa Nɨmɨ Tewkapɨʔha Tɨboopɨ* 47). The Comanche word for *money, puhihwi* can be broken down as *puhi-wi,* meaning *leaf-knife/awl*[83] or as *puhihwhi,* meaning *money, gold, metal, dollar* (*Taa Nɨmɨ Tewkapɨʔha Tɨboopɨ* 81, 48). *Puhihwi* not only describes of what paper and coin money is made, such as trees and metal, but also it describes what can be made with it or exchanged for it: knives and metal awls, two tools that enhanced early colonial Comanches' fighting abilities and domestic lives. And these two items were much sought after by early colonial Comanches when trading with or raiding Spanish villages. Kavanagh's chart, "Gifts to Sofais, [a Comanche chief] 1800-1801," shows that sometimes "awls" and "knives" were given to the Comanches as political gifts (qtd. in Kavanagh, *Comanche Political . . .* 188-189). In the 1700s, the Comanches were successful in Indigenizing the Spanish's notions of currency by persuading them to equate "one knife" with "a buffalo robe" (Kavanagh, *Comanche Political . . .* 68). Given how Comanche language likes to remember the origin from which a substance is derived, and given early Comanches' preexisting trade system, humor exists in how the Comanche language equates money with metal because the coins were made from metal, and past Comanches saw the metal coins as unnecessary placeholders for the big metal substances, i.e. knives, that they wanted, meaning they found it unusual to exchange little metal coin pieces to obtain big metal objects that are made of similar silver substances when they could bypass that step and directly swap

[82] Some wild boars have sharp teeth and tusks. Hence, their association with weapons.
[83] An awl is "a small, pointed [metal] tool for making holes in wood, leather etc." (*Webster's New World Dictionary* 45). Awls are part of Comanche women's traditional regalia in which it is placed in a leather, beaded pouch and worn on a woman's belt along with her other beaded pouches that contain knives and other items. These items were worn by Comanche women for everyday use to aid them in their tasks and to beautify themselves. These same items continue to be worn on modern Comanche women's belts with their traditional regalia.

goods with a village's peoples' goods so that they, too, could obtain items that they wanted from the Comanches, thereby strengthening Comanches' economic pursuits instead of replacing them.

Within the Comanche word for *money, puhihwi,* is the term *puhi*. *Puhi* translates as *leaves* or *grass* (*Taa N~~ʉ~~m~~ʉ~~ Tewkap~~ʉ~~ʔha T~~ʉ~~boop~~ʉ~~* 48; Canonge 145), and *puhi* signifies the history of how Comanches obtained money from grass on their terms similarly, yet differently from how Euro Americans obtained money from trees, grass, and the selling of Indigenous lands. In the 1800s, the Comanches leased reservation land to "Texas ranchers," who were permitted to graze their cattle on reservation land, in turn paying the Comanches "grass money," which enticed "traders" to venture "to the reservation" (Foster 81). The "grass money" enabled Comanches to establish a form of credit with the designated reservation trader, thereby enabling them to obtain items that they wanted (Foster 81). According to Foster, "This gave Comanches an alternative to government rations and allowed some to continue a nomadic existence within reservation boundaries" (81). Ironically, grass is what Comanche horses and buffalo grazed on—a crux of pre-reservation Comanche economies. In many ways, "grass" and various notions of grass-like abundancy helped fuel the Comanche economies of the 1700s-1900s. And this history of equating money with grass by using the grass to earn money, a substance that is ironically made from tree materials that produce green paper that also looks like grass or leaves, is all woven into the Comanche words for *money, puhihwi* (leaf-money) or *sonibuhiwi*/*sonipuhiwi* (meaning "grass money," or grass-leaf-money, or grass-grass-money) (*Taa N~~ʉ~~m~~ʉ~~ Tekwap~~ʉ~~ʔha* 48,136). The history is in the language. Comanches were wielding their agencies over their homelands within the reservation even while outside political and economic structures tried to determine it for them. Comanches were being denied self-determination, yet they found ways to wield it anyway, specifically through the fattening up of Texas cattle from grazing on

Comanches' reservation lands, which enabled the Comanches to cross and navigate the reservation's physical, economic, and political boundaries. Cattle, grass, *yuhu*, and trade were keys in pushing these boundaries.

This same blurring of westernized economies within early Comanche economies happens in Riddles's tale. Riddles juxtaposes how a few Comanche women grapple with westernized commerce. After the reservation limited Comanche trade and their access to buffalo, Comanches had more need to obtain cash. The group of women whom Riddles describes participate in the western economy, but *how* they navigate the commerce suggests that they Comanche-ize it. For instance, the women still hunt and gather, practice nomadism, and maintain a sisterhood. They embrace westernized commerce, but maintain their cultural traditions. Just as the Comanche language blurs the definitions of *tɨmɨɨnu* and *puhihwituanu*, the Comanche women blended Comanche and western economic concepts on Comanche terms. Similar to how *yu* serves as a placeholder for *tɨ* and *tsi* plus an action description, the Comanche women treat westernized currency as a placeholder within their traditional process of trading goods. Prior to the reservation era, the Comanches would exchange goods for goods, but once colonization imposed westernized economies onto their own economies, they had to obtain currency to get the goods that they needed while maintaining their own economic practices. The Comanche women in Riddles's tale use the natural resources available to them to earn money so that they can purchase groceries, and, in a way, the groceries themselves are "placeholders" for the foods that they would have obtained directly from nature had they been permitted to access it without limitations.

From a traditional Comanche point of view, the western currency is goods, yet not goods; the groceries are food, yet not their usual foods, and the western economy is like their traditional

trading system, yet not, implying liminality that harkens back to *yu*'s ability to be swapped for *t~~ɨ~~* and *tsi* plus an action description. The combination of *t~~ɨ~~m~~ɨɨ~~n<u></u>* and *puhihwituan<u></u>* and the context of Riddles's tale suggest a hidden history that gives examples of how Comanches navigated early westernized commerce by a variety of methods while maintaining their culture. Considering the thousands of bands and tribes and their individual trading and currency practices and the several countries who were establishing trade on the continent that relied on other countries, there were many economies competing at once. A shift in values and economic practices occurred within many tribes' cultures as a result of these economic changes.

In the 1700s and 1800s, Comanches' trade with the Euro American fur market strained buffalo herds. The growth in Euro Americans' demands for hides led to an increase in the fur trade, which was not proportional to Comanche herd preservation values. Though the Comanches of these periods cared about the buffalo, a conflict between ensuring herd longevity verses supplying trade demand affected Comanche values. The major decrease in buffalo herds was not due to the Comanche's economic goals alone, but a combination of not enacting "conservationist strategies" and enduring other "ecological, economic, [and] military" issues that competed for precedence simultaneously (Hamalainen, "The First Phase . . ." 108). Hamalainen acknowledges that the Comanches were aware of how treaties led to changes in their hunting territories, and the "increasing hunting pressure" from other tribes affected "their hunting success" (Hamalainen, "The First Phase . . ." 109). The late 1700s and early 1800s Comanches' needs to maintain intertribal kinships, the warrior tradition, economic influence, and access to Euro American technologies outweighed the value of preserving buffalo herds (Hamalainen, "The First Phase . . ." 109). This period is characterized by major changes on the Comanche traditional land base that brought many issues as pressing as access to buffalo herds because the

Comanche nomadic lifestyle itself was being challenged. These factors resulted in their needs to supply more fur for Euro American trade at greater rates, which led to changes in their economies and their values at that time.

To a significant extent, westernized economies flourished because of Indigenous peoples' chosen and/or forced participation in it. Riddles's tale conveys that a historic period occurred in which many economic systems in North America were struggling to exist simultaneously and with different purposes. Tutino elaborates on how Comanche economies occurred alongside other world economies during the 1700s, in which "the fall of New Spain and the Bajío revolution that took down the silver economy weakened the emerging Mexican nation and contributed to a global transformation that facilitated the rise of the Comanche empire. The later fall of the Comanche was part of a continental transformation that enabled the rise of the United States" (72-73). Riddles's tale of the Comanche women gathering pecans combined with the words *t~~u~~m~~uu~~nu* and *puhihwituanu* depict the effects of this period of economic liminality, a grey area that ensued after the Comanche economies were usurped that is not always discussed in mainstream, public school history books from Indigenous perspectives.

Just as *yu* has a relationship with irony, punchlines, and double meaning, *t~~u~~m~~uu~~nu* and *puhihwituanu* convey double definitions, and their connotations lend humor to the Comanche women's actions because they are not depicted as struggling with a western economy, but as using the westernized economy to suit their own cultural and economic interests. Riddles conveys the liminality surrounding the women's pursuits with a seamlessness that conceals yet reveals the women's cultural submissiveness, yet subversiveness through the terms' double meanings, which decreases calling the reader's/listener's attention to the terms' duplicities, thereby deemphasizing the story's hidden history. Further considering this tale's *yu*-esque

liminality, the Comanche women's abilities to cross both the boundaries of Comanche and westernized economies harkens back to *yu*'s affinity to cross cultural boundaries.

Border permeability was a major factor in Comanche trade, as it was with many humans' trade practices throughout history. The Fort Sill reservation was not the Comanches' first reservation. Some bands of Comanches lived on the Brazos River Reservation, a Texas reservation in the 1850s (Foster 75). They often tested the boundaries of this reservation. According to Foster, "They used the reserves as protected enclaves to maintain trade relations with Texans and to evade Anglo military pursuit" (75). The Comanches moved back and forth across the Texas reservation's boundaries depending upon which side of the boundary benefited them the most.

When their movement across the later Kiowa-Comanche-Apache (KCA) Reservation's boundaries became limited, trade was a means for Comanches to move goods, ideas, and influence across its borders. Some Comanche bands were later relocated to a reservation in what is present-day Oklahoma with the signing of the 1867 Treaty of Medicine Lodge Creek that formed the KCA reservation (Kavanagh, "The Encyclopedia . . ."). From 1869 to 1875, the Comanches who lived on the reservation would make "periodic small ventures outside its boundaries" (Foster 76). When the Comanches first lived on the KCA reservation, they had access to buffalo, which is how they obtained hides to sale, but "the last of these hunts was in the winter of 1878-79, when the Comanches were unable to locate any bison" (Foster 80). In the late 1870s, "licensed agency traders" were given permission to enter the KCA reservation to trade with the Comanches (Kavanagh, *Comanche Political . . .* 463). Kavanagh refers to Bureau of Indian Affairs agent Hawthorn's claim that when Comanches had access to buffalo, they would use their "robes or furs" to purchase goods from traders (qtd. in Kavanagh, *Comanche Political .*

. . 459). In addition, the Comanches would use their cattle herds "to sell the beef to the post traders in return for script, which could be used for luxury goods" (Kavanagh, *Comanche Political . . .* 459). Kavanagh also notes that agent Hawthorn explains that the Comanches would sell back some of their rations to traders, when this practice was permitted, which "enabled [them] to buy many things for their families" (qtd. in Kavanagh, *Comanche Political . . .* 459). Sometimes the Comanches would leave the reservation to raid the Chickasaw's reservation because some of the Euro Americans who were stealing their cattle resided there (Foster 186). Trade and issues related to trade were means for the Comanches to either travel away from the reservation to conduct business or to find opportunities to bring the business to them, a practice that harkens back to the early 1700s western Comanche trade center with the Pueblos that Hamalainen discusses in "The Western Comanche Trade Center: Rethinking the Plains Indian Trade System" (487). The Comanches were frequently looking for methods to leave the reservation or to push the economic boundaries that sought to restrict them while maintaining their culture.

Comanches were not the only ones who crossed the reservation's boundaries. They had to contend with non-Indigenous peoples who ventured into their reservation for many purposes, such as business opportunities that ranged from legal to illegal to economic grey areas. Illegal cattle grazing happened on the reservation (Monahan 453). Illegal cattle grazing on reservation lands demonstrates facets of the reservation's permeability because this act disobeyed both Indigenous rights and federal law (Monahan 453-454). Indian Agents encouraged Comanches to become farmers, which was culturally incompatible and, one could also argue, geographically incompatible with certain crops. Of the Comanches who took up farming on the reservation, some Comanches employed Euro Americans as farmhands to work the land for them (Foster 80).

Some non-Indigenous farmers who worked for the Comanches, Kiowas, and Apaches were permitted "to live on the reservation," and the Comanches would pay them "in cash or in a share of the crop" (Monahan 456). Though the Comanches could not fully control who entered or exited the reservation, the Comanches exerted some control over their territory through their business endeavors, and they realized how they could influence the traders and cattlemen who were encroaching on their territory as much the traders and cattlemen sought to influence them. For example, they required "grass payments" from cattlemen who used reservation land for their herds (Foster 83). Grass payments were the economic grey area and/or indigen-uity that Comanches found to earn money besides raising crops. The Comanches indirectly further permeated the reservation's boundaries through the peoples whom they attracted to the reservation for business.

Riddles's pumpkins tale expresses *yu*-esque liminality that gives further insight into the narrative and Comanche history. As the Wichita man and the Comanche boys' father decide how to settle the dispute, Riddles seamlessly weaves in another section of hair into the braid to create a lesson of which the boys, the man, and the audience, are not aware until they meet the boys' sister who volunteers to marry the Wichita man's son. "Sur~~ʉʉ~~k~~ʉ~~se u samohp~~ʉ~~ tsaati b~~ʉ~~ [p~~ʉ~~] puki nar~~ʉ~~noo?r~~ʉ~~k̲i̲tsi [nar~~ʉ~~noo?t~~ʉ~~k̲i̲tsi] wihnu suhka b~~ʉ~~ [p~~ʉ~~] samohp~~ʉ~~?a uba?a [upa?a] u rohto?inu̲ [tohto?inu̲] . . ." Riddles states, "Those ones' sister saddled up their good horse; then, they helped their sister to mount the tall horse" (line 26). This sentence expresses *yu*-esque liminality because *rohto?inu̲/tohto?inu̲*, means "to help one mount," "to go out forcibly," or "to exit forcibly" (Canonge 149; *Taa N~~ʉ~~m~~ʉ~~ Tekwap~~ʉ̲~~?ha* . . . 62). The sister gives the appearance that the boys' circumstances have forced her out, but she is seizing this moment to enact her own plan for herself. The physical rhetoric appears that her brothers are "helping" her to prepare to leave and

lending her their strength to mount the horse's saddle, but she is leaving of her own accord. She can get on her horse by herself, but she chooses to let them help her so that she can disguise her intention to jump on that horse and gallop far away and fast. The sister prepares to leave, but she frames her actions as though she does not want to leave when she really does, similar to *yu*'s whisper vowel status that is visible/audible and invisible/inaudible and how the front and back of a braid are not mirror images. Her actions of *rohtoʔinu̲/tohtoʔinu̲* reveal yet conceal her intentions. This line communicates irony, humor, and rhetorical trope because the Wichita man does not know the sister's intentions, and the sister succeeds in persuading him, giving her the last laugh. Riddles subtly calls the audience's attention to the sister's intentions like a small, thin deer-hide ribbon that is crisscrossed around the outside of the braid because the audience knows that it is the sister's choice to leave. Likewise, *rohtoʔinu̲/tohtoʔinu̲* pertains to movement, just as *hakaniyutu̲ ~~u~~nu̲ haniyu* asks, "How are you fixing/repairing," and by moving away and pursing her own goal, the sister fixes her family's relationship with the Wichita man's family. By giving the appearance of putting forth much effort to leave, she effortlessly enacts her plan and creates the impression of submissiveness and subversiveness simultaneously.

The last example in Riddles's pumpkins tale that conveys *yu*-esque liminality is one of the brother's final lines. Riddles states, "Sit~~u~~ ma samohp~~u~~ sihka renahp~~u~~ʔa [tenahp~~u~~ʔa], 'N~~u~~ samohp~~u~~ʔtsa ~~u~~ tuaʔa kuhmabaituʔi̲,' mek~~u~~ . . . This he said of his sister to this man, "My sister is going to have your son for a husband" (line 28). *Kuhmabaituʔi̲* is related to *kuhmabai*, which means "married," *kumaru*, which is "to marry" and is "said of a woman" in historic Comanche culture, *kuumarur~~u~~*, "[to] marry a man," *kuhmap~~u~~*, meaning "husband," and *kuhmakat~~u~~*, "to have a husband" (*Taa N~~u~~m~~u~~ Tewkapu̲ʔha T~~u~~boopu̲* 134, 127). *Kuhmabaituʔi̲* can be broken down as husband-marry-going to (or, going to-marry-husband). Based on traditional Comanche culture,

the brother could have used the male's term for *marriage, kwʉʉkatʉ*, meaning "married (said of a man)," or *kwʉhtuʔi*, meaning "take a wife," because he is a male addressing another male (*Taa Nʉmʉ Tekwapʉ̲ʔha Tʉboopʉ̲* 134). He could have used a more neutral term for *marriage* in general, *nanakwʉʉhtʉ* (*Taa Nʉmʉ Tekwapʉ̲ʔha Tʉboopʉ̲* 134). But he chooses to use, *kuhmabaituʔi̲*, which is related to the traditional Comanche woman's word for to marry, reinforcing that it is his sister's decision and that he is laughing at the man because the man thinks he is getting a reparation, but the girl is using him as an opportunity to seize her goal.

The boy's words demonstrate *yu*-esque liminality because his actions appear to be bringing his sister to the Wichita man and saying that the man's son may have his sister to be his wife, but what he is really saying is that his sister is taking his son to be made her husband.[84] The boy performs a formal, respectful act toward the Wichita man, but he sticks his tongue out at him one last time. Just as *yu*'s whisper vowel makes it audible, yet inaudible, the boy's word choice makes his insincerity detectable, yet undetectable. Reflecting *yu*'s verbalizing of an object of the post position, *kuhmabaituʔi̲* emphasizes that the sister will be acting upon the Wichita man's son's identity, essentially husband-ing. This line suggests *yu*'s qualities of irony, humor, and rhetorical trope because the Wichita man, whom I assume speaks Wichita instead of Comanche, may not understand the hidden meaning behind the boy's words in the Comanche language, but Riddles's audience of Comanche speakers know. Riddles uses the boy's dialogue to call the audience's attention to the irreverent humor like how a beaded hair tie added to a well-crafted braid calls viewers' attentions to one's hair. The boy's masked disrespect relates to questions of

[84] I like to think this tale could contain a backstory in which the sister informs her brothers of her plan as they are helping her to prepare her horse, which would explain why the one brother knew to say to the Wichita man that his sister is taking a husband, meaning the one left out of the joke is the Wichita man.

etiquette just as *hakaniyut*ʉ *unu yuhaniyu* asks, "How do you do right?" By assisting his sister to marry the Wichita man's son, he is simultaneously teasing the man, yet mending the riff that he caused, aiding his sister to both obtain her goal and to liberate her family from being in debt for generations to the Wichita man for ruining his crops. This teasing is a piece of Comanche culture that reveals and conceals the strained kinship between the boy and the Wichita man because Comanche families often tease family members to show that they care. The boy's final act of teasing the Wichita man is both resisting and embracing the Wichita man as his official elder kin.

However, Riddles's tales are not the only Comanche stories that contain *yu*-esque liminality. Sandra Karty's star tale contains a liminal moment that gives insight into the narrative. She states, "Situkʉse osu pui wahimaʔeku tsaaku sukʉ tatsinuuʔpita makʉkwatobiʔetʉ sikʉ puu ooʔrʉ kahnikʉ kueʔkʉ uraniʔeyu . . . This one put that tree up well and was going to the closet and finding the wrapped-up star on top" (34, line 9). The general English translation is "She would put that star up there . . . Then one day she told him to clean out their closet" (line 6, 9). *Makʉkwatobiʔetʉ* means *wrapped up.* This term is related to *makʉkwitubi*, which means "to wrap a baby or candy or a present" (*Taa Nʉmʉ Tewkapʉʔha* Tʉboopʉ 17). *Yu* indicates relationships to irony, humor, and rhetorical trope, and Karty's repeated pattern of images of the wrapped-up star serves the same purposes. This sentence is ironic because of the connotations, denotations, and context surrounding the couple's star; it is more than a precious present to them since Karty describes the star as wrapped like a baby. The star becomes associated with the couple's children. As Karty's tale notes, the couple own the star before they have any children; therefore, they have no children to wrap up yet and no presents to wrap up for any children. Then they later associate celebrating the holiday with their children, and as they age, they associate it with their children returning home and seeing the star decoration, which foreshadows the tale's

conclusion in which the children find the second wrapped-up star in the closet and give it to their mother. Karty depicts the second star in line 23 as *makw~~ʉ~~tubesi*, "wrapped" also (35). Ironically, the tale closes with the woman having lost her husband, but she is surrounded by her children and the unwrapped new star, denoting bittersweet humor because the woman is so worried about losing her husband and the broken star that she momentarily forgets about her children whom she still has in her life. In keeping with *yu*-esque liminality, the second star is both revealed and concealed like *yu*'s whisper vowel role because the audience knows about the man's plans to buy the star, how he wraps the star, and where he hides it once he buys it, but his wife does not learn about any of these details until the story's end. Similar to *yu*'s ability to substitute for *t~~ʉ~~* and *tsi* plus an action description, the star acts as a placeholder for the woman's values until she makes the connection that she values her children more than her prized Christmas decoration. Karty weaves the image of the wrapped-up star throughout the tale like seamlessly weaving a blue ribbon throughout a braid, just as *yu* weaves through *hakaniyut*<u>*ʉ*</u> *~~ʉ~~n~~ʉ~~ yuhani* to question aesthetic, "Why in this fashion are you making that right?" Likewise, the woman in the tale learns that what makes her holiday celebrations "right" is not the glass star, but her family.

Yuh<u>*u*</u> and *yu* serve as heuristics for comprehending the complexity of Comanche grammar—the fluidity of sentence structure, the layers of connotative, denotative, and narrative meaning, the layers of cultural and historical significance, the nuances of tone. Both *yuh*<u>*u*</u>'s physical properties and *yu*'s grammar roles are lenses for examining Comanche texts and creating Comanche texts, and they are an approach for learning Comanche language's grammar fluidity and woven-ness. Many Comanches want to keep learning their languages and to pass it on to future generations. Many Comanches want to be able to create with their language. Approaching learning Comanche from an English subject-verb-direct object mindset is a

beginning scaffold for considering Comanche grammar, but Comanche uses holistic logic that is all its own with complex, fluid, yet structured grammar rules. Not all the Comanche language follows a subject-verb-direct object structure. According to Charney, basic declarative sentences in Comanche follow a subject-object-verb or object-subject-verb structure (Charney 7). But, in a YouTube video recording from the University of California Los Angeles archive of Lucille McClung speaking Comanche, declarative sentences can follow an object-verb-subject format, too, as in "He sees me . . . n~~ʉ~~ puni u" ("Comanche audio . . . 08" 00:00:10-00:00:20). And in basic interrogatives, Comanche language follows an adverb-subject-verb form, such as "Where are you going? . . . Hakap~~ʉ~~ ~~ʉnʉ~~ miaʔyu? . . . Where are you coming from? . . . Hak<u>a</u>nai ~~ʉnʉ~~ kimaiʔyu?" (*Conversational Phrases*). But simple interrogatives follow a subject-adverb-verb form, as in "How are you? . . . ~~Ʉnʉ~~ hakani nak<u>a</u>?"; interrogatives, such as "Do you understand? . . . ~~Ʉnʉ~~ [~~ʉ~~nha] ma nak<u>a</u>ʔsuabitain<u>a</u>?" can follow subject[adverbial]-object-verb form (*Conversational Phrases*). Comanche is very fluid.

