

**SPEAKING THE UNSPEAKABLE: EMOTIONAL EXPRESSIONS
OF IDENTITY IN JOURNALS**

A Thesis

by

AUBRIE HORROCKS

Submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies of
Texas A&M University
in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

August 2004

Major Subject: Speech Communication

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August 2004

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ABSTRACT

Speaking the Unspeakable: Emotional Expressions
of Identity in Journals. (August 2004)

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Creating a sense of identity is constructed through communicative processes allowing us to participate in interpersonal relationships, and understand who we are. “Much of our emotional life is bound up with the way we narrate experiences...” (Kerby, 1991, p. 48). Because experiences are told from our own perspective, what we tell is significant. It reflects our feelings regarding a situation, and in the telling of the story, we reinterpret the way we understand our life and how we know ourselves. The purpose of this study is to examine the content and structure of the narratives contained within a diary, in order to learn how an individual interprets emotional experiences and constructs identities. It is a unique opportunity to explore how individuals can cope with ambiguity and uncertainty by constructing multiple identities to functionally enact within a variety of environments.

To Robert.

For whom the completion of this thesis has
significant meaning.

Without your stories, and consistency in writing,
we would never have come to know you.

Breaking this barrier of silence is a way to overcome the past,
and become apart of something greater than yourself.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This has been an incredible journey, and one that would have been incredibly impossible without the love and support of many around me. First, I thank my Heavenly Father for the opportunity to pursue my dreams. I feel that I have been blessed far beyond what I could ever deserve, and I am thankful that I can always place my trust in Him.

My family has been very supportive of me throughout this project, and I would like to thank my mother for offering valuable encouragement and resources. You have made education my passion, and with it, I now know that I can accomplish anything. Thank you for listening patiently to the painful memories and for filling in the holes of stories that I didn't know or couldn't remember. For us, this means more than just knowing Robert. It allows us to focus on where we are going and not on where we've been.

I thank my thesis committee for enduring this process with me. Thank you for your support and feedback.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION AND LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

Regardless of ability, place, appearance, race, religion, culture, or background, each individual has a life story. It is this story that gives us an identity, allowing us to exist and function among one another. “Every day, we swim in a sea of stories and tales that we hear or read or listen to or see...from our earliest days to our deaths” (Berger, 1997, p.1). Some of these narratives are heroic accounts of individuals achieving success against all odds, while others are tragic stories laced with failure and defeat. No matter the specific plots and characters, these stories are worth understanding as they provide insight into our definitions of self, revealing the process through which we shape ourselves. As Phillips (1994) has argued, “listening to a story requires us to involve ourselves in another’s world of time, embodiment, relationship, meaning, and concern” (p. 10).

A focus on understanding the stories of individuals has gained prominence over the last 20 years throughout research, literature, and even the media (Lieblich, Tuval-Mashiach, & Zilber, 1998). Academic studies use narrative inquiry to explore individual characters, entire societies, and historical cultures; websites host thousands of biographical and autobiographical resources; and entertainment television, newscasters, and even Oprah are drawn to understanding the realities of life through the narratives

This thesis follows the style and format of *Management Communication Quarterly*.

people tell (Lieblich et al, 1998). Clearly, this fascination illustrates that storytelling is an important resource for discovering and maintaining a sense of identity. Moreover, hearing these narratives helps others in their own process of identity creation and negotiation. As stated by Linde (1993), “Narrative is a significant resource for creating our internal, private sense of self and is all the more a major resource for conveying that self to and negotiating that self with others” (p. 98).

The process of creating a sense of identity through communication, both oral and written, allows us to participate in interpersonal relationships, while constructing and sustaining a satisfying self-concept. “Much of our emotional life is bound up with the way we narrate experiences...” (Kerby, 1991, p. 48). Because experiences are told from our own perspective, what we tell is significant because it reflects our feelings regarding a situation. In the telling of the story, we reinterpret the way we understand our life experiences and how we know ourselves. Further, although stories are an integral part of our interaction with one another, in some cases the means of communication and understanding one’s self occurs privately, constructed through writing in a diary. “Unquestionably, the kind of work of self-understanding and self-presentation that takes place in telling a life story also takes place in writing a journal” (Linde, 1993, p. 43). Diaries exist, in part, because we have stories that are not socially accepted, or are too personal to tell to others. Ironically, however, those are the stories about which we may be the most curious. The personal reflections within diaries offer a unique opportunity to understand an intimate, subjective story “...that bear[s] the greatest resemblance to the life story...” (Linde, 1993, p. 42).

Hidden in drawers, or under lock and key, diaries are safe places for individual expression, free from the expectations of social collectives, allowing an author to communicate anything that comes to mind. If we illuminate and expose the stories, honoring and respecting the voice of the narrator, we begin to understand an important interplay of how emotional experiences are interpreted and the effect they have on our identity. Narratives are our tools for clarifying the uncertainty of the past, understanding and managing the emotion of the present, and creating a functional identity from which to act in the future.

Purpose of the Thesis

Because all people have stories that help them build an identity, exist in society, and communicate with others, the task becomes researching and understanding life stories in terms of their negotiation of identity with self and others and the way in which emotion, behavior, and meaning are intertwined within the stories. The purpose of this thesis is to explore the content and structure of the narratives contained within a diary in order to understand how an individual interprets emotional experiences and constructs an identity or identities. The holistic-content approach to narrative analysis will be used to understand a life story in its entirety by focusing on specific, critical stages of experience, paying particular attention to the type of stories that are told, the nature of the feelings that are conveyed, and the identity that is created and conveyed (Lieblich et al, 1998). In addition to providing insight regarding the narrative communication of emotion and identity, this analysis offers specific insight into private communication and the personal nature of expression within journals.

Overview of the Narrative

The significant narrative focused on in this thesis research is recounted by a man, my father Robert, who lived within a paradoxical experience, existing in conflicting worlds of drug addiction and conservative Christianity. Upon his recent passing, several volumes of diaries, spanning a 30-year period of time, were found and given to me and other surviving family members. While diary entries are typically private writings, permitting secure expression of feelings and experiences for personal clarification and understanding, these journals offer something different. With authorization from family members, several entries have been read publicly, revealing Robert's desire to have his diaries exposed, and his experiences used to help others. This is a unique opportunity, considering the circumstance of Robert's death, his complex identity, and the vast period of time that the journals cover. Furthermore, Robert's narrative interpretation of emotional experiences within contradictory worlds offers particular insight into the communities in which he functioned, the communication process of journaling, and the social construction of identity[ies].

The focus of this thesis is on the discourse within those journals, told in separate entries over 30 years, that provides insight into the process of constructing a sense of identity[ies] as it is negotiated through emotion management. This study is significant in that it explores how individuals can cope with ambiguity and uncertainty by constructing multiple identities to functionally enact within a variety of environments. For example, Robert lived a typical suburban life, with a wife and five children. He owned his own industrial sales business and was actively involved in the leadership of his church. He was an avid marathon runner and enjoyed working in the yard. Apart from small disputes

with neighbors, or struggles within his company or marriage, no one had any idea that Robert lived an alternate lifestyle of cocaine abuse and homosexuality for over twelve years. He was a master at maintaining distinct identities in separate realms of his life, and he kept note of his paradoxical life experiences in his journals.

Because this research focuses on the private communication within diaries, it supports the communication literature by showing how journaling offers a therapeutic outlet for emotional expression. At the same time, this research furthers the literature by revealing dialectical tensions within public/private discourse, unpacking these tensions to understand the negotiation process of managing conflicting identities. Robert writes of being trapped in his dual identity, controlled by his physical dependence on drugs, yet socially constrained by his reliable and responsible roles as a father, priesthood leader, and business owner. Writing about his problems seemed to temporarily satisfy his need to communicate with others about his trials of addiction, sexuality, relapse, bankruptcy, and self-esteem. At times, several entries seem to communicate that he wanted to deny the tragic life that he led, while other entries are direct statements to specific people perhaps revealing that he was too embarrassed or frightened to communicate interpersonally. Considering the complexities of the journaling process provides an avenue to understand the power of written communication as a means of creating reality from complex emotional experiences. The purpose of this research, then, is not to sketch a picture of painful memories and massive failures, but rather to understand the chaos that exists in our minds, directs our lives, and is only managed and expressed during those quiet moments of journaling.

Literature Review

In the remainder of this chapter, I will discuss the way in which narratives, identity, and emotion have been previously conceptualized. First, narrative is defined as a structured story that emotionally fuses experience with meaning, giving rise to an individual self-understanding. Identity is then understood as an emotional process of reducing uncertainty through communicative interaction with others, building a way of knowing oneself. And finally, emotion is clarified as the overarching power that manipulates our behaviors and expressions, maintaining an identity in both public and private environments. When these concepts are related, questions of identity creation and emotion management are proposed, furthering an understanding of the role of emotion in the process of identity construction through private communication in journaling.

Defining Narrative

There are a variety of ways to define narrative. Some theorists use definitions requiring bounded structures of act, scene, agent, agency, and purpose, or elements of summary, situation, action, evaluation, and resolution (Riessman, 1993). Many argue that the term narrative is synonymous with story, and can be used interchangeably to describe a writing or telling that contains plots, time orientation, characters, action, resolution, and a return to the present (Gilbert, 2002; Labov & Waletzky, 1997). Other researchers describe the nature and power of narratives in a more complex manner, requiring the definition to include elements of subjective interpretations of interaction that clarify experiences, placate uncertainties, and shape future behavior (Gilbert, 2002; Gough, 1999; Riessman, 1993; Rosenwald & Ochberg, 1992). And still other theorists

concentrate on issues of personal significance, describing narratives as a retelling of a series of experiences, or an emotionally and symbolically charged sequence of events that “...enrich, enhance and infuse facts with meaning” (Gabriel, 1998, p. 136). For this research, the terms narrative and story will be used interchangeably, and conceptualized as the “discourse...designed to represent a connected succession of happenings” that emotionally infuses experience with meaning (Webster’s, 1966, p. 1503, cited in Lieblich, et al., 1998, p. 2).

Narrative research is a way to understand the experiences that all of us have as we interact with one another. As a story is created, and perhaps told and retold in a variety of relationships, we begin to learn about ourselves and others. By exploring the stories that we tell, we gain insight into the way that individuals interpret behavior, describe experience, and construct identities. Lieblich et al. states that “stories imitate life and present an inner reality to the outside world; at the same time, however, they shape and construct the narrator’s personality and reality” (1998, p.7). Furthermore, the stories that are written in a journal reveal emotions and experiences that influence the construction of identity. Each diary entry frames, builds, denies, and/or maintains aspects of identity, revealing different shifts and changes that occur throughout life.

Personal life stories have motivated research studies in the attempt to understand the continual building process of experience, allowing research to explain how human behavior is learned, internalized, and sustained. Narrative research has grown in popularity, giving insight into unfamiliar worlds and social arenas, exploring a wide range of life, such as women’s personal experiences (Clark, 2001; Langellier, 1986), abortion (Ellis & Bochner, 1992), HIV/AIDS (Cherry, 1996), breast cancer (Sharf, 1997),

domestic violence (Montalbano, 1993), and sharecropper activities and emotions (Madison, 1993). These are only a few examples of the many stories told that have enriched our understanding of behavior.

Narratives are what we use to pacify our uncertainty and understand our interactions with others, allowing us to negotiate our future exchanges (Eisenberg, 2001). In his presentation of the narrative paradigm, Fisher (1987) argues that people are natural storytellers because we experience life through a series of ongoing narratives. Each story that we tell comes from a significant memory being rationally ordered in a linear way around time, events, topics, and styles (Fisher, 1987; Gough, 1999; Riessman, 1993). “Telling stories about past events seems to be a universal human activity, one of the first forms of discourse we learn as children (Chesebro, 1989) and used throughout the life course by people of all social backgrounds in a wide array of settings” (Riessman, 1993, p. 3). Fisher (1987) furthers this narrative paradigm, affirming that through telling the stories that construct our lives, we better understand communication, behavior, and ourselves.

Narratives are representational stories, created from ambiguous experiences, reflecting individual perspectives of the world (Eisenberg, 2001; Gilbert, 2002). They are a biased depiction our lives, communicated from a perspective that only we can see, and become the knowledge that we use to identify how to act and function (Gilbert, 2002). Through the analysis of narratives, we can better understand the experiences of individuals from their perspective, learning how their identities are created. Shaping our sense of identity, “...stories provide structure...and that which we perceive to be reality. At the same time, our lives and our perception of reality establish a structure for our

stories. We create our stories and then see our world and ourselves through [them]” (Gilbert, 2002, p. 225). The stories that we tell typically come from real experiences, and narrative analysis is a way of understanding what the story means by changing characters back into people and plotlines into real experiences. As summarized by Mishler (1995), “it is clear that we do not *find* stories; we *make* stories,” (p. 117).

Understanding the Purpose of Narratives

The study of narratives is not a new form of research, and has, in fact, facilitated understanding and theory in a variety of fields such as communication (Peterson & Langellier, 1997), education (Clark, 2001), linguistics (Linde, 1993), sociology (Lieblich, et al, 1998), and anthropology (Rosenwald & Ochberg, 1992). Narrative analysis has become increasingly popular because it provides rich data to understand interpersonal interaction, individual bias, social expectations, and cultural values (Smith & Keyton, 2001). While the narrative considered in this thesis is merely one voice, offering a single perspective, its value for analysis emerges through the personal descriptions of experiences that are often full of emotions, and may be relevant to many. The stories offer insights that are not only significant to the life of the participant, but also may resonate with the lives of others. Thus, narrative research not only reveals how participants reflect on and interpret their own personal experiences, but also allows the reader to interact with the story, requiring further interpretation and understanding. We are constantly required to both interact with others and reflect upon our own thoughts, and telling stories is the fundamental way for us to interpret situations and understand experiences (Gough, 1999, & Riessman, 1993).

Narrative research extends beyond the insight of a particular experience, and stories are now read for the description of “the process, product, and consequences of reportage itself” (Rosenwald & Ochberg, 1992, p. 2). The process of creating and telling a story is a subjective one. The process varies depending on who is telling the story, the environment in which it is told, the aspects of experience that are emphasized or omitted, and the ongoing reactions of the audience to the story. Thus, the very process of constructing and telling a story is important to our understanding. That is, narratives are a sense-making tool, in which the experiences retold are both enabled and constrained by the individual’s own interpretation. “[P]eople lie sometimes, forget a lot, exaggerate, become confused, and get things wrong. Yet they are revealing truths. These truths don’t reveal the past as it actually was, aspiring to a standard of objectivity. They give us instead the truths of our experiences” (Personal Narratives Group, p. 261, cited in Riessman, 1993, p. 22).

This concept reveals a dual purpose of narrative research. First, we can learn about individuals and their experiences by analyzing their stories. Through narrative, we come to know a particular storyteller and the way in which s/he understands the experiences they are telling. In this case the act of narration becomes a predominant channel for communication. The second function of narrative research relates the experience of an individual in relation to a society and culture. The analysis of narratives may reveal much about the social pressures, and possible conformity, that serve as a lens for understanding experience, and as a sense-making tool, in the construction of a narrative.

Diaries and Journals

Offering insight into a variety of ways in which to communicate a narrative, Chesebro (1989) argues that, “the basic nature of the story-telling experience changes dramatically depending upon the type of medium employed to tell the story” (p.7). Diaries are private, written narratives that encompass similar characteristics as spoken stories, in that they disclose experiences that negotiate emotions while constructing identity. However, the written and private form of communication produces an avenue for a different type of expression. Written narratives offer different qualities than more public forms of communication; the most obvious benefit being freedom from the public judgment of others. Fisher (1987) explains that audiences typically pass judgment on the integrity of a story by considering the narrative’s coherence and fidelity, or whether or not a story “hangs together” in a logical way and is consistent with our understanding of human experience. Public communication of shared narratives assumes that an audience will make judgment on coherence and fidelity, and is thus constrained by social expectations. In contrast, diaries are typically written for the sole expression of a single perspective and are not constrained by possible judgments regarding narrative coherence and fidelity.

A second distinction between private, written narratives and shared, public narratives is the notion of expectations. There are no specific expectations to fulfill within journal writing, except for those maintained by the author, unlike the social expectations that guide human interaction and communication. In more public forms of communication there are social rules and expectations that guide further behavior, and over time, acceptance and resistance of these social standards, “offers a way of

identifying what is assumed to be a normative experience” (Andrews, 2002, p. 1).

Individuals who have experiences that deviate from the norm, or life stories that are too difficult or embarrassing to tell, might create reactions of denial, suppression, and silence in a public forum. However, the expression of such a narrative is possible within a diary. Journaling provides a safe place for expression. Private constructions do not always mix with the imposed order in society, but are important for the individual to construct in order to better understand themselves. This is the process of “claim[ing] identities and construct[ing] lives” (Riessman, 1993, p. 2).

Furthermore, journaling is the only form of communication that allows individuals to journey through thoughts and experiences, over various periods of time, and among an array of personifications or identities (Brockmeier, 2002; Raggatt, 2002). The narrator may hold these thoughts at a variety of levels of awareness. As Brockmeier (2002) points out, “There are capacities or perhaps better, activities of the mind of which we are not aware, at least not always, and which may come to our consciousness only gradually” (p. 456). Writing offers the narrator time for reflection, allowing lingering thoughts to develop, free from the pressures of a listening audience. Journal writing brackets abstract experiences, marking it as significant, concrete, and real, while giving it a beginning, middle, and end. It provides “a sense of continuity and self-contained individualism” which might never be realized through oral or public forms of expression (Raggatt, 2002, p. 301). A diary is a two-dimensional way to freeze time, forcing the experience into a narrative where it can be emotionally expressed, accepted as a truth, and reviewed for further reflection.

It is through the study of narratives that we come to understand, “what it means to live simultaneously in several worlds of present and past experiences” (Brockmeier, 2002, p. 461-2). By focusing this research on a specific journal, a unique opportunity is presented to understand ambiguity and subjectivity of experience, identity creation, emotional expression, and private communication. “How individuals recount their histories—what they emphasize and omit, their stance as protagonists or victims, the relationship the story establishes between teller and audience—all shape what individuals can claim of their own lives. Personal stories are not merely a way of telling someone (or oneself) about one’s life; they are the means by which identities may be fashioned” (Rosenwald & Ochberg, 1992, p. 1).

Defining Identity

There is extensive literature regarding the process of identity creation, with theories and research spanning a wide variety of disciplines, relating to a vast range of topics. Over time, theorists’ conceptualizations of identity have evolved from identity as individual thought (i.e. Descartes’s ‘I think, therefore I am’) to a multi-faceted construction of identity through interpersonal interaction, such as that articulated in Goffman’s notion of self-presentation (Goffman, 1959, Holstein & Gubrium, 2000, Volger, 2000). Currently, research within the social sciences is building on the concept of identity as a process of negotiating ambiguity with the belief that there is no absolute truth from which to base our actions (Eisenberg, 2001). Some scholars argue that individuals maintain multiple identities, where specific selves are developed to advance interaction within particular spaces/environments, and among a variety of people

(Eisenberg, 2001, Holstein & Gubrium, 2000, & Raggatt, 2002). While it would be impossible to completely review the literature on all of these areas in depth, this section offers a brief overview of the philosophical foundations of identity that begins with positions that advocate a belief in a single and coherent self, shifts to a social constructivist perspective that places identity formation and maintenance within webs of interaction, and concludes with the postmodern/post-structuralist approaches to identity creation.

Beginning with the era of Enlightenment, beliefs about both being and knowledge were based in objectivity and thought, separating the rational self from the chaos of society and from the body and emotions (Burrell & Morgan, 1979; Miller, 2002a). During this time period, Descartes philosophically pinpointed identity within our thoughts, setting up a conceptualization of identity as an objective entity and hence separating mind from body and rationality from emotion. Descartes and other theorists equated the self with cognition, producing not only a philosophical approach to self-discovery, but also the concept of a single identity (Holstein & Gubrium, 2000). This was the transcendental self that transcended, through rationality, the baser elements of body and experience.

The birth of interpretivism, in the social sciences, began with the neo-Kantian movement, and highlighted humanistic values in research through perspectives such as hermeneutics and symbolic interactionism (Burrell & Morgan, 1979; Miller, 2002a; Putnam, 1983). This approach expanded the concept of a single identity by incorporating social experiences into the definition of the self. An interpretive approach to identity looks to the relationship between self and society, showing how individuals create the

social order through interaction, and how society impacts the individual by shaping the way people come to know themselves. The development of this alternative view brought the notion of multiple identities to the forefront, recognizing that varied selves are constructed through individual thoughts, interpersonal communication, and reflexive experiences. For example, American pragmatists such as James, Cooley, and Mead, proposed that we come to understand ourselves through interaction with others and our beliefs about that interaction (Holstein & Gubrium, 2000). James, for instance, maintained that identity is subjectively substantiated through concrete communication and the shifting activities and interactions of everyday life. Cooley, in proposing the idea of a “looking glass self,” promoted the notion that we understand ourselves by speculating about the way that others see us. And although Mead’s interpretation of identity is similar to these pragmatist views, he differentiates the self as, “human thought (mind) and social interaction (the self with others) that serve to interpret and mediate the society in which we live.” (Miller, 2002a, p. 51).

In more recent years, theorists in the postmodern school of thought have augmented these interpretive approaches to identity. Gaining its foundation from Foucaultian analysis (Calas & Smircich, 1996) and Ferdinand de Saussure’s (1966) structural linguistics, the post-structuralist/postmodern approach locates identity in language use (Holmer-Nadesan, 1996). This perspective promotes the continual deconstruction of discourse, analyzing the complexity of changing social realities to recognize what is traditionally silenced. Through deconstructing communication and interactions, the intricacy of viewing several important issues at once creates a more dynamic picture, offering different resolutions for socially oppressive systems

(Buzzanell, 1994). Post-structuralism/Postmodernism advances the premise that understanding the idea of expression, the system of language, and the relationship of knowledge to language and identity is a means to change present practices (Calas & Smircich, 1996). Social realities are recognized as having multiple readings allowing flexibility within the definition of identity. Through continual deconstruction of multiple realities and systems, the complexities within these relationships emerge.

