

**“Deliberate Intentions”**  
**Portfolio I**  
**Due October 6th, 2011**

Please complete the following three-stage portfolio assignment, addressing each section in order. Take a break between each stage to “collect” yourself and your ideas. Your final work should be five to six pages in length, and contained within a thin, two pocket folder.

**IMPORTANT:** You can not successfully complete this assignment if you have not read or viewed the texts assigned this semester thus far.

**Part One:**

Please read the section on “Developing a Working Knowledge” on pages 39-59 in the Ballenger text, and “map” your experience as you move through the following exercise. This activity will give you some practical experience in the acquisition and development of working knowledge, as well as some skill in developing this working knowledge through the use of proper focusing questions. It should also give you some sense of the various ways that this particular trajectory is mirrored in the mapping that takes place within the research process in its entirety.

- With Sherry Turkle’s *Alone Together* in mind, make a short list of some ideas that you might be interested in pursuing about her work through several stages of research, especially in light of all that we have focused on throughout the first few weeks of the course. Take advantage of the “interest inventory” model that Ballenger has provided on pages 29 - 32 of the text while choosing these themes and ideas.
- Following Ballenger’s advice about developing research strategies, see what kind of working knowledge you can begin to acquire by developing appropriate and wide-ranging focusing questions in light of your interest inventory work above. Once you have spent some time on these questions, try incorporating some or all of the following terms into your overall thinking: ‘ethnography,’ ‘ethnology,’ ‘ethos,’ ‘ethics,’ ‘emic,’ and ‘etic.’ You will of course need to look into the meaning of these terms prior to doing so.
- After spending some time with these exercises, again make a short list of those ideas that you might be interested in pursuing about this work through further research, especially in light of what you have focused on through your exploration of and with the terms that I have provided for you above. You may want to write a few quick sentences or speak to a trusted “colleague” to clarify your thinking at this point.

After you have completed your lists, please write **two pages** about this experience, describing what you discovered about your subject matter through this exercise, and providing some preliminary assessment regarding your skill as a “researcher” at this point in the process. In other words, tell me what you did, how you came to your ideas, and what this has taught you about your own capacity to generate and pursue these. If possible, please include specific references to texts or specific class discussions that have helped you in your account.

## Part Two:

Please read the section on “Developing a Research Strategy” on pages 61-85 in the Ballenger text, and once again carefully “map” your experience as you move through the following exercise. This should give you some sense of how to develop *focused* knowledge with the aid of *focusing* questions, and more importantly, about what you are doing as you engage in this activity. Once again, this should also give you some appreciation of the various ways that this trajectory is mirrored in the mapping that takes place within the research process in its entirety.

- With some of the central themes addressed in Turkle’s text in mind, think about your own beliefs and opinions about her subject matter, and about what she is trying to achieve through her work in general. Without making any claims at this point, once again consider your own take on what you have explored and discovered regarding possible ideas to pursue through further research.
- While taking a look at the themes that are addressed in Turkle’s text, think about your own beliefs and opinions about her subject matter, and about what she is trying to communicate throughout the first half of her book specifically. Without making any claims at this point, once again explore your own take on what you have written regarding possible ideas to pursue through further research.
- Look on page 81 of Ballenger’s text, and again read his comments regarding the development of “focused knowledge.” Think about what you might still need to do in order to successfully achieve this level of expertise on your own by asking yourself the following questions:
  - What will most help me to understand the context for the sorts of questions that interest me?
  - Do I have enough information to support any claims that I might eventually want to make about these subjects?
  - Has anything that I have written down or thought about thus far challenged or complicated my understanding of anything addressed in Turkle’s book at this point in the process?
  - Has anything that I have found in this text, or anything in my own previous thinking regarding any of the ideas found therein been complicated by what I have accomplished at this point of this portfolio assignment at any level?

After you have completed your list, please write **two pages** about your experience. Focus on what you have discovered about your subject matter and about your own experience as a “researcher.” In other words, I would like you to simply tell me what you have done to come to your ideas, and what this has taught you about your own capacity to generate and pursue these. Once again, if possible, please include specific references to texts or specific class discussions that have helped you within your account.

## Part Three:

Please reread pages 99-105 in Ballenger’s text, and then apply his suggestions about conducting interviews to what we have read in Sherry Turkle’s book. In light of what you have discovered in the first two parts of this portfolio assignment, please compose three questions for Turkle in preparation for an imaginary discussion with her in the coming days. In your questions, please refer to her text to give these questions their proper context. In other words, rather than asking her a question about her use of narrative in general, you should point to specific examples of narrative in her text to make your question more concrete and effective. After you have composed each question, please provide me with a short explanation of how you went about doing so. This should be **one to two pages** in length.