After taking Comanche language classes from various teachers throughout my lifetime, and after reading Charney's study of Comanche speakers, I realized that just when one assumes that one has heard all possible variations and usages of a Comanche term, one can still hear it used in a new way by a fluent elder speaker. *Suniyut<u>~~ʉ~~</u>*. There are grammar rules that Armagost, Wistrand-Robinson, and Charney (and even I) could not pin down. As one who has learned English before learning Comanche, I found conceptualizing Comanche grammar to be frustrating at first until I realized that Comanche language "just is," it is fluid . . . and then it made sense, then I could see the relationships amongst the particles within the words and the relationships surrounding the words and how they relate back to both Comanche stories and culture, which has

aided me in retaining words and their meanings. This method for approaching Comanche language may or may not help anyone else, but I share it because it helped me.

The liminality that is present in both *yu*'s roles and the Comanche language itself is within early Comanche history and worldviews, and even pre-Comanche Nʉmic worldviews. In Hamalainen's "The Western Comanche Trade Center: Rethinking the Plains Indian Trade System," he discusses how the western band of Comanches' primary encampment and place of trade "shifted" and floated around a given, general area depending upon seasonal changes and shifts in animal herds patterns (Hamalainen 501). He states, "Although the Big Timbers was its focal point, the center constantly shifted up, down, and across the Arkansas corridor as the Western Comanches moved from one source of game, grass, and timber to another" ("The Western Comanche . . ." 501). The early Comanches' concepts of trade were fluid and permeable, like *yu* and its multiple placements, roles, and meanings that pertain to movement, distribution, the blurring of author/audience roles, and the blurring of audible/inaudible sound. Accord and discord frequently characterized Comanche's practices of both raiding and trading with various tribes and Euro Americans. Hamalainen describes the Western Comanche trade center as a "primary impermanent center" ("The Western Comanche . . ." 502). This notion is fitting not only for conceptualizing Comanche trade, but also for conceptualizing traditional Comanche nomadic encampments, which were *yu*-esque in their abilities to be present and absent depending upon the inhabitants' discretions. Their very concepts of civilization were fluid as their bands' encampments were moveable "cities" that enabled them to take their "cities" with them wherever they went. Moreover, their traveling paths were not linear, but in movements that

morphed with the terrain[85] based on whatever movement it required at the moment, a mass flowing, gradual movement that coincided with the movements of buffalo herds, simultaneously sweeping across large swaths of plain, following a general path that was similar, yet different season after season, just as no matter how many times one braids one's hair in a given pattern, it is never quite the same each time.

Yu-esqueness as Rhetorical Technique of Story

By examining texts written by both Comanche authors and other Indigenous authors, one identifies *yu*-esque traits that show how *yu* is a narrative technique to create texts. In the works of Louise Erdrich (Chippewa), Sara Sue Hoklotubbe (Cherokee), and Velma Wallis (Athabascan), we can conceptualize how *yu* can be used to craft rhetorical and narrative techniques in future Indigenous writers' texts, even though these specific writers did not use *yu* intentionally to craft their passages. I hope that by showing readers how to examine texts through a *yu* lens that readers will understand how to write from a *yu* lens across diverse genres and artforms. Indigenous texts that are not written in the Comanche language can be *yu*-esque by meeting one or more of *yu*'s grammatical roles, being metaphorically braidlike, or depicting narrative relationships in certain nuanced ways. Texts can also emit an air of *yu* by alluding to *yuhu*'s transitory physical properties or by selecting subject material that pertains to the following within *hakaniyut~~u~~ ~~u~~n~~u~~ yuhaniyu*: Process, movement, etiquette, aspiration, or aesthetic. A text can convey *yu* through its various criteria for *suniyut~~u~~* (because, it just is, for that reason) and *kwisikat~~u~~* (woven-ness). *Kwisikat~~u~~* pertains to qualities of weaving, fluidity, seamlessness,

[85] The speaking rate, rhythm, intonation, and pitch in Comanche language is much like gradually walking up hill, across a level plateau, and down the hill. And before the Comanches had horses, most of them walked almost everywhere.

liminality, and the ability to diffuse across perceived boundaries. *Kwisikat~~u~~* is characteristics relevant to *yu*, the braid metaphor, Comanche language, Comanche culture, or Heath's and Heath's sticky pedagogy. *Yu*'s traits include but are not limited to serving multiple grammar roles, effort, effortlessness, visibility, invisibility, concealing, revealing, the relating of speaker to listener, experiential learning, remembering historical accord and discord, and identifying accord and discord in character's words and actions, etc. *Yu*-esqueness even pertains to how a work is so well made that it almost appears effortless, resonates with the audience, or blurs perceived boundaries. Comanche language's woven traits involve the weaving together of words, motions, parts of speech, many words for one meaning, many meanings for one word, multiple meanings in narrative and syntax, the concealing and revealing of layered historical meanings, the blurring of author/speaker/audience/listener roles, and whisper vowels. For Comanche culture, one may consider the various uses of *yuhu* within the Comanche materials or duct-tape-like-solutions (indigen-uity) for problem solving. And the stickiness within Heath's and Heath's "sticky" teaching and learning relates to "emotion," "concreteness," "story," "mental simulation," memorability, and engagement (1, 3, 4, 5, 10). And all these various aspects overlap. By exploring the uses of rhetorical *yu*, one contributes to further discourse about Indigenous rhetoric and the creation of Indigenous theoretical lenses from which to critique Indigenous writers' texts and to appreciate Indigenous ways of knowing while encouraging the use of Indigenous languages and inspiring further production of Indigenous writers' works, be they written, spoken, or in some other artform or means of expression.

Future Home of the Living God

In Louise Erdrich's (Chippewa) Indigenous futurism novel, *Future Home of the Living God* (2017), the protagonist, Cedar is a young, pregnant Indigenous woman who is being held captive along with other pregnant women in their dystopian world where humanity suspects that people are devolving. While in captivity, Cedar shares a hospital room with Tia, a pregnant Asian woman who does not verbally speak to anyone and secretly plots her escape. Cedar learns of Tia's plan when she finds her deconstructing hospital blankets and weaving them into a rope:

> She keeps the yarn taut with her feet as she leans over the loom of strands that move through her fingers with mechanical swiftness. She is finger-braiding. Old-time finger-weaving. Grandma Mary Virginia's trick. An Ojibwe method of creating fancy sashes, wall hangings, belts, tumplines, and ropes . . . I reach across the covers and touch the sash, then point from her to me, her to me, then I clasp my hands. She nods. When she tires, I start working on the sash and from then on it is the two of us. The two of us against them all. (Erdrich 141)

Even after Cedar joins forces with Tia to create their rope, Tia refrains from speaking to keep fooling her nurses. Cedar does not know Tia's name until later in the novel and resorts to calling her "Spider Nun" in her journal. Cedar and Tia communicate non-verbally and without alphanumeric text to complete a shared goal, which is *yu*-esque because *yu*'s whisper vowel makes it spoken, yet not spoken, and audible, yet inaudible. Their method of nonverbal communication mirrors the sign language that various precolonial tribes used to communicate with one another. Though both Tia and Cedar can speak the same verbal language, they use their woven rope to communicate. This woven rope is both substitute for verbal communication and a binding place for sections of woven material that are formed from repetitive movement that in turn weaves a friendship between the two women. Likewise, *yu* expresses repetitive action and

substitutes for *t͟u* or *tsi* plus an action description, making it a placeholder or binding place for motion particles.

Tia's and Cedar's weaving practices have a similar substitution process in which they both take turns weaving the rope. Coinciding with *yu*'s ability to serve multiple roles within parts of speech and in word formation, Tia and Cedar refuse to forget all the complexity of their lives and their identities, yet the hospital tries to relegate their identities to just "birthmother." While *yu* verbalizes an object of the post position, the women collaborate to create the rope to put it, and their escape plan, into action. The rope becomes their friendship pact to escape together along with their unborn children, harkening to *yu*'s expression of unrealized action. Just as *yu* has a relationship to plot twist and tension, the women use the rope to twist the trajectory of their lives in captivity, and with every woven link that they secure, they become closer to one of the novel's highpoints, their escape where they must fight their way out of the hospital. And the rope becomes a means to cope with their frustrations of being captured. This scene exudes *yu* because much like the Comanche women who resorted to using *yuhu* in its various states (oil, gel, solid) to survive starvation by mixing it with the foods that they could access, Cedar and Tia make something from almost nothing, too—they take a blanket and transform its physical composition into a rope—using their resourcefulness to make a survival tool in an imprisonment situation that has denied them almost any means for self-defense. Their rope takes on rhetorical meaning because Erdrich depicts the two women as successfully using this rope to scale the building and escape, meaning the rope sends the message that women are strong, creative, determined, and can do anything, and Erdrich calls attention to this message in much the same way a braider would weave a bright blue ribbon into a braid.

Coinciding with *hakaniyutu unu haniyu*'s question of survival, "How are you doing that?" Cedar has already learned how to finger weave because her grandmother, Mary Virginia, taught her, so Cedar does not have to ask how Tia is weaving; she knows and joins her. Poignantly, she also has no need to ask "why" Tia is weaving because they share the same plight. This unspoken understanding between them is *yu*-esque because they do not need spoken words to comprehend one another's pain or one another's strength; they can glance at one another and see it in their faces and actions—their refusal to give up. Cranford-Gomez argues that when one views a Creole or Indigenous basket, one must place "the basket within a greater context that addresses a historic cultural dialogue within a set geographic space" (100). She argues that baskets and geography express history. In placing Tia's and Cedar's rope in conversation with Cranford-Gomez's concept, one can argue that their rope makes an argument. Human works reveal insight into communities' identities and their emotions toward an issue without speaking it with words (Greer 177). These community "insider" messages of Creole and Indigenous baskets are ones that can be recognized and understood by the community who helped produce them, forming solidarity, and a similar understanding occurs between Tia and Ceder with the rope that unites them as sisters in the cause for freedom. Their rope becomes their means to move across the restrictive boundaries of the hospital without being detected right away in *yu*-esque fashion.

This scene conveys a *yu*-esque resonance that speaks to many Indigenous peoples emotionally because Indigenous peoples throughout history have endured many different facets of being "captured" and marginalized in different areas of mainstream society, including in art and literature, and many Indigenous peoples carry the historical knowledge of having the children of their tribes taken from them and placed into boarding schools. Therefore, these women's acts of breaking out of the hospital expresses their wills to determine their own lives,

an aspiration that many Indigenous peoples continue to relate to generation after generation. There is a seamlessness to their escape, which is ironically, made of nothing but blanket seams, and this contradictoriness is *yu* that masks their plan and makes them unsuspecting, so much so, that while the women are using traditional Ojibwe weaving practices to construct the rope, they are using a method for manipulating mass that harkens back to an Indigenous oral story that originates from the "founding" of the New England colonies in what is now America.

This translation of a story about early Indigenous-European encounters comes from the Brian Swan edition of *Algonquin Spirit: Contemporary Translations of the Algonquian Literatures of North America*'s "The Arrival of the Whites (Lenape-Delaware) Version 1: 'Indian Account of the First Arrival of the Dutch at New York Island' as told to John Heckewelder," which is published in Paul Lauter's 2014 *Heath Anthology of American Literature*:

> As the whites became daily more familiar with the Indians, they at last proposed to stay with them, and asked only for so much ground for a garden spot as, they said, the hide of a bullock would cover or encompass, which hide was spread before them. The Indians readily granted this apparently reasonable request; but the whites then took a knife, and beginning at one end of the hide, cut it up to a long rope, not thicker than a child's finger, so that by the time the whole was cut up, it made a great heap; they then took the rope at one end, and drew it gently along, carefully avoiding its breaking. It was drawn out into a circular form, and being closed at its ends, encompassed a large piece of ground. The Indians were surprised at the superior wit of the whites (these Dutchmen were probably acquainted with what is related of Queen Dido in ancient history, and thus turned their classical knowledge to a good account), but did not wish to content with them about a

> little land, as they had still enough themselves. The white and red men lived contentedly together for a long time, though the former from time to time asked for more land, which was readily obtained, and thus they gradually proceeded higher up the Mahioannittuck [Hudson River], until the Indians began to believe that they would soon want all their country, which in the end proved true. (Swan 81)

The same technique that the colonists used of ripping the bullock hide into continuous strips to expand the mass of the material's perimeter, forming a circular rope, that was used to deceive Indigenous peoples and to take their lands, is the same technique that Tia and Cedar use to deconstruct their blankets to have enough string-like material to weave into ropes and to outsmart the hospital staff. Their pulling apart of the blanket reflects how *yu* compacts sensory information, such as images, movements, and other experiential and/or instructional information into individual Comanche words, which requires one to break a word into its parts to uncover its hidden meanings. Erdrich's depictions answer back to this Delaware narrative about the stealing of Indigenous lands through material trickery because in a *yu* fashion these two pregnant women use their knowledge of history in self-defense to subvert the oppressive parameters around them that seek to make natural childbirth illegal.

By the oppressive forces in Cedar's world attempting to control pregnant women, their efforts are likened to humans trying to control nature—nature cannot always be pinned down, neither can Cedar nor Tia—and neither can *yu*. *Yu*-esqueness is found in nature. According to Cranford-Gomez, "Louisiana's wetlands are a vital ecosystem; the delicate balance of seawater and fresh water that make the brackish water is a gentle weaving of nature" (105). A similar occurrence happens in aquatic life. Salmon can change themselves from freshwater fish to saltwater fish (and back again) to navigate the differences in water. *Suniyut~~u~~*. This *yu*-esqueness

in water ecosystems happens without human intervention, and this mixing of seawater and fresh water is a fluid, contradictory, liminal occurrence. For Cedar and Tia, their fictional world tries to "control" the nature of childbearing and separate it out by separating mother from child and mother from her family and friends and from her familiar places (and from nature itself, if one thinks about the human-made hospital environment as being "unnatural"). But these efforts to separate humans from one another proves futile in Cedar's world because the hospital staff cannot fully control Tia and Cedar, just as linguists and even I cannot fully guess what *yu* will do and when (Charney 201; Wistrand-Robinson and Armagost 379). Elusive, fluidity is a quality of *yu*. As Cedar and Tia appear vulnerable, the hospital staff does not suspect them to be capable of escape—yet they prove them wrong. Similar to *yu*'s ability to find its way into Comanche discourse across time, surviving even the "end of the world as early Comanches knew it," Cedar and Tia find a way out. Since *yu*-esque characteristics are attributed to the rope creating process, then *yu* can cross beyond braiding and written text into other materials and/or concepts.

The American Café

Yu can be seen in Sara Sue Hoklotubbe's (Cherokee) 2011 mystery novel, *The American Café*. The protagonist, Sadie Walela (Cherokee), leaves banking to become the owner of a café in a small Oklahoma town. Little does she know that the café she has bought is at the center of a murder mystery and is connected to a corrupt law enforcement scheme. Upon taking ownership of the café, she makes many plans about how she wants to run it, what it should look like, its new name, and its new menu, but when she meets the townspeople, many of whom are Indigenous and rural non-Indigenous peoples, she quickly learns that she is not entirely in charge of the café—the town is. Sadie arrives at the closed café to begin renovations, but she is

interrupted by several townspeople, one of whom is a Muscogee elder named Red. And she realizes that the café is not just a café, but it is a major artery in the heart of the town:

> 'Thanks for stopping by,' she said, 'but I'm not quite open for business yet.' She hoped he would take the hint and leave. 'You want me to make the coffee?' he asked. 'People are going to be here soon.' No sooner had he finished his statement than the front door opened and three men in worn overalls entered. They each nodded silent greetings to Red, took their seats, placed their arms on the counter, and looked at Sadie. 'Are one of you guys the painter?' she asked. The men exchanged puzzled looks and all three shook their heads, 'Well, then, I'm sorry, but I'm not serving food. The café's not open. The only reason the door is unlocked is because I'm expecting a painter.' The man in the middle spoke first. 'That's okay, Miss,' he said. 'We heard you were here and came by to see what you looked like. Figured we could run a pot of coffee if nothing else. Goldie always lets us make our own coffee' . . . she shrugged her shoulders, not troubling to hide her irritation at the distraction these determined customers were creating. 'I don't even know if I have coffee.' The second man slid around the end of the counter and pulled out a box of coffee packets from an underneath shelf. With a toothy grin he said, 'Yes, ma'am, we've got coffee. May I?' . . . 'Well, I guess.'" Sadie reluctantly nodded. He pulled a packet of coffee from the box and placed it strategically in the strainer, then hit the red button on the front of the brewer and waited. Moments later, steaming coffee spewed into the waiting pot. The man returned to his seat and the conversation resumed. (17-18)

This impromptu coffee meet-and-greet occurs moments before a mentally ill elderly woman storms into the café with a sawed-off shotgun claiming to be the murderer of the café's previous owner, Goldie Ray.

Just as *yu* blurs speaker-audience roles, the roles between café owner and patrons blur because Sadie takes a holistic approach to renovating the café. She includes the patrons in some of the decision-making about how the café is run by allowing them to brew coffee for themselves as though the kitchen belongs to them because she respects the preexisting relationships and traditions that the community members have toward the café. This inclusion is likened to Powell's weaving in of her reader's by asking them to "keep this piece of this story in the palm of your hand while I pull in another strand," or how Cranford-Gomez states that viewers of baskets must be "active participant[s] in the story" ("A Basket is a Basket . . ." 471; Cranford-Gomez 100). Indigenous storying encourages the audience to finish the storying, and Sadie allows the cafe's community to help her create the café, though she is hesitant to include them at first. Her respect for the townspeople's relationships to the café implies that the café has a "hidden history" to which she must listen to better understand the community and to build kinships that later enable her to survive (Powell, "A Basket is a Basket . . ." 486; Cranford-Gomez 95). She refrains from mowing them over with her ideals of what a café "should be." Sadie works with the community to restore the café, rather than imposing her notions of "how to café" upon the townspeople because they already have their own ideas for "how to café[86] *right*."

[86] One may be wondering why I have chosen to discuss a passage about a café. When I was growing up, my elders loved to eat in small town cafes across Comanche country in various small towns. I have memories of eating in cafes with them, and some of them would share their memories of eating in cafes with me while we were eating. In some ways, cafes function as modernized versions of early community meal-sharing spaces where eating, storying, honoring, gift giving, politics, song, and merriment would merge in the discourse of the temporarily shared

She understands that while she is taking ownership of a café, the townspeople already have a history of their own with the café, meaning they will almost always see the café through their previous knowledge about the place to which Sadie is a stranger because she is joining the café much later in the café's history similar to how no matter how many new names a plot of land is given, the original Indigenous inhabitants will still remember the land from the perspective of their ancestors' original tribal territories before colonization. And the café has a "hidden history" that she must uncover (Powell, "A Basket is a Basket . . ." 486; Cranford-Gomez 95).

Similarly, to how *yu* reveals and conceals, Sadie seeks to reveal to her patrons that she is renovating, yet they try to reveal to her that no matter how much paint she puts on the place, they will still see it as "theirs." Rather than impose her will upon the already established town, she respectfully becomes a *yu*-esque placeholder by substituting for the previous owner and keeping the café's environment familiar to the community, similar to how *yu* is a placeholder for *tɨ* and *tsi* plus an action description (and vice versa). She knows that to transform the café too much is to walk into someone else's home and tell them how to run it. In a *yu* manner, Sadie embraces the townspeople's habitual actions, as *yu* does in Comanche grammar. She allows the community's distributive, reduplicative action of sharing coffee with one another each morning to persist.

Both Red's and his fellow community members' "surprise" visit to the café is also *yu*-esque because it twists the plot, adds tension, and implies some humor, as the patrons know more about Sadie's kitchen inventory than she does. The patrons' willingness to help her find and make the coffee serves as a duct tape solution since the café is not exactly ready based on Sadie's

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space. And the Comanche Nation has their own café at the tribal headquarters that Comanche Nation employees and Comanche communities themselves enjoy frequenting.

standards, but to the community, it is functionable. The accessibility of the café to the greater community, including Indigenous and non-Indigenous patrons, is *yu*-esque because it allows peoples of diverse backgrounds to facilitate discourse in a shared-space, similar to how *yu* diffuses across cultural boundaries in the Comanche language to communicate colonial, paracolonial, and traditional cultural constructs on Comanche terms. Just as *yu* is contradictory and unpredictable, Sadie's encounter with the mentally ill woman adds an element of unpredictability, and it coheres with the braid metaphor because this woman's arrival brings Sadie the awareness that she is walking into a "story" that is already in progress, like the *yuhu* in gel form that evokes in media res. The café is where the townspeople's lives meet up and overlap like sections of hair crossing and overlapping in a braid, and the café is the blue, rhetorical ribbon that weaves through it all. For each of the people who meet and converse at this café, their dialogue and the meals that they share are the individual links that keep the braid going. Had Sadie denied the men access to their daily coffee and conversation, she would have disrespected the community, causing a tangled knot in the braid. Hoklotubbe's mystery novel exudes *yu* because it has three mysteries that connect within the one town. Sadie must solve the mysteries of Goldie's murder, a bank robbery, and a young woman's adoption. As *yu* identifies discord and accord in actions and words, Sadie must uncover the "truth" behind characters' verbal claims because many of them say one thing, but their actions speak otherwise. Hence, the ability to find *yu* in Hoklotubbe's mystery novel reinforces that it can be infused into many genres.