The postmodern approach to narrative research has also produced discourse discussing the issues behind separating multiple identities within an individual in order to focus on the one identity that is most marginalized. In her article on separating the self from the other, Fine (1994) argues the importance of “working the hyphen,” meaning that, “researchers probe how we are in relation with the contexts we study and with our informants, understanding that we are all multiple in those relations” (p. 88). Fine, for instance, would criticize the tendency to write about the exploited or oppressed without recognizing other identities that those individuals also maintain. Typical articles obviously pinpoint critical contradictions within a culture, focusing on the differences that cause an experience, rather than relating the experience through a variety of identities maintained by individuals. For instance, we do not see articles about a conservative Christian homosexual, who is also a father and drug addict. This concept of working the hyphen is important to this thesis research, as it shows the importance of understanding Robert’s narratives through a lens of multiple identities. Then it may be understood how these identities are constructed, emotionally managed, and strategically maintained.

The philosophical foundations of interpretivism and post-modernism differ in important ways with regard to identity, yet both schools of thought would agree that,

“individuals respond to the meanings they construct as they interact with one another” (Holstein & Gubrium, 2000, p.32). The different frameworks have assumed diverse analytical methods; but all emphasize that identity construction is a process of realizing the importance of intrapersonal thought, subjective experiences, and interpersonal exchanges.

While the search for a sense of self, or a way of conceptualizing and framing life experiences, has produced a variety of theories in postmodernism, interpretivism, and criticism, some theorists continue to find that this abstract concept still slips through our fingers as we try to consider it in rational or scientific ways. Eisenberg (2001), for instance, illustrates how many social theorists promote an understanding of identity through a consideration of experience, yet these theorists still overlook the simple truth that life is ambiguous and unpredictable. He grants that there is something to be gained in these various perspectives as they establish common ground through the realization that identity is a building process that creates a multiplicity of results. However, these processes of constructing identity[ies] assume an end through open communication and self-discovery, negating the fact that no matter what an individual knows today, the future always remains uncertain (Eisenberg, 2001).

Ambiguity, Uncertainty, & Communication

Riessman stated that, “In the telling, there is an inevitable gap between the experience as I lived it and any communication about it” (1993, p. 9). Obtaining a secure sense of identity among obscure experiences continues to be an unsettling challenge because the morphing task is to continually understand who we are becoming, and what

our roles are in an ambiguously unstable world. Each life experience shapes a story in our minds, creating boundaries and rules for prospective interaction. From this blueprint of narratives, we've learned to interact as capable individuals by applying familiar behaviors to unfamiliar encounters. This way of reducing uncertainty through passive observation or active interaction produces a sense of reality and an understanding of individual identity. Realistically, however, each moment of thought and interaction has the potential to alter our current way of knowing. Eisenberg states that, "The quest of understanding oneself is an aspect in achieving mental and emotional security...[and]...How we respond to the fundamental uncertainty of life shapes everything we do and is driven in part by how we think about our place in the world, our sense of identity" (Eisenberg, 2001, p.534).

This being the case, there is no single truth, until we chose to construct a definition or accept a way of knowing, find the resources to live it, and reinforce that particular understanding through experience and storytelling. In an article on progression through significant life experiences, Gough stated that, "The purpose of inquiry is not to dispel the difficulties, risks, and ambiguities of life but to live and speak from within them" (1999, p.414). Identity is an emotional process that is understood through communication, or enactment with others and personal reflection. The multiple results are unique to each individual and every situation. Merleau-Ponty stated,

Our linguistic ability enables us to descend into the realm of our primary perceptual and emotional experience, to find there a reality susceptible to verbal understanding, and to bring forth a meaningful interpretation of this primary level of our existence...By finding meaning in experience and then expressing this

meaning in words, the speaker enables the community to think about experience and not just live it (cited in Polkinghorne, 1998, pp.29-30).

Through communication of emotions and experience, we begin to construct ourselves. We are not merely telling stories, "...[we are] also creating a self—how [we] want to be known..." Riessman, 1993, p. 11). Each moment of experience, reflecting on past histories and imagining the future, allows us to become who we know we are.

Defining Emotion

The study of emotion, how it is individually managed (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993) and how it shapes interactions within society (Hochschild, 1979; Rafaeli & Sutton, 1991), has emerged as an important field of research in the academic community. Emotion plays a critical role in this thesis research, as it the power that structures our thoughts, motivates our communication, and provokes identity construction. Emotions are a part of daily life, embedded in every thought, interaction, and outcome (Rafaeli, 2002). Defining emotion and understanding how it affects us all is crucial in order to gain further insight into how emotions affects the narration of our life stories and gives us an understanding of who we are. The concept of emotion is typically defined, in terms of an individual's feelings, general mood, or disposition (Callahan & McCollum, 2002). Most research sustains the notion that emotions are a component of expression resulting from internal stimulation (Hochschild, 1983), or are "the culturally-based interpretation of a physiological state which enables an individual to act" (Callahan & McCollum, 2002, p. 6).

Research in emotion management has been particularly influenced by Arlie Hochschild's book, *The Managed Heart* (1983). Beginning with her extensive work among flight attendants, Hochschild (1983) studied how emotions are experienced and expressed in service occupations. She found that in order to fulfill occupational duties, many flight attendants were compelled to manage their emotions, displaying a particular cheerful disposition, even when they felt otherwise. This management of feelings to comply with social expectations is what Hochschild (1983) termed emotional labor.

Emotional labor requires that individuals conform to certain roles and expectations (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993). For many, displaying acceptable emotional behavior, in order to meet social expectations, is a way to fulfill job requirements and maintain an affirmative identity. In order to appropriately perform emotional labor, there are social rules for individuals to follow. These social rules that guide emotional expression were termed as "feeling rules" by Hochschild (1983), and "display rules" by Rafaeli & Sutton, (1987). Both terms refer to the expression of socially appropriate emotions, rather than the emotions that are actually felt.

There are two ways in which an individual can conform to the social norms through the enactment of display rules. The first of these is through surface acting, or imitating appropriate emotions that are not actually felt during an experience. The displayed emotions are different from the emotions that are internalized (Hochschild, 1983; Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993). For instance, a waitress may feel increased stress with a dinner rush, yet still approach guests with a welcoming smile, and a pleasant disposition. This behavior is surface acting because it focuses on the outward display of feelings, rather than the inner emotions that motivate the expression. The second way

an individual conforms to the display rules is through deep acting. Deep acting occurs when an individual conjures up the appropriate emotions to both feel and display (Hochschild, 1983; Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993). An example of this could be a secretary who wakes up with absolutely no desire to go to work, but forces herself to be excited about her job by listening to fun music on her drive into the office. This is deep acting because the focus is on inward feelings, with the goal of compelling yourself to feel the same emotion that is displayed. Ashforth and Humphrey (1993) create a third category for emotional labor performances, that of genuine emotional display. This encompasses the emotions that are felt and displayed with little conscious effort, because they are authentically experienced and expressed.

When emotions are managed in order to influence the behaviors of others, emotional displays often result in strategic communication. The strategies of emotion management typically focus on the three general approaches of positive, negative, or neutral displays. In a study by Gibson and Schroeder (2002) positive emotion management allowed individuals to create loyal interpersonal relationships through unifying social support network and by reframing negative experiences. Strategic management of negative emotions was different from positive strategies, in that there was no intention to satisfy another individual's needs, but rather the focus was on accomplishing a goal. Finally, neutral emotional expression was a management technique of masking authentic feelings to appear more professional and in control, promoting a perception of strength, rationality, and authority. All of these strategies influence this narrative analysis research, as the strategic management of both private and public emotion may be central to the creation and maintenance of multiple identities.

The tactics of emotion management can also help us in developing a further understanding of authentic versus strategic types of expression. All emotional expression can be considered deliberate in the sense that such an expression is an attempt to maintain identity, or support social norms, or even to gain additional influence (Kramer & Hess, 2002). While the term ‘management’ would indicate that feelings have been regulated, authentic feelings can be both managed and expressed as long as such regulation sustains social expectations, or is perceived as low risk (Hochschild, 1983). Emotion management often occurs during interactions with others, making it difficult to distinguish between expression of our true feelings, and suppression of our emotions. The degrees to which emotions are suppressed or expressed exist in a realm that is difficult access and legitimately study because some form of emotional labor is always happening when we interact. It is usually in a safe, secure environment when authentic emotional expression happens (Hochschild, 1983), further validating the genuineness of expression with in diaries. When individuals narrate their personal experiences and emotions in journals, emotion management tactics can be more completely understood, situations can be more clearly analyzed, and interesting implications for future research developed.

The Interplay of Narrative, Identity, and Emotion

Because emotion is dynamically interwoven into the stories that we tell and the identities that we create, it is an important aspect within this thesis research. As individuals interact with each other, we typically strive to balance an identity, or self-concept, with the need to authentically express emotion. This equilibrium is maintained

through communication, often in the form of the stories that we tell.

Hochschild (1983) refers to this dialectic as a tension of authenticity, maintaining that as a society we value “spontaneous, natural feeling” (1983, p.190); yet require the management of emotions. She claims that “we find ourselves speaking of emotion as if it had a location or residence...as having some sort of continuous identity...[which] is sometimes the case and sometimes not” (Hochschild, 1983, p. 203-4). Emotion influences how we feel about ourselves, and this interplay can only be seen as a function of how we communicate. And it is from this process that our life story is produced, revealing how we privilege a particular identity and emotional openness. Every situation and environment is going to require elements of both emotion management and identity management, yet it becomes interesting when an individual consistently focuses on one while neglecting the other.

In the case of a false sense of identity, an individual’s narrative management is most focused on maintaining a particular identity, rather than expressing authentic feelings. This may, or may not, be a conscious effort because while it seems that society has placed more value on the expression of emotions, the freedom to authentically convey feeling is restricted by social expectation (Irvine, 1997). Hochschild refers to these situations as an “estrangement...from feeling” and a “hazard” (Hochschild, 1983, p.189). At times, preserving identity over emotional expression is important, however, continual surface acting creates a binding identity that is established through manipulation, resulting in less sincerity and dissatisfaction. For example, in this thesis research, Robert appeared to be a responsible father and church leader, hiding his addictive habits and alternate life style. Once that picture was shattered by the truth of

the cocaine abuse and homosexuality, Robert wrote of losing the trust of his spouse, children, employees, and friends. The decision to disguise felt emotion has been shown to affect future expectations and interaction, creating dissonance in our sense of identity, leading to personal disharmony, depression, and even demise (Stringer-Cawyer & Smith-Dupre', 1995; Clark, 2001; & Krone, Chen, Sloan, & Gallant, 1997).

On the other extreme, when an individual is completely focused on accurate emotional expression, a unified identity may be sacrificed, producing incoherent experiences and instability. Having intense expressions for every experience is psychologically draining, and emotionally overwhelming. Although passion is important, picking your battles is crucial for survival and coherence. Reinforcing this notion, Hochschild states that, "Emotional dues can be costly to the self" (1983, p. 219). Relating to others is an important aspect in this dynamic, and a pattern of highly charged experiences eliminates outlets for future communication as others become too drained or emotionally numb. Once Robert's responsible identity was shattered, he became overly expressive with his emotions, writing about his feels of abandonment and loneliness, expressing elements of codependence and insecurity through continually evolving stories.

Thus, emotion is a sense that guides our way of knowing, and identity is an ever-evolving process. We use narratives to package and make sense of those shifting experiences.

Summary

As reflected in the review of the literature, over time we begin to construct a general sense of who we are through public and private interactions. The way we

communicate our experiences builds a history of identity, and we rely on this history to articulate both authentic and inauthentic expression of our feeling and our selves.

Interactions with others are emotional experiences that are realized through communication and understood through subjective reflection. This cyclical development, laced with emotion, creates an individual sense of self.

This thesis is a unique opportunity to understand identity development through written narration in diaries. The stories of one individual reveal how he conformed to social pressures, used journals as his main means for emotional communication, and found himself trapped in conflicting multiple identities. Analyzing his private expression allows us to understand the importance of stories, identity, and emotion. By telling and analyzing the private narratives in which he reflects on his life experiences, we learn more about private communication, the process of multiple identity creation, and the consequences of emotions management. Thus, the research questions for this study are as follows:

- RQ 1: How does Robert create identity[ies] through narratives told in his journals?
- RQ 2: What do the form and content of Robert's stories tell us about his identity construction?
- RQ 3: Does Robert construct conflicting identities? How does Robert manage conflicting identities?
- RQ 4: How does emotion management frame Robert's narratives and identity construction? What are the emotional consequences of this process?
- RQ 5: How does the private and written nature of journaling influence Robert's narratives and identity construction?

Through the private expressions and personal thoughts of one man, we not only understand his distinctiveness, and how he understood his life purpose, but also use his

example as a way of clarifying the influential affects of social pressure, the importance of both oral and written communication, and the art of balance and flexibility in emotion and identity management.

Understanding the creation of identity allows us to add purpose and direction in our own lives, making it easier to relate to those with whom we come in contact.

Through narratives, we articulate our experiences and emotions, forming our private sense of self. Because each person has a story that describes who they are as a way of interpreting the past, these stories become an important tool for us to understand the experiences of others, reduce our own uncertainty, and allow us to continually develop and progressively change.

CHAPTER II

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Ethnographic Description

My brother called one day, and said that my father only had an hour to live. That was it. He was just passing on the news of some stranger that had been in our lives a while back. At first, I couldn't think of anything to do, so I went to work, pleased that this news hadn't interrupted my daily schedule. I sat at my computer, and in the silence of my office, I slowly became overwhelmed with enormous guilt. Only days before I had told someone that I wished my father were dead. I had said it for years, and in fact, I considered him dead, told people he was dead. I thought it would solve all my problems, make me seem more typical. But now, those words just haunted me.

You see, I can remember my dad planting peas, encouraging piano practice, and flipping crepes in the air. But those memories were shadowed seven years ago. One August morning, my life changed when my father told my family that he was a cocaine addict. I held my crying mother, rocking her, while we tried to comprehend the unfamiliar, dark world of addiction. The drug abuse led to physical and psychological abuse, and eventually crippled my family with the AIDS virus. Exactly one year later, after an abusive battle, a therapist decided that my father and I couldn't live together, and ironically, *I* was forced to leave my home a week before my senior year of high school.

I hadn't had any real contact with my father since then. Sure, we ran into each other at the gas station, and I heard bits and pieces about his life, but basically he was little more than a fleeting thought in my mind. Only a thought, not because I didn't love

him, but because I had to survive life. I was determined to make something of myself, working my way through school, and I had become more interested in research than in family issues. Those priorities changed with that one phone call from my brother. That short conversation reopened the past and sent me spiraling through a roller coaster of emotions. I didn't know my father, and my father didn't know me, but obviously that opportunity was gone.

The time for cultivating a relationship with my father has past, at least for this short moment of life. Interestingly, however, through volumes of journals that he left behind, I can still learn of how he saw himself, and the world can learn from his story. This narrative and auto-ethnographic study is a rare opportunity to glimpse inside the thoughts of a man who appeared to be a monster--destroying businesses, relationships, families, and even himself. Yet this study goes beyond my life history, past what is seen, into a private world where individual thoughts and feelings clarify our process of understanding, showing how we reduce life's uncertainties, manage social constraints, and build our personal character. It is a study to analyze and deconstruct how subjectivity is presented within the complexities of personal narratives. Robert tells of maintaining a dual identity, allowing him to function within conflicting worlds of Christianity and drug addiction, conflicting allegiance to fatherhood and homosexuality. By understanding how these identities were created and sustained, not only can we learn from his mistakes, but also we can clarify our understanding of individuality and identity maintenance, the role of emotion management in negotiating our sense of self, and the importance of both public and private communication.

In order to structure this interpretive thesis project, allowing me to answer my

research questions, I first had to ground myself in principles of theory, while recognizing my complete immersion in both the material and story. For that purpose, I began with an understanding of subjectivity and ethnography in order to clarify my thoughts as a researcher and participant, while at the same time analyzing the personal thoughts of my father contained within the journals.

I grounded myself in a definition of subjectivity by Weedon (1997, p.32) who identifies the term as “the conscious and unconscious thoughts and emotions of the individual...in relation to the world” (cited in Clark, 2001). Through this definition, it can be understood that our identity creation is a continual process emerging from an amalgamation of experience, culture, communication, and belief. With this in mind, I can function within the dual roles—scholar and estranged daughter—that exist in this research. At the same time, this interpretive research study can focus specifically on Robert and his social construction of reality, or how he understood his daily experiences.

Understanding ethnography further clarifies my dual roles, and allows me to situate myself as an author within this narrative structure, adapting to the partial and subjective stories that Robert recounts in the diaries (Richardson, 1990). Generally, ethnographers learn about human interaction through complete immersion in the research, using participant observation and interviews to clarify situations. This allows a postmodern epistemology to give voice to the stories and experiences that are typically socially suppressed or privately contained. In describing this type of research, Tyler (1986) argues that, “...ethnography privileges ‘discourse’ over ‘text’...and emphasizes the cooperative and collaborative nature of the ethnographic situation in contrast to the ideology of the transcendental observer” (p. 126). While I cannot interview Robert,

conversations with family members and participant observation allows me to use the stories that they tell about Robert, to fill in the gaps and analyze the narratives within the diaries.

Because the data are a written text communicating the stories of one individual's life history, it seemed rather obvious to conduct a narrative analysis of the material. The significance of this qualitative methodology is that it produces answers and explanations of particular phenomena, relevant to a variety of situations and individuals because of its inductive approach. Further giving purpose to using narrative analysis, Fisher (1987) states that narratives "are a form of recounting the construction of a story...[as] a way of relating a truth about the human condition" (p. 62-63). Personally, I want the truth as to why my father and I could not have a relationship, and reconstructing the story through narrative analysis allows me that insight. But more, by using Robert's story, the data provided in Robert's journals create an opportunity to cross contexts and cultures of drugs, disease, and homosexuality that are typically privatized, and begin to understand what it was like to live out identities that are socially rejected. By using a narrative methodology, Robert's voice is finally privileged, breaking the 30-year barrier of public/private communication.

The appropriateness of this research methodology and approach is also substantiated by an explanation of social science research, from Richardson (1990) "Telling collective stories is one way in which we as social scientists can use our skills and privileges to give voice to those whose narratives have been excluded from the public domain and civic discourse" (p.28). Reviewing both the content and structure of Robert's diaries is a way to access his identity and personality, his emotional reactions

and suppression, while also providing understanding into existing social constraints of conflicting worlds. Narrative analysis is a way to reproduce Robert's perspective of reality with integrity.

The following sections will further explain the research process that was conducted, by considering the way in which I structured the analysis, maintained relationships within the scene, protected the participants, reviewed ethical issues, and questioned my role as an immersed researcher.

The Research Process

It has been a difficult journey getting to this point. Before I began any research, it was important to me to have the permission of my family to tell this story, as it would affect their lives and mine. Once I gained their support, especially the support of my mother, I spent hours contemplating and deliberating my purpose in sharing such a personal experience, while at the same time trying to understand how my father identified himself. In order to accomplish this, I located as many journals as possible. When Robert passed away, his belongings were donated, thrown away, or shipped to my mother. I searched through the six ten-pound boxes at my mother's home, locating three books of journals and a variety of other notes and letters. Over Christmas break 2002, I started reading, and in February 2003, my mother sent me four more diaries that she had found in a briefcase belonging to my father. The initial readings began two weeks after his death, at the start of the new year, and lasted through mid-February. I have read seven different journals, totaling 949 pages. The first five months of 2003 were spent analyzing the last six months of Robert's life to see if a narrative account of identity

could be constructed and analyzed from the material. Finding it possible, the summer and fall semesters were spent conducting similar narrative analysis of the remaining data, discovering recurring patterns, general themes, and critical points of change.

My first impression of the journals was upsetting, as it took me through a past that I had rejected. Also, the personal narratives transformed Robert from the monster in my head to the man that he was, all creating feelings of guilt, sorrow, and loss. With this much emotional attachment to Robert's stories, I needed to find a way to detach and frame my role as a researcher. But before I could even do that, I began reading the entries to see if Robert would even appreciate this public disclosure of his past experiences. There had to be a greater motive than simply providing me with therapeutic closure.

After struggling for weeks to find an answer, and nearly deciding to end the research project, I read the diary entry of April 27, 2002, where Robert shares a desire to be a part of something greater than himself. At that point I concluded that he would want his story to be told to alter other's lives and our current understanding of private communication, identity creation, and emotion management.

Method of Analysis

In the case of this research project, the actual narrative itself is the tool that allows further study of other cases and questions, as it describes a way of knowing. Narrative analysis uses a variety of strategies, yet each approach values the complexity and multi-dimensional layering of narrative communication. Fisher (1987) states, "A story is always embedded in other stories" (p.180), hence, providing thick descriptions of life

processes. There are various ways to read, analyze, and interpret narrative material. Life interviews can be conducted to encourage others to articulate their interests and experiences (Lindlof & Taylor, 2002), ethnographic studies allow the researcher to fully immerse themselves in a narrative text (LaPastina, in-press), and a poetic approach focuses on small phrases of a story, exposing the rhythm of a narrative (Riessman, 1993). I have focused this project on a continuum strategy developed by Lieblich et al. (1998). Within this method, two dialectical dimensions are emphasized—that of a holistic versus categorical approach, and a content versus form approach.

In considering the first of these dialectics, a holistic approach analyzes a narrative as a whole unit, or a complete account, and “...sections of the text are interpreted in the context of other parts of the narrative” (Lieblich et al, 1998, p.12). Contrasting this approach, the categorical perspective dissects the original story, “...and sections or single words belonging to a defined category are collected from the entire story or from several texts belonging to a number of narrators” (Lieblich et al, 1998, p. 12). The categorical approach is most effective when analyzing a group of stories, allowing the comparison of emerging themes.

