

## The Social Sciences and Humanities Disciplines: - a summary

### “Eye Juggling,” an Integration of the Diverse

**Social sciences:** Examples of disciplines: archaeology, psychology and sociology. 1. Application of an empirical, rational methodology to prove/disprove a hypothesis (legitimized via validity and reliability tests, and either quantitative or qualitative research design); 2. Premised upon objective observer (“glass pane” Cartesian Dualism); 3. Purpose is to analyze, explain and predict overt human behavior (as groups and/or individuals); 4. In order to generate new knowledge. Knowledge is the accumulation of facts and information.

In analyzing a rite of passage, for example, a psychologist would ask, how does this ritual contribute to self identity and enhance self esteem, while a sociologist might ask how does this ritual contribute to group social solidarity and build community?

Example of the “Jericho and Domestication” essay, based upon archaeological research, with specific chronological dating of measurable subject materials, e.g., walls and tower, and burial remains, adding to factual information of the domestication of plants, and its documented economic, religious and social consequences.

**Humanities:** Examples of disciplines: ethnography (cultural anthropology), literature, and history of religion. 1. Application of an interpretative methodology (to “interpret” is to “negotiate” knower and known, to render something meaningful, legitimized via authenticity and trustworthiness); 2. Premised upon a reflective/reflexive participant (cracks and holes in “glass pane” or perhaps no “glass pane” dualism, acknowledging researcher is part of subject studied); 3. Purpose is to reveal and appreciate human meaning and purpose; 4. In order to generate wisdom – better address and explore the “big questions.” Wisdom is the synthesis of knowledge and experiences into insights that deepen one’s understanding of relationships and the meaning of life. In other words, knowledge is a *tool*, and wisdom is the *craft* in which the tool is used.

In interpreting a rite of passage, for example, an ethnographer or historian of religion might ask what are the symbolic meanings of the various components of a rite of passage, and how do these meanings render an appreciation of what it means to be a “human”?

Example of the “Burnt Face” oral tradition, the components of which can be linked to the stages of a rite of passage (orphan, separation and sacrifice-death, adoption,

rebirth), embedded with certain *mi'yep* (meaningful symbolic clusters, such as *ashammaléaxia*, *unshat-qn*, “wagon wheel”), serving as a metaphoric guide for human behavior and meaning, presented from the reflexive, personal experiences of the instructor.

**Importance and Role of Integration:** In this seminar and throughout your educational pursuits, you will be presented with an array of multiple and diverse perspectives and worldviews, along with distinct and differing methodological and epistemological specializations, such as those brought to bear through the disciplines of the humanities and social sciences. And in addition, as in any academic endeavor there can also develop a disconnection and schism between your academic pursuits and your social and personal life as engaged outside the classroom. It is thus especially important you acquire skills in *integration* and *interdisciplinary cohesion*. Out of the potential chaos and contradictions of diversity can arise a larger inclusive unity, as well as ability to better think and act critically and creatively, and, in turn, problem solve.

In this seminar we are using an integration model entitled, “**Sailing the Five C’s.**” It entails **Compartmentalization** (acknowledging and distinguishing the epistemological and methodological differentiation of the humanities and social science tools); **Context** (distinguishing the diverse and differential cultural, historical, intellectual and social environments, as well as the differential levels within an given environment; in other words appreciating and distinguishing the rich diversity in the human condition); **Competency** (in knowing the distinct epistemological and methodological tools, and when and in what specific contexts to apply those tools); **Connection** (applying the multiple tools to differentiated contexts to make connections, see the “bigger picture,” address issues, and problem solve); and **Civic Engagement** (applying these tools and skill to the benefit of others, those in need; in other words, share the Huckleberries).

We seek to develop and utilize a most adaptive approach to integrating multiple disciplines and diverse perspectives, and in so doing, attempt to address life’s challenges. Critical and creative thinking as well as problem solving all depend on your ability to both *think divergently* – compartmentalizing and seeing the rich diversity and multiplicity in the human experience – as well as to *think convergently* – integrating and connecting that rich diversity in new and novel ways. And we just might consider Tom Yellowtail’s Wagon Wheel to help us along the road of integration. The “**Eye Juggling methodology**” is an attempt at “Sailing the Five C’s” and applying diversity and integration into our academic studies and into our lives.

“Eye Juggling” facilitates our capacities to better see and experience from an Indigenous perspective, to engage Coyote, Salmon, and Chief Child of the Yellow Root, along with a host of other First Peoples/Animal Peoples, all from the perennial time immemorial. It is they who travel a landscape full of monsters and “man-eaters,” transforming them into rock formations or into those who will help the people yet to come, and embedding that landscape with “gifts, to be shared with others,” the things the Human Peoples will need, camas to dig, salmon to dip net, deer to hunt, and the *sqigwts* or “water potato” to nourish, as well as the *mi’yep* and “bones,” and the *suumesh/baaxpée* necessary for life. They prepare the landscape for the coming of the Human Peoples, and then bring those People forth.

It is a landscape traveled by Human Peoples, in a participatory world in which reality is the “transitory intersection of those participating.” It is the human responsibility to re-tell the stories, to re-create and perpetuate the perennial phenomena of the First Peoples, of the Spiritual, of the Creator. To participate in the Indigenous world is to have “Coyote swirling around with you, and you in direct dialogue with him.”

“Eye Juggling” facilitates in each of us our capacity for empathy.

“Eye Juggling” allows us to see in the faces of perfect strangers our shared humanity.