Two Old Women: An Alaskan Legend of Betrayal, Courage, and Survival

Velma Wallis's (Athabascan) *Two Old Women: An Alaskan Legend of Betrayal, Courage, and Survival* (1993) has *yu*-esque moments. Her novella, which is based on a

precolonial Athabascan oral tale, depicts two elderly Gwich'in women, Sa' (Star) and Ch'idzigyaak (Chickadee), who are abandoned by their tribe amidst one of the harshest winters, and the two women become friends and survive together. When the women's tribe learns that the elderly women are thriving better than they are, a group of the tribe's male warriors approach them and ask for their help with surviving the winter. Sa' explains to the men that they will aid them based on certain conditions:

> We will share with the People, but they must not become greedy and try to take our food, for we will fight to our deaths for what is ours . . . You will stay at the old camp. We do not wish to see anyone else but you . . . and the chief. We will give you food, and we hope The People will eat sparingly in knowledge of harder times to come. This is all we can do for you. (Wallis 120-121)

The women's presence signifies that they are strong, survivors who are willing to fight to defend themselves, forcing their community to realize that they wrongfully assumed that they were weak. Just as *yu* swaps roles with *tɬ* and *tsi* plus an action description, the women have swapped roles with the chief; they are now the ones telling the tribe where they will camp, what they will eat, and how they will conduct themselves, which is indicative of *yu*'s ability to hold multiple grammar roles and to blur cultural boundaries, as these women become both elders and leaders who are transforming leadership boundaries. While *yu* features in commands, the two women command the community, stating "We do not wish to see anyone else, but you . . . and the chief" (Wallis 120-121). Their dialogue implies the behavioral instructions, "Do not come and visit us," without stating these words directly much like *yu*'s audibility and inaudibility as a whisper vowel. *Yu* expresses be verbs, and the women are telling the community how to "be" as they state, "We hope The People will eat sparingly in knowledge of harder times to come" (Wallis

120-121). The women's dialogue expresses the distributive characteristics of *yu* because they give their community their food and the extra clothing that they made, which suggests an ironic twist like the shifting of sections in a braid as they meet up and overlap. Now, the wrongfully supposed "weak" are in charge of their tribe, and the young and healthy are begging them for help. Sa's tone and word choice conveys a tension that the women do not yet trust their tribe. Like the tug of hair in a braid, Sa' states, "They must not become greedy . . . we will fight to our deaths for what is ours . . . This is all we can do for you" (Wallis 120-121). And do not dare ask them, "why," or rather "*Hakaniyut~~u~~ ~~un~~ haniyu* . . . Why are you doing that?" because the tribe knows *why* Sa' is saying these words. *Suniyut~~u~~*. As *hakaniyut~~u~~ ~~un~~ yuhaniyu* questions process, etiquette, and movement, Sa's statement on behalf of Ch'idzigyaak and herself answers these questions, informing the community how they will work together, how they will treat them, where they will go, and how they will survive.

Both Sa's and Ch'idzigyaak's resourcefulness patches their tribe's hunger, but it does not yet fix the broken relationships between the tribe and themselves. At this point in the story, the community's initial partaking of the women's food is a duct tape solution—things look better, but are not completely fixed. This awkward community meal is a "sticky," memorable one because the women's bodily rhetoric, or rather their chosen lack of "presence" makes it so (Heath and Heath 1). From my own modern Comanche perspective, Comanche community meals involve everyone eating together, followed by a formal thank you to and recognition of the family (families) who prepared the meal. In the two women's instances, their tribe is starving, so almost everyone is wondering from where all the food came so that they can thank whoever prepared it. But once word gets around that the two women whom they abandoned are alive, provided the food, and chose not to be present to eat with them, the community will ask

themselves “why.” Then they will remember how they abandoned them, how they seldom thought about them after they were left behind, how they did not appreciate them when they were around, how now they are only thinking about them because they need them, and how they are currently surviving because of them—and hopefully the community will learn a lesson.

The women’s acts of strategic absence coincide with their instructional dialogue and form accord, just as *yu*’s absence from *tsi* plus an action description in *yukwihtsi* suggests accord in characters’ dialogues and actions. The women said what they would do, and they did it. In place of the women’s attendance is the food and the community which causes them to notice a discord amongst the community itself, much like *yu* in *yukwiiyu* paired with action and dialogue suggests discord in characters’ actions and dialogues because the food is there, but the two women are not, yet traditionally they should be. The community recognizes a discord between their past memories of how the two elderly women spoke and acted in the past verses how they speak and act now, and they recognize a discord in how they treated and spoke of the elderly women in the past verses how they treat and speak of them now, which enables the community to realize that abandoning them was not justified, but a profound discord, because based on precolonial Athabascan culture, they did not abandon “weaklings,” but their strongest, most vital leaders, teaching them never to abandon anyone, no matter how “weak” they wrongfully assume someone to be.

The two women’s absences function like *yu*’s absence from the completed action verb marker, *nu*, in Riddles’s rations tale’s repetition, and from *tsi* plus an action description because *yu*’s absence calls the audience’s/reader’s attentions to the action, priming them to question why *yu* is missing, thereby encouraging the audience/reader to tap into a “constant state of

interpretation" (qtd. in Wieser 11). Likewise, the women's absences[87] cause their tribal community to question why they are missing, causing them to tap into a "constant state of interpretation" to learn a lesson (qtd. in Wieser 11). And the food's rhetoric functions like *yu*'s whisper vowel, allowing the women to be present without being present; the food is evidence of their survival, but the community has yet to see them, much like *yuhu*'s ability to be visible and invisible in a braid. Their food also expresses an effortlessness because the community sees the final product of the food and clothes, but only the readers know how much effort the two women put into hunting for their food and sewing their clothes, and *how* they did it despite their hardship. And the women's choices to aid their tribe, but to keep their distance, sends the message that they are interested in forming accord, but they remember the discord that surrounds the tribe's history, the day they abandoned their elders. Lastly, the *yu*-esqueness in this Athabascan oral tale that pertains to survival skills, such as cooking, hunting, sewing clothes, and making tools in the wilderness is further evidence that *yu* crosses cultural boundaries, artforms, and genre.

Later the women express that they wish to visit with their fellow community members, and they invite them to come and visit them at their home. Now that the community realizes that it is they who do not know how to survive and not the women, they have a newly found respect for them:

> Now, an unspoken understanding existed between them, and The People found themselves seeking out the company of the two women for advice and to learn new

[87] Kavanagh states that key "periods" in Comanche history pertaining to colonization, "were significant events that marked changes in the resource bases of Comanche politics and thus relate to the presence or absence of resources" (*Comanche Political . . .* 22-23). These notions of "presence and absence of resources" has almost always been rhetorical in Comanche culture.

> things. Now they realized that because the two women had lived so long, surely they knew a lot more than The People had believed. Visitors came and went daily from the women's camp. (Wallis 128)

This "unspoken" understanding that is evident amongst the community is *yu*-esque because it is visible, yet invisible and audible, yet inaudible. Like *yu*'s ability to serve multiple grammar roles, the two women have taken on yet another role, that of being teachers, which implies the heuristic nature in the braid metaphor where braiders braid to pay their skills forward to future generations. Since the community acknowledges that they now realize their elders know more than they do, this acknowledgement conveys a plot twist and irony.

The daily trek that the women's visitors' take to visit them creates a *yu*-esque liminal discourse space—a place that is caught between two different discourse spaces, the two women's camp and the tribe's main camp, both of which are located near where their ancestors lived in prior generations. The community's trekking space is liminal because it is a go-between space that enables them to reflect on the women's teachings and for physical exercise, assisting the community in strengthening their physical and mental health so that they can one day be as wise and as strong as the two women are. Additionally, the two women's camp is itself a liminal discourse space because it is removed from their main tribe's space by the two women's choices. This passage still answers back to *hakaniyut<u>u</u>* ~~*unu*~~ *yuhaniyu*'s questions of process and movement, but in this instance, one sees glimpses of etiquette and aspiration as the community aspires to be like the two women; and the two women only engage with the community because they made the decision to invite the community to visit them, thereby teaching etiquette.

Near the story's end, Ch'idzigyaak reunites with her daughter, who allowed the tribe to abandon her, and peace is restored to their family and to the community. And Sa' and Ch'idzigyaak find new leadership roles:

> After everyone had been reunited, the chief appointed the two women to honorary positions within the band. At first, people wanted to help the old ones in any way they could, but the women would not allow too much assistance, for they enjoyed their newly found independence. So The People showed their respect for the two women by listening to what they had to say. (Wallis 135)

In *yu*-esque fashion, the two women help weave the community back together. They are now official leaders, like heads women or matriarchs. One cannot always predict when *yu* will substitute for *t~~u~~*, for *tsi* plus an action description, or when *yu* will introduce dialogue. Similar to the unpredictability of *yu*'s elusive nature, the women's refusal of the community's offer to help them could not be predicted by the audience. Just as one cannot always predict when *yu* will substitute for *t~~u~~*, for *tsi* plus an action description, or when *yu* will introduce dialogue. *Suniyut~~u~~*. Like the extra *yuhu* in a braid to patch errors, there is humor in the community's conflict of managing effort and effortlessness because they want to make a big effort to help the women, but the women will not allow it. The two women's choices to maintain their independence suggests a habitual action because they vow to never be helpless or abandoned again, which fosters their community's future traditions. Rather than becoming chiefs, breaking away from the tribe and starting their own band, or disowning their tribe for leaving them, these two women choose to restore community harmony in addition to keeping their independence. Their honorary leadership positions function similar to the rhetorical significance of adding a beaded hair tie to a braid to signify one's family lineage or social standing because this honorary title calls

audiences' attentions not only to how to respect their elders, but also how to be elders in the future by defining the "ideal" elders through Sa's and Ch'idzigyaak's character transformations as those who give almost everything to their communities, helping them even when they do not value their generosity or even them. Thus, Wallis effortlessly brings the novella to a close by having Ch'idzigyaak embrace her daughter who abandoned her, seamlessly bringing the last pieces of the community back together. This embrace between Ch'idzigyaak and her daughter is a *yu*-esque act of speech in which her actions send the message that she has forgiven her daughter because from a Comanche culture and language perspective, her actions are speech. Her family and her community have been restored. In *yu*-esque fashion, the two women's liminal camp space transforms from a place of remembering historical discord to a place of remembering community accord.

Chapter Three Conclusion

By considering the *yu*-esqueness within this collection of Indigenous writers' texts, one can see how *yu* blurs genre, while Indigenizing the critique of texts. I have looked at Indigenous futurism, mystery novels, and a folk tale as novella, and within each of these forms I have observed genre innovation. Erdrich's *Future Home of the Living God* combines epistolary and novel. Across Erdrich's, Hoklotubbe's, and Wallis's works, they each embrace different forms of Indigenous rhetoric—oral, written, material, or performative. *Yu*-esque moments are in each of these works. Their works are from various tribes, meaning *yu* can be intertribal, even though these authors write from tribal specific points of view (Wieser xii). These authors' styles of writing contain *yu*-esqueness, which contributes to their variety of writing techniques and bolsters their innovations of genre.

Hoklotubbe's *An American Café* and Erdrich's *Future Home of the Living God* have *yu*-esque moments in their depictions of characters' relationships, their interactions, their behavior, characters' role sharing, how characters navigate space, and how they respond to problem-solving. These authors Indigenize their narratives through double meanings, irony, and liminality, especially by depicting settings that are liminal. Therefore, *yu* can critique texts. As Wieser states, "Traditional ways of 'talking in a good way' utilize the same oral rhetorics and poetics that are still very much apparent in creative writing . . . they also can be useful for oral and written scholarly discourse in Native studies" (9). One can use *yu* to examine a text by considering how a text is written and why it is written that way, as well as by considering the culture that produced it. One can consider Indigenous authors' works were multiple meanings are conveyed, where meanings contradict, or have surprise twists, or where things are left spoken, yet unspoken. *Yu-esqueness* can be the subverting of imposed circumstances and the blurring of cultural boundaries. One can examine cross-cultural exchanges within authors' texts, be they material, verbal, spatial, identity-driven, or even characters' behaviors that constitute acts of speech.

One can examine a work's rhetorical *yu* where the text or artwork exudes effortlessness, where characters are tirelessly working toward an unrealized goal, where characters achieve a feat with ease (or at least create the "impression" of ease), or where the text has a comic, exaggerated effort or ease for effect. The use of strategic absence to reveal and conceal accord and discord is *yu*-esque. Texts' instances of indigen-uity in which resourcefulness is used to problem solve is *yu*-esque, as in duct-tape-like solutions, or the using of Indigenous ways of knowing to survive. Lastly, the "how," the woven-ness, and/or "layering" of the plot structure itself is an opportunity to consider *yu* (Powell, "A Basket is a Basket . . ." 471; Wieser 156). One

can gage a text's reciprocal or distributive action on a community scale for *yu*-esqueness. But *yu*-esqueness also occurs in crossing artforms, as in rope making or cooking, and it occurs in artforms that do not require braiding, thereby lending itself as an abstract concept of weaving or synthesis that can be used to send a message, create an impression, or invent something new. *Yu* furthers discourse about Indigenous rhetoric and promotes the creation of both Indigenous texts and Indigenous theoretical lenses to appreciate Indigenous ways of knowing, while encouraging the use of Indigenous language. Yes, not all tribes wear braids. Many tribes have unique, complex hairstyling techniques (some of which may be information not of the public domain). Not all Indigenous peoples choose to wear traditional hairstyles on a regular basis, or at all. I realize that not all Comanches wear braids and that there is far, far more to Indigeneity than hair, but braiding with *yuhu* is a metaphor for using Indigenous ways of knowing to establish our own Comanche and/or Indigenous literary standards of critiquing and creating Comanche and/or Indigenous texts (alphanumeric and nonalphanumeric) on our own terms. In our own terms. Of course, yes, not all tribes speak Comanche and share the same Comanche worldview or sociocultural philosophies. But Indigenous ways of knowing are in Comanche language, culture, hairstyling, narratives, philosophies, and other artforms that inform one another and at times have intertribal qualities, as well as universal human qualities, that lend themselves well for examining and creating Indigenous texts, artwork, and other innovations.

CONCLUSION

Introduction

Yu encourages one to consider how one stories or makes because it is this *how* of creating that is theory, structure, style, and rhetoric. How does one story, braid, or make "right" according to Comanche culture? There is no one specific braiding, storying, or creating process, and there is no one way to read an Indigenous narrative—there are many. Every braider's/storyer's/artist's braiding/storying/creating process is different and unique to him or her. The works of Powell, Wieser, and Cranford Gomez attest that the various weavings that constitute one's work are just as telling as the text itself; it helps constitute the text's meaning. Powell metaphorically shows how she examines Indigenous rhetorics by bringing the reader along in her basket weaving process, teaching Indigenous rhetoric within Indigenous ways of knowing in addition to retelling the history of the field of Indigenous rhetoric ("A Basket is a Basket . . ." 471). She states, "A basket is a basket because of how it's made, how it means. Like story, like poems, like novels, like legal briefs, like films, like songs, like dances, like paintings, like sculptures, like moccasins, like drums, like gardens, making one is an act of Native rhetorical practice" ("A Basket is a Basket Because . . ." 483). Wieser's discussion of layered meanings identifies the many ways that Indigenous leaders convey meaning through various rhetorical methods such as, text-based, material, kinesthetic, and she, herself, takes a layered approach to show how this reasoning occurs through combinations of modern literature, oratory, personal story, and history (4). And Cranford-Gomez makes the basket weaving process visible by examining how the physical composition of Louisiana Creole and Indigenous baskets enhance understandings of identity, "community," "history," and "geography" (95). These are *how*. It is my hope that in some small way that my examination of *yu* contributes to understanding one of the countless ways that

human meaning making occurs, and my hope is that my study will somehow inspire future scholars, artists, and innovators to use *yu* creatively to examine texts, alphanumeric and nonalphanumeric, and to make.

When I was growing up, I heard elders say the words, *hakani*, *ʉnʉ*, *hani*, and *haniyu*. I also heard elders say "yukarʉ," "sit down," "niyukarʉ," "be quiet." But my Comanche dictionary introduced me to the prefix, *yu-*, meaning "do right" (*Taa Nʉmʉ Tekwapʉ̲ʔha Tʉboopʉ̲* 86). And a Comanche language class around 2007 introduced me to the phrases, "Hina ʉnʉ haniiyu. . . What are you doing?" and "Ʉnʉ hina haniʔyu . . . What are you doing?" (C*onversational Phrases*). These two phrases are in adverb-subject-verb and subject-adverb-verb form. A similar form is echoed by some of Lucille McClung's question patterns in the UCLA Phonetics Lab's audio recordings, in which she states, "What are you doing? . . . Hina ʉnʉ haniiyu? . . . What is he doing? . . . Hina surha haniiyu? . . . What is the woman doing? . . . Hina urʉ waʔipʉ haniiyu" ("Comanche Audio . . . 11" 00:03:05-00:03:14, 00:03:23-00:03:31, 00:03:39-00:03:50). Each of these questions follows an adverb-subject-verb form. Likewise, Karty uses the same phrase in "Eka̲sahpana Ʉ Kawosa Kaabekanu̲," a tale of how a soldier tricks Coyote, in which the soldier states, "'Hina ʉnʉ haniʔyu?'" (18, line 9). McClung's recordings also acknowledge the fluidity in Comanche question structure by providing two alternative structures for asking "How do you feel?": "Hakai ʉnʉ nʉʉsuka?" and "Ʉnha hakai nʉʉsuka?" ("Comanche Audio . . . 13" 00:00:02-00:00:10, 00:00:16-00:00:25). This variance shows both an adverb-subject-verb and a subject/adverb- adverb-verb form. And in the Comanche dictionary by Anderton, McClung, and Nahquaddy, the phrases, "Hakanai ʉnʉ kimaiyu . . . Where are you coming from? . . . Hina ʉnʉ punin̲ʉ̲ . . . What do you see/ what did you see?" maintain an adverb-subject-verb pattern (11-

12). In addition, a *Comanche Language #2 Leave Taking and Responses* worksheet from the Comanche Nation College in 2007 expresses "Hipe ʉnʉ miaʔyu . . . When are you going?"

Knowing these patterns assisted me in creating the adverb-subject-verb sentences, *hakaniyutʉ ʉnʉ haniyu* and *hakaniyutʉ ʉnʉ yuhaniyu*. I have never heard or read an elder say these exact phrases, but I created them by following the sentence patterns that elders used themselves in Charney's research quotes, my Comanche Nation college conversational worksheets, McClung's recordings, Riddles's narrative dialogue, the dictionary by Anderton, McClung, and Nahquaddy, by taking Comanche language classes at various points in my lifetime, and my experience of growing up listening to my elders speak and sing Comanche in my Comanche community. I have woven Comanche narrative, Comanche history, Comanche culture, Comanche ontology, Comanche rhetoric, Comanche values, Comanche sociocultural philosophy or ways of knowing, and the linguistic studies of Comanche like a braid throughout this dissertation to show how these understandings merge together, assisting one in creating new sentences and words based on Comanche grammar. Though I am coining this sentence, the sociocultural philosophy already exists within the Comanche grammar, etymology, and usage of *yu*, as well as in Comanche culture itself. My rhetorical *yu* lens is also based on patterns that I noticed in Riddles's, Karty's, and McClung's Comanche stories that indicate relationships between *yu* and overall narrative functioning that correlate with the Comanche tradition of braiding hair, a practice that gives insight into Comanche language usage, especially for storying, and that expresses rhetorical meaning.

I created a new word, *yuhaniyu,* by taking two preexisting words, *yu* and *haniyu*, and fusing them together, as well as by pulling from my understanding of *hinʉ ʉnʉ haniyu*, which is in adverb-subject-verb form. I have neither heard, nor read work by an elder who used the exact

word, *yuhaniyu*. But, throughout my research, I have found many Comanche words that begin with *yu* besides, *yukarʉ* (prefix-verb, *do right-sit*), that attach *yu* to verbs and nouns, just as I attached *yu* to the verb, *haniyu* (doing/making/fixing/repairing/making in the abstract). *Yunʉmi* is comprised of *yu-numi*, *do right-us*, to express "behave" in prefix-noun form (*Taa Nʉmʉ Tekwapʉ̲ʔha Tʉboopʉ̲* 35, 87). *Yuʔa kwʉ̲suʔu* is comprised of *yu* and *kwasu* to express *warm coat*, parsing out as *do right/warm/coat/shirt/dress* or *animal fat/warm/coat/shirt/dress* (as historic Comanches obtained clothing from animal hides to keep themselves warm just as some animals need to grow thick fur and fat to stay warm in winter) in prefix-noun form (*Taa Nʉmʉ Tekwapʉ̲ʔha Tʉboopʉ̲* 103, 112, 86, 87). The word for *stuck in the mud*, *yubutsʉhkatʉ* is formed from attaching *yu* to the verb, *tsʉhkatʉ̲*, meaning "stuck down in something" (*Taa Nʉmʉ Tekwapʉ̲ʔha Tʉboopʉ̲* 86, 161).

Then, I incorporated my understandings of *hakaniyutʉ̲*'s functions in Charney's example sentences of "Hakaniyutʉ̲ ʉnʉ sinniku nʉminiʔatsiʔiyu . . . Why are you telling us to do this? (i.e., why are you telling us to do it this way?) . . . Hakaniyutʉ̲ ʉnnʉ sunniku nʉmi tʉʔahwekʉvʉnni [tʉʔahwekʉpʉnni/tʉʔahwekʉbʉnni] . . . Why are you telling us (to do it that way)? . . . Hakaniyutʉ̲ surʉ kimaiyu . . . Why is she coming?" (171, 216). Despite some variance, each of these sentences follow an adverb-subject-verb pattern, leading with *hakaniyutʉ̲* at the front of the sentence. Lastly, I referred to Riddles's hackberries tale, in which she describes the Comanche man's question of, "Hakaniʔyutʉ̲ ʉnʉ sinihku tai hanitʉnʉ̲? . . . Why are you having us to do this like this?'" which also follows this same structure (line 25).

I am not the first Comanche to make up a word. Some of the most well-known word inventors were the World War II Comanche Code Talkers, and they created many words that assisted the United States and Allies in winning the war. For example, prior to WWII, the

Comanche language did not have a word to describe *tank*, until the Comanche Code Talkers used the word *turtle, wakaree,* to describe *tank* "because it had a hard shell like a turtle" (*Taa N~~ʉ~~m~~ʉ~~ Tekwap~~ʉ~~ʔha T~~ʉ~~boop~~ʉ~~* 163). According to the PBS's *Back in Time* episode, "Talking Leaves" about the history of the Cherokee Syllabary, "Four times a year, a select group meets to invent new words in Cherokee to describe the modern world" called "The Cherokee Language Consortium" comprised of fluent Cherokee speakers ("Talking Leaves" 00:16:45-00:17:56). In this episode, a Cherokee elder is shown discussing with a group of Cherokee speakers and behind him is a white board with the term *physics* and a Cherokee word written beside it ("Talking Leaves" 00:16:45-00:17:56). A Cherokee elder, Anna Sixkiller, who translates news articles into the Cherokee Syllabary for the *Cherokee Phoenix* newspaper, translates the formation of the Cherokee word for *gravity* and explains that it means "it's pulling. Something from here [she points down toward her desk, as though she is pointing at the ground] is pulling you down so you won't be floating out in the air" ("Talking Leaves" 00:17:37-00:17:55). Indigenous peoples using their Indigenous languages to create new words to describe concepts is not new, but it is so vital to keeping a language alive.