The content versus form dimension refers to a typical distinction made in literary analysis of texts. A content reading of a text is taken from the perspective of the storytelling, and concentrates on the specific material of an account, identifying the event, why that experience occurred, all the individuals involved in the event, and possibly the consequences of the experience. This approach also seeks to understand the meaning of the story, and “...what traits or motives of the individual are displayed, or what a certain image used by the narrator symbolizes” (Lieblich et al, 1998, p. 12-13).

Opposite of this approach, a focus on form, refers to the structure of the story. The sequence of events, the coherence of the story, the timing of an event, the feelings evoked by the story, the way an author narrates an experience, are all elements of this approach. This method acknowledges the difficulty of separating content and form completely. It is difficult to relate a story without regard to its form, and in order to analyze the shape and characteristics of an experience, some context must be considered.

For this thesis research, I will be using a holistic-content approach. The last 30 years of Robert's life contained in the journals are understood as a whole unit, or a single story, and three sections are chronologically grouped and analyzed according to critical points of change. By analyzing critical pieces of Robert's story, "the meaning of the part...emerges from the rest of the narrative" (Lieblich et al., 1998, p 13). The critical points emerged, after the data were sectionalized based on distinct time periods, early adulthood, mid-life, and last six months of life, revealing the different experiences that shape Robert's identities during each period of time.

Thus, while the focus of this research is holistic, it segments the whole into the experiences that occur within the three critical sections of Robert's life narrative. This content, and the way that it is told, is constructed and analyzed by extracting pieces of Robert's journal entries in order to highlight recurring patterns, or themes of identity development and emotion management, and discussing how these themes shaped his life story. With respect to this method, some elements of form may be considered to further analyze possible identity construction.

The Data

After ascertaining the general story of Robert's entire life as recounted in his journals, I read the material in search of emerging critical points of change. While there were several instances of shifting jobs, a growing family, and moving homes, the three defining moments that distinctly stand out among the rest of the stories were: experiences at the beginning of his mission, the death of his brother, and his move to Kansas. The journals were sectionalized based on these critical points of change, and then the individual entries within each section were analyzed, marking recurring patterns and common themes that emerged. Identifiable within the journal entries were patterns and themes of control, powerlessness, drugs, disease, family, church, humility, loneliness, fear, self-blame, pride, victimization, recovery, and isolation. By grouping these themes, it became evident that Robert subjectively created dialectical identities that involved Christianity, fatherhood, homosexuality, and drug addiction. While all of these identities are not maintained in each of the three sections, the analysis shows a progression and demise of identity complexity. The following summaries provide a very rudimentary description of the critical characteristics of each identified section of Robert's life as represented in his journals.

Section One

Description of Experience

Robert became a missionary for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints on February 12, 1972 where he entered the mission home in Salt Lake City to learn the French language and his duties as a missionary, staying until April 18, 1972. This first

section begins with an account of entering the mission home. The account contains consistent entries throughout the first year of service, eventually tapering during his second year. It concludes after two years of service in France and Belgium with an honorable release, and a return to the United States.

Time Frame	February 12, 1972—February 14, 1974
Location	Provo, Utah—2/12/72—4/20/72 France—4/20/72—6/21/73 Belgium—6/21/73—2/14/74
Age	19-21 years
Description of the journal	Thick black book, 6in x 7 in Pages: 259, 28 lines per page
Shortest entry	One sentence, 4 lines
Longest entry	2 ½ pages
Average entry	½ page, 15 lines
General Themes	-pleasing others -wasting time -need to become more humble -wanted to belong -distrust of family -beauty of the land -intensity of the work -organization—control/powerlessness -unspoken outrage
Dominant Identity	Christian Missionary
Other important information	Some accounts switch back and forth between English and French

Section Two

Description of Experience

The second critical section focuses on Robert during mid-life, beginning after he was married at 23 and had his first child 25-years-old. In the years following, he has three more children, changes jobs, and begins his own industrial sales company. The majority of the entries are during the mid-1980s, focusing mainly on his business, family, and finances. It concludes with an extensive account of the death of his brother, and the

interaction Robert had with him before he dies from AIDS.

Time Frame	March 16, 1978—December 10, 1988
Location	Salt Lake City
Age	25-35
Description of the journal	Bounded brown journal, size of a legal pad Contains 242 pages, 28 lines per page
Shortest entry	3 lines
Longest entry	9 pages
Average entry	$\frac{3}{4}$ page, 20 lines
General Themes	-pleasing others-blaming self -wasting time at work -wasting time at home -need to become more humble -distrust of extended family -fatherhood/marriage -homosexuality/disease -control/powerlessness -a secret -unspoken outrage
Dominant Identity	Father, Christian Leader

Section Three

Description of Experience

The final section accounts for the final six months of Robert's life. After losing his business, divorce, and drug abuse, Robert moves to Kansas to begin a new job. He writes of working for the new company, and gives accounts of working to start a drug recovery group. His health begins to fail in the fall of 2002, and his last entry is November 10, 2002. He dies in the hospital on December 14, 2002, of organ failure and pneumonia, basically complications with AIDS.

Time Frame	March 28, 2002—November 10, 2002
Location	Salt Lake City—3/28/02—6/1/2002 Gardner, KS—6/1/2002—11/10/2002
Age	49 years
Description of the journal	Single white legal pad 16 pages, 28 lines per page
Shortest entry	3 sentences, 3 lines

Longest entry	1 page
Average entry	¾ page, 18 lines
General Themes	-drugs-sin -disease- health issues -dependency on God/church -wanting to belong -distrust of family -beauty of the land -struggle with work -victimization -powerlessness/control -loneliness/fear
Dominant Identity	Recovering drug addict
Other important information	Some accounts have handwriting too difficult to read

In order to privilege Robert's voice, and allow his story to be told, the journal entries were transcribed exactly, and for the purposes of this thesis, only names of people have been changed. By leaving as much of the story as intact as possible, it allows us "To view communication through the perspective of narrativity...focus[ing] on [the] message, on the individuated forms that constitute it, and on the reliability, trustworthiness, and desirability of what is said" (Fisher, 1987, p 143). Because this diary was in no way written with a research outcome in mind, it is likely that the thoughts recorded are the actual feelings and interpretations of this individual. Recording those thoughts as such, add to the meaning of this work while privileging a voice that has typically remained silenced.

Triangulating the data, and further insuring the authenticity and integrity of the story, family members and close friends reviewed my accounts throughout the analysis and writing process.

The Living Participants and My Role as a Researcher

Lindlof and Taylor (2002) emphasize the need to protect all of the participants involved in qualitative research to ensure a clear and valuable study. Because of the nature of this project, “contacting the scene” and “protecting the participants” seemed a bit unusual at first. However, while it seems that Robert is the only participant, there are many involved within his stories, especially in the three sections that are highlighted in this research. The two main groups of living participants are family members, and recovery group members.

This thesis project affects my four siblings and mother most directly. All of us are experiencing different stages of coping, both with the upheaval in our family life as well as with Robert’s death. As stated before, it was important for me to have the approval of my family to do this research, and all have been supportive and helpful in their respective capacities. While some were willing to review analysis and manuscripts, others approve of the study but have chosen to not read the results. I worked to be sensitive to all involved by negotiating appropriate timetables and environments in which to discuss the material. The role that each individual has played in reviewing my analysis, clarifying Robert’s behaviors within the writings, and discussing meanings allowed this research to be fully developed and ensures the integrity of Robert’s narrative, while at the same time has helped to fill in some of the missing pieces of our family’s history. Any conflict that arose in the writing and analysis was discussed, clarified, and the final product was agreed upon. The recovery group, although an integral part in Robert’s identity, played a minimal role in the data analysis. For that

reason, and to protect the anonymity of the group, all names of individuals have been altered.

The final living participant that needed consideration, support, and sensitivity is me. I am the researcher as well as a participant. Although I have been separated from my family and Robert's drama for over five years, the emotions of past experience, as well as my current perspective, play an intense role in this narrative study. It would be absolutely inaccurate to say that I can separate myself completely from the data. I am too involved as Robert's daughter. However, being his child, combined with the period of separation, allows me to take an interesting role as both participant and researcher.

My role as a researcher shifts within each of the three sections. In the first section, I am not alive, compelling me to be an observer of the text, only relating stories that maintained such an impact that it emerges later in a different context. In the second section, I was old enough to remember the death of Robert's brother, but too young to remember the details or its effect on my father. This makes me a participant observer. Finally, in the last section, I assume full immersion in the text, playing a specific role in the story. Yet, because I am the only family member to have left the scene, I am able to detach from incidents and interpret possible meaning.

Understanding the biases and preconceived notions that I bring to the research is absolutely crucial. It presents me with both advantages and disadvantages, of knowing some of the stories firsthand, but being jaded by the emotions of the situations. My personal values and morals are represented within the study and have affected this analysis. However, as with any narrative analysis, qualitative research, or interpretive study, the emphasis and explanations are only one of many possible perspectives and

would certainly change with different researchers, methods, and questions. Ultimately, my role in this thesis project is important as it allows a story to emerge from a private realm, adding to the literature on identity, emotions, and narratives. I needed to know that my father was someone more than a dying addict. But more, he needed others to know that no virus, no disease, no drugs, no mistake killed him. He would still have died, as mortality takes us all. “Nature is cruel and indifferent. Death is a random, inevitable disaster...we share it and learn it and discover that it is—like life” (Lerner, 1985, p. 269). By accepting the sorrow of his death, no matter the cause, we can also accept that Robert is just a person who individually struggled to create a satisfying identity and communicate it to others. This is our opportunity to learn from the legacy of his writings.

CHAPTER III

RESULTS OF ANALYSIS

For the past year that I have spent researching Robert's life story in the seven diaries that he left behind, I have come to know him in various phases of his life. As I read the journals, interpreting his mind-set and moods, his values and opinions, I'm constantly learning about my father and his struggle to appreciate himself. As we all do, Robert matured from the experiences in his early years into the man that he was when he died. Understanding from the current literature that building self is a process, the identities that shaped Robert's character early on became his foundation, guiding both his thoughts and behavior for the rest of his life.

This story is written from my perspective, and I have used my own judgment in selecting accounts that I find to be most descriptive and poignant in representing Robert. Because I am Robert's daughter, partially involved in his experiences, I have been able to draw on my memories as guide for choosing the entries from the narratives that best reveal various aspects of Robert's identity. I also used my five research questions to direct my interpretations, especially focusing attention on #1, #4, and #5:

RQ 1: How does Robert create identity[ies] through narratives told in his journals?

RQ 2: What do the form and content of Robert's stories tell us about his identity construction?

RQ 3: Does Robert construct conflicting identities? How does Robert manage conflicting identities?

RQ 4: How does emotion management frame Robert's narratives and identity construction? What are the emotional consequences of this process?

RQ 5: How does the private and written nature of journaling influence Robert's narratives and identity construction?

Through the experiences that he writes about, using his words to reflect emotions and personality, I was able to reconstruct a story with little interjection and explanation. It was important to me to privilege Robert's voice, breaking the barrier of private communication, allowing him to finally share his stories through my abilities as a researcher. This chapter builds a story, and is meant to be read that way. My conclusions to the research questions are integrated throughout the material, and then explicitly summarized in a section at the end of each story.

Story One: The Mission

Being a part of any organized religion requires some sort of sacrifice. Whether you contribute your time, money, and talents, or devote an element of your spirituality to benefit those with whom you worship, you acknowledge allegiance to something that is greater than yourself. Conservative Christianity is built on these principles, requiring faith in Jesus Christ and obedience to laws and ordinances of the gospel by maintaining a virtuous character of honesty, hope, and humility.

Robert talked of being raised in accordance with Christian beliefs, and as he grew older he continued to believe in these values and guided his life by his religious ideology. As a 19-year-old member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, he was asked to serve a mission for the Church. And this is where his journals begin.

Robert willingly left his family, job, and educational pursuits to preach the gospel for two years without any monetary compensation. He was asked to live and serve in Belgium and France, speaking the native language, assimilating into the culture, working

solely for the Church. Before leaving for Europe, Robert spent nine weeks in Salt Lake City, Utah, living in what was known as the language training mission (LTM), learning French and the duties and expectations of a missionary.

3-19-72

I have to take the opportunity to express my feelings this night. It's been a great day for me, as I know that I have finally taken a small step forward in my spirituality. Tonight we had a testimony meeting for those going to Tahiti. I met a new man there, Elder Fuller. Though before now I knew who he was, tonight I know him. He is one of the most humble people around. Another point I wish to make is that always, always work hard to help others. The joy and blessings are the greatest the Lord has to offer. I know!!

From this first entry, the earliest located, it seems Robert is new to the art of journal writing. The entry is short, and he talks of wanting to express feelings, but instead gives himself advice. He recounts aspects of the day, and ends with a philosophical thought by which to guide his life. While it is difficult to tell his actual feelings of being away from home for the first time, it appears that by recounting positive experiences Robert is recognizing differences between his familiar lifestyle and the expectations of his new adventure.

3-22-72

Tonight j'étais en France avec Soeur Allred, I learned an important lesson that I should like to put down here. It had been rumored here that to give a discussion to Soeur Allred was a fate worse than death, that she was so hard and so mean. Tonight I found her to be different. Elle-t-était tres gentile. Never heed a rumor, especially one concerning people, because they are usually false. She was very nice, and I felt that she was really striving to help me, in a way that was real, and normal...

The missionaries learn short lessons in order to clearly and succinctly teach the gospel in an orderly fashion. They have to teach their supervisors the lessons, in the language that they will be using, showing that they are competent and prepared. Robert is beginning to learn the basics of the language, and writes in French that he spoke with

Sister Allred. Apparently, many were nervous to pass off their lessons with Sister Allred, yet Robert found the experience to be different, acknowledging Sister Allred as “very gentle.” Again, reinforcing a pattern, Robert writes of his unfamiliar daily activities and ends with personal advice and clarification of expectations.

3-23-72

I've been thinking these last few days that it might be cool to have a prefacing line for this work. I've chosen something my father wrote to me just before I left for this mission: Success is in direct proportion to the number of hours spent working each day, every day. I think that those are words worth remembering.

I've also deemed it necessary to write this night because tomorrow we begin on the third discussion, and I don't usually have time to write while I'm memorizing. Just one thought: A good day is marked by a new truth discovered during that day. Today was a good day because I discovered that in letting the Lord be an aid in daily doing, nothing will be impossible to accomplish. Also, I can appreciate knowing that I'm doing the right thing at the right time.

Less than a week into his training, Robert is making an enthusiastic effort to understand his role as a missionary by setting goals, reflecting a reliance on the Lord, and finding nuggets of philosophy by which to live. He writes of needing to separate his daily tasks and responsibilities in order to accomplish everything that is expected of him. Journal writing is not something he does to express feelings or internal desires, but rather is a sign of his obedience to the mission rules, and is a way of strategically organizing his thought and responsibilities.

The prefacing line that Robert has chosen for his mission appears several times during his service in Europe, and it eventually becomes so engrained into his character that he uses it a guiding philosophy throughout the remainder of his life.

3-30-72

I only have five minutes before lights out, but something special happened to me today that I wish to remember. After class this afternoon, I remained behind to study and learn the remaining lines of the forth discussion. At the end of it, I discovered a beautiful

passage: Frere Durand, pourquoi aimez-vous le Seigneur?...Avant que frere x et moi-meme partions, mettons-nous a genoux et remercions notre Pere celeste de nous avoir envoye son Fils.” I tried praying with remembering, and I know now another great truth of this gospel. There really is a living God and the power of the Holy Ghost is real. It was very assuring to be reminded of that today.

The translation of the French passage above is a summary of the 4th discussion and example questions to ask an investigator. It says: Brother Durand, why do you love the Lord? Before what brother and me ~~~~~go put our~~~~~and thank our Heavenly Father for sending his faithful son.

The French is very rough, but it's Robert's attempt to review what he is learning. He is working hard to teach himself not just the language, but also the ideologies of what he is supposed to believe. He is showing his desire to fulfill his missionary role by commenting on memorizing his fourth lesson, and showing improvement in his language skill. However, the writing in other entries introduces a possible conflict. Robert writes of having no desire to live in France, preferring to be in the Tahitian group after seeing beautiful pictures of where they will be proselyting. The entry above seems to be an attempt to communicate his fears and concerns with his mission identity.

4-11-72

I wonder why it's always so hard to do anything good. Probably because I've accustomed myself to the bad, it's become habit. I've got to overcome that problem before I leave here. The harder I try, the harder it becomes to overcome. Maybe by putting in writing that I'll do it, something will break. I certainly hope so. A new line of thought: Elder Belt gets funnier every day. I'm glad he's here, as his humor breaks the tension and keeps me going.

Many missionaries comment about the stress of living in the LTM because it is such a different environment from what they are used to. It is extremely restrictive, and every minute of the day is planed with classes, meeting, meals, activity time, and sleep. They don't have to make any daily decisions, allowing them to concentrate solely on

their intensive learning. When my mother served her mission, she talked about the anxiety and pressure of the training center, struggling to learn a language and being required to memorize discussions quickly. However, she also says that she would live that experience over again before serving in a foreign country, because it is so much more difficult once you are on your own and out in the field.

This is the first entry that Robert begins to share more personal, and perhaps, private information. He talks about struggling to overcome bad habits, but does not use his journal to explain what that means exactly.

4-17-72

Well, journal, it's hard to believe that almost nine weeks have passed by, and that tomorrow morning, at 4 we'll be leaving for Belgium. I'm going to miss those in Valence who won't be in my mission. They're really a great bunch of guys, and I know they'll be working miracles in Switzerland and So. France. The testimony meeting this night was outstanding, as I've grown to love to hear them all bear their testimonies. The one thing I've leaned most here at the LTM is there is so much to be gained from each and everyone. I'd do myself a big favor if I'd shut up and listen and learn...

It appears that the journal has become a personal friend, a confidant to which Robert can share his thoughts and feelings. Robert's diary is becoming more therapeutic as a way to communicate all the emotions that must be rushing through his body as he plans to leave the country for the first time.

4-30-72

Today was the jour de souvenir, where all the French go around giving their friends and relatives bouquets of Lily of the Valley's... We gave the second discussion to a Boissel Family. I'm not going to count any chickens this time, as lately I've been getting omelets. Tonight we had crepes. They're very good. I'll have to remember how to make them. Also, I've got to work on the French... I try reading the D&C, and I'm looking up every other word. I've got to hang in there because the people don't understand me.

I'm still playing the piano for the Branch. For anyone who should ever read this, never refuse to take a job being offered in the ward, and always keep up on the talents, as one day you'll come to need them...

The first two weeks in a foreign country is a surreal experience, when all of your excitement and everything you have learned is hitting the surface of reality head on. For a missionary, there is quick absorption into the culture of a mission. Instantly, the missionaries are assigned a companion to work with, an area in which to proselyte, and an apartment in which to live. This total immersion is designed to help the individuals assimilate and adapt to their life as quickly as possible. However, the transitions obviously require time for the missionaries to become accustomed to the culture of the country and come to grips with their new life.

In his few entries while in Metz, France, Robert recounts all the activities that he did for the day, with very little commentary on how he feels about it all. At the point of the entry above, Robert is starting to recognize some of the difficulties he will encounter while living in France. Obviously, nine weeks of learning a language is not enough to be fluent, and Robert writes of struggling to understand and communicate for the first four months of the mission. However, he does quickly learn aspects of the culture and traditions, immediately falling in love with the food. The line of wanting to remember how to make crepes is especially important because he does learn how to make them, incorporating the art into his life, and eventually they become a tradition in his future family.

Interestingly, as well, the final line accounts for the fact that others might read his journals some day, revealing his desire to communicate his new experiences with others, yet demonstrates a fear and need to remain private. Also, it shows how Robert wants to have an influence on others, living and writing about a life that would be appealing to future readers.

5-6-72

...I really need to do some talking with the Lord, to better prepare me to be a better servant to the people. I'm also getting to hate bicycles as a form of transportation. I'm really sold on the automobiles. Who knows, though! I've grown to love eating yogurts, maybe one day I'll enjoy the bike trips.

For the majority of his mission, Robert's main form of transportation was a bicycle, and he never learned to like it.

This entry does show acceptance of his identity as a missionary by the comment of wanting to be a better servant, revealing Robert's desire to work hard and please God, and ultimately be successful. Also, it reflects that prefacing mission statement of success being in direct proportion to how hard one works.

5-7-72

...I feel that much of the Lord's time is being wasted. Maybe I'm wrong, as usual, so I won't say anything, as Elder Lucas is the senior. I know that time will show, and that I can only learn. I hope the Lord will help me to recognize the good and absorb it, that when I'm called to lead, I'll have something to go from with the help of God...

This is the first entry in which Robert uses his journal for more than just remembering important thoughts or reporting his daily activities. Typically, his criticisms are marked with an acknowledgement of a blessing or he concedes that he is learning something positive from a negative experience. This entry is a direct critique of his feelings toward his companion. Although Robert shows hope for a change in this entry, it also marks his authentic emotional expression, altering the purpose of his journal. Robert makes a direct statement of frustration, communicating the feelings that he has otherwise suppressed. The attacks on himself seem to be the only way to find control of the situation, as he is a junior companion and required to follow the directions

of his senior trainer. Until September, Robert always has a critical statement in his entries about Elder Lucas.

5-22-72

I swear that my comp. can waste more time when he wants to. We rode out to Borny to see a couple of members. The first one wasn't home. We then rode around looking for the other member's place. That excursion took us up & back down one hill and a little backtracking. Every now and then Elder Lucas would check the map. We finally made it there, and I was really surprised...when we got there Elder Lucas was going to turn back as it was 6 o'clock and we had a rendez-vous at 6:30. After riding the bikes 45 minutes to get there, I couldn't see turning and leaving without going in, even for a few minutes.

I still feel that we could do more with better planning and organization and less kissing-off. I know there are days when I don't feel like getting out of bed, or that when we are tracting wishing we could quit, or even having a hard time keeping my mind on the work and not falling asleep during a discussion, but we're on the Lord's time, and I came out expecting to work harder. But then again, I guess I'm still green.