I realize that the Comanche Code Talkers were warriors, which I greatly respect, and that they were elders when they revealed some of the words that they used during their time as Code Talkers, but they were young men when they came up with these words. Some of them were in their early 20s, the age of my freshman and sophomore undergraduate students, which is eleven years younger than I am now. I have not served in the military. I may not be an elder or a cultural authority, but I do have cultural credibility. I was raised in my Comanche community of Lawton, Oklahoma, and I frequently spent many weekends in other Comanche communities in Apache, Cache, Indiahoma, Walters, Geronimo, Anadarko, Verden, and occasionally Carnegie,

Oklahoma which is also a predominately Kiowa community. I am the former Comanche Nation Princess (2011-2012) and the former Comanche Indian Veterans Association Princess (2004-2011), and in these roles in which I served my Comanche communities as a goodwill ambassador from the time I was 12 years old until I was 20, I dressed in traditional Comanche regalia, danced at powwows, sang Comanche hymns, sang the U.S. National Anthem, and spoke Comanche language. Part of my regalia was wearing my hair in braids, and my mother and I would load my hair down in hairspray, hair pins, and ribbon to keep it in place while I danced at powwows, which I did not know until now coincided with how my traditional Comanche ancestors would care for their hair, though altered to suit the times. I may have been the only Comanche Princess at that time whose mother loaded her hair in hairspray, but it was part of my lived experience as a young Comanche woman, part of my ontology, for participating in my Comanche culture.

We, as Comanche speakers, can do the best that we can to follow the language patterns that our elders have so graciously and generously provided us, but at some point, we must do the best with the words and cultural understanding that we have and improvise, with an informed improvisation, because some day we will be the elders. Once we learn our elders' frameworks and language rules, we are better prepared to both maintain cultural traditions and practice informed improvisation for the future, keeping the language and culture alive for future generations. Languages that are living are supposed to grow and change a little. Today's English is so different from the 1500s English in England, and it was the vernacular of that time. Comanche belongs with the people. As long as one is being ethical, respectful, and "truthful," then one is speaking Comanche "right," because at least trying is better than not trying at all. I have been taught that there are many modern Englishes and that they are all intelligent, vital, legitimate, and welcome in the classroom and in academic writing. I have been taught that an

effective English professor embraces all the diverse Englishes and languages that students use, and I think the same can be said of Comanche language, that one must embrace all the diverse Comanche languages that exist. Yes, one needs to learn Comanche elders' rules for sentence structure to maintain the language, but once one learns these patterns, then one can be better prepared to be creative and express one's own thoughts. For instance, once one learns the basic sentence, "I see a dog . . . sariiʔa nʉ puni," then one can express "tenahpʉʔa nʉ puni . . . I see a man . . . nabukuwaaʔa nʉ puni . . . I see a car" (Anderton, McClung, and Nahquaddy 56). Language was meant to be used generatively. This is what keeps a language living. We need both grammar rules and creativity. Again, Comanche language belongs to all the Comanche people.

The 2003 Comanche dictionary, *Taa Nʉmʉ Tekwapʉʔha Tʉboopʉ*, does not have an entry for *email* or *text message*, "new" words in the English language, that someone "made up" to describe an invention, which are comprised of other words from previous Euro American cultural concepts of *electricity, post mail, telegraph, written text, textiles,* and *message*. What are *ayyye, buh, gaw, innit,* and *high yigh,* but Indigenized English vernacular that someone(s) who are Indigenous so brilliantly made up? Betsy Greer coined the phrase *craftivism* from "craft" and "activism," as well as from sociocultural, political, artistic, and rhetorical phenomena (175). Heath's and Heath's term *sticky* is based on educational psychology, research-based teaching methods, social learning occurrences in classrooms, colloquialism, and metaphor. *Yuhaniyu* is based on Comanche linguistic, historical, social, and cultural phenomenon that exists in Comanche communities.

Yes, Comanche language has a declarative sentence structure of subject-object-verb, but as one can observe throughout this study and throughout Charney's research, this pattern varies.

While approaching learning a language from a subject-verb-direct object perspective can be effective, it is not the only method for approaching learning Comanche language. Comanche language has structure, but it also has fluidity, just like a braid bound with *yuhu*, similar to many human languages.

Woven-ness (*kwisikatu*) exists within the Comanche language. The sentence, "uhimakwai u . . . He took some of it" is an example (Charney 133). This sentence attaches *u* (it) to *himakwai* (took some), but it can also be written as *u himakwai u*. Another instance is "uriwekikwatuʔi nuu . . . I'm going to look for them" (Charney 133). This sentence attaches *utii* [or *urii*] (them) to *wekikwatuʔi* (going to look for motioning around, random), but it could be written as *utii* [or *urii*] *wekikwatuʔi nuu* (Charney 133). It is not just *yu* that is woven.

Fluidity is within the Comanche language. Comanche can follow a subject-object-verb order; "Keenu u supanaʔitu . . . I don't know . . . " (Anderton, McClung, and Nahquaddy 61). Sentences can follow an object-subject-verb order; "Tuboopuha nu tuniharu . . . I'm reading a book" (Anderton, McClung, Nahquaddy 76). Sentences can be in object-verb-subject order; "nu puni u . . . He sees me" (Anderton, McClung, Nahquaddy 56). Or *u kamakutu nu*, I love you, a new construction, which is written in object-verb-subject order as *you love I*. Sometimes, Comanche sentences follow a logic that is all their own, such as, "Nu hiimataka nu numu tekwaʔet . . . I know just a little Comanche," which, depending on how one interprets the sentence, appears in subject/first person possessive pronoun-adverb-subject/first person possessive pronoun-adjective-object/verb form (*Conversational Phrases*). These instances reflect the holistic reasoning within Comanche language.

There is woven-ness in more of the Comanche language besides *yu*'s ability to be present at the front, middle, and back of a phrase or word. In "comparative" sentences "an individual or

group of individuals is said to possess a quality in equal measure with another individual or group" and the pairings of "*-wai*," an "adverbial, meaning 'like'" and "*-ku*," meaning "there, at," correlate with *tsa*, which frequently functions as *is/are* (Charney 197). As a result, one has the following comparative sentence: "N**ʉ**vet**ʉ**n**ʉ**kw**ʉ**̲**tsa** [n**ʉ**pet**ʉ**n**ʉ**kw**ʉ**̲**tsa] **ʉ**pet**ʉ**n**ʉ**h**ʉ***waihku* **ʉ**ʔ**ʉ**r**ʉ**n**ʉ**kw**ʉ**̲** . . . My two daughters are as good as your two daughters" (Charney 197). *Tsa* and *waihku* weave together to create meaning. In "expectative" sentences, "*k**ʉ**kat**ʉ*** expresses the speaker's expectations about the outcome of the prediction. It is always the first element of the sentence," and it works with the verb's "prefinal aspect marker *-hu*=(2)," which signals that "the outcome of the event usually fails to meet the expressed expectation" (Charney 185). For instance, "**K**ʉ***kar**ʉ*** [k**ʉ**kat**ʉ**] n**ʉʉ** sook**ʉ̲**niku miʔa**hu**tuʔi . . . I thought I was going to Lawton (but probably didn't)" (Charney 186). *K**ʉ**kat**ʉ*** weaves with *hu*, who is stuck to the verb, to indicate whether or not a goal was achieved. And complex sentences with "switch references," create a woven, bracketed structure by conveying that two subjects in a sentence's independent and dependent clauses are acting "simultaneous[ly]," as in "**[**I **[**during=him=walking around**]** eat**]** . . . **[**N**ʉ**se **[**mavohiyanoko**]** t**ʉ**k**ʉ**v**ʉ**nni**]** . . . I was eating when he was walking along" (Charney 231-232). This same sentence can also be written as "**[**I eat **[**during=him=walking=around**]]** . . . **[**N**ʉ**se t**ʉ**k**ʉ**v**ʉ**nni **[**ovohiyanoko**]]** . . . I was eating when he was walking along" (Charney 231-232). In other words, this sentence can be parsed out as **[***n**ʉ**se* **[***mapohiyanoku***]** *t**ʉ**k**ʉ**b**ʉ**nni***]**, creating the image of a single braid link that contains a linear section of hair that is suddenly interrupted by another layering of hair across its middle, or as **[***N**ʉ**se t**ʉ**k**ʉ**b**ʉ**nni* **[***opohiyanoku***]]**, creating the image of two links in a braid that are connected in succession.

There is woven-ness in the construction of Comanche stories themselves. "*T**ʉ**a*" indicates "the onset of narrative," while "*-k**ʉ***," signals "narrative past" and "marks narrative that lies

outside the speaker's personal knowledge—both folktales and events that the speaker learned of from others" (Charney 186, 188). For example, in Riddles's tale of the painted grasshopper, *tʉa* works with *-kʉ* in the first two words of the tale's beginning: "Soobeʔsʉ**kʉ**tsa **rʉa** [**tʉa**] ahtakii tʉmʉʉmiʔanu . . . **Long ago, it is said** that a grasshopper went shopping" (line 1). Every line that follows *tʉa* (sometimes written as *rʉa*) contains *-kʉ* to answer back to *tʉa*:

> U piaʔ**kʉ**se, "**Tʉa** ʉnʉ oʔana manakwʉ miasuwaituʔi," me u niikwiiyu . . . **His mother said** to him, "**It is said** that you want to be going someplace" . . . Sitʉ**kʉ**se ahtakii, "Natsatsa taa nomiaʔeku uʔana esitsʉnʉʔikatʉ tahʉ naʔnʉmʉnʉʉkabaiki nʉ yʉtsʉmiaʔeeku." . . . **This one** [grey] grasshopper said, "No matter, we will move away somewhere; I appear grey when I fly amongst our relatives." Sitʉ**kʉ**se siʔanetʉ yʉtsʉhkwa tʉmʉʉmiʔatsi . . . **This one** [grey grasshopper] flew off somewhere to shop. (lines 3-5)

Each line that contains *-kʉ* connects back to *tʉa*, weaving all the lines together like separate sections of hair woven into a braid that all connect back to the wearer's head.

If I can create this new phrase, *hakaniyutʉ ʉnʉ yuhaniyu*, then other Indigenous writers can, too. *Hakaniyutʉ ʉnʉ yuhaniyu*, "Why are you making right?" demonstrates *yu*'s ability to be woven throughout a phrase like *yuhu* is incorporated throughout a braid to reinforce the braid's structure. I am coining *hakaniyutʉ ʉnʉ yuhaniyu* to describe the linguistic phenomena of woven-ness and fluidity, that is braid-like, that already exists both in the Comanche language and in basic Comanche braiding techniques that are rooted in early traditional braiding practices, and my sentence describes an approach for teaching and learning the Comanche language, as well as an approach for using the Comanche language as a rhetorical lens and as a tool for invention. If we, as Comanche people, can make new sentences, new words, from the Comanche language,

then we can create new ideas and make something new, while preserving our Comanche language for generations. There are so many possibilities.

Yu as a Tool of Invention

In this section, I am listing "food" for thought for creating with *yu*, and the reader is welcome to use, throw out, interpret, or combine any of these suggestions for creating with *yu* however one sees fit. *Yu*'s grammar roles, *yu*'s narrative relationship, the physical properties of *yuhu*, sociocultural philosophies behind *hakaniyut~~u~~ ~~unu~~ haniyu/yuhaniyu*, and characteristics of *suniyut~~u~~* and *kwisikat~~u~~* (braid metaphor or woven-ness) can be transferred beyond the creating of alphanumeric texts to almost any artform. One does not have to make a braid or rope to express rhetorical *yu*; one can use braidlike synthesis to create, and one can strategically use contradiction to give insight. For instance, Weckeah describes how her elders made a baby swing by using both a braid-like structure and synthesis process; she includes a drawing of the baby swing that is attached to two trees similar to a hammock. "I was told that long ago tanned hide with hair left on was used instead of a blanket," she said, "and the rope was made from four or sometimes eight strands of braided buckskin" (107). One does not have to make a rope with a braid to create something, but one can take a resourceful approach that is *yu*-esque in a similar manner to how the Comanches made baby swings by using a braid-like synthesis of ideas that takes various materials and one's surroundings.

Yu's ability to link series of movements, to compact sensory information, to be audible, yet inaudible, visible, yet invisible, and to relay historical accord and discord, makes it suitable for conceptualizing theatre, filmmaking, or other digital media. For example, Danis Goulet (Cree-Metis) directed and wrote the 2021 film, *Night Raiders*, and many of the scenes that she

filmed are *yu*-esque in that her filming technique moves the camera along with the actor in her/his motion in a single, progressive, sweeping motion that brings the viewer along with the actor in the process of her/his action. One scene that captures this progressive *yu* movement well is when the protagonist, Niska, is riding her bike and the camera's tracking shot runs parallel with the bike, simultaneously moving with her in the angle and direction that she is peddling (Goulet 00:30:05-00:30:09). In another *yu*-esque instance, when Niska turns in her daughter to the authorities, she walks away to a side ally to cry under a scaffold, and with each crushing step that she takes away from her daughter, she caves in further and bends closer to the ground until she is in almost a fetal position crying, and the camera sways and lowers with her as she moves; when she finally hangs her head, closes her eyes, and covers her face to cry harder, the camera closes in on her face and goes black, like closing its eyes, too (Goulet 00:27:35-00:28:11). How the camera moves with Niska, moves the audience along with her in her journey, thereby moving the audience's emotions. Goulet also focuses on how Niska moves from location to location, which is very *yu*, because she is not just moving to a location, she is crossing legal territory boundaries which weigh heavily on both her and her child's well-being. Prior to joining their Cree tribe for survival, Niska and her daughter occupy a *yu*-space that is in between the boundaries of the city and the Cree tribe's encampment where they both use Indigenous ways of knowing, the Cree language, and urban cultural elements to navigate space. Another *yu*-esque air of Goulet's film is that much of the dialogue is in the Cree language with English subtitles.

Yu's blending together of diverse elements and seamlessly weaving them together coheres with skills in culinary arts. Chef David Wolman (Xaxli'p First Nation) merges Indigenous and European cooking techniques, resulting in Indigenous Fusion cuisine. He defines "Indigenous Fusion" cuisine as "taking the essence of indigenous ingredients and putting it under

the spotlight. I blend the traditional with modern tastes and ingredients that are generally available in stores these days" (Wolfman and Finn 4). In his cookbook, *Cooking with the Wolfman—Indigenous Fusion*, he gives his recipe for "Grilled Deer Rack with Plum Shallot Compote" that merges the Indigenous ingredients of "deer," "juniper berries," "mint," "plums," and "shallots," with non-Indigenous "bread crumbs," "Dijon mustard," and "Worcester sauce" (Wolfman and Finn 148-149). His cooking process seamlessly weaves Indigenous-rooted cooking processes with modern culinary skills, such as "pat[ting] dry the meat with [a] paper towel . . . Brush[ing the] meat with the mustard . . . crush[ing] the juniper berries in a mortar and pestle. Combin[ing] juniper berries with remaining ingredients in a shallow nonreactive dish (glass, ceramic, or stainless steel)" and grilling (Wolfman and Finn 148). But *how* he shares his recipe for "Lemony Rabbit Succotash" is just as interesting as the recipe itself (Wolfman and Finn 106). He acknowledges how this recipe merges influences from First Nations, Metis, European, Narragansett, American Indian, and American influences (Wolfman and Finn 106). He surrounds the telling of this recipe with history, story, and song. His wife, Marlene Finn introduces this dish with the lyrics that she wrote about her grandparents entitled, "The Metis Song," and then Wolfman closes the recipe's introduction with a brief anecdote about his nephew who was inspired to learn about trapping animal game from this dish (106). The framing of this recipe through story and song implies that, for Wolfman and Finn, this recipe is influenced by these artforms and history as much as the meal has influenced the history and artforms. Wolfman explains how this meal symbolizes aspects of Metis history because they were the "product of the partnerships that formed between the European explorers and the First Nations, [and] made a living as the go-betweens, or trade interpreters" (Wolfman and Finn 106). Some of this recipe's ingredients with Indigenous roots are "lima beans, "corn," "tomato," and

"rabbit" (Wolfman and Finn 106). He marinates the rabbit in various seasonings and oil in the refrigerator for "four hours (preferably overnight), covered" (Wolfman and Finn 106). His process of marinading the rabbit combines modern cooking methods with roots in Indigenous cooking practices of fermenting foods in seasonings and oils. He then uses a Dutch oven to roast the covered rabbit with bacon (Wolfman and Finn 106-107). Though he uses some cooking techniques from Euro American cuisine, his method harkens back to Indigenous practices of boiling, roasting, and grilling meats. In *yu*-esque fashion, these ingredients and processes merge seamlessly, diffusing across cultural boundaries, while revealing yet concealing their historical roots through the combinations of fortes and pianissimos of flavor that intermingle to create a great meal.

Yu's liminality, elusiveness, transitory states, fluidity, seamlessness, effortlessness, resonance, ability to diffuse across perceived cultural "boundaries," as well as its "because/just is" mentality, lends itself well for painting, sculpture, street art, fashion, and other art forms. Considering *yu*'s connections with the concept of continuous "interpretive motion" (qtd. in Wieser 11), *yu* assists artforms in conveying movement and meaning by compacting images and motions and by layering multiple meanings. *Yu* assists in creating experiential art, such as gallery installations, that are loaded in sensory details that enhance one's experience. One can create in ways that enable viewers/readers to become part of the art, to finish it, to change it in some way. Maybe, viewers can leave their impression on the work as much as it makes an impression on them.

The Indigenous ways of knowing surrounding *yu* can also be woven into works. One can create a work that "sticks" to, as Heath and Heath say, or "resonates" with the audience in a way that enables them to take a piece of the work with them or to pass something of the work on to

someone else. *Yu*'s affinity for crossing boundaries is another concept to be explored through one's creative process. Works can blur audience's perceptions of two or more similar or unlike things, or *yu* can infuse transparency, fluidity, the morphing of states, or even notions of being in-between various states. One can additionally express any of the abstract concepts surrounding *suniyut~~u~~* and the many meanings of Heath's and Heath's stickiness.

Yu is an opportunity to provide counter narrative or to express survival instructions in novel ways, and to create both holistically and collaboratively. *Yu* aids in sending rhetorical messages to say something that is important to the artist. *Yu* embraces subjectivity, as well as any "mistakes" in a works composition. *Yu*-esqueness emits effortlessness, effort, a combination of the two with a serious or humorous take on the subjects. One can incorporate layers of context, such as kinship, immediate environment, community, wider environment, historical contexts, and consider how one's process and materials connect with resourcefulness, sustainability, or other values indicative of precolonial or paracolonial Indigenous cultures; one can determine how one's work encourages indigen-uity/ingenuity.

The Comanche language, likewise, presents possibilities for continuing to create with the language. For scholars, artists, and speakers of the Comanche language, I encourage you to express the language to family, friends, and fellow humans in general. To quote Powell's "A Basket is a Basket Because . . ." "This story is yours now. Do with it what you will. Teach about it. Write about it. Blog about it. Forget about it. But don't say you would have done any of that differently if only you'd heard this story. You've heard it now" (483). I would love for people to write books, movies, TV, YouTube videos, blogs, theatre, and more entirely in the Comanche language for the community to share and enjoy. Teach how to speak Comanche if you already

know it. If you have an opportunity to take Comanche language classes, seize the opportunity to learn. Please pass on the language.

Applications for Indigenous Rhetorics

Examining both Comanche stories and non-Comanche Indigenous texts through the metaphor of oiling and braiding hair helps one understand the culture and philosophy behind both Comanche women's stories and Indigenous texts. We have our own frameworks for artifice in the Comanche culture, language, and materials we make, and so do other Indigenous nations. These frameworks can be used to critique and make texts instead of imposing a non-Indigenous lens. Placing braiding in conversation with writing enables one to consider process, audience, kinship, and community care behind a "text" (alphanumeric or nonalphanumeric). Both the braiding and storying process overlap, and both storying and braiding combine fluidity, unity, and layers of history to make. Thus, *hakaniyut~~u~~ ~~unu~~ yuhaniyu* questions how Comanche women's stories and non-Comanche Indigenous stories create their own criteria for how to story "right."

Again, there is not just one way to story, but there are Comanche cultural values that inform the creative process, similarly to the storying examples set by Riddles, McClung, and Karty. One needs to speak "truthfully" or in a fictional story, with at least "ethical" intentions. As a speaker, one's words and actions should be equivalent (Wieser 107). The narrative should respectfully and accurately reflect the community and enable the community to speak for themselves and portray themselves how they want to be perceived, which assists in carrying on the community's "continuum" of stories (Powell, "Word by Word . . ." 135). One should story with the aim to share knowledge that can be passed down to future generations. The tale one

tells, how, when, where, to whom, and by what means is for one to determine for oneself with community respect in mind (as not all tribal knowledge is of the public domain). Of course, one should respect an individual if he or she does not want to be involved in the tale or does not want to share his or her story. Be supportive of fellow storytellers, even if their story differs from one's own, respect others' "truths," and embrace newer modes of storying. These criteria are implied from Comanche women's stories, but they are applicable to other Indigenous storying, too.

Considering story elements that are Comanche culture specific, "confluence" is a hallmark of Comanche culture (Gunn Allen 181). The blurring of speaker/audience roles is also an aspect of Comanche storying, too. Comanche language can be used to further reinforce Comanche women's notions of the story process, thereby further legitimating Comanche women's standards of artifice, storytelling, and rhetoric that already exist culturally, philosophically, and linguistically in modern Comanche societies.

Moreover, I would like to share ways in which this study might be used from both Comanche-specific rhetorics and the field of Indigenous rhetorics itself. When examining Indigenous words, consider the etymology and breaking words down to their smallest particles to find additional meanings. One should consider multiple meanings surrounding a given term. Look for relationships across words through related words' etymologies, and ponder the precolonial and paracolonial cultural contexts surrounding these terms' denotations and connotations. There is a "hidden history" embedded in some Comanche words themselves, though not all. Considering the speakers' immediate storying environment, the period(s), the audience, kinship, the precolonial and paracolonial intended audience, the period of the speakers' elders, the geographic location of where the stories are from, and a speaker's nonverbal cues

reveal additional understanding into Indigenous discourse. Situating stories within a continuum across periods is beneficial because Comanche stories were meant to be spoken and then retold and changed across various periods like a time capsule that keeps shifting, deleting, recycling, adding, and recontextualizing materials.

Other aspects that are helpful for examining Indigenous texts is thinking about how modern community members of a specific tribe use a word in various situations and how they define it. Are there other terms that they use for the same meaning? How do the images, experiences, smells, sounds, motions, and other sensory information within a given word connect in ways indicative of the tribe's culture and life experiences? One may consider how a combination of ideas in a word would be pertinent to both precolonial and modern Indigenous cultures. Thinking about how a phrase, word, or particle functions at the sentence and narrative level gives insight into narrative relationships, and linking culture, values, and ways of knowing to grammar rules aids in conceptualizing how the language informs the culture and how the culture informs the language, just as some cultural material practices inform story, and story informs some cultural material practices.

One can further investigation by accounting for the difference in a language's spoken and written forms, including spelling variations, and any difference in dialect or interpretations of a term. When considering how a tribe's discourse is spoken verses written, thinking about possible actions, settings, and nonverbal cues that accompany the telling of the tale or the characters' dialogue within the narrative is meaningful.

One can consider connections across terms, grammar phenomena, and worldviews cross-culturally as Indigenous ways of knowing diffuse across intertribal territories at times. Accounting for the various methods of rhetorics that accompany a work is helpful. Noting where

a particle *is not* is just as important as where a particle *is* because it assists in finding how words or pairs of words function rhetorically. Wieser acknowledges how Booth Donohue notes that considering what related stories connect to a given story, but were strategically left out, is essential knowledge for interpreting Indigenous texts (Wieser 11).

Indigenous discourse may contain rhetorical tropes that are similar to the Greek and Roman tropes like slippery slope, repetition, turns, foreshadowing, anaphora, onomatopoeia, and others, and there are rhetorical tropes that are of a tribe's storying tradition that are specific to the one tribe or, as Wieser's book points out, are Intertribal. One may need to consider a story outside of notions of genre or outside of a single story because some Indigenous stories blur genre, are part of a continuous storying theme that spans many stories, or one story may have multiple mini stories within it. Examining how a text relates back to itself like a braid weaving back on itself gives insight or connecting various key points like links in a braid is another method for examining Indigenous texts. The reflecting on the possible heuristics within a story is significant. As one relates stories' messages to lessons relevant to precolonial, early reservation, and modern Indigenous life, one can reveal more layers of meaning.

Encouraging Indigenous language speakers to see worth in their Indigenous languages can inspire communities. One can participate in community involvement projects to collaborate with tribes on language projects of their own choosing, which assists in language revitalization.

Applications for the Rhetoric and Composition Classroom

Comanche women's teaching techniques through story inform modern teaching practices to foster inclusive teaching that weaves in Indigenous ways of knowing into course design. Comanche women's ways of knowing coincides with teaching that is student-driven, student

inquiry based, kinesthetic, visual, and process-oriented. These same aspects are in Comanche storying practices that encourage an open-storying form, audience agency, audience involvement, subjectivity, and a "constant state of interpret[ation]" (qtd. in Wieser 11). The modern composition classroom can incorporate some of these aspects by encouraging student reflection journals, by allowing students to write from the subjective in formal essays, and by letting students choose what they will write. These methods allow students to finish the lesson and to make of it "what [they] will" similar to how Comanche story allows the audience to finish the storying. The course design itself can allow students possible paths to course completion from which they can choose, for instance, allowing students to choose whether or not they will complete the class in two short essays and a presentation or one large essay due by the end of the course with a presentation. Having multiple options to complete the course will make the course more accessible to students who may be facing unforeseen circumstances that could hinder their paths to success. Thus, students will have more agency to choose the learning options that are best for them. In addition, instructors can bring in Indigenous works into class readings and encourage students to infuse their various languages into their English compositions with translations about the meanings.

Final Thoughts

What messages do Comanche storytellers hope future generations of listeners/readers will gain from their works? I can only speculate. Afterall, many of the tales are open for interpretation, but many of Riddles's, Karty's, and McClung's stories contain lessons regarding survival instructions for hunting, gathering, cooking, Comanche language, and Comanche culture. Some of the tales discuss how to treat one's fellow humans respectfully, how to work

with others, how to show generosity, community care, in addition to elements of humor and history. Many of the tales share Comanches' perspectives on the early reservation years. Such commentary embedded in the hidden meanings of Comanche words inform studies about the struggles of boarding school students who endured being told that their "truths" were fairy tales because they were "unwritten." Riddles's, Karty's, and McClung's stories imply that written and oral languages are tools to be used ethically, and that language is a means to maintain aspects of culture while navigating change on one's own terms because even when the Comanches' ancestors' cultures were wrongfully forced upon by European cultures, they still found ways to maintain their languages and identities that continue to persist generations later.

Comanche women's stories support positive Comanche role modeling and Comanche pride. Riddles, Karty, and McClung use storying to illustrate what they find beautiful about Comanche women and culture—how they told these tales in an every woman way, how they described the way characters carried themselves, how they spoke to and treated others, how they treated themselves. Several of their tales convey values that are very universal, such as food, family, home, travel, and clothing.

What I found most interesting was how studying Comanche language can contribute to the studying of human knowledge in general. I am fascinated by how Comanche language strategically compacts and organizes sensory details and connects word particles in ways that are beneficial to semantics, especially for organizing, storing, connecting, remembering, transmitting, and creating knowledge in non-text dependent ways, which is essential for transmitting stories through the oral tradition via memory. I am still pondering how various Comanche words convey experiential clues through their very sounds.

The modern Indigenous works that I have been lucky enough to read, to see, to hear, or to stumble upon by accident have made me optimistic for what will be made in the future.

STORY TWO

My third-grade teacher took our class on a field trip to the Great Plains Museum in Lawton, Oklahoma, to listen to a young Indigenous woman tell stories. I remember when our class arrived, the woman was already sitting on the floor with her legs tucked sideways underneath her. As we approached her, the hushed yellow glow of the museum lighting made it difficult to see her face. She was a large, beautiful woman with brown skin and long black hair that almost matched her black cardigan and pants. She welcomed us and asked our class to sit on either side of her and to form a circle with her. I do not recall her name, her tribe, or anything that she said in her introduction, except for when she asked, "And is anyone here Indian?"

I nearly rose to attention on my knees and raised my little light hand as fast and as straight and as high as I could. I was the only one who raised his or her hand, but that was not why my heartbeat began pounding in my chest and ears. The woman folded her lip inward and squinted her eyes to get a better a look at me in my knee-length blue jean shorts, T-shirt, and my poofy hair bangs with 1980s-styled side ponytail. I remember being acutely aware that my only features that "looked Indian" were my eyes, hair, and cheek bones because they were the same as my mother's features.

Keeping a neutral tone, she said, "And what tribe are you from?" In the minutest tilt of her head, I could detect that she was bracing herself for yet another "my great great grandmother was a Cherokee princess," response. I knew this look because I saw my mother take the same short huffy breath and tilt her chin in the same direction as this woman's chin when she suspected that someone was claiming an Indian identity about which they knew nothing.

I said, "I'm Comanche." Then my heart beat even faster because, thanks to my mother, I knew what the next age-old question would be: "Who are your folks?" I secretly hoped she

would not ask this question because as a third grader, I was terrible with remembering my great grandparents' names. *Do I tell her my grandma's before she was married name or her married last name? I don't know which name to give. Do I say them all? Remember . . . Remember . . . it starts with* . . . Her pupils slightly dilated. Looking back, I do not think she expected my response. She paused, her eyes swept across mine as she mulled something over. I stared at her, not hiding the excitement in my eyes. I wondered what she would say next. *Will she believe me? Demand to see written proof, or deny me? Maybe she will pass me by and change the subject and forget I said anything? Now, I've done it, opening my big mouth.*

But she cast her eyes downward, took a deep breath, tilting her head again, but in the opposite direction, smiled softly, and said, "Come here," waving me over with a single motion of her hand. She told me to sit down in front of her with my back to her, and she braided my hair. As she braided my hair into one, thick, single braid, she told the class a story. I have no idea what story she told, but I remember the soft alto tone of her voice. And I remember her sweet perfume. She was so careful not to pull my hair, and with every line she spoke, every plot progression, she would turn my hair and secure another link in my braid. By the time she had reached the end of my braid, the story had concluded.

"There you go," she said, securing my braid with the same hair tie that my mother had just wound around my side ponytail that morning, and she released my braid from her hand. I smiled, touched the back of my head, and went back to my seat in the circle of students surrounding her. When I returned to my seat, I inhaled a short, shallow breath, still surprised that someone had braided my hair in front of my entire class, and for a second, I had to pause and ask myself if it all *really* happened. If someone had told me that morning when my mother was

meticulously curling my round bangs that in three hours my hair was going to be restyled into a braid, I wouldn't have believed them.

This Indigenous storyteller proceeded to tell the class another story —— I don't remember this story either. But I remember how she storied. The hushed intensity of her voice; how she spoke, not like she was reaching out to us, not aiming at us with her voice, but like she was inviting us into her home and telling us a secret over a warm bowl of soup. I remember feeling care. I recall the subtle changes in the angles of her eyes and the corners of her mouth, and the tiniest chuckle of her voice could resonate the profoundest of emotions, setting the tone of the stories. All of us leaned in close to try and hear every word.

I remember wondering why did this woman want to braid my hair? What was the point of that? It was not until a couple years later when my mother was working as a tutor for Indigenous students in the public schools that I realized that lady braided my hair for the same reasons that my mother went to great lengths to share bits of Comanche and Kiowa culture and language with her students—because of the history of assimilation in boarding schools that sought to erase Indigenous languages, stories, ways of knowing, identities, and the very hair on their heads. I think she was nice to me because she knew, like my mother knew, how the education systems have a history of ignoring Indigenous story traditions and are too quick to mislabel Indigenous students as "unteachable." By ignoring the rich knowledge present in Indigenous cultures, school systems send the message to Indigenous students that they are uninteresting, unimportant, and nonexistent. So many Indigenous students cannot see their cultures reflected in education curriculum, let alone mainstream media. These reasons were why my mother worked so hard to find books about Indigenous youth to give to her students, and these reasons were why that Indigenous woman braided my hair. Because when Indigenous students open a book or stare at a

TV screen and see no one who looks like them there, it is like looking into a mirror and seeing nothing. My mother and that Indigenous storyteller did not want one more Indigenous student to feel invisible. I think they wanted Indigenous children to see themselves in story and in education and to learn in a way that reaches them where they are, to feel community and care, to feel beautiful.

When our class returned to school, I wanted to see my hair, so I looked into the mirror in the back of our classroom above the sink where we washed our hands before lunch. My mother's high standards for braids had already formed my notions of what "a braid should be." I realized that I did not have a tight, sleek braid, but a round poof of curly bangs at the top of my head that my mother teased and sprayed with hairspray before sending me to school that morning and a single, messy braid. To me, these two different hairstyles were mixed matched because, to my third-grade-self, poofy bangs and a side ponytail were for school and two tight braids were for special occasions with my Comanche relatives.

I asked my third-grade teacher, "Does my hair look right?" I felt like I had the head of a poodle and the tail of a Labrador retriever.

"Yes, yes your hair looks fine," she said.

I rushed over to the mirror again. All I could think about was that braids are supposed to look sleek and tight.

If ever anyone besides my mother braided my hair, she would say, "It's gotta be tight." If my hair was not tight, then she would add more water and more hairspray. I could already imagine her reaction if she saw my hair, "What happened to your hair?" she would say.

So, I ran to the sink, cupped my hand and filled it full of cold water, and I splashed it over the top of my head, flattening the puffball that was my bangs. But, instead of fixing my hair, I made it worse. I ended up looking like a soggy mop or a poodle that was left out in the rain.

"Oh, you messed it up," my teacher said, "It looked fine."

I said, "No. It didn't look *right*."

APPENDIX

The Grammar of Hakaniyut~~ʉ~~ ~~Unʉ~~ Haniyu

How is each particle functioning in *Hakaniyut~~ʉ~~ ~~unʉ~~ yuhaniyu*? According to Charney, *Hakaniyut~~ʉ~~* is an interrogative pronoun meaning *why* (108). Haka also means *how* and has other interrogative meanings (Charney 108; *Taa N~~ʉ~~m~~ʉ~~ Tekwap~~ʉ~~ʔha* 4). *Ni* is an adverbial suffix meaning "like," "manner," or "in this, that fashion" (Charney 173, 108, 170). *~~U~~nn~~ʉ~~* is the subject, *you* (*Taa N~~ʉ~~m~~ʉ~~ Tekwap~~ʉ~~ʔha* 79; *Conversational Phrases*). *Yu-* is an prefix meaning to do right (*Taa N~~ʉ~~m~~ʉ~~ Tekwap~~ʉ~~ʔha* 86). *Hani* is the main verb meaning to *do/make/fix/repair* (Charney 207-208; *Taa N~~ʉ~~m~~ʉ~~ Tekwap~~ʉ~~ʔha* 4). And the suffix *-yu* is a progressive final aspect marker meaning *-ing* (Charney 148). The following sentences have been broken down to show the various shades in meaning of *Hakaniyut~~ʉ~~ ~~unʉ~~ yuhaniyu*, depending on how it is deconstructed and interpreted, signifying how important context is to Comanche language.

Why are you making?

Hakaniyutʉ ʉnʉ haniyu?

Hakaniyutʉ ʉnʉ hani -yu?

Inter. Subj. Verb -progressive

Why you make -ing

Why in this fashion are you making (that)?

Hakaniyutʉ ʉnʉ haniyu?

Haka -ni-yutʉ ʉnʉ hani -yu?

Why -in this fashion-ADVB you make -ing (that understood)

Inter. -advbl. suffix-ADVB Subj Verb -progressive (implied direct object)

Why in this fashion are you doing (that)?

Hakaniyutʉ ʉnʉ haniyu?

Haka -ni -yutʉ ʉnʉ hani -yu?

Why -in this fashion-ADVB you do -ing (that understood)

Inter. -advbl suffix -ADVB Subj Verb-progressive (implied direct object)

Why in this fashion are you fixing/repairing (that)?

Hakaniyutʉ ʉnʉ haniyu?

Haka -ni -yutʉ ʉnʉ hani -yu?

Why -in this fashion-ADVB you fix/repair -ing (that understood)

Inter. -advbl suffix -ADVB Subj Verb -progressive (implied direct object)

Why are you doing that?

Hakaniyut~~ɯ~~ ~~ɯnɯ~~ haniyu?

Hakaniyut~~ɯ~~ ~~ɯnɯ~~ hani -yu

Why you do -ing (that understood)

Inter. Subj Verb -progressive (implied direct object)

Why are you fixing/repairing?

Hakaniyut~~ɯ~~ ~~ɯnɯ~~ haniyu?

Hakaniyut~~ɯ~~ ~~ɯnɯ~~ hani -yu

Why you fix/repair -ing

Inter. Subj Verb -progressive

How you doing?

Hakaniyut~~ɯ~~ ~~ɯnɯ~~ haniyu

Hakani-yut~~ɯ~~ ~~ɯnɯ~~ hani -yu

How-ADVB you do -ing

Inter. Subj Verb -progressive

*This sentence does not have the same intention as "How are you feeling . . . *Hakai ~~ɯnɯ~~ n~~ɯɯ~~sukat~~ɯ~~*,*" which is concerned with state of emotions. The above sentence is more concerned with how you are doing something or one's mental goals or plans. This sentence can also be interpreted in the abstract sense of doing or making because Charney states, "Hani is more generally used for an abstract sense of 'to do' as well as for 'to fix'" (207). Also, *hakani* is interpreted as "how" because Charney defines it as "why," "because of," "how," "what," "what

happened," "what kind of," as well as "to question manners of being and doing" (108;111;211;216). The 2003 *Taa Nʉmʉ Tekwapʉ?ha Tʉboopʉ* also defines *hakani* as "how" (4).

How are you doing that?

Hakaniyutʉ ʉnʉ haniyu

Hakani-yutʉ ʉnʉ hani -yu

How-ADVB you do -ing (that understood)

Inter. Subj Verb -progressive (implied direct object)

How are you making?

Hakaniyutʉ ʉnʉ haniyu

Hakani-yutʉ ʉnʉ hani -yu

How-ADVB you make -ing

Inter. Subj Verb -progressive

How are you doing right? (for clarity purposes the prefix, *yu*-, has been added to the main verb.)

Hakaniyutʉ ʉnʉ yuhaniyu

Hakani-yutʉ ʉnʉ yu- hani -yu

How -ADVB you do right- do -ing

Inter. Subj prefix- Verb -progressive

How, in this fashion, are you doing right?

Hakaniyutʉ ʉnʉ yuhaniyu

Haka -ni -yutʉ ʉnʉ yu- hani -yu

How -in this fashion -ADVB you do right- do -ing

Inter. -advbl suffix -ADVB Subj prefix- Verb -progressive

How are you making right? / how do you make right?

Hakaniyutʉ ʉnʉ yuhaniyu

Hakani -yutʉ ʉnʉ yu- hani -yu

How -ADVB you do right- make -ing

Inter. -ADVB Subj prefix- Verb -progressive

How are you fixing/repairing right?

Hakaniyutʉ ʉnʉ yuhaniyu

Hakani -yutʉ ʉnʉ yu- hani -yu

How -ADVB you do right- fix/repair -ing

Inter. -ADVB Subj prefix- Verb -progressive

Why are you doing right?

Hakaniyut~~ʉ~~ ~~ʉnʉ~~ yuhaniyu

Hakaniyut~~ʉ~~	~~ʉnʉ~~	yu-	hani	-yu
Why	you	do right-	do	-ing
Inter.	Subj prefix-		Verb	-progressive

Why are you making right?

Hakaniyut~~ʉ~~ ~~ʉnʉ~~ yuhaniyu

Hakaniyut~~ʉ~~	~~ʉnʉ~~	yu-	hani	-yu
Why	you	do right-	make	-ing
Inter.	Subj prefix-		Verb	-progressive

Why are you fixing/repairing right?

Hakaniyut~~ʉ~~ ~~ʉnʉ~~ yuhaniyu

Hakaniyut~~ʉ~~	~~ʉnʉ~~	yu-	hani	-yu
Why	you	do right-	fix/repair	-ing
Inter.	Subj prefix-		Verb	-progressive

How, in this fashion, are you making (that)?

Hakaniyut~~ʉ~~ ~~ʉn~~ʉ yuhaniyu

Haka	-ni	-yut~~ʉ~~	~~ʉn~~ʉ	yu-	hani	-yu
How	-in this fashion-ADVB	you	do right		make	-ing
Inter.	-advbl suffix	-ADVB	Subj prefix-		Verb	-progressive

Translations of Comanche Texts

*Note: These translations are from Canonge's *Comanche Texts*, which he translated of Emily Riddles's (Comanche) stories. I have kept his spelling to maintain an archaic Comanche dialect, except for the ʉ/ʉ̱, which I adapted to reflect the modern alphabet. In the Comanche language sentences, words in brackets are the modern pronunciation/spelling that I am aware of, and in the English translation, the brackets are implied information that I added for clarity purposes. At times, words beginning in *b* would more than likely begin with *p* today (*p, b,* and *v* are often swapped across Comanche dialects). Words beginning in *r* are mostly used with a *t* today, and words containing *g*/*gw* would be *k*/*kw* today.

Although I am providing a new translation of some tales from *Comanche Texts*, I am keeping some of the dialectical aspects of the Comanche language to reflect how I heard my elders speak English when I was growing up in the 1990s, 2000s, and mid 2010s in Lawton, Oklahoma, which is home to the Comanche Nation Tribal Complex, and a vast majority of the Comanche population reside in and around Lawton. The majority of the elders who raised me were from rural communities, such as Apache, Cache, Walters, and Elgin, Oklahoma. Some of my elders were from Lawton, Oklahoma. My elders grew up during the 1930s-1970s. I also kept some dialectical aspects in the English translations to reflect how my elders have Comanche-ized English and how Comanche language-based ways of reasoning have filtered into Comanche-English (Coman-glish/Engl-anche). Comanche language likes to quantify nouns (such as, hypothetically, "I am speaking about you two," or "I am speaking about many here, meaning more than two"). Hence, Riddles's use of "those ones" and "these ones" is important because it quantifies and shows Comanche language-based reasoning, and these phrases denote tone. Based on how someone speaks the phrases "this one" and "that one" can denote endearment,

kinship/relationship, teasing, disdain, and more, and both “this one” and “that one” are phrases that can still be heard in the Comanche-English dialect of women’s conversations today.

The Tale of Coyote and the Sliding Turkeys

1. Soobeʔsʉkʉtsa rʉa [tʉa] kuyunniiʔnʉʉ bisikwanuuʔibʉni [pisikwanuuʔibʉni].

   A long time ago, it is said some Turkeys were sliding.

2. Suni urii [utii] nayʉkwibʉnikukʉse oha?ahnakatʉ urʉʉka bitʉnu [pitʉnu].

   They were continuing along that way, when Coyote approached them.

3. Surʉkʉse, “Tamihtsiʔbenihtʉhtsiʔnʉʉ hina mʉnʉ hanibʉni?”

   That one [Coyote] said, “Dear little brothers, what are you all doing?”

4. Surʉʉkʉse, “Pisikwanuuʔibʉnitʉ nʉnʉ.”

   Those ones [the turkeys] said, “We all are sliding.”

5. Surʉkʉse, ohaʔahnakatʉ, “Mʉ mʉmaʔai nʉ bisikwanuuʔitu?i [pisikwanuuʔitu?i],” me yʉkwiiyu.

   That one, Coyote, said, “I’m going to slide with you all.”

6. “Haa,” mekʉse surʉʉ.

   “Yes,” those ones [the turkeys] said.

7. Surʉkʉse nah hʉʉsʉ urʉʉmaʔai pisikwanuuʔitsi wihnu me yʉkwiiyu

   That one [Coyote] slid with those ones [the turkeys] just a few times, and [one turkey] said

8. “Orʉtsa [otʉtsa] raa [taa] haitsi pʉnʉ ʉkʉnaa pisikwanuuʔi,” me u niikwiiyu.

   “That one [Coyote], our friend, he slides himself first,” he [one turkey] said to him.

9. Surʉkʉse, “Nʉha?”

   That one [Coyote] said, “Me?”

10. “Haa,” mekʉse suurʉ.

    “Yes,” those ones [the turkeys] said.

11. Urʉʉkʉhʉ u yuhuwehkipʉ wihnu surʉ pisikwanuuʔinu.

    Of those ones [the turkeys], he [Coyote] looked for the fattest one, then that one [the fattest turkey] slid in a sitting position.

12. Surʉkʉse wihnu okʉhu paakʉhu wʉhtʉkwanu nahubiniiyu.

    Then that one [turkey] there at a distance hit something in the water and was groaning.

13. Surʉkʉse, “Anaa,” meh.

    That one [turkey] said, “Ouch.”

14. Surʉʉkʉse, “Hakani ʉnʉ nahanu?”

    Those ones [the turkeys] said, “What happened? [How are you]?”

15. Surʉkʉse, “Namaruniʔnʉ,” me yʉkwihtsi nahubiniiyu.

    That one [turkey] said groaning, “I hurt myself.”

16. Surʉkʉse, wihnu rʉyaainu [tʉyaainu].

    That one [turkey] then died.

17. Surʉkʉse, ohaʔahnakatʉ usʉ pʉma u nabisoʔaruʔiha mutsipʉha huuhpihta pʉhtu u pisikwanuuʔituʔitu u tsiʔnikanu.

    That one, Coyote, removed himself from the group to place a sharp pointed stick for him to stick himself with as he slides in a sitting position.

18. Surʉkʉse, wihnu ohaʔahnakatʉ piayakenu, “Nohi tʉtaatʉ taa haitsi namarʉninu,” me yʉkwiiyu.

    That one, Coyote, then gave a big cry and said, “Our very little friend has hurt himself.”