5-23-72

Elder Lucas gave a first contact, and then the two discussed everything from temple marriage to Vietnam. I didn't agree with all the explanations that were given, however I kept my mouth shut as I didn't fully understand the whole discussion and I didn't want to contradict my companion. Also, I'm not going to mention my disagreements as he may be correct, as I realize there is still much for me to learn. That includes French.

Robert is starting to consistently use his journal as an outlet for emotional expression. While he still gives a general account of the day, there are specific feelings toward his companion that he only communicates in this diary. It is obvious that Robert is struggling to get along with his companion that he required to be with every day, all day long. He doesn't like the authority and control that Elder Lucas has over him, especially because Robert perceives Elder Lucas as unorganized and lazy, two labels that no missionary would want attributed to them. The critiques of others, however, are never without a personal attack. Robert blames his inability to communicate or change the situation on the disadvantages of being a junior companion and his struggle to learn the language.

6-15-72

We began early today by going to the laundro-mat. Then into town. My money finally came in, so I paid off debts and will now buy food for three weeks. We pretty well spent the rest of the day here in the apartment. It rained a little while during the afternoon. Family Night was at Soeur Tusars. For refreshments, she had two huge bowls of fresh strawberries—they were so good!

After living for two months in France, Robert had not received any money from his family. His older brother was also serving a mission at the same time, and his parents struggled to cover the costs. Missionaries live meagerly, but they do need money for at least rent and food, and the missionary's family is expected to provide that funding. Nearly every entry in this section of Robert's journal had a comment about the lack of money, the stress of finances, and his companion's annoyance with having to share his money with Robert. The uncomfortable feelings Robert had asking for financial help were most apparent in the experience he wrote of when he did not want to petition his companion for change to buy a stamp so he could send a letter home.

7-3-72

...Elder Lucas and I got into a small difference of opinion, and I let it out that I thought a previous "serious discussion" we had was a waste of time and that I didn't especially like wasting time. He has become sarcastic, now, on that point. Tonight we had a "serious discussion" again, 2 ½ hours worth... On the way home he asked me "if it was a waste of time." I didn't answer, as if I had, I would have told him to get screwed, or stick it up his nose, or something. I judged the time to best be left in silence. I shouldn't get so bugged, but some days---

For four months, Robert had said nothing to his companion about the dissatisfaction and concern that he was having working with him, only journaling about his feelings, anxieties, and frustrations. Finally, when he does say something, it irritates his companion who pokes fun of Robert. At this point, Robert begins a pattern of suppressing thoughts and feelings, writing about his emotions rather than publicly communicating with others.

7-24-72

Today was very interesting. We began by seeing M. Ceanal to straighten up things at the old salle. We had a lesson for around 3 pm, just before it began to rain very hard. We waited until we thought it was over (the sky was clearing) and we jumped on the vetos and took off. Just before we got down to this lady's house, it began to rain again. It was raining harder and harder until I couldn't see out of my glasses. We pulled over and stood under a tree, still getting wetter. Finally we decided to make a final dash for the house of the investigators, so we take off running down the road. By the time we are there, we're soaked to the skin. We stood on her door step dripping and she stood there and laughed. We went in, dried off and Elder Lucas put on a pair of her husband's pants and I had on a pair of her's. We looked like a couple of clowns. She hung up our things and we gave her the lesson. We were going along fine when her husband came home. He sort of stared at us—I still wonder what he was thinking. We ended up leaving with those clothes on as the suits weren't dry. It was rather funny to see us like that...

Finally an entry with humor! Most of the journal entries are negative, focused on the work that is not happening, relationships that are not being built, and depressing moments when he doesn't want to be there. This entry, although commenting on another mishap, is taken lightly and joked about. It is descriptive enough that we finally get a sense of what Robert's day is like, rather than just a list of activities. He is accepting both the good and the bad of this missionary identity. It is amazing that Robert, who couldn't ask for 20 cents for a stamp, could teach a two hour discussion in women's clothing, and then wear them home. Also, showing further acculturation and more acceptance of his identity, Robert begins to incorporate French words into his normal lingo. For example, he doesn't jump on a bike anymore, but a veto.

9-11-72

Today wasn't anything exciting as far as missionary work goes, but I realized again as the sun was setting, just how well off we are here, what with the church and everything. Maybe it will sound stupid or like I'm super spiritual, which I'm not, but for a moment today, I tried to realize how marvelous this old earth is—and that its' creation was truly a work of God. It's good to be alive, to have the gospel...

After working for four months in Metz, France with Elder Lucas, Robert is moved to St. Quentin, France. For the next three month he will work in this new area with three different companions.

This entry is a true expression of spirituality, with the typical personal criticisms. Robert has found a way to build an identity of faith through his religious ideology, while also, perhaps, incorporating a notion of humility.

9-12-72

Nothing really exciting happed today, except that the weather is cold and we taught a third discussion to a Communist. He, the commy, told us very seriously that he thought that the Mormon missionary's were really CIA men in disguise. My comp about died laughing. You hear it all on a mission...

Robert is sounding more comfortable in his role with his companion, his responsibilities to the work, and he rolls with punches. Having several family members and friends serve missions all over the world, many have remarked about the funny things people do or say to them. They truly do hear it all, but it helps them to understand and accept their identity as missionaries.

9-19-72

...This afternoon Elder Brubaker and I taught our communist a fourth discussion. At the end, we layed everything on the line and really bore strong testimonies. It kind of took him back—left him speechless, but still in the end, he x-ed us. He's nice guy. Then tonight we began our English classes. I'm with beginners and it was a riot. I thoroughly enjoyed the evening.

Robert and his companions began teaching English as a way of meeting the people in the community and building relationships of trust. The experience helped him improve his French, and gave him the confidence to communicate with others. He was able to relate to his students with empathy as he watched them struggle to learn a

language. It seems to have presented a well-rounded learning experience for all involved.

11-23-72

Being as today is Thanksgiving, half of the zone met in Cambrai for dinner. The other ½ were in Arras. The Elders there fixed a really fine dinner. It was pretty nice. We rode home with Elder Tolley via Arras, so I got to see the whole zone anyway. Also, when Elder Tolley called in to Brussels today, he learned of a transfer...I will be baby zap...The transfer takes place tomorrow. I can't help but say that I was surprised.

This entry recounts Robert's first opportunity to move up the hierarchy of missionary work. A baby zap, a term no longer used, was an assistant to the Zone Leader. A Zone Leader is responsible for several companionships within a particular area. With this responsibility, Robert found himself traveling a lot, sleeping on floors, and helping many companionships implement new teaching strategies.

12-12-72

...I think that a big dilemma faced by missionaries is a sense of, or maybe better the choice in deciding priorities. We never are around to see the fruits or results of our decisions, therefore we ourselves determine our classification, are we successes or are we failures?

While this rhetorical question shows Robert's desires to prioritize and be successful, it also reveals his concerns and fears about failure. The question seems to be a way for Robert to acknowledge that he is successful for working hard and serving people, all while learning and maturing, regardless of the outcome. Unfortunately, life is not as simple, or as black and white as this question makes it appear to be. Robert always classified himself in these categories, sometimes as a success, but mostly as a failure.

12-19-72

I hate to think it, but today a lot of time was wasted in not getting much accomplished. I think that personally, I shall put forth a greater effort to being ready on time and also in

making sure I study both the scriptures and the language. As Christmas draws near, I find myself with old habits and a different sort of feelings. It's like Christmas really isn't here at all. I'm not especially home sick, but rather happy to be here and happy to be an Elder, away from the bothers of every day life. It's weird.

Most individuals go through a stage in life where a holiday is just a moment, and a birthday just another day. With this experience, Robert finds contradictions in his current identities as a independent man, living in a foreign country, and serving a mission, all different from what he knew in the past. This entry clearly marks acceptance of his missionary identity.

12-24-72

This morning passed by presenting one of the worst Christmas programs I've seen done in a Sunday School. It really stunk. Part of the problem was only two people were at church. I keep wondering what's with the people here. Why don't they support the church? Why do they go inactive? We've just about finished off a little village, and have seen some hope there. Who knows?! Tonight we had a sort of Christmas program where we read in Luke the birth of Christ and then sang Christmas carols. After that we exchanged gifts between the four of us. Elder Tolley gave me <<Le Petit Prince>>. He himself received a jigsaw puzzle, which he stayed up until 3 am to put together. I think we must all be crazy. At any rate it made for an interesting Christmas Eve.

12-25-72

It's Christmas today, and it's unbelievable. We decided to take P-day today, so I spent all morning working on the dinner. After opening the presents, I went into the kitchen to start the potatoes cooking and soon found that we were out of gas. We use bottled gas for cooking. It took us about an hour, maybe longer, to find someone open that could sell us some. Aside for that, the day went along pretty well. We took some pictures of the lights downtown, then finished the day with our district study class. It was a different kind of Christmas, but it wasn't lonely like I thought it might be. Maybe it was due to the fact that we have four elders here. I don't know, but I enjoyed it.

A "P-day" is a preparation day. The missionaries are required to teach or look for people to teach six days a week. One day is for buying groceries, doing laundry, writing to family and friends, and anything else that they need to get done that day to prepare for

the week. On the week of a holiday, the p-day switches to the holiday, as most people don't like to be interrupted during their festivities.

I found this entry significant because I remember that Robert always liked to cook. He always remembered interesting recipes, or was willing to try anything new. Apparently, the days on his mission are no different, typically taking on the role of cooking meals and cleaning house. Robert recognized these activities as his sensitive side that also advantaged him in relating to more of the women that he taught. The following experience is another example of how Robert's sensitivity allowed him to bond with a kind woman.

1-8-73

...The thing that really touched me, and I can't explain it very well, is when we said goodbye. She shook our hands firmly, not at all like a French handshake, and I could see and feel her joy, the joy brought to her by our visit. It wasn't that she felt that she had found the true church, because she's not aware of that yet. It was simply the fact that we were Christian enough to pass by and speak to her of God, because as she said, she's a strong believer in God. I had a good feeling for the rest of the time we were out tracting, and even now, just knowing that tonight someone found joy by our visit. I just can't express how I feel, but I know that we'll both be blessed, we as missionaries and her as a human being.

Once Robert became comfortable in his identity as a Christian missionary, he wrote of more personal experiences, showing his growth and self-confidence, all of which allowed him to become more at ease interacting with others.

Tracting is using door-to-door contact to find those interested in hearing a message about Jesus Christ. It is typically ineffective, teaching only one in 20 homes, and converting one in every hundred. Robert complained about tracting because he hated being rejected and felt like he was wasting time. This one contact, however, changed his opinion and his purpose in sharing the message that he had memorized in the missionary

training center nearly a year earlier. He made a connection, and although he is unable to completely express his emotions, he recognizes the power of feeling.

1-25-73

...I feel that since I've been here, tremendous things have transpired within me. (That last line ought to impress somebody.) In a serious sense, I find myself wanting to progress to better understand situations about me. I want so much to do good here, to eventually see a good change in me and those about me. Many of my old hang-ups, life of timidness, show themselves now and then, and I become like a child learning to walk, i.e. feeble and very unsure of my steps. To be myself in the presences of others is one of the hardest things in this world for me. But then again, it's our weaknesses that make us strong. That being the case, I ought to come out of this one as a pillar of strength.

There was no specific experience written leading to this profound statement of transformation by Robert. This entry was written on transfer day, when he was moved to a different area in Colmar, and he was reflecting on all of the experiences in the area, as a whole. He mentions that if he ever lived in Europe in the future, he would choose to live in Colmar because of the beauty of the land, and a love that he had for the people. This entry is an attempt to summarize his own mission story. It demonstrates his appreciation for the learning he had received through experience, and his desire to construct a concrete plan to overcome weakness.

2-12-73

Happy hump day! It hardly seems like one year of my mission has gone by. After a moments reflection I only hope this next year marks better results as far as progression goes. Today was mighty cold and blah, and to finish it off, I only had one student in my class for English. Good thing there's always tomorrow.

It seems strange to have such a short entry to mark or remember an important day of the mission, the midpoint. He talks of making better progression, again reflecting on his prefacing statement that he made at the beginning of his mission. At this point, Robert had been rejected by countless numbers of investigators, and had been apart of

only one baptism. Baptisms are typically the way missionaries celebrate their success.

While it can be assumed that the statement of progression in this entry has to do with the success of teaching the people, it can also reflect the desire to progress within himself.

Unfortunately, Robert doesn't write as much after this point; in fact, there are only three more entries during his mission, one on Easter, and the final two are as follows:

5-13-73

It's been awhile since I've written, mainly because I was bored with keeping a journal and I was rather tired at the end of each day. Lately the work here has been very bad, and as a result, I've had a sort of depressed frame of mind. My comp is good at keeping up the morale, however I feel that I've "planted" many seeds now, and I look for a way to begin a harvest. It's incredible the way people have been slipping away from us. Hopefully things will begin to pick themselves up.

11-7-73

I just read a bit in my journal tonight, and got psyched up about journals, so I decided to write again. It's only been six months, and I doubt I'll ever be able to express my real feelings during that period. In June of this year I transferred out of Colmar and I was very sad to leave...

Once in Liege, I saw that it was a very large and very old town. My comp, Elder Sorensen was from Salt Lake...we're living in one of the smallest apartments I've seen...anyway, no bath. We share our toilet with the neighbors as well...

I came to love Liege and my comp, Elder Sorensen. We would wrestle around our little room, thumping on each other and laughing ourselves silly. It's something I miss. I only spent two short months in Liege and I was sad to leave...I was transferred rather suddenly to Namur to replace Elder Bouchard as the B.P...being a B.P. is certainly different, and I might say that it almost killed my missionary desires. I figure that the Lord sent me to Namur to learn humility. Boy, am I humbled. Namur is a beautiful city, and I now have an excellent comp, Elder Wilson. Lately, I've felt tired and worn out to be done. I just can't let up. I love my mission and the work I've been doing. It's really the first time in my life that I've worked so close to the Lord, and since being B.P. I've learned and continue to learn much. So much for the quick catch up. Today being Sunday, we spent the day at church. We figure anywhere from 9-13 hours nonstop is normal. My day of rest has become one of the busiest days of the week.

Obviously, Robert became busy with the work and with the increase in responsibility. A “B.P.” is a Branch President is the head of the church in an area, accountable for the welfare of the members.

It would have been interesting to compare the difference between the first half of his mission to the second year to see why he became “bored” with writing, and depressed over his service. However, without that comparison, it’s apparent that Robert has experienced a change. He’s learned to live on his own, he appreciates hard work, and loves his church. Robert was honorably released from his mission on February 14, 1974, when he returned to Salt Lake and started a job.

Research Questions

RQ 1: How does Robert create identity[ies] through narratives told in his journals?

The dominant identity that Robert constructs during this first story is that of being a Christian missionary. With the intense changes that require him to alter nearly all familiar behavior, Robert is well aware that he will be having experiences that will change how he knows himself. That realization is where the identity construction begins.

Robert then actively starts to identify expectations that he is required to fill. Most of those expectations are established through the mission rules that alter his daily activities, the language he uses, and the people with whom he must spend all of his time. In a process of social comparison Robert recognizes traits in people that he admires, and writes about wanting to create similar characteristic within himself. In the beginning he wrote of missionaries who communicated humility, and near the end of his mission, he admired his companions who were adaptable, playful, and witty. All of the writing that

acknowledges these traits allows Robert to create a template of expectations and characteristics. The writing clarifies his idea and desires, and eventually he comments on whether he was able to incorporate these new behaviors into his personal character.

The process of becoming comfortable with these changes in identity is slow and rarely recognized by Robert, but his increasing comfort with his role can be seen through the patterns in his writing. Consistent within the journal entries is a template of characteristics and his abilities to achieve mission expectations. Also, there is a pattern of listing daily activities until they become routine, and eventually the philosophical thoughts are eliminated from the writing. Finally, the language is a considerable indicator of identity creation. At the LTM, Robert writes several lines in French, more to show himself what he's learning rather than to communicate. By about four months into the mission, his language is transformed and the journal writing naturally incorporates French words into English sentences. For example, bikes are *vetos*, apartment is *la salle*, and brother is *frere*.

RQ 2: What do the form and content of Robert's stories tell us about his identity construction?

There is a definite formal structure to the journal entries that changes near the end of Robert's first year in France. The first few entries are very short and relay one piece of information about the day, ending with a philosophical thought. As he becomes more comfortable with journaling, the entries are longer, but are still reports of daily activities with little emotional expression. Indeed, the journal seems more as a day-planner than a diary. Once Robert's activities become more familiar and routine, his writing also becomes more comfortable. As soon as Robert begins to feel at ease with his

environment, he writes of more personal and emotional experiences, sharing criticisms of his daily activities and companions.

The content of the journal entries seems to be a better indicator of the changes in Robert's identities. It takes several months before Robert writes a narrative, with characters and plotlines. The first, for example, is the story of being caught in the rain, and teaching a discussion in women's clothing. The experiences that Robert writes about show how he is becoming comfortable with his roles and responsibilities, and adapting to all the changes. Most specifically, the content reveals how private Robert is. There are several entries that mark emotion management and suppression of feelings, revealing Robert's struggle to comfortably communicate interpersonally.

RQ 3: Does Robert construct conflicting identities? How does Robert manage conflicting identities?

Robert does construct distinct identities. Whether they are conflicting is difficult to determine. In the beginning, his familiar past is conflicting with responsibilities of the mission. He seems to incorporate the changes and alter necessary behavior in order to manage the new experiences. What creates the most conflict, however, is Robert's construction of an ideal missionary, and his failure to achieve that ideal. The template for a successful missionary is one who works hard, baptizes, and is a humble Christian. While Robert does work hard, and baptizes a few people, he is never satisfied. His struggle to consistently teach and get along with all of his companions forces Robert to classify himself as a failure.

Robert manages this conflict in identity by accepting or rejecting behaviors and mistakes. Many times, failures in working hard are attributed to the companion's

laziness, Robert inexperience with the language, or his role as a junior companion. Whenever he does accept his faults, there is typically a sentence about working or studying harder in order to please the Lord.

RQ 4: How does emotion management frame Robert's narratives and identity construction? What are the emotional consequences of this process?

Robert conforms to the social norms of being a missionary by enacting display rules. He employs surface acting when he recognizes his inferiority as a junior companion and remains silent and pleasant during discussions with investigators. Although he disagrees with statements that his companion makes, he writes it off as a language barrier issue, or his need to be more humble. Robert is a deep actor when he constantly encourages himself to get up in the mornings when he doesn't want to go tracting, and when he continually knocks on doors after being rejected all day long.

Robert uses strategies of emotion management when having to interpersonally interact with those that he comes in contact. Robert is a very shy person, and struggles to communicate publicly. The way that Robert typically manages emotion is to suppress negative feelings by blaming himself for his inadequacies. There are only two companions that Robert feels comfortable enough to share his thoughts with, thus, writing in a diary was a outlet for all of his feelings that he didn't feel at ease to verbally express. Robert also used strategies of masking his feelings to appear a particular way and meet the expectations that were set for him as a missionary.

RQ 5: How does the private and written nature of journaling influence Robert's narratives and identity construction?

The private nature of journaling gave Robert a place to communicate all of his thoughts and feelings as he experienced such a dramatic change in his life. The journal is also a way for Robert to make sense of all of the different activities that he is required to accomplish. Without his journal, there wasn't an outlet for his emotions. Journaling became a safe world where Robert could express himself, remember the things that he found joy in, and not fear the repercussions of his thoughts.

At times it seems that Robert uses his diaries as a crutch, so that he doesn't have to communicate with people. He could write about his discontent and frustrations, and then just forget about it. Because he was never able to fully satisfy his conflicts with his companions, Robert struggled to build relationships with them. While the journal is a therapeutic tool for private communication and intrapersonal satisfaction, it was also communicative method that prevented interpersonal resolution.

Story Two: Becoming a Father

After returning from a mission, and adjusting back into a more typical lifestyle, Robert found himself back in school and working as an office manager for an industrial supply company. He was still active in his church, serving as the President of a young, single adults group. With this role, Robert was in charge of all meetings and activities for all the singles ages 18-30 in the South Salt Lake valley, and it is through this service that he met his future spouse.

My mother, Pam, had just returned from her mission to Argentina and was in charge of the activities for the young single adults at her church group. She was planning

a summer activity, but heard that there was another group of singles (Robert's) headed to California and Mexico for ten days, and she thought she would get in on the fun.

The group, about 30 people, rented two motor homes, Robert in one and Pam in the other, and they started their trek west. Just outside of San Francisco, they stopped for gas. After filling the tanks, Robert's motor home sped ahead, starting a race between the two vehicles. All of a sudden, smoke came billowing out of Robert's motor home and the others tried to warn them by honking the horn and flashing the headlights.

Robert's van thought they were just playing and didn't stop. Suddenly, the motor home ignited and flames came shooting out the back. Pam's motor home pulled into the other lane and pushed them off the road. Just as the last person jumped from the vehicle, the whole thing went up in flames. This, however, didn't stop the group from having an adventure. They all piled into the other motor home, and in close quarters went to Disneyland and Mexico for the remainder of the week. From that one trip, five couples met, courted and married, Robert and Pam being one of them.

March 16, 1978

No doubt you are wondering what on earth I'm doing writing in a journal. One must admit that it is "old fashion." Journals haven't been popular for years. The only reason, I guess, is the Church. What else motivates man? (At least in a righteous way.) Well—here I go. Today is March 16, 1978. A Thursday. The weather was very pleasant, about 55 degrees and it looks like spring is just around the corner. I had a rather typical day at work, though I left home late and so arrived about five after eight. It's funny, but I hate so to get up in the morning. I'm not a lazy person—I just enjoy sleep. We live in Sandy, Utah at present in a home situated on 1108 E & 10877 South. As you can tell, this account does not begin at the commencement of my life. We'll just have to do our best to pick up, as we go, the earlier years. I'm twenty-five at present, having been born on December thirtieth, nineteen hundred and fifty-two. I married Pamela Tischner on February seventh, nineteen hundred seventy-six, and at present we have one son, Robert Brandon.