19. Surʉkʉse, wihnu, “Tanʉ hakanihku [hakaniku] ma hani?” me yʉkwiiyu.

    Then that one [Coyote] said, “How should we fix him?”

20. “Tanʉwitsa nah baakʉhu [paakʉhu] ma wihinu.”

    “Together, we should just throw him at a distance into the water.” [Coyote speaking]

21. Surʉʉkʉse, “Haa,” meh.

    Those ones [the turkeys] said, “Yes.”

22. Surʉkʉse, wihnu suni uhka bʉi [pʉi] mʉʉhka, “Miaruʔi nu,” me yʉkwiiyu.

    Then those ones, they did that way [placed their friend in the water], and that one [Coyote] said, “I am going to go.”

23. Surʉkʉse, wihnu hunuʔbʉhoiki nuhkinu soʔana bʉ tʉrʉeʔtʉʉkʉ bitʉnu [pitʉnu].

    That one [Coyote] ran off downstream somewhere at a distance, and he arrived at his children.

24. Surʉkʉse, “Obotika hunuʔruti noo hina tuhanikiti okwehkiti puhwaibʉʉni,” me urii [utii] niikwiiyu.

    That one [Coyote] said to them [his children], “Look that way over there at a distance in the stream for it carrying something of dark flowing liquid.”

25. Surʉʉkʉse, u tʉrʉeʔtʉʉ, “Apʉ ohtotsa hini tuhupitʉ okwehkitʉ,” me u niikwiiyu.

    Those ones, his children, said to him, “Father, there is something black in the flowing stream.”

26. Surʉkʉse, ukʉhu miʔanu.

    That one [Coyote] went there.

27. Pina surʉ piabuhitoo siʔana okwehkina.

    There that one big turkey floated due to Coyote.

28. Surʉkʉse, makʉhu weehtsi u yaanu pʉ kahnikʉhu miʔanu.

    That one [Coyote] went down and drove up the animal, took it, and went to his house.

29. Piakohtoohtsi sihka kuyuniiʔa bahtsinoʔitsi [pahtsinoʔitsi] u kuʔinʉbʉni.

    He made a big fire, picked this turkey clean, and he was roasting it.

30. Surʉkʉse, u kwasʉkah pʉ tʉrʉeʔtii nimainu, “Kimaka tʉhkaruʔi tanʉ.”

    That one [Coyote] cooked it, and called to his children, “Come you all, let’s eat.”

31. Sitʉʉkʉse siʔana nuraakitsi yukwihtsi tʉhkaayu.

    These ones, Coyote’s children, came running, sat still, and were eating.

32. Urii [utii] tʉhkakukʉse tʉehuhtsuu urʉʉbaʔaiki [urʉʉpaʔaiki]yʉtsʉmiʔarʉ, “Ohaʔahnakatʉ nʉ maaka,” me u niikwiiyu.

    They ate, and a little bird went flying by them, “Coyote, feed me,” he said.

33. Surʉkʉse, “Hakani ʉ mʉʉruʔi?”

    That one [Coyote] said, “How am I going to treat you?”

34. Surʉkʉse, wihnu tʉehuhtsuu, “Ma haitsinii nʉ narʉmuʔikʉtuʔi,” me yʉkwihtsi yʉtsʉnukwa.

    Then that one, the little bird, said as he flew, “I am going to tell it to his friends.”

35. Surʉkʉse tʉehuhtsuu u haitsinii narʉmuʔikʉnu.

    That one, the little bird, told his friends.

36. Sur~~ʉʉ~~kʉse wihnu, “Meekuka namakaʔmuukɨ uhka rai [tai] bunikwatuʔɨkʉa [punikwatuʔɨkʉa].”

    Then those ones, his friends, said, “Now let’s get ourselves ready so that we can go see *that one*.”

37. Sur~~ʉʉ~~ wihnu miʔanʉ.

    Then those ones went.

38. Sur~~ʉ~~kʉse wihnu ohaʔahnakat~~ʉ~~, “N~~ʉ~~ r~~ʉ~~r~~ʉ~~eʔt~~ʉʉ~~ [t~~ʉ~~t~~ʉ~~eʔt~~ʉʉ~~] os~~ʉ~~ hini ohto huhkuw~~ʉ~~n~~ʉ~~kinʉ?”

    Then that one, Coyote, said, “My children, what is that thing in the distance that is stirring up dust?”

39. Sur~~ʉ~~kʉse urii [utii] suabetainʉ suhka b~~ʉ~~ [p~~ʉ~~] kuʔinapʉha tsayumiʔɨtsi u watsihtahniʔinʉ.

    That one [Coyote] knew them [the turkeys], so he roasted him [the turkey], took him off, and secretly put him away.

40. Sur~~ʉ~~kʉse wihnu p~~ʉ~~ t~~ʉ~~r~~ʉ~~eʔt~~ʉ~~htsiʔn~~ʉʉ~~maʔai etʉsipʉkahtu s~~ʉ~~m~~ʉ~~naʔaniʔinʉ siʔana etʉsikawoʔarʉ yakehp~~ʉ~~nɨ.

    Then that one, Coyote, along with his children completely and thoroughly rolled around in ashes, and Coyote streaked his face with dirt and cried.

41. Sur~~ʉʉ~~kʉse kuyuniiʔn~~ʉʉ~~ siʔana mabaʔa toboʔɨhupiitʉ.

    Those ones, the Turkeys, came to a stop nearby Coyote.

42. Sur~~ʉʉ~~kʉse, “Haa,” meh, “Natsak~~ʉ~~ ~~ʉ~~n~~ʉ~~ taa haitsɨha paakʉku tsahtoʔɨtsi siʔanetʉ u kuʔinʉb~~ʉ~~nɨ?”

    Those turkeys said, “Yes, we accuse you of taking our friend out of the water; Coyote are you roasting him?”

43. Surʉkʉse ohaʔahnakatʉ, “Hipeʔsʉka nʉ nasuwatsipʉha nʉ ninʉsutamakʉbʉni,” me yʉkwihtsi piayakenu.

That one, Coyote, said crying loudly, “At some time, I forgot it, but you all saying something has reminded me.” [Coyote is referring to the loss of his turkey “friend” to fool the turkeys.]

44. Surʉʉkʉse wihnu kuyunniiʔnʉʉ, “Nahruku [nahtuku] nʉmi nohiti,” me niwʉnʉtsi bitusʉ [pitusʉ] miʔanu.

Then those turkeys said, “This is just a game played on us,” and they went back.

45. Surʉkʉse wihnu ohaʔahnakatʉ surii [sutii] bʉʉ [pʉʉ] tʉrʉeʔtii, “Taa tʉhkapʉhaka tsapʉye tai tʉhkaruʔika,” me yʉkwiiyu.

Then that one, Coyote, said to those ones, his children, “Let’s take out our meat and eat.”

46. Surʉʉ tʉkʉtsi yuuʔʉhkooinu.

Those ones ate and slept just right.

The Tale of Turtle and Coyote

1. Soobeʔsʉkʉtsa rʉa [tʉa] tʉehwakareʔee moʔobetii tʉʔrikuuʔnii siʔanetʉ kohtoohkatʉ kwasʉkʉbʉni.

   Long ago, it is said that a little turtle had five prairie dogs, and at this point he built a fire in which to fry them.

2. Uhkakʉse u kwasʉkʉbʉniku [kwasʉkʉpʉniku] ohaʔahnakatʉ uwaka bitʉnu [pitʉnu].

   As he was frying, Coyote began approaching him.

3. Surʉkʉse ohaʔahnakatʉ,"Tʉtaatʉ wakareʔee hina ʉnʉ kwasʉkʉbʉniʔ"

   That one, Coyote, said, "Little turtle, what are you frying?"

4. Wakareʔeeʔkʉse, "Tʉʔrikuuʔa nʉ kwasʉkʉbʉnitʉ.

   Turtle said, "I'm frying prairie dog.

5. Ma marʉkʉtsi nʉ ma rʉhkaruʔi [tʉhkaruʔi]."

   When it's done, I'm going to eat it."

6. Ohaʔahnakatʉkʉse "Nʉ makanu nʉʉ," me yʉkwiiyu.

   Coyote said, "Feed them to me."

7. Wakareʔeeʔkʉse "Ke nʉ," me yʉkwiiyu.

   Turtle said, "Not I."

8. Surʉkʉse ohaʔahnakatʉ, "Meeku rakwʉ [takwʉ] mabaʔatu nararʉʉna," me yʉkwiiyu.

   That one, Coyote said, "Sure, we can be competing."

9. Surʉkʉse wakareʔee, "Ke nʉ runehtsʉwaʔi [tunehtsʉwaʔi] naahkatʉ," me yʉkwiiyu.

   That one, Turtle said, "No, I don't want to run."

10. Surʉkʉse ohaʔahnakatʉ, “Noo nʉ biarʉpihta [piatʉpihta] nʉ napema wʉtsʉkʉnane,” me yʉkwiiyu.

    That one, Coyote said, “I will just tie a big rock to my foot.”

11. Surʉkʉse wakareʔee, “Haa,” me yʉkwiiyu.

    That one, Turtle said, “Okay.”

12. Sitʉkwʉkʉse piarʉpihta [piatʉpihta] yaahuyʉkʉtsi ma napema ma wʉtsʉkʉnanu.

    So, these two scrounged around for a big rock to tie to Coyote’s foot.

13. Sitʉkʉse ohaʔahnakatʉ, “Kima meeku runehtsʉruʔi [tunehtsʉruʔi] takwʉ,” me yʉkwiiyu.

    This one, Coyote said, “Come now, let’s run.”

14. Sitʉkʉse wakareʔee, “Hinakia kaabehkaruʔi ʉkihtsi,” me yʉkwihtsi, uwakatu kimanu.

    This one, Turtle said, “I wonder what trick he’s trying now,” as he came towards him.

15. Siʔana sitʉkwʉ nahkʉmaʔkʉ roboʔinu [toboʔinu].

    These two found someplace, and together they stood side-by-side one another.

16. Sitʉkwʉ wihnu runehtsʉnu [tunehtsʉnu].

    Then these two ran.

17. Sitʉkʉse wakareʔee ma bʉahkwa.

    This one, Turtle, decided to quit.

18. Suni bʉhi [pʉhi] nahamiʔaku ohaʔahnakatʉ makuhpa nuhkinu.

    Coyote continued running.

19. Sitʉkʉse wakareʔee nooʔyahnehtu ma yʉwihka, pitusʉ tʉbitsi tunehtsʉnu.

    This one, Turtle, laughed at him when he went far out of sight, and Turtle started running back really fast.

20. Sitʉkʉse pʉ tʉʔrikuuʔkwasʉkʉpʉka bitʉnu [pitʉnu] siʔanetʉ ma kwasimaku marii tsapʉyenu.

    This one, Turtle, arrived at the fried prairie dogs, and at this point, he removed their tails.

21. Wihnu ma hʉkahka ma namʉsitʉhkanu.

    Then he cooled it and quickly ate.

22. Sitʉkʉse u tsuhnipʉha ʉmahpaakʉhu wihiʔeeyu u kwasitaka etʉsipʉka manakʉʉʔikʉnu.

    This one, he threw the bones in the lake and made their tails stick out of the ashes.

23. Sitʉkʉse ohaʔahnakatʉ siʔahru toʔiki kweʔyʉkatʉ.

    Elsewhere, this one, Coyote, appeared and was tired.

24. Sitʉkʉse wakareʔee suʔahru puhikabatu miʔatsi u watsihpunihka.

    This one, Turtle, went along the leaves and grasses and secretly spied on Coyote.

25. Sitʉkʉse ohaʔahnakatʉ, “Ma kohtoopʉha kʉmaʔkʉ karʉhtsi nohi tsaahtʉkʉhutuʔi nʉʉ,” me yʉkwiiyu.

    This one, Coyote, said, “Oh, I will sit beside the fire and eat very well.”

26. Sitʉkʉse wakareʔee ma bunihkatʉ [punihkatʉ] maaitʉ yahneeyu.

    This one, Turtle, watched him nearby and was laughing.

27. Sitʉkʉse ohaʔahnakatʉ ma kwasitaka siʔanetʉ kunakʉku tsahtoʔiʔeeyu.

    At this point, this one, Coyote, pulled out the tails that stuck out.

28. Sitʉkʉse wakareʔee mawaka bitʉnu [pitʉnu].

    This one, Turtle, moved toward him.

29. Sitʉkʉse ohaʔahnakatʉ ʉmahpaakʉhu miʔanʉ ukuhpaiti tsiwainʉ u tsuhnipʉha rʉhkanʉ [tʉhkanʉ].

    This one, Coyote, went to the lake and probed around with a pole in the water for bones and ate them.

30. Sitʉkʉse ohaʔahnakatʉ, “Ke nʉ bʉmi [pʉmi] kaabehkawaʔitʉ me suatʉ ʉnʉse tʉtaatʉ wakareʔee nʉ kaabehkanʉ,” me surʉ ohaʔahnakatʉ me yʉkwiiyʉ.

    This one, Coyote said, “I didn’t cheat. I think this little Turtle cheated me.”

31. Surʉkʉse ohaʔahnakatʉ, “Ʉmituku ʉkʉnaa ke tunehtsʉkʉʉyʉ ʉpinakwʉ nahanoorʉ ʉwaʔiku pitʉsʉ tunetsʉtsi ʉ tʉkwʉsʉkʉpʉha ke sʉmʉrʉhkaayʉ [sʉmʉtʉhkaayʉ].

    That one, Coyote said, “You were the only one who didn’t run first. You ran back. I didn’t do like you and eat up all the roast.

32. Ʉnʉse tʉtaatʉ wakareʔee nʉ kaabehkanʉ nʉ kwakunʉ.”

    Little Turtle, you tricked me and beat me.”

33. Mekʉse surʉ yʉkwihtsi nuhkinʉ.

    And after saying that, that one ran off.

34. Wakareʔeeʔkʉse umetʉ biayahnenʉ [piayahnenʉ] nʉmasʉ, “Ʉ kaakwakunʉ.”

    Turtle had a big laugh and said, “I beat you”.

The Tale of Coyote and the Prairie Dogs

1. Soobeʔsʉkʉtsa rʉa [tʉa] suʔana u piabʉhʉwahtʉkʉ [piapʉhʉwahtʉkʉ] tʉʔrikuuʔnʉʉ sookʉnibaʔi.

   A long time ago, it is said that some place on the southern plains there was a prairie dog town.

2. Surʉʉkʉse narahkaʔwitsi nʉkʉbʉni.

   Those ones, the prairie dogs, gathered together and were dancing.

3. Sunikʉse urii [utii] nayʉkwibʉniku ohaʔahnakatʉ urʉʉkʉ [utʉʉkʉ] bitʉnu [pitʉnu].

   Those ones were continuing along that way when Coyote arrived.

4. Surʉkʉse, "Mʉnʉkiaʔnʉkʉbʉni?"

   That one said, "You all are dancing?"

5. "Haa," mekʉse surʉʉ.

   "Yes," those ones said.

6. Surʉkʉse ohaʔahnakatʉ, "Mʉiʔnahubiyaaruʔi nʉ," me urii [utii] niikwiiyu.

   That one, Coyote, said to those ones, "I'm going to sing a song for you all."

7. "Mʉʉʔnʉʉkahni nʉʉʔka kʉhtaaku tsahtʉ miʔinu.

   "You all shut your house tightly.

8. Tai nʉhkaruʔika."

   We will dance."

9. "Haa," mekʉse surʉʉ.

   "Yes," those ones said.

10. "Kimʉbʉniikaʔ, kimʉbʉniikaʔ," mekʉse surʉ ohaʔahnakatʉ.

    "All keep coming, all keep coming," said that Coyote.

11. “Nʉkʉtsi nʉʉʔka nahma moʔotsaaihtsi sʉmʉʔʉʔtsumihkina.”

    “Dance you all, hold hands, and close your eyes tightly.”

12. Surʉkʉse wihnu urii [utii] nʉkʉrʉkika surʉ piahuuhpihta yaarʉ sʉkwenaisʉ urii [utii]

    wʉhtokwʉkina.

    Then that one clubbed several of those ones dancing, killed them, and took several of them.

13. Sʉmʉʔkʉse urʉʉmatʉ tasʉkʉpunihtsi ohaʔahnakati buninu [puninu].

    One saw Coyote taking those ones [the missing prairie dogs], through squinted eyes.

14. Surʉkʉse, “Tunehtsʉʉka

    That one [the peaking prairie dog], said, “Run you all

15. Tai wʉhtokwʉkitʉ ma.”

    He’s clubbing us to death.”

16. Surʉʉkʉse pʉʉ kahnikʉhu turunehtsʉnu [tunehtsʉnu].

    Those ones ran to their houses.

17. Pʉʉ muhyi urii [utii] mʉnihkakusʉ surʉ ohaʔahnakatʉ sooti wʉhtokwenu.

    Those ones were unable to get to the door, and that one, Coyote, clubbed many of them.

18. Surʉkʉse wihnu piakohtoohtsi surii tʉʔrikuuʔnii kusiwʉhpimanu.

    Then that one [Coyote] made a big fire to roast those prairie dogs buried in ashes.

19. Pʉ wʉhtokweʔnii suurʉ sukʉhu tsaahtʉhkanu.

    There, that one, he ate good of which he clubbed.

The Tale of the Grey Grasshopper Who Gets a Brightly Painted Coat

1. Soobeʔsukutsa ruua [tua] ahtakii tumuumiʔanu.

   Long ago, it is said that a grasshopper went shopping.

2. “Ibu nu tabe ikahpetu manakwuhu nanaʔatahpu naboori kwasuʔi tumuukwatuʔi,” mekuu.

   “I will go far in the direction of the setting sun to buy a different coat,” he said.

3. U piaʔkuse, “Tua unu oʔana manakwu miasuwaituʔi,” me u niikwiiyu.

   His mother said to him, “It is said that you want to be going someplace.”

4. Situukuse ahtakii, “Natsatsa taa nomiaʔeku uʔana esitsunuʔikatu tahu naʔnumunuukabaiki nu yutsumiaʔeeku.”

   This one [grey] grasshopper said, “No matter, we will move away somewhere; I appear grey when I fly amongst our relatives.”

5. Situukuse siʔanetu yutsuhkwa tumuumiʔatsi.

   This one [grey grasshopper] flew off somewhere to shop.

6. Situukuse yutsumiʔaru, yutsumiʔaru, u biarupinooʔkaruku [piatupinooʔkaruku] uma karuhupiitu.

   This one [grey grasshopper] flew and flew to where a big rock hill sits.

7. “Maa ma karukukuse piawosaʔaaʔra mawakatu toʔihupiitu, “Hina unuʔ” me u niikwiyu.

   As he sat on it [the hill], the largest of the grasshoppers came toward him, and said, “What do you want?”

8. Surukuse “Tsaa nu naboori kwasuʔi suwaaitu,” me u niikwiiyu.

   That one, he [the grey grasshopper] said to him, “Well, I want a painted coat.”

9. Sitʉkʉse nanaʔatahputi tʉrʉetʉpihta himanu uma sihka esiʔahtamuuʔa tʉʔekanu.

   This different one took several things near his hands and painted the grey grasshopper.

10. “Meeku nabunni [napunni],” mekʉse surʉ u niikwiiyu.

    “Now look at yourself in the mirror,” he said to him [the grey grasshopper].

11. Sitʉkʉse siʔana wʉnʉrʉ nabuihwʉnʉbʉni.

    This one [grey grasshopper] stood somewhere examining his appearance.

12. “Nohi tsaa nabuniyu [napuniyu] nʉʉ,” mekʉse surʉ esiʔahtamuu.

    “I look good,” said that one grey grasshopper.

13. “Usʉ nʉ bʉesʉ [pʉesʉ] tsaa naboori nʉ suwainihti kwasuʔutuaʔi miaruʔi nʉ,” usʉ mekʉse suurʉ.

    “Already, I have a good painted coat that I wanted; I am going to go,” that one [the former grey grasshopper] said to that one.

14. Siʔanetʉkʉse surʉ pitusʉ yʉtsʉnukwa soʔana sehka esiʔahtamuuʔa pʉkʉhu sooyoriʔikahtu pitʉnu.

    That one grey grasshopper flew back somewhere where many scattered grasshoppers fly to in order to arrive [to meet].

15. Surʉʉkʉse esiʔahtamuuʔnʉʉ, “Osʉ hakarʉ naniʔsuyake nabooʔrʉ ukʉ tamʉkaba kahtʉ [karʉ]?”

    Those ones, the grey grasshoppers said, “Who is that one who is of us and is sitting and looking beautiful?”

16. Sʉmʉʔkʉse, “Urʉ u rʉmʉʉkoʔi [tʉmʉʉkoʔi],” me yʉkwiiyu.

    One grasshopper said, “That one, he went shopping.”

17. Surʉkʉse pʉmi urii [utii] nasuyakeku pʉnihku [bʉnihku] uhka pʉ naraʔurakʉʔiha urii [utii] tʉʔawekʉnu.

    He met those ones who wished that they looked like that one [the one grey grasshopper who is now a painted grasshopper], and he told them.

18. Setʉkʉse esiʔahtamuu sebutu tabeʔikahpetutu sʉmʉyorinukwa, tsʉʔnikatʉ, setʉ sʉmʉkoyamanu, nananisuyake setʉ naboohka.

    Those ones, the scattered grey grasshoppers completely flew in various different directions toward the setting sun [and] stayed awhile; those ones all returned, and those ones were beautifully painted.

19. Suku sehka naboori ahtamuuʔa naahkahu atanaihtʉ urʉʉkʉ bitʉnu [pitʉnu].

    Those ones, the scattered painted grasshoppers continued, when a different one arrived amongst them.

20. Surʉkʉse, “Mʉnʉ esiʔahtamuuʔnʉʉ hakanihku nananisuyakeku naboohka?” me urii [utii] niikwiiyu.

    That one said to them, “How did all you grey grasshoppers get painted so beautifully?”

21. Surʉʉkʉse, “Tʉmʉʉyʉkarʉ nʉnʉ. Usʉ subeʔsʉ suhka esiʔahtamuuʔa tʉmʉʉkoʔikatʉ nihanu tsaa naboori u kwasuʔutʉ mʉʉhka,” me yʉkwitʉ.

    Those ones said, “We shopped around. That one, grey grasshopper, at that time went shopping to be named, ‘His Pretty [or Good] Painted Coat.’”

22. Subetʉ.

    The end.

The Story of the Comanche Couple and the Racoon

1. Soobeʔsʉkʉtsa rʉa [tʉa] suʔana nʉmʉnʉʉ kahnibaʔi.

   Long ago, it is said that somewhere Comanches owned a house.

2. Urʉʉ ahpʉʔkʉse, “Taa kunatsa tsuʔmaʔi.”

   Those one’s father said, “Our firewood is used up.”

3. Surʉkʉse pʉ kwʉhi, “Tahi nomohkakʉtuʔi nʉ tahi konookwatuʔika,” mekʉ.

   That one said to his wife, “We’re going to put a bridal on the horse and carry some firewood for us.”

4. Sitʉkwʉkʉse siʔanetʉ miʔanu hunuʔbetu.

   These two went to a creek somewhere.

5. Sitʉkwʉkʉse hunuʔbetu miʔanu siʔana tobоʔihupiitʉ pʉhʉ waikinʉkahtu pʉhʉ tsoʔmepʉha tʉbakimiʔa pʉhʉ waikina tʉhpeʔkʉakʉnu.

   These two went to a creek somewhere; their wagon came to a stop; they gathered up [firewood]; they loaded up their wagon, [and] they gathered [firewood] and filled it up.

6. Sitʉkʉse ma kumahpʉ, “Ikʉhi nʉ ma pamʉtsoʔnikʉhi punituʔi,” mekʉse surʉ yʉkwihtsi ukʉhu miʔanu piahuuma ukʉhi tsiwainu.

   This one’s husband said to her, “Here, I am going to look in this debris that the receded flood water has left,” as he went there to a big tree and felt around with something sharp to find [firewood].

7. Siʔanakʉse pamʉtsoʔnikaaba paruuku haahpi.

   Somewhere in the debris that the receded flood water left was a racoon.

8. Sitʉkʉse ma wʉhkupanu.

   This one, he killed it with his weapon.

9. Surʉkʉse yuupʉ.

   That one [the racoon] was fat.

10. Sitʉkʉse tenahpʉ, “Nohi tsaahtʉkʉhutuʔi tanʉ,” me yʉkwiiyu.

    This one man said, “We are going to eat very good.”

11. Pʉhʉ waikinʉkahtu sitʉ ma wihinu.

    They gathered this [one] up [and] threw it [into their wagon].

12. Sitʉkwʉkʉse siʔanetʉ miʔanu, pʉʉ kahnikʉhu.

    Those two went to their house someplace.

13. Sitʉkʉse ma kumahpʉ pʉhʉ konoopʉha tsayumiʔinu wihnu piakohtoonu sihka paruukuʔa pʉhʉtsahkweʔyanu.

    This one, [her and] her husband, they took down their firewood, made a big fire, and skinned the racoon.

14. Sitʉkʉse ma kwʉhʉ sukʉhu ma kohtoopʉka ma kuʔinanu.

    This one, his wife, roasted it over a fire there.

15. Sitʉʉkʉse wihnu rʉhkanu [tʉhkanu] sihka pʉʉ ahpʉʔa pʉmʉ tʉbehkakʉʔiha u kuʔinʉtsi tsaahtʉhkanu.

    These ones then butchered and roasted it; here, with their father, they ate good.

16. Sitʉkʉse marʉʉ ahpʉ, “Tʉbitsi tsaaku tamʉ tʉrʉeʔtʉʉ tʉhkaʔinʉʉ,” me yʉkwiiyu.

    This one, their father said, “Our children ate really good.”

17. Pʉi tʉkʉkakʉse marʉʉ tʉrʉeʔtʉʉ nohinuraahkwainu pʉʉ tʉhkaʔiha tʉbitsi tsaa wʉsukaatʉ.

    They ate their really good food; their children ran around and played and felt good.

18. Subetʉ.

    The end.

The Tale of the Comanche Children and the Hackberries

1. Suʔanakʉtsa rʉa [tʉa] sʉsʉmʉʔnʉʉ nʉmʉnʉʉ nobitʉnu [nopitʉnu].

   It is said some many Comanche people arrived some place far away and camped.

2. Tʉtaatʉ urʉʉ petʉʔkʉse hunuʔbetu [hunuʔpetu] miʔanu.

   Those ones' little daughter went to the creek.

3. Suʔana u rʉehbasiwanooʔkarʉkukʉse [tʉehbasiwanooʔkarʉkukʉse/

   rʉehpasiwanooʔkarʉkukʉse/ tʉehpasiwanooʔkarʉkukʉse] tʉtaatʉ kʉʔrahuu uma wʉnʉ.

   Somewhere on a little sand hill stood a little hackberry tree.

4. Sitʉkʉse pʉ tʉetʉʉhkaʔaʔma u wʉhkaʔanu.

   This one, with her little axe, chopped it down.

5. Tʉtaati wihtue pʉ tsayaahkaku u bomanu [pomanu].

   She picked the berries and carried them in a little bucket.

6. U sʉmʉbomʉtsi [sʉmʉpomʉtsi] bʉʉ [pʉʉ] kahnikʉhu miʔanu.

   She picked them completely and went to their [her family's] house.

7. Pitʉhtsi bʉ [pʉ] piaʔa, "Ihka nʉ bomapʉha [pomapʉha] rayuʔnetsi [tayuʔnetsi] nʉmi hanikʉ."

   She arrived at her mother and said, "Here, I picked these to pound with a pestle and to make for us."

8. Sitʉkʉse ma pia pʉ huuʔawokʉku marii tayuʔnekʉnu pʉ tʉʉhtsohpeʔa kuhpitsunikʉtsi ubaʔaihtu [upaʔaihtu] u roʔkwʉrianu [toʔkwʉrianu].

   This one, her mother, pounded it with a wooden mortar and pestle near at hand, rendered bone marrow, rendered fat, and poured it on it.

9. Tʉrʉehbarʉkwihtsipʉha [tʉtʉehparʉkwihtsipʉha] tsahkobiʔhuniihtsi ukʉhi yaaʔetʉ uma u matsʉbakiʔetʉ marii himimiʔa.

   She took the little new tree shoot-switches and broke them with her hands there and stuck it [the pounded hackberries, marrow, and fat] to it [the switches] and gave it to them.

10. Sitʉʉkʉse tʉrʉehpʉʔrʉʉ pʉʉ kohtoopʉbaʔa u kuʔtsiyaaʔeeyu.

    These children made a fire and were roasting it on a stick.

11. Nanisuyakeku u otʉkwasʉkʉʔeeyu.

    They cooked it until it was brown and beautiful.

12. Wihnu surʉʉ u rʉhkaʔeeyu [tʉhkaʔeeyu].

    Then those ones were eating it.

13. Surʉʉkʉse rʉrʉehpʉʔrʉʉ [tʉrʉehpʉʔrʉʉ], “Tʉbitsi tsaa ma bihnakamatʉ [pihnakamatʉ],” me bʉʉ [pʉʉ] piaʔa niikwiʔeeyu.

    Those ones, the children, said to their mother, “This tastes sweet and really good.”

14. Surʉʉkʉse tʉrʉehpʉʔrʉʉ pʉʉ kʉhtoʔipʉha pʉʉ kahtʉiʔnʉʉ tʉrʉetʔtii makamaʔeeyu.

    Those ones, the children, were giving their leftover, excess food to their female neighbor’s children to eat.

15. Urii [utii] makahkakʉse urʉʉ pia, “Nohi tsaaku mʉnʉ nʉ rʉrʉeʔtii [tʉrʉeʔtii] makanu,” mekʉ.

    The mother of the ones whom they fed said, “You all have fed my children very good.”

16. Surʉkʉse urʉʉ pia, “NʉsuʔatsaTsaa mʉi manʉʉsukaaruʔi,” me urii [utii] niikwiiyu.

    Their mother said to them, “I am going to think of something to make you all feel good.”

17. Siʔanetʉkʉse surʉ pʉ ooʔrʉna narʉbakina tsahtoʔinʉ ukuhpaku bʉ [pʉ] taʔsiwooʔwanaʔʉhi tsahtoʔinu.

    At this point, that one pulled up a clothing bag and pulled up a buffalo hide blanket.

18. Suhka urʉʉ tʉebatsiʔa, “Ihka nʉʔʉ wanaʔʉhʉmakaʔi.”

    She said to those one’s little sister, “I give away this blanket to you.”

19. Surʉkʉse suhri [suhti] bihiʔanih [pihiʔanih] wahabahtih naropʉsiʔiitih uhri napʉmakanʉ.

    That one [the neighbor woman] gave the boys two separate pairs of beaded moccasins.

20. Sitʉʉkʉse siʔanetʉ miʔanʉ pʉʉ kahnikʉ bitʉnʉ [pitʉnʉ] pʉmʉ u sutaaʔiha bʉʉ [pʉʉ] piaʔa tsahpunikʉnʉ pʉʉ ahpʉʔa bitʉhka [pitʉhka] u narʉmuʔikʉnʉ.

    These ones [the children] arrived at their house somewhere and showed their mother [the neighbor’s] blessings, and when their father arrived, they told him.

21. Surʉkʉse urʉʉ ahpʉ, “Nohi tsaakukia tahʉ tʉrʉeʔtii hanikʉnʉ,” meku.

    That one, their father said, “Our children did very good.”

22. Pʉetsʉkusʉkʉse surʉ yʉtsʉhtsi tʉhʉyaroʔitsi urʉʉkʉhu nuhkinʉ.

    In the early morning, that one [their father] got up, mounted on horseback, and ran off to those ones [the Comanche people].

23. Surʉkʉse urii [utii] tekwʉninʉ, “Namakaʔmukika tai nʉhkaruʔika.

    That one [their father] said to them [the Comanche people], “Everyone get yourselves ready, we are having a dance.

24. Inakwʉtsa hayarokwetʉʉ pimorooʔnʉʉ yuupʉnʉʉ tai tʉkwʉsʉruʔi.”

    And in this direction near at hand, we are going to butcher four fat cows.

25. Sʉmʉʔkʉse renahpʉʔa [tenahpʉʔa], “Hakaniʔyutʉ ʉnʉ sinihku tai hanitʉni?’

    One man said, “Why are you having us to do this like this?”

26. “Nah nʉʔtsu ohka waʔihpʉʔa tʉtaa nʉmi naahkaku nʉ rʉrʉeʔtʉʉ [tʉrʉeʔtʉʉ] ma hanikʉʔiha tsaa wʉsukaatʉ sunihku rai [tai] hanikʉʉtʉ,” mekʉ.

“I just feel good that that woman made my children something good when we have little, so we are continuing on doing this way,” he said [the father].

27. Sitʉʉ nʉkʉtsi tʉmarʉʉmoaku tʉkwʉsʉnʉ.

These ones danced a lot and butchered [the cow meat].

28. Surʉʉkʉse nʉmʉnʉʉ, “Nohi tʉhtʉtaatʉʉ tʉrʉehpʉʔrʉʉ tai tsaahtʉhkakʉnʉ,” mekʉ.

Those Comanches said, “Just because of our little children, we ate good.”

29. Sitʉʉ wihnu nʉkʉtsi tʉmarʉʉmoaku ooʔri [ooʔti] nahiminʉ.

These ones then danced a lot and gave gifts of clothing to one another.

30. U yʉihka bʉʉ [pʉʉ] nʉhkana bʉanʉ [pʉanʉ].

At night they quit dancing.

31. Usʉkʉ sunihku suhka tʉtaatʉna tʉehpʉʔrʉna pomapʉnai uhka urii [utii] namakʉka surʉʉ usʉ umetʉ biahaninʉ [piahaninʉ].

Because those little children picked berries, those ones had a big doings [doings is an archaic Indigenized-English term that Comanches used mostly during the 1950s and before to refer to community dances, such as powwows, though the concept of modern powwows carries similarities and several differences to powwows during the 1950s and prior].

32. Subetʉ.

The end.

The Tale of the Comanches and the Rations

1. Soobeʔsʉ nʉnʉ tʉa tʉhimaʔeeyu.

   A long time ago, it is said we were receiving rations.

2. Okuse Lawton-a kwihneʔnakwʉ nʉmʉ paraiboo kahnibaʔi.

   There, north of Lawton, was the Comanche agent's house.

3. Sukukuse nʉnʉ u kahnikʉku waha u kahnitaikʉku tʉhimaʔeeyu.

   There, we went to his house to two of his rooms where we were receiving rations.

4. Surʉse nʉmʉ paraiboo tʉhimʉrabeni [tʉhimʉtabeni] nʉmi nobitʉrʉniʔeeyu [nopitʉrʉniʔeeyu / nopitʉtʉniʔeeyu].

   On ration day, we were arriving and camping at that Comanche agent's [house].

5. Setʉse nʉʉmʉ suhka tabeni ukʉhu sʉmʉnokimaʔetʉ nobitʉʔeeyu [nopitʉʔeeyu].

   There that day, those Comanches' whole camp were arriving and camping.

6. Wihnu tʉehbuharabeni [tʉehpuharabeni / tʉehpuhatabeni] pʉetsʉkusʉ tʉhimaʔeeyu nah hina oyoʔkʉsʉ ta tʉhkaʔena tʉasʉ wanakotseʔa.

   Then Saturday morning we were receiving our rations of just what all [things] to eat and soap.

7. Surʉʉse sʉsʉmʉʔnʉʉ waʔihpʉʔanʉʉ suhka wanakotseʔa petihtaiʔeeyu.

   Some of those women there were throwing the soap down to dispose of it.

8. Tʉasʉse surʉʉ woʔarʉhkapʉha [woʔatʉhkapʉha], "Woʔabi ma," me niwʉnʉrʉ u betihtaʔeeyu [petihtaʔeeyu].

   And those ones [Comanches] said of rice, "That's worms," and they were throwing it away.

   [Note: the Comanche word for rice translates as worm-food/meat in English].

9. Nʉ ahpʉʔse suhka urʉʉ tʉhimana urii [utii] hanikʉʔeeyu.

   My father was there when those ones were getting their rations fixed.

10. Surʉʉse wihnu tabetʉkʉtsi pimorooʔa tʉkwʉsʉʔeeyu.

    Then those ones were butchering a cow and ate it for dinner.

11. Hayarokwetʉʉ nʉmʉnaahkanʉse sʉmʉʔa pimorooʔa naʔnʉbeʔku tʉhaniʔeeyu.

    Four Comanche families were butchering a cow and divided it evenly.

12. Tʉasʉse nʉ ahpʉ suhka urii [utii] hanikʉʔeeyu.

    And my father was fixing that for them.

13. Setʉse nʉʉmʉ wihnu sooko narʉhkaʔruaʔetʉ tʉasʉ tʉhkapʉruaʔetʉ pʉʉ kahnikʉhu pitusʉ nomiaʔeeyu.

    Then those many Comanches received groceries and meat, and they moved away from their camps and went back to their houses.

14. Sunihku surʉʉ usuni hanimiaʔeeyu.

    Those ones always were doing and going that way.

15. Nʉmʉ sokohne ta tsatuwahka nʉmi bʉakʉnu [pʉakʉnu].

    Our Comanche land opened [,and] we quit.

16. Subetʉ.

    That is all.

Tale of the Comanche Boys Who Stole a Wichita Man's Pumpkins

1. Soobeʔsʉkʉtsa rʉa [tʉa] suʔana tuhkanaaiʔnʉʉ kahnibaʔi.

   Long ago it is said that some Wichitas had a house somewhere.

2. Surʉʉkʉse tʉmarʉʉmoaku tʉrʉniʔinu hanibihta kamuutaʔa puhibihnaaʔa [puhipihnaaʔa] taibooʔbihnaaʔa [taibooʔpihnaaʔa] tʉasʉ nakwʉsiʔa.

   Those ones planted a lot of corn, sweet potatoes, watermelons, cantaloupes, and pumpkins.

3. Sunihku urii [utii/surii] naahkakukʉse nʉmʉnʉʉ urʉʉkʉ nobitʉnu [nopitʉnu].

   In that way, those Comanches were continuing on and arrived and camped.

4. Surʉʉkʉse bʉʉ [pʉʉ] nʉmʉhanihne atakwaʔsʉʔaiʔetʉ rʉasʉ [tʉasʉ] pʉʉ [bʉʉ] nakwʉsiʔa wʉhtsitoʔaʔetʉ pahpaʔaku u kooʔiʔetʉ u rohtsaniʔiʔeeyu [tohtsaniʔiʔeeyu].

   Those ones [the Wichitas] had Indian corn and partially roasted dried corn, and they had peeled pumpkins with a knife, cut it up, and were hanging it up.

5. U wʉhtakʉmiʔeku u kwisiʔeeyu.

   They were drying it partially and braiding it [the peeled pumpkins].

6. Surii nʉmʉnii suma pʉʉ [bʉʉ] atakwaʔsʉʔaipʉma tʉasʉ pʉʉ [bʉʉ] nakwʉsiʔma nakwʉsipʉma surii nʉmʉnii tʉmʉʉʔeeyu.

   Those [Wichitas] prepared their partially roasted dried corn and pumpkins for trading with those Comanches.

7. Surʉʉkʉse nʉmʉnʉʉ nahbiʔanʉʉ, "Ohka ranʉ [tanʉ] tuhkanaaiʔtenahpʉʔa tʉmʉsʉapʉkahti noohtsi oko [soko] hunuʔmatu miʔatsi hanikwasʉkʉtsi tʉasʉ puhibihnaaʔa [puhipihnaaʔa] tanʉ piarʉhkane [piatʉhkane]," mekʉ.

   Those Comanches boys who are all related said, "We should carry off that Wichita man's crops and go to the creek to roast corn and watermelon; We will eat a big meal."

8. Sitʉʉkʉse siʔanetʉ miʔanʉ sukʉ hunuʔma pitʉnʉ pʉʉ [bʉʉ] pabiʔa, “Tai kohtookʉ,” mekʉ u niikwiiyʉ.

   These ones went somewhere and arrived at a creek; their older brother said, “Make our fire.”

9. Siʔanetʉkʉse sitʉʉ kohtoohtsi hanikwasʉkʉnʉ.

   Somewhere those ones made a fire and roasted corn.

10. Sʉmʉʔkʉse marʉʉmatʉ, “Tsaati nʉ suʔuraʔi,” mekʉ.

    They completely made the fire near at hand; one said, “Good, I have an idea.”

11. Sitʉʉkʉse, “Hini usʉ?” me u niikwiiyʉ.

    These ones said to him, “What is that?”

12. Surʉkʉse, “Tanʉwitsa ruhkanaaiʔniwʉnʉkatʉ [tuhkanaaiʔniwʉnʉkatʉ] ihka raa [taa] hanikwasʉkʉpʉha tʉkʉbʉʉni,” mekʉ.

    That one said, “We should speak Wichita as we are here eating our roasted corn.”

13. Surʉʉkʉse, “Yee haa. Tsaatʉ u tuhkanaaiʔniwʉnʉbʉnika [ruhkanaaiʔniwʉnʉbʉnika],” mekʉ.

    Those ones said, “Hey, yes! Good idea for us to be speaking Wichita.” [Yee haa is usually a male expression in Comanche culture.]

14. “Subeʔtsa urʉ tuhkanaaiʔtenahpʉ taa tuhkanaaiʔbihiʔanii tai suatʉ ke tamʉmatu musasuawaʔitʉ.”

    “At that time, that Wichita man will think us our Wichita boys, not our concern.”

15. Surʉkʉse urʉʉmatʉ, “Namʉsohihtsika namisituhkanaaiʔniwʉnʉ tamʉmatu u roʔituʔi [toʔituʔi],” mekʉ.

    That one said to those ones, “Hurry, speak Wichita. He is coming for us.”

16. Sʉmʉʔkʉse urʉʉmatʉ, “Yee haitsi. Ma maʔoome. Ma nakwʉsiʔtsa nikakʉtsi ma maʔoome,” mekʉ.

    One of them said, “Hey male friend. Stir up that fire. Stick in that pumpkin. Stir up that fire.”

17. Sʉme u ʉkʉyʉkwikakʉse surʉ tuhkanaaiʔtenahpʉ urʉʉkʉhu kimaayu.

    Speaking of that, he was still talking when that one Wichita man was coming toward those ones.

18. Surʉʉkʉse, “Yee ikise ihka hanibihta narʉmi kimaayu,” me niwʉnʉtsi surʉʉ tunehsʉnu.

    Those ones ran and said, “Hey, here, here, the corn owner is coming.”

19. Surʉkʉse urʉʉ [surʉʉ] pabi, “Ma pamutsaaʔmatuka tunehtsʉ,” mekʉ.

    Those one’s older brother said, “Run to that bend in the creek.”

20. Sitʉkʉse tenahpʉ marii miakʉnu.

    This man chased them.

21. Urii [utii] miakʉtsi sʉmʉʔa kuʔnikakʉnu.

    He chased those ones and completely roped one.

22. Sitʉ tʉmatʉʉmoaku u wʉhpaʔinu, “Nananʉʉʔmaikuka nʉ rʉmʉsʉaʔena [tʉmʉsʉaʔena] poʔsabihiʔanʉʉ ahiʔbʉniyʉhka,” mekʉ.

    This one he hit a lot, several times [and] said, “I tired myself out with my crops; mischievous boys go about destroying.”

23. Sitʉkʉse siʔanetʉ sitʉʉ nʉmʉbihiʔanʉʉ kahnikʉhu miʔanu urʉʉkʉ bitʉhtsi [pitʉhtsi], “Mʉʉ tuaʔnʉʉtukutsa nʉ rʉmʉsʉapʉha [tʉmʉsʉapʉha] tʉmarʉʉmoaku ahiʔbʉniʔnʉʉ,” mekʉ.

    This one went somewhere to these Comanche boys’ house [and] arrived [and] said, “Your sons were destroying many of my crops.”

24. Sitʉʉkʉse nʉmʉbihiʔanʉʉ ahpʉʔnʉʉ, “Usʉ tanʉ mʉʉ poʔsahanipʉkahtu mʉʉ pukunii uhka [suhka] tuhkanaaiʔtenahpʉʔa rʉmakaruʔi [tʉmakaruʔi],” mekʉ.

These ones’, Comanche boys’, fathers said, “For your mischievous acts, we are going to pay that Wichita man your horses.”

25. Sʉmʉʔkʉse urʉʉmatʉna samohpʉ, “Nʉtsa nah suhka renahpʉʔa [tenahpʉʔa] tuaʔa kuhmaruruʔi,” mekʉ.

One of those one’s sisters said, “I am going to just marry that man’s son.”

26. Surʉʉkʉse u samohpʉ tsaati bʉ [pʉ] puki narʉnooʔrʉkitsi [narʉnooʔtʉkitsi] wihnu suhka bʉ [pʉ] samohpʉʔa ubaʔa [upaʔa] u rohtoʔinu [tohtoʔinu].

Those ones’ sister saddled up their good horse; then, they helped their sister to mount the tall horse.

27. Siʔanetʉ sitʉkwʉ suhka tuhkanaaiʔtenahpʉʔwakatu miʔanu mawaka bitʉnu [pitʉnu].

Somewhere those two went to that Wichita man [and] toward him they arrived.

28. Sitʉ ma samohpʉ sihka renahpʉʔa [tenahpʉʔa], “Nʉ samohpʉʔtsa ʉ tuaʔa kuhmabaituʔi,” mekʉ.

This he said of his sister to this man, “My sister is going to have your son for a husband.”

29. Sitʉ naiʔbi suhka u tuaʔa tsaati tuibihtsiʔa kuhmarunu.

This beautiful young girl married [said of the woman] that son, a good brave young man. [kuhmarunu is one term for *married* that is spoken by Comanche women in the Comanche culture.]