I've had reason to do a lot of thinking this week about life, as last Monday I rolled the car...

The years between his last mission entry and this first entry in a new journal show quite a bit of difference. Obviously, being married with a new baby has something to do with this altered style of writing. It seems like he's talking to a new friend, writing about the weather, and recounting the dates and details of his life. It's clear that there is some sense of responsibility to keep a family, or life, history for others to read in the future, motivated by his activity in the church.

The entry continues about the accident. Roads were slippery after a snowfall and freeze. In trying to avoid an accident that occurred just in front of him, Robert swerved off the freeway and rolled his car several times into a ditch. The car was totaled, but he was able to walk away from the accident, only a little shaken. He called for a ride into work and went on with life as usual. The entry only tells of the accident. He never writes about his thoughts on life. Comparable to his previous writing, the next few years of entries are few and far between, and are merely summaries of events from the day, only with a more narrative tone. Other than having a second child, a little girl, nothing out of the ordinary provokes him to write.

March 3, 1980

...For the home front, I got ticked off Saturday when I went to help Keith, my brother, move. I was an hour late, but figured that they would still be loading trucks. They weren't. In fact, everything, and everyone was gone. I thought that it was rude of him not to have at least called when he knew that I was coming. No big deal, I guess. Lately I've felt myself going into a shell somewhat that I've become so disappointed with people that I've wanted nothing to do with them. Last night Pam and I had a long talk about a lot of our problems in communicating and bickering, and I came to the conclusion that I've got to determine, very definitely, what my priorities are and what I will and will not do, and also when I will or won't do it. For all that I think life is, it's not as easy as some pretend. It is a constant effort toward an end, and I'm just glad for a testimony that helps me to know what that end is...

It's strange that after not writing for several months, this event of his brother's move was enough to cause Robert to contemplate and record his thoughts. He had been struggling with his family, mostly his brothers, and work had also been a source of stress, probably causing most of the arguments in his marriage. I'm not sure how he understood that his priorities were out of line, but that same comment occurred several times on his mission when he felt out of control and was unable to voice his concerns. This reflects Robert's tendency to absorb the emotions of others, feeling guilty when everything doesn't fall into place, thus identifying as a failure rather than just being human.

Robert didn't come from a unified and supportive home, and it was not uncommon for there to be disruptions and fighting with his family. He has six siblings, and Robert is second to the youngest, with the kids typically split between the oldest four and the youngest three. Robert always wanted to be accepted by his older siblings and recognized for being something great, more than just the little guy. He was always rejected by his oldest brothers, especially because he and his brother Mark, who was two years older, got along and weren't involved in typical masculine activities. They didn't like to hunt or play football, but rather enjoyed the math club and musicals.

The two oldest brothers, Richard II and Keith, typically took on the dominant role in the home because Robert's father, Richard, was always gone on business. No one knows what he did exactly, except that he would come home after three months, stay for a weekend, and leave again. There was rarely any money coming back to the family, causing them to live meagerly and make a lot of sacrifices, including not having a refrigerator. Robert was embarrassed by his family and home, and never invited friends

over. He, as well as others, questioned if his father worked, or lived a secret life with a second family. No one asked, so no one knows.

September 4, 1983

Don't panic folks, the years between are in the blue journal...

I find this single comment incredibly important for two reasons. First, two years has passed without an entry, which in the past, meant that his life was very busy and stressful. Fortunately, that is not entirely the case this time as, obviously, he is writing in a different journal. The second reason I find this comment important, is because something caused him to change where he recorded his thoughts. There is no way of knowing why he switched journals, as we have been unable to locate that “blue journal.”

At this point, a third baby has been born, another girl—me—and as a surprise, it caused more financial strain to the family. Having three children, all under the age of three and all in diapers, definitely added to the excitement of Robert's life.

September 8, 1983

...Now to cry about me. Never would I have suspected how dependant I could become on someone else's love, affection and concern and attention. In the Little Prince, the fox tells the Little Prince that one becomes responsible for that which he tames. It's true. Some how I've got to find a way to get more attention. I feel myself yearning for it. So much for me...

September 12, 1983

Another beautiful day. Besides the usual, I felt like I was slighting myself—denying myself my full potential. The hard thing on that is that only I can make a difference. I told Pam I've got to break out of this stagnant hole and begin doing all that I can. I realize that the above doesn't make much sense, but believe me, it does. What we become rests within ourselves.

September 20, 1983

I've been down today because of work. I vow that nothing will let me get down over Merrell and Dave, and then it does. Someday this too shall pass.

I visited with a fellow I home teach tonight—he's building a home and is so excited. It was fun to share his excitement.

These three entries reflect a shift in the purpose of Robert's journal. Not only is Robert's diary a place to account his daily activities and life history, but also it becomes an outlet for emotional expression. Although most use journaling as a means of emotional expression, Robert feels guilty for expressing negative emotions, and sarcastically writes about a few frustrating moments. He seems to be cycling through a type of depression, or lack of purpose in life, writing mostly about his inadequacies, both at work as an employee and at home as a husband. He wasn't satisfied with where he found himself in life, and was searching for something more.

October 4, 1983

Go, go, go. Pam has been down today. The pressure of money and work. Sweetwater, who we have a time share with, has filed a chapter 11 Bankruptcy. Cash is tight here at home. Jamie is to get her tonsils out on Friday. We need to get orders in for papers. The pressure is mounting. Today was a beautiful warm day, and the kids were so cute tonight. I think the only way we hang on to sanity is through the family and the gospel.

As felt through the intensity of Robert's listing, life is beginning to pick up the pace. He finds himself extremely busy in every arena of his life. His statements are short and to the point, with no elaboration. It is significant that Pam is now depressed, as Robert has felt similarly in his prior entries. He doesn't talk about how that makes him feel, or what she needs from him. His wife's depression is downplayed--just another statement to mark the events of the day. The issue of money is also important, as the next line leads into his 4-year-old daughter facing major surgery. It also reminds me of the anxiety he had over money on his mission. To Robert, money seems to be a sign of success and control.

November 8, 1983

I repent. This week has flown by, and somehow I neglected to write. We're going full steam on paper sales, Pam's busy with church and school for the kids. I've had the usual church meeting along with paper, and the spa... Tonight I'm tired and ready to crash. Though my mental attitude is very positive, sometimes the pressure is unreal. I feel like I'm scrambling for \$. And I hate it. Life is hard enough without having to add all this on top. Perhaps one day I'll be rich.

Robert is submerged in the life of being a husband, father, and businessman, juggling all of the roles, while at the same time working to maintain an active Christian identity. In the beginning of this journal, he hadn't been writing because it wasn't the "in thing," but now, he sees it as a point of spiritual neglect and inadequacy if he doesn't write. Robert seems to have incorporated his Christian ideologies much more into his life, or feels more comfortable with that identity because it's most commonly expressed. Every now and then, Robert drops a line or two about his children, or wife, but doesn't go into much depth about those relationships. Most of his entries are about working, partially recognizing his responsibility to his family, but mostly to fulfill the need of achieving success and feeling good about himself.

November 24, 1983

A cold and windy Thanksgiving Day. My thoughts drifted back 11 years to when I was on my mission. At the time I was in a city in France—St. Quentin. Thanksgiving that day was cloudy, but still warm. We played football in the morning and then got together as a district for Thanksgiving Dinner. I remember thinking at the time how I wasn't homesick, that it was very right to be where I was at that time. Now, eleven years later I'm with my in-laws. Again it felt right...

It's strange that Robert remembers and writes about all of these Thanksgiving activities now, because he didn't write about any of it at that time. Statements like this make it clear how important his mission was in shaping his character. He recognizes that

holidays are about the time spent with people, rather than the celebration of the holiday itself. The memories are positive, and an acknowledgement of success.

Again, there is some attention given to his desire to fit in. He seems surprised to find inclusion in less typical groups than he would have first thought. Robert felt like an outcast in his family, so it's unexpected to him to be accepted into a different family.

The point of not feeling homesick continues to surprise him, showing that he is thinking about his family, but also enjoying different experiences.

November 27, 1983

...I've had on my mind lately the hustle and bustle of the season. There seems to be so much to do, and I don't push like I should to get everything done. I think the one thing that bothers me most is that I don't take time for my family and for people. I fear waking up twenty years down the road and finding that I'm financially successful but that my family, relatives and friends, have left me in the dust. There are people who I admire who have sacrificed much in their lives to reach the position wherein they now sit, however, I feel so much has been missed. Take my father as an example. He is doing well in his job. He feels useful and needed, which is good. But at 65 years of age, he lives alone in California seeing his wife and family once every other month—at best—for a week or so. He is not in the best of health, and could easily leave this life at any time. It is sad to say but I don't think I would shed many tears, as I don't really know him. He's a hard working and a good hearted, generous man. But what is he, and who is he? I'd be surprised if he kept a journal...

This entry is an interesting point of reflection, marking a desire for something different from the example of his father. It's apparent that Robert is still using a template of characteristics and expectations to negotiate his own identities. He finally explain his philosophical thoughts, rather than just giving himself advice, and for the first time questions his theme of success relating to hard work. It's also interesting that Robert prides himself on his journal, making him better, or at least different, from his father. Robert doesn't know what he wants, or how to achieve it, but he clearly know what he does not want.

Strangely, this entry is a moment of foreshadowing. Robert's outcome was a bit different; he was never financially successful, didn't make it to even 50 years old, and was alone in Kansas when he died. For as much as his detested who his father had become, in some respects, he followed closely in his footsteps.

December 6, 1983

When you start out by loosing a contact lens in the corner of your eye while driving along the freeway during the morning rush, you know you're in for a long day. Noon was a rush, and then there's tonight. Aubrie was sick, so we went to Jim's for a look. After the exam, she vomited all over herself. Such is life...Pam is upset with me again. She's pregnant and is feeling the effects of morning sickness. She doesn't think I'm as concerned for her well-being as I should be. I keep thinking it's just the hormones. Just hang in there Robert. This too shall pass.

This entry is definitely commenting on his identity as a husband and father. Jim was a brother-in-law, married to Pam's older sister, but was also a ear, nose, and throat doctor. I was only four, but I do remember this day. I remember sitting in a black, leather chair, in my pink pajamas, and once Jim stuck the tongue depressor in my throat, it was all over from there. I did get a yellow, sugar-free sucker, but couldn't eat it because I was so sick. I eventually had my tonsils removed, adding to the financial stresses of Robert's life.

The statement "this too shall pass" is a scriptural passage that Robert continually repeats throughout these journals, specifically when Robert is emotionally numb and ready for a new experience. Also revealing his emotional state and desire to be removed from the situation, Robert talks to himself in third-person. Obviously, he's not feeling successful in his role as a husband, yet doesn't verbally communicate his feelings about it. The journals are becoming a strategy for emotion management. When Robert writes

the event down, he recognizes it for what it is, and moves on, revealing the suppression of public communication.

December 18, 1983

... We made spritz cookies this afternoon and were then invited to the Carbones for dinner. (This after tithing settlement) The Church broadcasted a Christmas fireside. It was good—very motivating. It was sad to see how far away from family we've gotten. Our world is commercialized, however, the real problem is not taking time to know each other. In my own case, I have friends who know me better than my own brothers and sisters. It makes me very sad inside.

Another philosophical reflection with only a single statement of explanation.

Robert's entries are so full of experiences at work that these short comments about his family come as major statements. He misses his family, and seems to have a template in his head of what a family is supposed to look like and do for each other. The failure to achieve those expectations looms over him, causing him to be depressed and angry and motivating him to write.

December 30, 1983

...I read in Jim's, my brother-in-law's journal, the other day that the real success in life is peace within self. How true it is. At this point in time, I don't feel very peaceful.

February 25, 1984

Pam and I had a bad fight today. That is all I'll say. There is much to do in order to repair our relationship.

March 7, 1984

Bishopric meeting tonight. Work all day. Some days I get depressed at seeing the rut I'm in. Why don't I move???

There are several entries in between these three blurbs, but these statements stuck out from the rest because they are short, poignant comments that give significant insight

into all three major areas of his life and identity, i.e. himself, his marriage/family, and work/church.

The first entry is important because he is reading someone else's journal. Obviously he's seeking advice, wanting to build relationships, and admires Jim as an example of a successful individual. Robert is finally able to attribute success to something other than hard work. It is an incredible difference from the prefacing line for his mission that success is in direct proportion to the number of hours spent working each day, every day. It is also shocking to read such an emotional disclosure that he doesn't feel at peace. This reveals Robert's safety and security in private communication through writing.

The second entry is profound, because some argument unsettled Robert to the core, where he questions the strength of his marriage. It's interesting that the fight is so emotional that he will not write about what happened, and even goes out of his way to make a statement that he is unwilling to "talk" about it.

Finally, the third entry reflects his feelings over his service in the church that requires him to meet several nights a week, and his distaste for his place of employment. Again, the statements are short, reflecting his frustrations. The company that he was working for was sold, and Robert struggled to get along with the new owners. He was still a hardworking office manager, who didn't get the raise that he wanted, but watched as the new owners took vacations to Hawaii. Not exactly the success that he was looking for in life.

March 24, 1984

The weather held out so that we were able to get a few things done...I fixed all the kids bicycles—flat tires, loose screws, and the like. I also got the grow box ready for planting

peas. I'll get the seeds this week. No question but that a house is much work and upkeep...

Robert loved the beauty of the outdoors, and especially loved gardening. I have so many memories of my siblings chasing me with worms because we all had to help plant the peas in the grow box. He's also the one who taught us all to ride bikes. It's strange how he hated riding bikes on his mission, but that was the object that helped him fulfill his role as a father and shape a different aspect of his identity.

June 27, 1984

I had reason to reflect upon my situation and personal freedom today. I like very much to be responsible to only myself, without having to give account of my time and actions. It is a weakness within me. In the real world we are responsible for everything and everyone we "tame"; i.e. become involved with. It would, by reason, be very lonely if life were not shared with others. It must therefore needs be that our personal time and actions be accounted for with someone—a parent, associate, spouse. It must have something to do with gaining control over self...

This entry gives such insight into Robert's thoughts, and again, his desire to make a connection with others and overcome his loneliness. Also, being responsible for those we tame is a reference back to the book, *The Little Prince*, that he received as a Christmas gift from his mission companion.

Both he and Pam have just received new jobs in the church. Pam is teaching an adult Sunday School class. Robert is president of the Elder's quorum, responsible for all of the men and families in his church. While Pam is enjoying her new assignment, and is recognized as a successful teacher, Robert is struggling to gain support from the men. In past entries, when he gives himself advice, it's usually to change how he's feeling. Now, apparently, he's overwhelmed with responsibility and is feeling alone.

July 23, 1984

What a week. Let me back up to last Tuesday night. The 17th was normal as far as the days usually go. I came home at noon because for some reason the garage door had gone out. Apparently the transistor board is once again gone out. From there Pam and I had words—I spent too much time trying to fix the door, etc etc. I went back to work while she said she would go to the doctor's for an ultrasound. Later in the afternoon my computer terminal went out—why not?

I got home at 5:40 only to get a call from Pam. She'd gone to the doctor's at four, only to learn that the baby was in distress. The doctor was preparing for an emergency cesarean section. The kids were with neighbors who graciously said they could spend the night. I rushed to Cottonwood Hospital as Pam was receiving an epidural block. We went into delivery at seven pm and the baby—a boy—was born at seven twenty-one pm. All went well...From there, it has been down hill. Pam spent five days in the hospital. We brought her home on Sunday.

Work wise the business is progressing with the lawyer getting started on the paperwork. It will cost us 75 thousand down and 176 thousand financed over 60 months to buy the company...Needless to say, my inside turned with this information. This endeavor should be interesting...

Baby number four. The complete description of the delivery marks a change in Robert's acceptance of his identity of fatherhood. With the births of his three previous children, he forgot to write about it until entries later, and when he does write, it's brief. This is different, maybe because he fought with Pam before, maybe because Pam and the baby almost died, or maybe because he now accepts being a dad and husband.

The process with the lawyer is explaining the purchase of a new company. Robert was tired of his job and looking for a change. His brother, Keith, had an opportunity to buy an industrial sales company, but needed a partner in order to afford the purchase. It seems to be the perfect situation, except that Robert and Keith hate each other. They hoped to be able to set aside their differences to make this new company work, but in the end, the company is the catalyst that divides Robert's family and eventually leads to his demise.

August 13, 1984

...While talking with Keith today, we set the date of Aug 29 to sign contracts to purchase Combined Supply. I'll believe it on the 29th when the ink is dry...

August 14, 1984

...Soon we'll be off to new ventures and new twists in life. I wonder how it will be, and yet I'm excited and scared all at once in not really knowing what I'm in for.

Robert obviously doesn't realize this now, but August 29 becomes quite a significant day in the future. The business hasn't even begun, but with its commencement on the 29th, it will always struggle to produce any money. The stress that is created from working eventually leads Robert to, and funds, his drug addiction.

Robert doesn't start using cocaine until 1987, and it isn't until August 29, 1997 when he finally tells his family of his addiction.

October 28, 1984

...I sometimes find it very difficult dealing with my role as husband and father. From time to time I feel a sort of yearning to be free and independent. That small inner voice keeps telling me that these feelings are of Satan—that he wants responsibility and families to degenerate. Then I worry about the kids. I wonder what type of spirits they possess, and what sort of influence I have over them. They are so good, and so smart.

Robert relies on his Christian beliefs and identity to gain feelings of control. It a normal feeling to want to be free from all your responsibilities, and it is actually normal for Robert to chastise himself when he doesn't achieve his own expectations.

His entries are gaining intensity and are more expressive and descriptive about how he feels. In this case, it's interesting that he expresses that the battle is within himself, which is usually the most difficult war to win. At this point Robert is extremely stressed with his new company. His time is stretched to the limit, as he's torn between the responsibilities in his home, at church, and at work. The company is still struggling, and Robert is finding it incredibly difficult to work with his brother, who is unwilling to

financially match what Robert funded to purchase Combine Supply and Plastics. Robert writes of feeling like he's taken on more of a responsibility and more of a risk, putting his family in jeopardy and his ego on the line.

3-4-85

I seldom take the time to write down my deeper thoughts and feelings. Life for me seems to pass so quickly by and there is hardly time in the day for what really counts that being the family and the gospel. I've been thinking about this journal and wondering if anyone down the road will come to know me or even really care about here and now. Basically we have all the comforts of life and are really spoiled. It all makes me wonder how long the Lord will allow such Leisure and 'good life' to exist when the spiritual tone is becoming so flabby! This is not so say that I'm perfect and am ready to meet the Lord. I'm not. There is, however, a great sifting occurring and it is surprising how many strong and active are being led away...

Work is consuming Robert. He is very concerned about the debt of the company, realizing that a lot is at stake. All of his time and energy is going into building the company, and as a result other aspects of his life begin to suffer, and he feels the consequences. On the home front, Robert's marriage has taken a hit, and Pam decides they should see a therapist to work out some of the concerns in their marriage. Robert is hopeful for an improvement, but is embarrassed to share his failures with a stranger.

Through the therapy and church, he decides to focus more on his family, mostly writing about wanting to concentrate on the well-being of he wife and children, rather than actually journaling about what he is doing differently.

During this entry he begins to question the purpose of keeping a journal, wondering if anyone is going to benefit from all of his reflections. Quite an ironic statement, considering this project.

Finally, it's apparent that he's concerned about facing God, and that he's thinking about death. While he doesn't write about his specific thoughts, it is on his mind as a concern, setting a goal to improve.

10-13-85

... We had some disturbing news with Mark this past month. He called and announced that he was dying of AIDS and that he wanted to come home. In addition, he was suffering with type A hepatitis. It was made plain to him that we'd set him up here in SLC, but that he couldn't come 'home' to live. He went off with the 'My family doesn't love me' routine and said finally that his decision was final. He would be in Salt Lake at such and such a time, to pick him up.

On the morning of the day in which he was to come he called and said that since no one loved or wanted him, he was going to Los Angeles to check into a clinic, and that was that. To date no one has heard from him nor knows where he is. What a wasted life. Somehow, I guess that we learn from all of these good experiences!!!

Before Mark's news, life continued to become more and more hectic. Robert became incredibly depressed, but never stopped working. The company was still a source of stress, and Keith started to blame it's lack of progression on Robert and his office maintenance skills. Also, it didn't help the working situation that Keith still hadn't put any money forward for the purchase of the business, creating more bitterness between the two brothers. Robert was still determined to see the company grow, regardless of Keith's plans, and was unwilling to ever give up.

When Mark contacted the family with the news that he had contracted HIV and was dying from AIDS, it added one more stress to Robert's plate. He and Mark had always been close growing up, and the two always felt responsible for each other. Mark had been married for a short year, before divorcing, and moving to California. He never kept in contact with the family, but Robert knew of his homosexual urges, and figured he would get involved in an alternate lifestyle.

During the 80s AIDS wasn't as common, and many were hateful toward those who contracted the disease. Robert's family was no different. While Mark lay dying, his family did nothing. Several times, Richard—their father—was in L.A. on business, and would not go see him, embarrassed and angry to have a gay son. Robert was adamantly against homosexuality, believing it to be a sin against God, yet he still loved his brother and tried to show that love however possible.

11-28-86

My how I've wanted to write my feelings for some time but never gotten around to do it. These past months have been most strenuous and believe me, I never want to go through them again.

Money, that root of all evil, seems to continue to be on short supply around our house, as the company continues on the slide. In backing up a few months, last June Keith handed me a letter stating that our partnership would be dissolved. He has hated working with me, and states that this move is in his best interested. Hogwash! He and I don't see eye to eye on how to pay ourselves. I've had tremendous pressure in trying to stretch the dollars so as to be able to cover the bills. There has been very little left to live on. One month, a while back, I was stringing out the fellows on their payment. I mentioned that finally their check had been mailed, when in fact it had not. Keith came to pieces over the pressure the fellows kept pulling on him. He, behind my back, set out to show me and everyone else what a liar I am. When faced with all of his accusations, I denied them. To this day I fail to understand what Keith was trying to prove. He let me know that he would not and could not tolerate a liar as a partner. All this was in January. Feelings continued to boil until, at last, the letter. What a shock!