30. Sitʉkʉse tuhkanaaiʔtenahpʉ rʉsuʔnaanu [tʉsuʔnaanu] surʉʉ pihiʔanʉʉ pʉmʉ aiʔku haniʔha sukʉhu nasuwatsinu.

This Wichita man quieted, calmed down, [and] forgot those ones’ boys’ bad doings.

31. Subet~~u~~.

The end.

The Tale of the Two Osage Men Who Surprised a Comanche Woman While She Was Cooking

1. Suʔanakʉtsa rʉa [tʉa] ta sookʉnibaihku sʉmʉ renahpʉ [tenahpʉ] pʉ kwʉhʉmaʔai u piaʔmaʔai tʉasʉ tʉtaatʉ tua tʉasʉ tʉtaatʉ petʉʔmaʔai urii [utii] nokaʔinu.

   Somewhere it is said of our village, one man, his wife, his mother, and little son and little daughter moved off to camp separately from the main band.

2. Sitʉkʉse miʔanoorʉ soʔana nobitʉnu [nopitʉnu].

   This one went somewhere at a distance [and] arrived and camped.

3. Sitʉkʉse tenahpʉ bʉ [pʉ] kwʉhi, “Namakaʔmuki tʉbehkakwatuʔi takwʉ,” mekʉ.

   This man said to his wife, “Get yourself ready, we two are going to kill for meat and butcher.”

4. Suhka bʉʉ [pʉʉ] kakuʔa bʉhʉ [pʉhʉ] tʉrʉeʔtʉhʉmaʔaihku sukʉhu bʉʉ [pʉʉ] kahnikʉhu urii [utii] bʉahtsi [pʉahtsi] pʉkwʉ miʔanu wihnu tʉkenukwa.

   Leaving their grandma to care for the children at their teepee, these two went then to hunt several days away from the camp.

5. Suʔanakʉse sitʉkwʉ nobitʉnu [nopitʉnu].

   Somewhere, these two arrived and camped.

6. Sitʉkʉse ma kumahpʉ suʔahru hunuʔmatu taʔsiwooʔa tʉmarʉʉmoari yuhukati tʉbehkanu.

   This one, the husband, went somewhere to a creek where he killed a very fat buffalo for meat.

7. Siʔanetʉ ma noohtsi pʉ [bʉ] kwʉhʉwakatu miʔanu.

   At some place, he went to carry that off to his wife.

8. Ma bitʉhkakʉse sitʉ ma kwʉhʉ ma tsayumiʔitsi pʉhi makanu.

   He arrived; his wife took down [the meat and] fed them.

9. Pʉhi tʉhkamaahka pʉhʉ tʉhkapʉha inanu.

   They ate [,and] they made jerk meat.

10. Sitʉ waʔihpʉ ma inaʔetʉ ma rohtsaniʔimiʔa [tohtsaniʔimiʔa] hunakwʉ.

    This woman made jerk meat and hung it up outside.

11. Sitʉkʉse ma kumahpʉ, “Inakwʉhi nʉ ma nooʔyahnehti bunikwatuʔi [punikwatuʔi],” mekʉ.

    This one, her husband, said, “In this direction I am going to look at that hill.”

12. Sitʉkʉse ma kwʉhʉ, “Namʉsohihtsi nʉʉ pitusʉ kimanu,” mekʉ.

    This one, his wife, said, “Hurry, you come back.”

13. Siʔanetʉkʉse ma miʔaka wahahtʉ wasaasiʔtenanʉkwʉ mawaka bitʉnu [pitʉnu].

    He went somewhere [,and] two Osage men arrived and moved toward her.

14. Surʉkwʉkʉse, “Hakʉse ʉ kumahpʉ?” mekʉ.

    Those two said, “Where is your husband?”

15. Surʉkʉse waʔihpʉ, “Ibu u miʔaʔi,” mekʉ.

    That one woman said, “He went this direction nearby.”

16. Pʉʔatahpu u miʔaʔiha uhri tʉʔawekʉnu.

    He went differently than what she told them.

17. Surʉkʉse sʉmʉ, “Mawaka nʉ karʉruʔi ʉnʉ ma kumahpʉʔa wekikwa,” mekʉ.

    That one said, “I am going to sit down; you move toward to search for her husband.”

18. Sitʉkʉse sihka bʉwaka [pʉwaka] karʉʔiha, “Ihka nʉ rʉhkapʉha [tʉhkapʉha] hunakwʉ rohtsanaruʔi [tohtsanaruʔi],” mekʉ ma yaahtsi toʔinu.

    She said to this one who was sitting, “Here, I will go hang up the meat outside,” [and] she took it and came out.

19. Pʉ puki narʉnooʔrʉkitʉ pʉʉ kahnimiihtsi nʉʉtsʉkʉnaaku uwakatu tʉbitsi tunehtsʉnu uba toʔitsi pʉ kumahpʉʔa pʉpetu miʔaʔibetu nuhkinu pʉ kumahpʉʔa raʔuranu [taʔuranu].

    She saddled up her tied-up horse by their teepee and really ran toward her husband, climbing up to escape. She ran away toward where her husband went and met her husband.

20. Surʉkʉse tenahpʉ, “Hakanikia ʉnʉ nahanu,” mekʉ.

    That one man said, “Wonder what happened to you?”

21. “Wahahtʉkwʉ wasaasiʔtenanʉkwʉ nʉwaka bitʉʔi [pitʉʔi],” mekʉ.

    “Two Osage men arrived and moved toward me,” she said.

22. Sitʉkʉse u kumahpʉ siʔanetʉ uhri kuhiyamiʔanu.

    This one, her husband, went some place to spy on those ones.

23. Surʉkwʉkʉse suʔanetʉ uhrʉ kahni muhyʉhkutʉ kuʔinʉbʉni.

    Those two somewhere east of that teepee were roasting jerked meat.

24. Sitʉkʉse pitusʉ pitʉnu.

    This one went back [and] arrived.

25. “Ukʉsʉ urʉkwʉ tahʉ kahnikʉ yʉkwihkatʉkwʉ,” mekʉ.

    “Still those two are sitting down at our teepee,” he said.

26. Surʉkwʉkʉse suʔana u bianooʔkarʉku [pianooʔkarʉku] u manaaʔnakwʉhu miʔanu.

    Those two were somewhere; they were sitting on a big hill [,and] still further off they went.

27. Surʉ u kumahpʉ suma u nooʔma toʔiʔetʉ uhri [suhri] kuhiyaʔeeyu.

    That one, her husband, completely climbed the hill [and] was spying on those ones.

28. Surʉkʉse u kwʉhʉ, “Tʉmarʉʉmoakutsa surʉ sʉmʉ nʉwaka karʉʔi nʉ bukubaʔa [pukubaʔa / pukupaʔa] toʔitsi nʉ runetsʉka [tunetsʉka] nʉ miakʉʔi noha u nʉ kwʉhʉruʔi ʉnʉse nʉmatu toʔitsi nʉ makwitsoʔainu.”

That one, his wife, said, “That one, who sat with me, moved toward me a lot. When I climbed on my high horse to run, he chased me [and] nearly was going to catch me; you appeared and saved me.”

29. Sitʉkʉse ma kumahpʉ u rukanika [tukanika] uhrʉwakatu miʔanu.

This one, her husband, when it became night, went toward those two.

30. Sitʉkwʉ wasaasiʔnʉkwʉ hunai bʉhi [pʉhi] u nakʉkaku piaʔʉsuakibʉni.

From the outside, he listened to these two Osages [who were] snoring loud.

31. Sitʉkʉse pʉhʉ tʉhkapʉha hunaiki narohtsaniʔiku ma tsayumiʔitsi ma noohtsi bʉ [pʉ] kwʉhʉwakatu bitusʉ [pitusʉ] miʔanu.

This one took down their meat that was hanging up outside, carried it off [, and] went back towards his wife.

32. Sitʉkwʉkʉse siʔanetʉ pʉhʉ tʉnoowapiha tsakʉtsi miʔanu soʔana surʉʉkʉ pʉʉ kakuʔwaka bʉʉ [pʉʉ] tʉrʉeʔtʉʉwaka bitʉnu [pitʉnu].

Someplace, these two led their pack animal [and] went somewhere toward those ones, their grandma and children, [and they] arrived.

33. Sitʉʉkʉse siʔanetʉ pʉʉ [bʉʉ] naʔnʉmʉnʉʉkʉhu pitusʉ [bitusʉ] nomiʔanu.

These two moved their camp and returned to their relatives somewhere.

34. Soko ra [ta] soohkahnibaihku urʉʉkʉ nobitʉnu [nopitʉnu].

There, our village, those ones arrived and camped.

35. Subet~~u~~.

The end.

The Lily Roots Tale

1. Soobeʔsʉkʉtsa rʉa [tʉa] atabitsi̲nʉʉ suʔana nobitʉnu̲ [nopitʉnu̲].

   Long ago it is said that some non-Comanche Indigenous peoples arrived and camped somewhere far away.

2. Surʉʉku̲se narʉhkaʔtsuʔmanu̲.

   Those ones ran out of groceries.

3. Urʉʉ nanawaʔihpʉʔanʉʉku̲se pʉʉ kahni yʉkwinu̲.

   Those ones' women relatives set up their teepees.

4. Urʉʉmatʉku̲se, "tanʉwitsa ohu̲hi ma piaʔʉmahpaaku̲hi kʉrʉʔatsi̲ha taa yʉihtʉhkaruʔi̲ha ahwemiʔanu̲."

   Those ones said, "We should go there to that big lake [and] dig up water lilies for our supper."

5. Sitʉʉku̲se siʔanetu̲ pʉʉ kuʔwu̲horaʔa himahtsi suku̲hu ʉmahpaaku̲hu miʔanu̲.

   These ones took several of their hoes and went somewhere to the lake.

6. Tahkweʔyuʔi̲tsi pʉʉ muhpeʔmaʔai maku̲hu weenu̲ tʉmarʉʉmoaku sihka kʉrʉʔatsi̲ha ahwenu̲.

   They took off their shoes [and] went down to it [there] with their hoes in hand [and] dug up many of these water lilies.

7. Sʉmʉʔku̲se urʉʉmatʉ, "Ketʉʔka mubi̲sitʉʉ mahka tai ahweku," me urii niikwiiyu̲.

   One of those ones said to them, "You all don't blow your noses as we dig them up."

8. Sitʉʉku̲se siʔanetu̲ pʉʉ ahwepu̲ha narʉsoko̲ko noohtsi pʉʉ kahniku̲hu miʔanu̲.

   These ones carried off their sack of dug up [roots and] went to their teepees somewhere.

9. Sitʉʉ pitʉnu̲.

   These ones arrived.

10. Pʉʉ kahnikʉku kohtooʔetʉtsi sihka pʉʉ ahwepʉha tʉkʉhmaninʉ.

    At their houses, they made fires and prepared their dug-up lily roots to eat.

11. Sʉsʉmʉ marʉʉkʉ tsuhnipʉmaʔaihku ma karʉkʉnʉ.

    Some of them boiled it with bones.

12. Sʉsʉmʉʔkʉse pʉmʉ u yuhukʉ u kwasʉkʉnʉ.

    Some of them cooked it in grease.

13. Sʉmʉʔkʉse, “Nʉtsa nah nʉ ahwepʉha kusiwʉhpimaruʔi” mekʉ.

    One said, “I am just going to roast and bury my dug-up lily roots in ashes.”

14. Sitʉʉkʉse hubaʔainʉ.

    These ones brewed coffee.

15. Sʉmʉʔoyetʉ tʉmarʉʉmoaku yuhunohkonʉ.

    Everyone made lots of fried bread.

16. Marʉʉ nanahtenanʉʉkʉse, “Tai makaaka,” me urii niikwiiyʉ.

    Their male relatives said to those ones, “Feed us all.”

17. Sitʉʉkʉse tʉkʉsonʉtsi pʉʉ tʉkʉhmanipʉha tsawʉniʔinʉ.

    These ones spread a cloth on which to place food and sat out the foods that they prepared to eat.

18. Sitʉʉkʉse, “nohi tsaaku mʉnʉ waʔihpʉʔanʉʉ tai tʉkʉʔahwekʉnʉ.

    These ones said, “You all, our women relatives, did very good by having dug up something for us to eat.

19. Tanʉse tʉbitsi tsaaku ma rʉhkanʉ [tʉhkanʉ].

    We ate really good.

20. Pʉetsʉku tanʉ itʉʉmati pimoroo?taiboo?nʉʉ kuhtsu?kʉhi tʉbehkaru?inʉʉ," mekʉse surʉʉ tenanʉʉ niwʉnʉʉyu.

    Tomorrow we will kill and butcher these cowboys' cattle for food," the men said to those ones."

21. Surʉʉkʉse, "ke tanʉ nah tsihakooiwa?itʉʉ ihka sokokuhpaiki ta tʉhka?ena sʉa?eku," mekʉse surʉʉ.

    Those ones [men] said to those ones, "We just will not starve here; our food grows there in the earth."

22. Surʉʉkʉse u bʉetsʉku [pʉetsʉku] suhka piayuupʉha pimoroo?a tʉbehkanu.

    Those ones the next day butchered that big fat cow.

23. Si?anetʉ sitʉʉ ma inanu ma basahka [pasahka] nomi?anu.

    Someplace these ones made jerked meat of it that dried [and, they] moved their camp away.

24. Subetʉ.

    The end.

The Tale of the Comanche Woman Who Was Caught in a Tree

1. Soobeʔsʉtsa rʉa [tʉa] nʉmʉnʉʉ waahkusiʔokweʔbetu miʔanʉ.

   Long ago it is said some Comanches went to grey flowing cedar creek [Wichita Falls, Texas].

2. Tamutʉsoʔihunuʔma surʉʉ nobitʉnʉ [nopitʉnʉ].

   Those ones arrived and camped at briar creek.

3. Urʉʉ nanawaʔihpʉʔanʉʉkʉse, "ʉbia [ʉvia / ʉpia].

   Those women relatives said, "Oh my goodness [traditionally an exclamation used by women].

4. hunuʔbetu tanʉ naʔkʉhtabaʔiʔa pomaakwa."

   We should go away towards the creek to pick some pecans."

5. Surʉʉ hunuʔbetu miʔanʉ.

   Those ones went toward the creek.

6. Sitʉʉkʉse sihka naʔkʉhtabaʔiʔa sʉsʉmʉʔa wʉhpomiʔinʉ tʉasʉ uma sohokʉahtsi u wʉyumiʔinʉ.

   These ones here cut down some pecans and climb it [the tree] to knock off [pecans] with a stick.

7. Sʉmʉʔkʉse waʔihpʉ, "Nʉtsa sohoroʔituʔi [sohotoʔituʔi]," Me yʉkwiiyʉ sʉmʉʔma toʔinʉ.

   One woman said, "I am going to climb," as she climbed one [tree].

8. Okobaʔa [okopaʔa] toʔitsi suhka huuhpihta moke tahkobʉtsi pahihkitʉ tʉasʉ sʉmʉʔma u mokama tsaninʉ.

   There she climbed; her foot snapped a tree limb, and it broke off. She fell and got snagged by a tree limb.

9. Sohkotʉ pʉ tsanihkutʉ wenuunukina.

   From there [where] she was snagged, [she] was swinging back and forth.

10. Surʉʉkʉse u tʉiʔnʉʉ uhka pʉʉ tsapʉhetuʔiha mʉninu.

    Those ones, her female friends [traditionally a Comanche woman's word for female friends, sisters, or cousins], tried to take that one down, but failed.

11. Sʉmʉʔkʉse tenahpʉ tʉhʉyakarʉrʉ ubaʔa [upaʔa] wʉnʉhtsi u tsapʉhenu.

    One man stood high on horseback and took her down.

12. Sitʉʉkʉse waʔihpʉʔanʉʉ tʉmarʉʉmoaku pomanu.

    These women picked a lot of pecans.

13. Waahkusiʔokweʔkʉhi uma tʉmʉʉnu tʉmarʉʉmoaku puhihwituanu.

    In Wichita Falls [grey flowing cedar creek], they traded it [pecans and] got a lot of money.

14. Surʉʉkʉse sooko narʉhkaʔrʉmʉʉnu [narʉhkaʔtʉmʉʉnu].

    Those ones bought a lot of groceries.

15. Wihnu u pʉetsʉku pitusʉ nobitʉnu [nopitʉnu].

    Then the next day, they returned and camped.

16. Setʉʉ waʔihpʉʔanʉʉ kohtoohtsi tʉkʉhmaniiyu.

    Those women made a fire [and] were preparing a meal.

17. Siʔahrukʉse waikinʉ nanakwʉhʉnʉh pʉpaʔa yʉkwihkana nuhkikitʉ marʉʉkʉ wʉnʉnu.

    At this point, a wagon with a married couple ran by and stopped [near] them.

18. Sitʉkʉse tenahpʉ, "Kwʉʉpʉ weehtsi tahi tʉkʉhmanikʉ," me u niikwiiyu.

    This man said to her, "Wife, get off; prepare us a meal."

19. Sitʉkʉse ma kwʉhʉ pʉhʉ tʉkʉhtʉmʉʉpʉha yaahtsi urʉʉ kohtoopʉkahtu u nʉʉhkwitubinikwʉsʉ u wihinu.

    This one, his wife took their wrapped, purchased [store bought] food and threw it in the fire.

20. Surʉʉkʉse waʔihpʉʔanʉʉ u suʔuyaaʔinu.

    Those ones, the women relatives, laughed at her.

21. “Soo ma hibihkatʉ,” me u niikwiyu.

    “She has drank much of that,” one said to him.

22. Surʉkʉse u kumahpʉ, “Hipeʔse waʔihpʉ senihku tʉkʉhmaniʔeeyu?”

    That one, her husband said, “Since when does a woman prepare a meal in this different way?”

23. Surʉʉkʉse waʔihpʉʔanʉʉ, “Pia rʉa [tʉa] noo u makwinumʉtsi,” me u niikwiyu.

    Those women said to him, “It is said big [and] loud, for sure, you are making her drunk.”

The Tale of the Comanche Women Who Are Herding Turkeys

1. Suʔanakʉtsa rʉa [tʉa] sʉsʉmʉʔnʉʉ kahnibaʔi.

   Somewhere it is said some [Comanches] camped.

2. Surʉʉkʉse ke tsihanabeniʔeeyu.

   Those ones did not have any food.

3. Surʉʉkʉse urʉʉ nanawaʔihpʉʔanʉʉ, “Hina ranʉ [tanʉ] taa tʉrʉeʔtii tʉhkakʉhutuʔi?” mekʉ.

   Those ones, their women relatives said, “What are we going to feed our children?”

4. Surʉkʉse sʉmʉ urʉʉmatʉ, “tsaati nʉ suʔuraʔi,” mekʉ.

   That one, one of them said, “I have a good idea.

5. Tanʉwitsa ma yʉihka raa [taa] nanahtenanʉʉmaʔai okʉho huuhkabatu miʔanu.”

   At evening we should go with our men relatives to the woods in the distance.”

6. Sʉmʉʔkʉse waʔihpʉ, “Hina hanituʔi mia?” mekʉ.

   One of those women said, “What are we going to do when we go?”

7. Surʉkʉse, “ehka kuyuniiʔa huuhkabanai tahkʉaruʔi,” mekʉ.

   That one said, “We are going to drive out those scattered turkeys in the woods.”

8. “Suni urii [utii] tai mʉʉhkase taa nanahtenanʉʉ pʉʉ taʔwoʔiʔa himahtsi ohto ma huuhkʉmaʔru wihnu roboʔihutuʔi [toboʔihutuʔi].

   “In that way, our men relatives are going to stand at the edge of the woods, shoot their guns, [and] take several [turkeys].

9. Soobeʔsʉ nʉnʉ sunihku puhitooʔa rʉkʉwasʉʔetʉʉ [tʉkʉwasʉʔetʉʉ].”

   A long time ago we killed turkeys to eat that way.”

10. Surʉʉkʉse oyetʉ siʔanetʉ bʉʉ [pʉʉ] kahnikutʉ miʔanu pʉʉ [bʉʉ] omomʉsʉ surʉʉ uku bitʉnu [pitʉnu].

    Those ones all left their teepees somewhere, went by legs [on foot/walked], [and] those ones arrived there.

11. Sitʉʉkʉse tenanʉʉ suhka waʔihpʉʔa pʉmʉ u niʔatsiʔnihku huuhkʉmaʔku miʔanu.

    These ones, the men, [once] there, the woman advised them, and [the men] went to the edge of the woods.

12. Sitʉʉkʉse wihnu waʔihpʉʔanʉʉ ma huuhkabaiki miʔanu siʔana pʉma sehka kuyuniiʔa yʉkwiʔena piabaʔsahpuniiʔtuhka [piapaʔsahpuniiʔtuhka] yʉkwinu.

    These ones, then, the women relatives, went to the woods somewhere [and] sat down near a big oak tree [where] those scattered turkeys sat.

13. Marii yʉkwihkakukʉse setʉ kuyunii sooyorikitʉ sima paʔsahpuniiʔma yʉkwinu.

    As they [the women] sat there, many scattered turkeys flew and sat in the oak tree.

14. Sitʉʉkʉse maa yʉkwihkatʉ wihnu sokoko pohbianu [pohpianu].

    These ones [the turkeys], they sat then jumped from there.

15. Sitʉʉ waʔihpʉʔanʉʉ marʉʉmatu tunehtsʉnu.

    These women ran after them.

16. Sitʉʉkʉse kuyuniiʔnʉʉ huuhkʉmaʔku tunehtsʉnu.

    These turkeys ran to the edge of the woods.

17. Huuhkʉmaʔku ma kʉahka sitʉʉ tenanʉʉ tʉmarʉʉmoaku marii wasʉnu.

    They came out of the edge of the woods; these men killed many of them [turkeys].

18. Sitʉʉkʉse wihnu pʉʉ [bʉʉ] wasʉpʉha waʔwahku noohtsi pitʉsʉ bʉʉ [pʉʉ] kahnikʉhu miʔanʉ.

    Of the number of turkeys that they killed, these ones then took two a piece, carried them off, [and] went back to their teepees.

19. Pʉʉ kahnikʉ bʉi [pʉi] bitʉhka [pitʉhka] setʉʉ marii noʔinʉ.

    They arrived at their houses and plucked them [the turkeys].

20. Wihnu marʉʉ nanawaʔihpʉʔanʉʉ ma makaʔmukitsi kohtoohtsi sehka kuyuniiʔa sooko kwasʉkʉnʉ.

    Then our women relatives prepared a fire for those turkeys [and] cooked them there.

21. Sitʉʉ sukʉhu sunihku kuyuniiʔa pʉʉ [bʉʉ] wasʉʔima tsihakwitsoʔainʉ.

    These ones, there, in that manner, the turkeys that they killed saved them from starvation.

22. Subetʉ.

    That is all.

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