Since that time, it has been hell with him. On August 28th he packed his things at the office and moved out. From then on he has sought to destroy CSP and especially me. I truly hate him.

This problem has spread to the family so that now there are nothing but rumors and bad feelings. What a mess.

What else has happened? Richard has been divorced and now has remarried (on 11-22-86). Pam and I have run a marathon (It was on October 4 in St. George). Now we, Pam, Kids & I live on money from Pam's folk's and Pat while we see if the business will succeed or not. What a mess...Needless to say, it has caused a rift between us. Lately the family has taken it in the short because of the company. No money, and so much time and energy spent at the office. I keep telling myself to be patient, though I won't be able to last for long.

If these diary entries didn't exist, it would be difficult to summarize and remember how challenging life became once Keith left the business. The situation grew

from bad to worse, with sales plummeting. My family was living on money from in-laws, and Robert continually faced the creditors at work. Many thought he was out of his mind to try to keep this business running. But Robert continued to believe that there was some divine purpose for experiencing this, and was determined to pull out on top.

Once Keith left Combine Supply, the Horrocks family split according to past loyalties. The older siblings supported Keith and would have nothing to do with Robert, and the younger kids took Robert's side, supporting him by working at the office beside him, or just through contact.

March 28, 1988

And life marches on. How profound! In the months since the above entry life has been full and challenging and very busy...So much has gone on in my life that it is difficult to try and capsule it all. Tonight the trouble with Keith and the business is on my mind. Yes, he continues to sue us and is so vicious. He was ex'ed from the Church last August for stealing funds from his ward. Funny how all along he has accused me of stealing money from the company. The battle with Keith will yet go on for a long time...

Perhaps as the days go on I'll be more diligent in picking up the scenes from the past. It is sufficient for me now to mention that I've hit bottom in all—especially my self-esteem. Even my testimony has been and continues to be challenged. My hope is that it will be strong enough to carry me through. I presently have a real 'I don't care attitude' about a lot going on in the Ward. My hope is in my belief that the gospel is true.

On the home front, we are expecting another baby, this May, number 5. To be honest, I've always known that we would have five children. Yes, I'm glad. I'll also be glad when Pam is through being pregnant!!!

The battle with Keith was exhaustive, and lasted for years. There were extensive court battles, and Keith even strangled Robert in a restaurant, threatening his life.

Eventually Keith found a job working for national life insurance company, became incredibly successful after embezzlement and fraud, and finally ended up at the state penitentiary for several years.

At this point, Robert's "I don't care attitude" reveals his depressed emotional state. During several entries, along with the one above, Robert writes of looking for a

change, or something to end his feelings of failure and frustration. Unfortunately, during this time of challenge, he left town, and snorted his first hit of cocaine while sitting in a truck stop. I was in first grade, but I can remember this day vividly. Robert had left for the gym after fighting with Pam, and just didn't come home. My mom had called hospitals and the highway patrol, but no one could find him. He didn't come home until late the next day, and only told us that he needed some quiet time, away from it all. We had no way of knowing what had just started, and how it would affect our lives forever.

Interestingly, Robert never writes about using drugs until 1997, only comments of getting priorities in line, ending the secret or changing behavior. For Robert, writing was a way of constructing reality. Obviously he didn't want anyone to know what he was doing, and he wasn't ready to admit to himself that he had a serious problem.

The final three entries in this diary are the most compelling, as they are a foreshadowing of Robert's demise. I read these three entries only days after his death, and had to shut the journal because it was too similar to how he passed away. This story ends with the passing of his brother Mark, who died of AIDS.

November 22, 1988

There are so many things that I want to say and to remember, but first things first. Today, at around 11:15 am pacific time, Mark, my brother died. It is so hard to write, to comprehend. He is dead! And at 37 years, one week old. Mark died of AIDS in Los Angeles, CA—he was living in the Fairfax district. Oh Mark, what a waste. Though I'm past tears, I feel like part of me has died.

Last Wednesday night I flew to L.A. to see Mark, as I felt that his time was short. I was there until Sunday night, and although it was not a 'great' time and I was in and out, I think Mark was glad that I came. I believe that he hung on for me. I shall finish my trip later—I just did not want to loose my feelings—my thoughts tonight!

November 25, 1988

...I've been postponing writing about my visit to L.A. to see Mark. I've got a lot of feelings about that.

December 10, 1988

Obviously there were a few interruptions since I began writing about my trip to L.A. to see Mark.

I flew into Los Angeles on Wednesday evening, the 16th of November. This was my first time in the 'big city,' and was therefore excited and nervous. I rented a car, and headed for the Fairfax district, following directions that I had received from Mark.

The last time I saw him was in May, right after Spencer was born. He looked hollow from a loss of weight, and he had a few spots—lesions—from the cancer. I remember most of his ear—it was a blackish color on the inside, and it was then he told us that the cancer had spread to his head, and that he was losing his hearing.

With this in mind, I expected to see him looking much the same, while at the same time expecting him to look worse.

Amazingly, I found the apartment without any trouble. When I rang the bell at about 8:00 a girl greeted me and directed me to Mark's bedroom. I came to learn that the apartment was a thoroughfare of people in and out as Mark was bed ridden and so left the door open so that anyone could get in.

I believe that Mark was glad to see me. I was introduced to everyone while in the shock of seeing Mark. He had no strength left and was basically in bed all the time. He was nothing but skin and bone, weighing less than 120 lbs. He wore a scraggly beard, and his hair was messed up. In a word, he looked awful!

We visited most of the evening, me staying in his room. I was feeling very out of place—like a fifth wheel. It was common knowledge that Mark had a different lifestyle than myself, but being in it was awkward. To be honest, Los Angeles, Hollywood, and West Hollywood all had a bad spirit about. I could feel it, but am at a loss of words to describe the atmosphere.

Mark was on morphine for pain, and his next pill was at eleven. He invited me to stay with him, saying I could sleep in bed with him, or on the couch. Due to his constant coughing, and the amount of traffic in and out of the apartment, I elected to get a motel room. I didn't tell Mark that, however, as I really didn't want to hurt his feelings. Besides, due to his medicine he really didn't know what was going on. When we spoke, he couldn't remember what we were talking about, then he would begin on a new thought out of nowhere—Or better, he'd fall asleep.

Needless to say, it was an interesting first night. The next day, Thursday, I met his day care nurse. She was a young black girl—very sweet. We visited more with one another than with Mark as he was sort of in and out. It was interesting how curious everyone was about me and Salt Lake when they learned that I was LDS and from Utah.

Both Thursday and Friday I was in and out a lot with business. I had scheduled visits for work to help break the time with Mark and also help pay for the trip. Being with Mark several hours at a stretch was difficult. He was still so argumentative and judgmental. He had become another martyr to the cause of gays and the disease AIDS. I got tired to hearing his friends go on and on about AIDS and what everyone should be doing. There is a very selfish society—a classic case of tunnel vision. Suppressing, I just listened, determining it not worth the while to spark an argument.

On Saturday, I got Mark to eat a little more food. He was slowly starving himself by only eating a little soup now and then.

I should also mention that on Friday because Mark was getting mixed up on his medication and was more and more disoriented, the agency had authorized 24 hour nursing care.

Anyway, on Saturday I talked Mark into eating more solids! He said that he felt like pizza, so I went out and got a pizza. His roommate said that he would never be able to keep it down, but we surprised everyone. Mark did just fine.

I could see a significant decline since Wednesday night when I arrived. The nurse said that they expected him to live only another 72 hours! My heart sunk. I knew Mark was dying. I had said that I didn't expect him to make it to Christmas. It was still sad for me to think of him dying, as he had just turned 37 on Tuesday the 15th of November.

I left Saturday evening to stay with Hansen's in Buena Park. I felt that I needed to get away from that dark spirit atmosphere of L.A., and I was planning on attending church with Fred and Carolyn. They, as always, were most gracious and were very sad to hear about Mark. They had had no idea what was going on. Tyler and his wife came by and we all went to dinner Saturday night. Sunday was great—Church was very pleasant, and being able to talk with Carolyn and Fred helped me to relieve some of my feelings.

I returned to Los Angeles Sunday afternoon to spend a few more hours with Mark before flying back to Salt Lake. I found him to be a bit more coherent than when I left him on Saturday. In speaking with him, I could sense a sort of fear in passing from this life. For the first time in a long while Mark was listening, and not fighting. He remembered some of the teachings he had learned in growing up, as he knew there was life after death. He fully expected someone to be waiting to escort him from this life—perhaps Cacilia.

I explained to Mark that soon he would see a light in his room, probably in an upper corner. For some reason I felt it would be the upper right-hand corner from where he was laying. "When you see it," I explained, "go for it. It won't hurt, and you will feel very much at peace. Go for the light, Mark."

From the look in his eyes, I could see that he understood and believed me. Then I hugged him, and told him that I loved him and that his family loved him. He said that he knew that, that he loved me too! Then I shook my head. "Mark," I said, "What have you done to yourself? I could just shake you, I'm so angry! You're too young to be dying like this." Said Mark, "I know."

I asked him to say hi to everyone, Opa, Oma, Cacilia, Grandma, and everyone else. We both knew that we would not see one another alive again. I hugged him again, then left, racing to the airport to just barely catch my plane to Salt Lake. I was back in Salt Lake by 10:00 pm on Sunday, November 20th.

Before leaving, Mark's friend who was present asked me why I said I was angry with him. He said that I should be angry with the government that did so little to research and find a cure for AIDS. I could only look at him and think how self centered they all were. Mind you, I'm far from perfect, and there is much for which my iniquity by claiming that someone else is responsible for my consequences.

I thought, when he told me to write my congressman, that the 'cure' for AIDS is before us. It is called morality. Unfortunately, the gays choose to ignore or acknowledge such a cure. For me, I came home converted that my family was most important and worth fighting for, no matter how hard things seemed for me.

It was good to be home. I felt like I had been gone a long time... Mark died Tuesday morning around 10:30 am pacific time, November 22, 1988. He was thirty-seven years and one week old.

Tears did not come. Though the news was sobering I was not shocked. I called his friends in California and received the details of his passing. Monday night had been difficult, but by Tuesday morning Mark was comfortable. He didn't eat much of a breakfast, but spent a few hours visiting with the day nurse. At ten, he was feeling tired, and decided to rest. The nurse left him to sleep. When she checked in at 10:30, he was gone. His passing was peaceful.

Patrick, his friend, said that his body had been taken to the mortuary and that, per Mark's request, he was going to be cremated. The mortuary would then scatter his ashes at sea, again per Mark's request.

Mark left no estate or belongings. He left this earth in much the same condition that he arrived. How sad for him to have no posterity. Mark was and is my brother, and I won't forget him. I loved him.

The irony of this entry is that Robert died of AIDS just weeks before his 50th birthday. Robert's comment of "being far from perfect" reveals a conflict within his identity. He overlooks his drug abuse and homosexual behaviors, disassociating himself from "the gays" that are irresponsible and selfish. While Robert can chastise his brother for questions concerning morality, he seems blind to his own issues of deceiving business clients, using cocaine, and being arrested for indecent exposure during a drug bust. The conflict in Robert's identity appears in these emotional expressions of the loss of his brother. Robert has found a way to deny aspects of his nature that he detests, masking authentic feelings, and portraying a more acceptable identity of a Christian believer, hardworking businessman, and providing father. The battle to sustain these opposing identities of drug abuser/homosexual and Christian/businessman/father is what eventually leads to Robert's fight for acceptance and sobriety, ending in a premature death.

Research Questions

RQ 1: How does Robert create identity[ies] through narratives told in his journals?

The dominant identity that Robert constructs in this second story is that of fatherhood. It wasn't long after his mission that he married and started a family. The responsibilities that came with these decisions quickly led him into the world of work, constructing a second identity of a businessman.

Similar to his mission, Robert formulated a template for how to act in these roles, using characteristics that he saw and admired in others. Also a part of the picture were the traits that he saw in his father and brothers that he disliked, and worked to reject.

While some of the entries are lists of daily activities, Robert seems to be more comfortable writing in a journal, telling stories that sparked an emotional reaction within him. The stories typically show the routines of his life and how he manages his responsibilities at home and at work. The characters and plot lines don't necessarily follow a coherent storyline, but patterns are created by the events that he chooses to write about. The majority of entries frame this narrative as a tragedy. Robert writes about facing conflict and frustration, rarely finding satisfaction. Even when his life seems to be under better control, Robert writes about the problems of the world, and destruction of the family.

Home and work are the two dominant settings, and it is interesting that all of the characters appear to be antagonists, even his wife. Robert doesn't acknowledge Pam as a supportive sidekick, but rather another aspect of his responsibilities. The journal entries tell a story of a lonely journey, or a fight for fulfillment, ending with the loss of his brother. There doesn't seem to be any environment, character, or role that is

emotionally satisfying for Robert. He appears to have constructed identities that he is unable to fulfill.

RQ 2: What do the form and content of Robert's stories tell us about his identity construction?

The form of the journal entries is important in this section. Robert writes consistently, three or four times a week, unless he is emotionally overwhelmed. The pattern that emerged was one in which Robert would write several routine entries, followed by a gap with no writing, followed by a long entry. The long entries were usually an explanation of an emotional experience or a description of his extremely busy life at work and home, making it too stressful to keep up on the writing. The entry about Mark's death was the longest and most descriptive.

The content of the material is also interesting in this section. While Robert is building an identity of fatherhood, there are very few entries of family experiences. Although he talks about wanting to take a family vacation, or of fixing bikes, most of the entries are about the pressure of working to maintain a home. He focuses a lot of attention on the arguments that he has with Pam, concerned about the impact of the fighting on the marriage. It isn't until the birth of his fourth child, Wes, that Robert seems to accept his role of fatherhood. It seems that Robert merely accepted the role of fatherhood that was projected on him when he created a family, rather than actually constructing a satisfying identity.

Likewise, the content of the narratives that construct Robert's business identity is typically routine entries of hating work. It isn't until he decides to buy the company with Keith that his identity as a businessman is acknowledged. He writes of being nervous

about the debt, fearing failure. Robert is constantly comparing his work effort to that of his brother's. There seems to be a competition between the two, and when Keith leaves, Robert writes about the company's survival as a sign of his success as an individual.

Finally, Robert's entry about Mark's passing is a sign of an emotional experience. Not only was it the longest entry, but the content is extremely detailed with dates, times, conversations, and feelings. It shows how writing is a way for Robert to acknowledge a situation, make sense of it, and cope with the stress of it. It also shows how Robert uses aspects of all of his identities in order to function. He sees his brother while on business, so that he can write-off the expenses of the trip. The trip is also a reevaluation of family, religion, values, and priorities. Robert wrote that Mark's life was a waste, and commented that because of his beliefs, family and morals he was creating a more fulfilling life.

RQ 3: Does Robert construct conflicting identities? How does Robert manage conflicting identities?

In this section, the conflicting identities that Robert creates is fatherhood vs. businessman. Research shows, and many individuals have expressed, the struggle to balance family and work. Robert definitely juggles the responsibilities of a home with having to dedicate his time and energy to both his assignments and work and at church. The conflict intensifies once Robert buys the company and is required to dedicate even more time at the office.

He manages the identities through meshing it all together, writing about it, and relying on Christian beliefs. In terms of integrating all of his identities, when Robert is at work, the business consumes him. However, he had pictures of his family and art

projects from school assignments all around the office. In the beginning, both of Robert's parents worked at the company, and my siblings and I could come help too. My mom even worked with him for a few months. Robert always wrote that the reason for the business was to maintain the family. There were many nights that Robert didn't come home until late, and there were business trips that kept him away. But he wrote that his dedication was for the success of the home.

Most of the journal entries were about the company and how it was benefiting the family, or was taking too much time away. When Robert wrote about the family, he expressed his frustration of not being able to dedicate enough time to work. The journal was his emotional outlet of this conflict that he was struggling to balance.

Once Keith left the company, Robert became completely overwhelmed with the debt and responsibility. He began to express that God would not give him more than he could handle, and that this was merely a trial to test his humility. At the end, he turned to God, relying on his Christian identity, to make sense of the realities of life.

The identities of fatherhood and businessman are apparent throughout the journal entries, yet it seems as if the identities are socially projected on him and eventually accepted, rather than Robert constructing them himself. In fact, because Robert struggled to accept these characterizations, it appears as if he is masking other aspects of his identity as a way of managing away his guilt for his other behavior of drug abuse and homosexuality.

RQ 4: How does emotion management frame Robert's narratives and identity construction? What are the emotional consequences of this process?

Robert is still using the same strategies of suppression and masking as his

foremost tools for managing emotion. Writing in his journal is Robert's way of privately communicating feelings in order to make sense and control his experiences. In fact, when the emotions are too overwhelming to handle, Robert refuses to write about. For example, the fight with Pam in February of 1984 compels him to write that conflict occurred, but he's too frustrated to express any more than that. As long as Robert doesn't write about a situation it doesn't exist, and he doesn't have to understand or fix it.

The consequences Robert faces of solely communicating his emotions in his diary is the extreme loneliness. Many of the experiences that Robert faced are extremely difficult, and without sharing his concerns with others, he restricted himself from the necessary social support. When he couldn't find satisfaction and success with work, and was in therapy for his marriage, Robert experienced depression and isolated himself further, by working more or writing, or doing nothing at all.

RQ 5: How does the private and written nature of journaling influence Robert's narratives and identity construction?

The private nature of journaling is what gives Robert the sense of security that allows him to write. He makes sense of his experiences and his identities by justifying situations, by challenging himself to be better, or by writing out his frustrations. The journaling fulfills the same purpose as when he was on his mission.

Story Three: The End

After Mark died, Robert had very little to do with his family, angry that they had done nothing for his brother, and feeling neglected himself. He pursued a relationship with his father, but was unsuccessful. His father, Richard Joseph died in 1992 of heart failure without telling Robert of his love for him. After my grandfather died, contact with Robert's family practically ceased.

This final entry about Mark is significant in its foreshadowing, but also because it's the last entry for several years. The journals pick up again in 1995 in the form of a blessing book. Apparently, Oprah started a journaling fad of recording five blessings found in each day, and he took that approach in his next diaries. For example:

Sunday, Aug 24, 1995

I sit here wondering what my blessing of the last 24 hours are:

- 1- Spud was stung by a hornet...but wasn't allergic*
- 2-The rain brought out the slugs and snails for a feeding frenzy, and I was able to lay down the snail bate once again.*
- 3-Jamie found the "bibs" that she wanted for school.*
- 4-The car pools for the boys are arranged at our convenience*
- 5-Jamie and Aubrie laughed together while canning peaches.*

The blessing book is eventually transformed back into a typical diary, except Robert, again, takes a new approach. He reads a chapter in his scriptures, summarizes the story, and then applies the meaning to his life.

Over the next few years, Robert's business was forced to file a Chapter 13 bankruptcy in which he was expected to pay back the debts. However, the business still wasn't producing any money. Creditors were taking him to court, and all but one of his employees quit. Also, his marriage was struggling. Pam threatened divorce, not understanding why Robert continued to work this failing business, sacrificing the

wellbeing of the family. She was often skeptical as to why Robert didn't come home several nights a week, thinking he might be involved with another woman. None of us had any clue that he was spending over \$1000 per week on cocaine.

During 1995-1997 the journals take on an odd form. It's more like reading a Dr. Jekyll/Mr. Hyde play than reading the lists of events that had typically fill Robert's journals before this point in time. If I could just transcribe every entry in this next section, so that the display of a devote Christian struggling with addiction could be fully articulated, I would. Every entry is a battle, reciting a passage of scripture or a piece of a sermon, and then writing of a desire to change from his past transgressions. For nearly a year, the journals chronologically articulate this internal struggle, compelling any reader to be emotionally distraught by the end of it. The silent struggle for sobriety took its toll on Robert as chronicled in the following excerpts from his journals, from 11-28-95 until 6-14-96.

11-29-95

A great conversation is had... turning to God, yield a softening of the heart. I've been troubled by the sluggish results of work and life. God doesn't want me only on Sunday, but every day...I say I'm ready and willing, but am I really? There is so much impurity to purge, that it seems impossible to accomplish. We've been taught that no trial given will be greater than what we can handle. I'm no Job, and I feel crowded.

12-26-95

Twice in the same verse, the Lord promises prosperity to all those who obey His commandments. Since I reject the notion of coincidence, I can only be thankful for yet another answer to my prayers of concern. Because of my neglect and willful reject of principles and covenants I've felt that in no way would God want to extend His arm of mercy to me.

I keep trying to hurry the healing that Pam is experiencing and my impatience yields nothing but disappointment. C.S. Lewis said all wrong must be unwound before healing can occur. There is much damage that I've done and this justice requires time of healing.

The rejection I now feel is only subdued when I think about God's love for me—Satan is there even when not wanted.

1-7-96

If ever there were hero's...the power of hell would be shaken forever. The daily conflicts of life give me moment to stop and ponder. I see challenges in every facet of life, and sometimes the least important thing causes me to derail!

1-30-96

I've avoided writing because I've not been the person that I should be. I'm disappointed, and it leaves me to wonder how the Lord could want me.

I've thought all day how we are destroyed from within...Choose ye this day is a line we, I must live by each day. The one thing I won't allow myself to do is to slip back to the ugly rut of self doubt and criticism I've climbed out of. Further, I will fight back against the 'natural' Robert.

2-26-96

I'm so afraid of myself, of my lack of courage and faith. I'm afraid of the debts I've amassed and my neglect of duty and responsibility. It's so easy for me to run, but I must stand firm. I don't feel worthy of Heavenly Father's help, and yet I know He is always there, waiting for me. So, then, why must I be so scared?

I pray that I might be more humble and hearken more so that I can be lead, rather than stumble like I now am doing. I pray that my actions from here forth may more truly reflect my love of God. I need His help. I've seen plainly the natural man of me, and I don't like him. Robert, get on and stay on track!!!

3-26-96

"Come unto me, that ye might hear & see..."

"Blessed are ye if ye have no disputations among you" --Just a couple of thoughts from today's reading and I need to focus upon. I'm still scared of what the future holds as of yet. I don't think that I've totally let go of control to the Lord. I still fear. How foolish to be so caught up in the world!!!

4-15-96

Families are challenging. So is working with people. This weekend has again shown me that I need to let go and to allow others room to grow without feeling any personal attack. I must love and let go and forgive! (Easier said than done.)

5-7-96

My life is not so difficult—It's just the challenges. Satan never ceases to let up the pressure. I'm disturbed by the multitude of bad decisions and actions on my part—I'm troubled by the last of tangible success at my work. I'm troubled with contention in

my family. Why is it so difficult to get along with Pam? I blame myself for being so blind and insensitive.

Finances are a huge challenge. I'm surrounded by debt and I know that only through the help of God will I be delivered. I've already proven my inability. I'm so grateful for my testimony of Christ, my faith and hope in him.

6-14-96

So, how do I feel? Many weeks ago I decided to leave "uncontrollable" things in the Lord's hands. This is one of those things. There is no doubt that the decision is wrong, however, I shall get past this and let it to the Lord. Perhaps one day I'll know why things are this way, and perhaps not.

The next journal we have starts again in July 1997, again listing things Robert's thankful for. Also, he talks about filling up another journal, so there is obviously another that we can't locate. This journal, however, is important because it accounts for his confession to the family of the drug abuse.

Aug 29, 1997

For the past while tithing has been a problem for me. Probably it is in a large part due to the struggle for dollars. I mentioned to Heavenly Father that I was going to put Him to the test (as if He needs to be proved) so that the blessing could and would pour in.

As only Heavenly Father can do, He required me to come clean with the drug problem that I have. I'm a user—and am and have been so ashamed of myself. Bringing this to light with Pam and the Bishop and the Counselor and Ron and the kids...I now feel that I can begin to move forward and correct the problem. I know that with God's help we will all begin to heal.

This day is etched onto my brain in complete vividness. Robert hadn't come home the night before, again, and my mom had been emotionally distraught. I stayed up late reading to her, so that she would fall to sleep, and then I went to bed myself. My older siblings were gone, Brandon serving a mission in the Philippines and Jamie away at school, so I found myself responsible for my mom and my little brothers.

The next morning, before the sun came up, I heard some ruckus on the front

porch. My bedroom window was directly above the door. Robert was still high, and couldn't get in the front door. My mom heard the noise too, and went to see who was there. I heard them fight, and then my mom let out a scream. I froze, and just stood in my room. Within seconds my mother rushed into my bedroom, tears streaming from her face, screaming "your dad's a drug addict." We both collapsed on the floor, crying together. Eventually, I went downstairs, and found Robert sitting on a couch. I sat next to him, put my arm around him, and said that we would get through it. Boy, was I naïve. The next year was a crash course in reality and life skills.

With daily doses of relapse and overdose, lies, hallucinations, and suicide attempts, we were launched into a practical education in balancing responsibilities. At times I'm astounded by all that I know about the dark world of dysfunction, drugs, and disease. Current research still supports that cocaine is considered one of the most powerfully addictive drugs that can be snorted, smoked, or injected. The number of cocaine addicts in America peaked in 1985, and although cocaine consumption has decreased, nearly 100,000 individuals begin using cocaine, or a form of the drug, every year, according to the National Institute on Drug Abuse. While the number of users has decreased, the amount of consumption has remained the same. The Almanac of Policy Issues shows that in 2001, approximately 1.7 million Americans over the age of 12 were current cocaine users, and, contrary to popular belief, almost $\frac{3}{4}$ were employed. According to the Arrestee Drug Abuse Monitoring Program, the average cocaine addict is typically 29-33 years old.

Nearly a year after the horrific nightmares of cocaine began to be normalized, AIDS was incorporated into the picture. At this point, I had been on my own for a year,

moving 11 times and finishing high school. Once I heard the news, I found myself on a hunt for information. I knew that people died from AIDS, but I was more overwhelmed with the embarrassment of it all. No matter how much research supported various ways of contracting the disease, I knew that this was rarely an honorable way to die. I worried about my mom, and was angry that Robert's selfish world had put us all in jeopardy. Although no one in my immediate family has shown symptoms of the virus, some of us continue to be tested on a regular basis, just in case.

There is currently no cure for AIDS, and there is still no vaccine to prevent HIV infection, but research efforts have led to effective and expensive medications that prolong life. My family was already living below the poverty level, and any money quickly went to support medication for Robert. At the end of December 2001, the Center for Disease Control and Prevention reported approximately 362,827 persons in the United States living with AIDS. This is only reported cases, not including those who are anonymously tested as positive, or those who live in states that do not report HIV cases. So, the CDC estimates that more than 800,000 people in the US are living with HIV or AIDS. When it is stated so quantitatively it seems easier to talk about; but there is no comfort in being a statistic.

After the HIV was exposed, Robert clung to his Christian identity that he had developed while on his mission. The journals reflect the constant preaching Robert gave both himself and all of us, reminding us to forgive him. The next series of journals, from the exposure to drugs in 1997 until the divorce in 2002, are intense emotional expressions. Robert seems to try and make sense of his life, the destruction of his family, and his struggle to be sober.

Jan 22, 1998

So much comes and goes with each and every day, and I haven't had a desire to record everything. The difference tonight may be due to the visits with the therapists today—both for me and Pam. The discussion centers on the bi-polar condition and drug use. Pam's centers on me also. It seems to me that she is so relieved to have me have a mental and drug problem. It seems to me that this makes everything that occurs or ever has occurred my fault. Good old blame. Perhaps this is just my twisted thinking. Dr. Evens told Pam that I'm a "hard ball" case, and that I don't yet realize how much work is ahead for me. I've been really hurt that he would drop me like a plague. I suppose anyone can become so repugnant that everyone around them is offended. Certainly this is how I feel!

Robert finally pinpoints his inability to express himself when he becomes overwhelmed with emotion. His depression seems to be overwhelming him with guilt, burying him in feelings of shame, loneliness, and abandonment. Robert sarcastically blames himself for the rejection that he is feeling from others, revealing his desire to reject aspects of himself as well. He doesn't want to be identified as a mental case or addict, but rather as someone who needs help and is trying to change.

Thursday, Feb 26, 1998

When I do drugs, I lie; and today I lied. The end result is that I'm staying at Grandpa's under controlling Pam's dictation. Laura and Bruce have been here too. I'm angry and ashamed to have all my problems displayed for public viewing. Life sucks!!! Once again, I'm Pam's biggest mistake!

The handwriting in this entry is sloppy and difficult to read, showing that Robert is coming on his high. Whenever his came down, he had to be separated from our family because he would become violent and abusive. During this experience, it took three grown adults and a police officer to restrain him. The writing in the journal shows his remorse over the situation, but ironically, he removes himself from the situation. The drugs make him lie, and Pam dictates and controls him. Also, rather than Robert making a fool of himself, he states that he doesn't like to have his problems on display. This

entry shows a conflict with identification.

Sunday, March 15, 1998

The inevitable has happened. While Pam and the kids were away this weekend, they together decided that for their healing, it would be best if I were only home on the weekends for the time being. While praying and pondering over everything this weekend, I felt assured that the family would remain intact, together. I'm blown away.

This was all presented in the Bishop's office with Pam, Jamie, Aubrie, and myself. After Pam tearfully explained her poor situation, Jamie articulated this plan. Aubrie said nothing. Basically, this is Pam's plan—she wants me gone. They all say that they “love me” but I can't buy it...I feel that I'm going crazy, and the old feelings of being unwanted and “thrown away” are resurfacing. What they do not know is that never was there a time when I did drugs to hurt the family. I only saw it as hurting me.

Robert sees himself as completely separate from the act, but as a family, we held him responsible for those actions, specifically the drug and physical abuse. This conflict between the action and the actor always seemed to present a problem. It didn't matter how much we told Robert we loved him and need time to heal, he writes that the rejection was all that he could feel and comprehend. Immediately following this entry, Robert overdosed, snorting over an ounce of cocaine in less than an hour. Typically, consuming that much cocaine would kill you, and for Robert, it shut down his lungs, kidneys, and liver. He was rushed to the ER, and the doctors were able to revive his body. During this time, however, Robert felt that he had seen God and Satan, and felt that Christ has saved him. This experience seemed to build Robert's religious ideology. He wanted to be accepted as a serving Christian, and demanded that we view him as such.

Sunday, December 6, 1998

This is an unusual moment—to be actually writing while at peace and serenity. The day is beautiful, the air is crisp, the snow is white and the feeling of the season is here. For some reason the Spirit has been rich this morning. I've gained much insight in how the spirit teaches and why I'm here right now. I've been enriched.

Last night at recovery meeting a young man shared how life is like a jigsaw puzzle for each of us, but only our personal pieces fit into our personal puzzles and no matter how we try, we cannot work another puzzle. How true that is. I also “heard” how I need

to talk less and listen more. I'm always trying to give answers when it's not my place to do so. There are so many for the spirit to reach!

Throughout this series of journals Robert is typically depressed and bitter, so this entry stood out as a different type of emotional expression. Robert faced much rejection after exposing his drug addiction, especially within his roles in the church. While he was supported in his recovery, he was stripped of his priesthood and excommunicated from the records of the church. Yet with all of this abandonment, Robert found solace in the Church's drug abuse recovery program. He was able to bond with others who were like him, and found social support in their group discussions. This entry reflects that support and camaraderie.

Tuesday, Jan 12, 1999

It's time to write again if for no other reason than to let everyone know that all is not hearts and roses around here. Life is an up and down ride, and while the high of those last months has been great, as they say, all good things must come to an end. I have elected to title this latest saga "The waterheater experience."

Last night was a blow out—Pam slept in Aubrie's room only after she tried to kick me out of our bed. I believe these days that if Pam chooses not to be with me, she can leave—which she did. She does not, however, have the right to kick me out! I still choose over my affairs.

Pam has been very depressed since the Christmas break. I believe that it is a let down having the girls leave home and not want to stay. I believe that she really hoped that Aub would move home. Aub, in truth, couldn't wait to get out the door.

Anyway, with that disappointment and starting teaching again and now starting back to school, when it's been enough—then add the regular day to day living stress. On top of this the water heater started to leak. The rug downstairs was soaked. This really ate on me, as it appeared Friday night, which meant fighting water over the weekend until I could get another heater at the wholesale plumbing house and work terms to delay payment until next month. Then there was the payable \$220.00. Just what we need along with paying off bills and a \$1800.00 per month mortgage payment. Face it, I'm no plumber and my usual track record is any 30 minute job will undoubtedly require 3-4 hours—if all goes well.

Yesterday Pam went to the therapist alone, and when she came home I was hollering at Wes and Spud who were and had been giving me grief about helping at home, etc. Immediately, Pam jumped down my throat and then I retorted by hollering at her. She told me that I was nothing more than a dry drunk, that I haven't changed, that she was sick of me and our marriage, that life was nothing more than Hell these past 23

years (All in front of the boys) Then she packed up the boys in the car and left because—I wasn't safe? To shame me? To pull rank? I don't know. (I really do, she needed time out.) but to me the result was to completely discredit me to the boys. I'm getting bitter here so let's move on.

The fighting was a sign of more conflict than just the apparent drug abuse.

Robert's mood swings were difficult to manage, and he demanded time, attention, and forgiveness. This entry reveals that. As much as Pam needed time out, he needed it too.

The pressures of a home and family were mounting and seemed to cause Robert trouble in his struggle for sobriety. He still shows signs of guilt and depression, but is quick to blame Pam for those feelings. This journal entry seems to be an expression of frustration with this experience, especially noticeable in the hard-pressed, sloppy penmanship.

Robert was trying to help out by fixing the heater, and found himself in a angry fight. It's apparent that his life is falling apart rather quickly. His rejection at church is followed by the loss of the business, and this entry shows the family's rejection of him. Robert's main identities of Christian servant, businessman, and father are being viewed as failures, socially as well as by Robert. There are long breaks in writing during the next two years.

Tuesday, December 28, 1999

I've been asking myself why I bother to write in a journal. I mean, seriously, who cares? All I am is a loser with a messed up life. Everyone deserves at least one friend—one person with whom he can be open and share the load without getting beat up in return. Sadly, I don't have anyone like that.

Perhaps, if anyone should ever read this, they may come to know that a life full of challenge and heartache is a normal life. Pam like to ell me that I'm not deal with my problems, that I'm in denial. Oh really!! The fact is that I've put my trust in Heavenly Father for deliverance. I don't know when, I just know it will, and this is the only peace that I get. Trust me, it is a lot!!!

So often I'm reminded of what a terrible, evil person I am, and I'm asked how it was that I could have betrayed my wife and family by my actions. As stupid as it sounds, never once was my motive to hurt or offend. Rather, I did everything that I could to put distance between ~~me~~ the behavior and the family. It was hell being the Dr. Jekell/Mr. Hyde. I hated myself and yet I continued to just run and hide from failure and inadequacies. I never wanted to be discovered, yet I wanted to be healed, hence, I

confessed. That's another story, the "talk" from the church that we can repent and that they are there to love and welcome and support. That line is pure bull shit.

Bottom line, evil sinners like me, deserve to be beat up, kicked around, verbally abused—We need to know "how it feels"—we deserve it. So, with all of this crap (Pam and the girls and the boys at times) I manage because I know that God loves me. I just don't know why He does. Pam's rejection tonight has left me melancholy. Face it Robert—Love is not in the cards for your life.

This is one of the most poignant entries Robert composes before the final separation of him and Pam. He's obviously angry, and uses his journal as a way to express his nothingness. Robert talks of not having a trusted friend in which to confide and share his feelings, yet his journal has been just that for him throughout his life.

Interestingly, Robert continues to separate himself from the behavior, wanting to identify with something other than the addiction. Even the semantics of this separation is seen when he strikes through "me" and replaces it with "the behavior." While this entry clearly shows the rejection of an addiction identity, it also reveals his distrust in the Church, which is where he typically found his security. And again, rejecting his identity of fatherhood, he classifies "Pam and the girls and the boys at times" as crap that he has to deal with.

Sunday, June 4, 2000

Where do I begin? Tonight I'm at Mom's house so as not to be homeless or isolating. It will be two weeks on Tuesday that Pam served me with divorce papers. That Friday we had a fight over the check book (Pam being the guardian of the checks and Robert needing a check to buy tile for the downstairs shower) Anyway, I was cited later that morning for assault and child abuse, and told to keep away from home for 24 hours. When I showed up Saturday am to do the paper route, Brandon called the police—Pam had signed a restraining order on Friday and she and the kids set up an ambush for Saturday morning to drive me out. Yet, they had gone through my closet and drawers and left the pile in the garage. In essence, I had no home, no family, and no money. Homeless, on the street. I was stunned. Words cannot begin to explain the hurt, confusion that I felt. Since then, I spent a week in a motel while I pulled together where and what I was to do. I could only turn to God for guidance, and prayed that I'd hang on and not return to foolish behavior...

Obviously, this experience can be viewed from several perspectives. It is most interesting to see how Robert writes very little about the situation that led to a restraining order and assault charges, but can write for four pages about feeling rejected, abandoned, and alone. He turned to God, because that was a last resort. The courts, police officers, clergy, and neighbors were done with his rocky behaviors that lead to physical and psychological abuse.

Although it was difficult on Robert, it was a positive move to have Robert away from the home. He started going to church recovery groups four times a week, and eventually became a facilitator.

June 22, 2000 Thursday

...I visited a kid, 17 yrs, named Mark again today in Juvenile D.T. He's got a long way to go. I'm no professional! I just let him know that Heavenly Father knows and loves him, and that there is hope. (Like I'm making an impression!) His dad called to say that they are trying to get him into a youth program in lieu of a wilderness program. I hope he gets the right treatment. Just in talking with him these last two days, I feel that there is hope for Mark.

Robert wasn't a professional, but he has several years of experience to share with those just beginning a battle to sobriety. This entry sounded quite similar to his mission entries when he talked about not being very spiritual, but then wrote of a profound spiritual experience. It is amazing how clearly Robert can see the problems in others, and give them guidance, but struggled to follow his own wisdom.

July 10, 2000 Monday

I've been lonely—melancholy actually—aching for my family that I ~~could~~ can hardly stand it. It has been very hard. Why are my children so hostile? Has my spouse, Pam, been such a negative here, or is it all me? Why ~~has Pam~~ does she only call ~~for~~ about money?

To boot, good friends have distanced themselves from me. Am I too much of a demand? So desperate that I over do? It feels like it. ~~I'm going~~ I want to pull back. In my desperation for people, I seem to only drive them away.

I thought, ~~after going to the driving range tonight,~~ tonight after hitting a bucket of balls at the driving range, that perhaps I'm relying too much upon people and not enough upon God at this time in my life. I'm searching for a reason to be alive, and I just don't seem to see any. ~~The Church doesn't even want me as a member.~~

Tonight I resolve to abandon a "last hold-out" habit that I've been using to find comfort. I'm giving this only to God—yes it's disgusting to me so, away with it. If life is to be lonely and hard, so be it. I commit to do it His way.

This entry is difficult to read because so much of it is crossed out and rewritten. Much of the re-write seems the same as the original, so it is challenging to pinpoint a reason for the editing. This entry does show, however, Robert's need to relate experiences in a particular light, even if it's just semantics. The writing also parallels Robert's identity at this time. He's working to scratch out old ways of knowing, changing them for something better.

Monday, Jan 1, 2001

Another year—another day! Brent promises that this year will be our year. I certainly hope so. Actually, I believe that he'll marry this year. He certainly is anxious for the relationship, and he has been diligent in putter back together his life. I'm anxious for him too.

I wonder about my family—I expect to be divorced this year. I doubt Pam will change. Besides, who wants a guy who is HIV? Certainly not my wife and kids. Except for Spud, and partially Wes, all they want is the money and insurance. Pretty sad. They didn't acknowledge my birthday, they wouldn't come to my re-baptism. I know that I caused much hurt, and I know that Pam is keeping it alive. This is one of those mountain obstacles that I've got to turn over to God. It still hurts though!

I was going to do a show tonight, but there were just too many out doing the same. I don't like crowds. My attitude was getting sour, anyway, so I've come home. Memorable!!!

With the way that Robert talks about the family, it's obvious that he wants something different. The talk of wanting more with the family is followed by Pam bashing, and a desire for us to support him in his life activities. His demands were contradictory. Robert hated us, especially my mom, for the hurt that we caused him, but that hate stemmed from an intense love that he still maintained for us.

Monday, April 30, 2001

Dear Pam,

I've been thinking of you tonight, and the truth is that a million thoughts have gone through my mind. Try as I might, it is impossible to hold for long any unkind thoughts for you.

No, I'm not being "PollyAnna" here. You have been unkind in your behavior, and especially of late, screening Spud to be sure that I know nothing—driving the wedge of anger deeper between me and the kids—yes, I know what you're doing, and yes, you have been hurtful.

I see the anger, the hurt, the endeavor to control, and the "I'll show you I can do it" routine. But, Pam, all pretense aside, I still see you. This other junk, this unkind behavior, isn't you and I know it! I know you love me—that you've pulled way into yourself and have erected a strong façade behind which you are hiding.

*I'm sorry to have so hurt you—I'm puzzled, and yet not, that you feel the need to hurt me so. My agenda isn't to make your life difficult, and hopefully one day you'll come to know all the behind the scenes that I've done to ease your burdens. Why can't you just let go of the anger, Pam, and risk trusting Heavenly Father? You say you believe. I hope one day you'll start to listen to your heart again! I'll be waiting.
Love, Me*

It is usually a therapeutic tool to write a letter to your ex- expressing everything you want to, after a breakup. It's interesting that he leaves this one in his journal, making it more personal.

Most of the letters that Robert did write looked similar to this one. He would tell us how much our actions were hurting him, and how if we truly loved God we would forgive him. He would tell us that we looked hollow, and didn't have the light of Christ in our eyes. Coming from the man who made our lives miserable, it was hard to take. The preaching behavior was double-sided, showings that Robert was clinging to his Christian identity, feeling that it's his one security and support in life, but at the same time was using it as a manipulative tool to create a fatherly role within the family.

Sunday, Nov 18, 2001

It has been a difficult time for me these last weeks. I've felt hopeless, am financially broke, and struggling with sobriety. I'm tired, and lonely, and feel unloveable. It had been hard to even get up in the morning.

Fake it until you make it comes to mind...As I sat in the car in the parking lot, I

cried again. Though I'm totally in a negative position regarding family, finances, and work, I know I'm at the end of the prosperity struggle. If I choose from this moment on to be an instrument for God, I won't have to worry about finances and health. I'm going to give it my best. I do love my Heavenly Father.

Although this entry expresses similar depressive statements as the others, Robert's idea to "Fake it" until he made it stuck me as interesting. Socially, he masked his feelings, deceiving everyone in his family and recovery group. It was this inauthentic expression of emotion that kept people at a distance, distrustful of Robert. This was the final entry before the divorce was finalized. Apparently, he's feeling the loss.

Many wondered why my mother still stayed in the relationship as long as she did. Usually women stay due to financial reasons, yet Robert was more of an unpredictable burden than any help. I thought she must be scared, maybe about losing the house, or about being stigmatized as an inadequate wife. There were excuses around the inconvenience of dealing with the court system, and the fact that he was just going to die anyway. Maybe she really did love him. No one will ever know why it took over two years to finalize the divorce.

Thursday, March 28, 2002—

I just signed Pam's divorce wishes—it's over & yes, I'm broken hearted. She is more interested in telestial treasures than in reconciliation. After signing & relieving the papers this morning, I returned to work & was fired. I had blown up this morning over Ann's & her father's kmt/pick over a good p.o. that I handled. Ann's had vengeance for over a year now, & once again, daddy does what he's told to do. I was not kind in my venting to Jeff, who allowed all to listen in to what I thought was a private conversation. What do they say—trust no one?? I just don't know where I'm going, or what I'm to do for money to cover my debts & obligations. I do know that I won't not trust God. I'm too blessed even when it looks like I'm beat up again.

Had a good one-on-one with Doug @ SARS this afternoon. I believe that our manual will go well. It is finally to print, and I'm excited to see what & how it turns out.

Last week I went to K.C. to check out a job offer—it looked good.

Well—let's see what happens from here. Just one day at a time.

Tuesday, April 9, 2002-

I'm sitting here reading the scriptures. How can HIV, possible hepatitis, joblessness, pennilessness and total family rejection (divorce) be consecrated for my good? Today I feel like a total loser—worthless human flesh. Am I to seek the Kansas City job? I believe in God—I just don't know where I am going right now. Like Jay at Consolidated said—I'm the miss fit! (Enough for now!!)

Once the divorce was finalized, it was difficult to keep posted on the events in Robert's life. The stories we heard were bits and pieces that came after the fact. We were never really sure how much of it to believe, partially because he was a notorious liar, but also because most of the information came through what little contact he maintained with my youngest sibling. Spud was naïve, but mostly he just wanted to trust his dad.

These entries show how much responsibility Robert places on Pam for the divorce. He also blames other employees for losing his job. He doesn't seem to be accountable for any of these bad situations that happened. Faced with feelings of inadequacy and failure, it seems that Robert only marks himself as a pitiful loser. There is no plan of how to accept responsibility for the mess that he's in, and no plan for how to make better choices.

Saturday, April 27, 2002-

Sometimes life is something we endure day to day. It never seems fair, and I know that oft times it leaves me wondering what all is going on. For instance, today I feel lonely & I miss my family. I really miss being a part of something greater than myself. Why don't the kids want me to be a part of their lives? It's hard to believe that I disappointed them so badly that they'll never want to be with me—but so it appears.

There has been contention within the recovery group—Why am I always so disliked? Why can't I get along? Yesterday Steve said that Richard called him & apologized for his comments and behaviors towards him. He, Steve, wondered if I had also been contacted. I have not. I suppose they feel justified in their accusations & disdain. I'm crushed.

It would appear that I'll always be the unwanted, unlovable drug addict. I don't get it!

The irony of life is that you don't realize how great something is until it's gone. Although the separation hurt everyone in my family, contact was more painful and too destructive. Apparently, others in the recovery group were experience a similar situation. The rejection Robert faced within the recovery group was the final straw, and increased his depression. He had nothing left; no family, no job, no future, no identity.

Monday, May 20, 2002-

It's so easy to journal about trials and so forth. Well—today was very different! Much good was accomplished with the recovery manual. Then, tonight, Steve & Melinda, along with the missionaries & facilitators, threw a huge good-bye party. I was astounded & so touched. So many people, such kindness, such love. It is amazing to think that my life has crossed so many other lives.

My one wish was that my family could have participated—but it wasn't to be. They really don't know me, and I'm sad for them.

It wasn't until months after he was gone, when I was preparing to leave the state, that I learned of Robert leaving town. The family had no clue as to where he had gone, but speculated it was the Midwest. There was talk of another job out there, and I thought, "Good for him. He's never going to make a life for himself here. Might as well start over with a clean slate." Instantly, my unrealistic optimism was met with harsh criticism as a second notion triggered, "he's gone to die."

The Kansas experience was largely a mystery to Robert's family. Until days before his death, no family member knew where he lived, what he was doing, or how he survived. It is only through his personal narration within his diaries that the experience and the struggle is acknowledged as reality. This move is a critical point in his life, marking an attempt for change, development, and progression. While it was an effort to escape from everything that he hated, unfortunately the move was merely a reenactment

of a familiar behavior. It's what addicts call a setback. You're supposed to learn from the mistakes in your life, so that history won't repeat itself. But it never seems to work that way, and it didn't work for Robert. Up to this point HIV, divorce, unemployment, and drugs defined Robert as a failure, and although this critical point is an attempt to change, it is characterized with more drug use, bankruptcy, abandonment, and death. Ironically, it presents a perfect relapse.

Friday, June 14, 2002-

It has been two weeks now since I pulled into Gardner, Kansas. Though I was blessed to journey without incident, the trip was difficult for me. There were new road and cities to encounter. I know no one here, and I'm all alone—yet God is with me.

The people for whom I will work have been nothing but generous. They've given me money to be able to get established. I'm in a duplex, with enough furniture for my needs. Though the experience started with me being scared, tonight I feel peace, & the care, keeping & love of God.

I'm pushing to start recovery groups here in Kansas. Tuesday I met with Family Services. Our goal is to be up and running by mid August.

Once again our manual was not accepted by Family Services. I'm not surprised. Like Steve said, we put together a weapon to bring souls to Christ. I'm still putting my trust in God.

How blessed I am. I still miss my kids!

The pamphlet/manual that has been mentioned several times is an addiction recovery manual. Through reading, journaling, and reflection, participants use it as a step-by-step guide to sobriety. For Robert, it is an amazing effort to help others achieve what he never could. Although a positive activity, it was flawed, more honestly being a performance of denial. Even after years of group therapy and moving to a new area, Robert still writes about further drug use. While he was promoting assistance and support to others, he was secretly deteriorating.

Sunday, June 16, 2002-

It's been a beautiful day here in Gardner. Church was good, and I'm so blessed. I have food & a roof over my head. I've got to get my spending in line, however. I went on a binge yesterday, and I am determined to keep that in line.

Yet, amid all the blessings, I've a hole in my heart. Truly I hoped to hear from the kids, but it was not to be. Another lonely father's day. I will keep pushing forward—but guy's—you break my heart! I love you all so much! What more can I do to promote our family healing? There are just no more tools (knowledge) in my bag.

Still no letter from Pam—She just lies about my financial support—anything to trash (or control). I gave her everything, and still she wants more. Where are you, Pam?

Tuesday, June 25, 2002-

I've haven't felt well these past days. To be honest, I'm not sure what exactly it is. I've also been a bit low—like depressed. It's hard to get up in the morning. This is mostly due to not being able to sleep at night.

Today Continental landed a much sought over pool job. I'm very pleased for them. I hope my part of the pipe & supply will tag along. It's been a month since I've heard from the kids, i.e. Spud. I don't know how to reach them, and it makes my heart sad!

I'm liking Kansas. Amazing! I'm even slowly but surely finding my way around!

The entries about loneliness are most poignant, because his absence from all of the holidays, birthdays, or even normal get-togethers was noticed. Although we never fully articulated our feelings, through jokes and sarcastic comments, we recognized the missing piece. As part of our immaturity and naivety we battled the desires to have a dad with over overwhelming efforts to rid ourselves of the chaotic destruction that his was. Our family had to have him leave in order for us to heal. I never wanted him to hurt; but until we had repaired our injuries from the past, inclusion would have only continued to damage a possible future.

These entries show that Robert was going through a similar cycle of emotions. Robert was making new memories, working to enjoy this new adventure, yet he felt a loss for the lack of communication with his kids. He wanted the support of his family, desiring to be apart of something greater than himself, yet still struggled to be sober.

Thursday, July 4, 2002-

Another holiday, and I'm totally alone, again. I keep trying to fill the huge hole with crap—it never works!

I bough an African Violet yesterday. It reminds me of Aub. It's in the living room with a small stuffed Panda Bear beside it. Gosh I miss the kids!

Today I went sightseeing. So, I ask myself, why me? Why have I been allowed to see these wonderful places? Why now, and why alone? God is good to me, & is very patient with my weaknesses. I shall again renew my efforts to be a better servant.

The crap that Robert is talking about is drug abuse. No matter what he's learned, there continues to be an ongoing battle for sobriety. This fight consumes his life, and he writes of little else than struggling to overcome drugs, and his desire to be with his family.

A part of this project is my selfish desire to know that my father loved me. This section was the most difficult to research because it brought back so many painful memories. It was also the hardest to write, taking me over a year to compose, because Robert's perspective about the family involvement contradicts my own recollections. He is also very vocal about his distaste for me throughout this series. Throughout all of the many journals, this is the only positive entry about me.

Sunday, July 7, 2002-

It's hard tonight—families are supposed to be forever, so what happened? Why did Pam quit? Where are my kids? Has the gospel not taught this family anything? I feel totally responsible & like such a failure!

On a better note, the article on the family history library was in Friday's paper. It was a good article & I even had my picture in the news!

Today at church I found a fellow who translates English to Spanish. What a blessing. Steve & I worked about an hour on the phone this afternoon on editing things in the manual. For a moment I've felt alive again.

I shall keep going!

Wednesday, July 24, 2002-

Everyone at home is off today, celebrating the 24th. I'm in Kansas, and it's just

another day! Sometimes the loneliness kills me, and I just want something—anything—to fill the hole. You know Pam, you've hurt me deeply. The hard thing for me to understand is that you did it deliberately. Did you never love me? I hold you responsible for turning the kids.

In Utah, the 24th of July is a holiday for statehood, marked with parades, barbeques, fireworks, and get-togethers. It's celebrated much like the 4th of July.

With the changing of the season, all of us began a new life. My mom sold the old house, and moved with my little brothers to a small neighborhood, while my sister and I transferred to two different parts of the country. We were all experiencing our own trials and challenges, and no one stopped to question how Robert was doing.

Robert was diligently working to prepare the pamphlet for publication, and also worked to begin a substance abuse recovery group in his area. Even though he had the determination to keep going, the loneliness was killing Robert. With no medication and increased drug use his health was rapidly failing. The following few entries reflect his challenge to comprehend whole thoughts and write in complete sentences. His handwriting had also digressed.

Friday, September 20, 2002-

After I was rebaptized, I told myself that I would never confess big sin to anyone again. I got so beat up by the folks around.

Now I'm in Kansas. I've been using again. I realize that I need to be honest about everything. I used 4 times, but the last, last Friday night, has set me on my butt again. I'm the perfect example of the people of _____, try to deliver my

Well, the phone is off, visa has a judgment & basically I let everything go. This place was a mess, I also stopped eating.

Anyway, tonight I've been having the weirdest dream. It was about getting sucked into a drug connection here in Gardner. I don't think so.

I feel like God wants me to break off with the recovery people in SLC. It's like I've been in their way. I know He has been bringing me to my knees. A lot of pride has been showing.

The place is cleaned up. I'm eating. The drugs really warped me out. I don't want to be an ADDICT!!! I want to get out of debt, serve God, & rebuild my life. I will never accomplish this through using.

Saturday, October 12, 2002-

So much has happened, & so many experiences! I'm so very blessed! I screwed up & relapsed. There are many excuses as to why, but no legitimate reason, especially when God is so available. I hate myself when I let go, & am always grateful for a Divine Hand that is extended to pull me back up.

Sunday afternoon I decided to go over to the hospital & get a blood test to see what was going on & perhaps to get the meds to get back to feeling normal—at least my normal. They, the hospital—didn't let me home. My b/p was 78/43 & the white blood cell count was 743 (normal is 14,000).

I'm home, five days later. I knew that I was low, feeling that part of the reason was having been off my meds. I prayed to find out what was wrong & help in correcting it. God came through once again. It was not an easy stay. Though I hate the drawing of blood for the many tests that were run, the worst was the bone marrow samples. It really hurt!

So, I'm home, & I feel grateful for the care & the meds to God. He really does know us & is involved in our lives more than I, at least, realize. I pray to be an instrument in His hands.

Aside—This rejection thing really sucks. I wonder if I'll ever allow myself to be "loved" again. People say they love you, then they throw you away—like the worst mistake of their life. Well, I don't think I can handle being anyone else's mistake! I'm not a mistake nor a failure. I'm growing & progressing & learning to trust God.

It is usually a bad sign when Robert writes about not wanting to work with the recovery group. Because they are his social support, it shows that Robert is isolating himself and resorting back to old behaviors. It is amazing that no matter how many times he relapses, he continues to sustain the belief that God love him, and is his way back to a healthy life. Unfortunately, because of Robert's HIV his body cannot handle the heavy drug abuse, and he finds himself in the hospital. Again, he sees it as divine intervention, showing that his Christian identity is the only aspect of life in which he believes, finding security and hope.

I've read, and have been told, that the final months of mortality for those with AIDS is a battle to recreate the meaning of life. As the person's immune system weakens they become vulnerable to illnesses, which would normally have been attacked by the

body's defense mechanisms. But eventually they become more and more sick, until they go. The progression of illness is reflected in Robert's writing. These last few entries are almost more moving than the others due to the changes in his handwriting. It is obvious that Robert is dying. His handwriting had been known for its beauty, and although the journal had begun as a handsome art it evolved into a difficult mess to understand, reflecting his life.

Sunday, November 10, 2002-

I've been fighting the loneliness again these past weeks. My health has been better, so I'm grateful for that blessing. So, why did everyone disown me? And why am I here in Kansas?

The password here is patience, Robert. Call me stupid, but I still hold on to hope! Maybe that's why it all still hurts so much.

[Robert's] story shows how confounding hope can be (Cherry, 1996, p. 55).

Amidst all the guilt and blame, he showed his true strength of persistence and his desire to love. This was his last entry before entering the hospital where he died on December 14, 2002, at the age of 49.

My oldest brother was the only member of my family to visit Robert in the hospital before he died. We all talked to him on the phone, but couldn't leave finals and jobs, or financially couldn't afford the flights. Brandon filled us in on the details once he arrived in Gardner, and his account was incredibly similar to the journal entry Robert wrote about the death of his brother, Mark. He said that he looked emaciated, weighing no more than 120 lbs. He was delusional, and hard to understand because of his swollen tongue, and eventually the hospital put tubes down his throat so he could breathe. Brandon said that he just held his hand and softly talked to him as he fought through the pain. Unfortunately, Brandon's return flight was too early, and he had to leave before

Robert actually passed away, but we do know that he wasn't alone. Robert did have friends from the area stop in to see him, having no idea that he was HIV positive.

Brandon said that the most poignant scene was when his employer came. Sitting on the bed, he picked up Robert and cradled him in his arms, rocking him, and softly whispering that he loved him and was going to miss him.

Much like my father, I too keep a journal, and the following accounts are taken from my diary, explaining the final events of Robert's life and the closure for my family.

12-14-02

Dad:

I never thought I would be using that term again; let alone titling a page after him. But—dad died today.

The last few days have been such a rollercoaster of emotions that it doesn't surprise me to be unemotional now. I spoke with him on Thursday and was the first one from the family to call. I didn't really know what to say to him, except that I was sorry and loved him. I told him that I felt badly that I couldn't be there, and he responded with something back, but I just couldn't understand. (I was told that his tongue is swollen, and there are tubes everywhere. It makes me sick to think of him in that way.) It makes me really frustrated; I just wish I knew what he said to me. Everyone called him, and he was doing well—all things considered. Brandon went out and was with him, so that was good. And then he just got progressively worse, until he went.

It's been a real bonding experience with the family, my neighbors have been awesome, and Andrew's just super. Karen came home from work on Thursday to be with me. Andrew offered to fly me out, which was nice, and he's called several times to make sure I was fine. Bishop chatted with me for a bit, and prayed with me, so I feel like I've been blessed all over the place. I just wish that I could get out of this stupid state. I want to be with my family, and not sitting here staring out the window all day long. Sounds stupid, but the only thing I can do is to keep working on my finals. My papers suck, but I don't even care anymore, it's better than just sitting.

Although this has been really difficult, it is finally and end. I don't think I could

have ever pictured all of this in the beginning when we first learned of the drugs. My life has changed, and I can honestly say that it's mostly for the better. I'm sure there will be more emotions to come, but Robert can finally rest from this awful journey, and for that I am truly grateful.

1-13-03

Wow:

My bishop told me to keep a journal because I would be learning a lot during my Christmas vacation. I just couldn't write. I didn't want to feel bad anymore. I wanted to enjoy being home and with Andrew. The graveside service went smoothly, but his stupid family buried him in a baby blue coffin. They're ridiculous; I really hate dealing with them.

Then we finally went through all of dad's stuff. I think Wes and I were just amazed with the stuff we found. He really didn't have anything of value. Just a lot of sentimental stuff and a bunch of journals. Reading those stupid things was like reliving the past. It was absolutely awful. You would think I would be doing better—now a month later—but I'm just depressed and have no motivation for school. I know that I'm only here for another year; and I just pray that I'll make it.

2-17-03

Winds of Change:

For a qualitative class that I'm taking, I've decided to analyze Robert's journal to see if I can figure out how he saw himself. It's an emotional rollercoaster, but hopefully it will turn out ok. If nothing else, it has given me some closure, and makes me want to keep up on my journaling. After re-reading the 1st entry in this journal, I realize how my life has drastically changed for the best.

I'm living for myself...doing what I want to do. No one could ever have told me a year ago that I would be living in TX, studying emotions, in love with a guy in Salt Lake, working on relationships with my family, and happily overcoming issues of the past. Some say journals are individual reflections of memories—and as I look back I get excited for what my future holds. Others say that diaries are expressions unfolded. I'm

going to work to make my story and Robert's emerge from the silence.

Before August 29, 1997, I had never understood why people said to take life one day at a time. How else are you supposed to live? Because of Robert, we learned that when life hands you an experience that paralyzes your thoughts and numbs every limb in your body, you cannot even conceptualize living two days at once, or two seconds at a time. The saying works paradoxically, forcing you out of bed each morning, reminding you to breath in and out, taking each moment one at a time.

Research Questions

RQ 1: How does Robert create identity[ies] through narratives told in his journals?

This narrative section illustrates a different process of constructing an identity. In story three, the narration shows Robert's efforts to manage or reject the characteristics that are ascribed to an addiction identity while increasing his efforts to build on past identities. The process of constructing an identity appears to be a method of both acceptance and rejection of self.

Robert's actions of drug use and relapse supported and created an identity of addiction, while at the same time, his writing divorced himself from his behavior. Robert's identity of drug addict was completely rejected, even to the point where he would strike out the personal pronouns and replace it with "the behavior." He would accept that he had made mistakes, but would emphasize his recovery and efforts to change. The addiction was acknowledged when he helped facilitate others to sobriety, or when he was overcoming a relapse. When he was deeply depressed he would

sarcastically concede that others thought he would be nothing more than a druggie, showing that he was denying the projection. More often, Robert wrote of rejecting the drug addiction, writing that he didn't want to be an addict.

Interestingly, while Robert rejected the characterization of addiction, he continued to build on his identities from the past. Through this third narration, there are countless entries of missing his children, and heartache for his family. He wants their forgiveness, and desires to maintain his identity as a father. As time progressed throughout the journals in this section, Robert would write about things that would remind him of his kids, such as buying stuffed animals and recognizing birthdays. These behaviors are different from those in section two, where he wrote of his children being a financial burden, and expressed his desire to be rid of fatherhood responsibilities. Increasing his efforts to construct an identity of a father allowed him to overlook his identity and behaviors as an addict.

Even more than building on an identity of fatherhood, Robert's entries were covered in acknowledgment of God's hand in his life. He clung to his identity of Christianity, recognizing that in the end, God's love was the only comforting peace that brought hope to his life. Many entries are prayers for peace, begging God to help him endure his struggle, and end his feelings of emptiness. Again, this Christian identity was a way for Robert to express penitence for his addiction.

It's also interesting to see Robert's rejection of homosexuality in this section. There was only one entry that commented on his struggle with same-sex attraction, and then it was never mentioned again. Robert often wrote of his battle with AIDS, revealing that he would never share that identity with anyone, and in the end, many were shocked

when they learned of the cause of death. The lack of communication about this defining aspect of his life appears to be a rejection of this identity.

RQ 2: What do the form and content of Robert's stories tell us about his identity construction?

The form of Robert's journals are distinctly different in section three, taking on three new structures of a blessing book; a scriptural reflections journal, and letters to others. Robert wrote of daily experiences like he had done in the past, but he also started what he termed as a blessing. He would list at least five things that he was grateful for throughout the day. Structurally, it was a numbered list, with little comment on his items. Sometimes, the lists were sarcastic, which seems to show Robert's lack of acceptance for his day. Other times, the lists were short, giving only five words, such as car, work, home, God, sunshine. After a while Robert began adding a paragraph after the lists, giving more commentary of day or feelings of an experience, and eventually, the lists were neglected and Robert converted back to typical entries with a date and explanation of an experience.

The scriptural reflections journal started after the blessings book. It was during the time of recovery when Robert was in-and-out of the home. After the date at the top of the page, he would cite a scripture. Sometimes it was one verse, others were several chapters. Robert would summarize what he had read, and then comment on it, relating it to his life or a similar situation that he was experiencing. This new form of journaling not only revealed aspects and feelings of Robert's life, but it also showed his consistent scripture study, or maybe an increased effort to support a Christian identity.

The last new form within this series of narrative is the letters to others. There are only a few, one to Robert's wife, one to his oldest son, and one to God. In these entries, Robert uses the combination of letter writing and journaling to express direct feelings to specific people. It appears as if Robert's having a conversation with them, expressing remorse for the lack of a relationship and his desires to forgive and be forgiven. The entries seem to be an effort on Robert's part to communicate all that he's feeling to these individuals, yet is prevented from verbal expression.

The content in section three is also different. The journals are used as a therapeutic outlet for expression, and are therefore extremely poignant and emotional. At times, the journals are difficult to understand and comprehend because of the rollercoaster of emotional expression. The entries alternate from gratitude and thanksgiving, to intense hatred and disdain, to love and remorse, to depression and emptiness, to adventure and new beginnings, to fear and self-loathing, to death and demise.

Beyond the emotions that were expressed, the content also shows a relapse in behavior. The move to Kansas presents an opportunity for Robert to begin a new life with a clean slate, where no one knows his identities and can prejudge him. Yet in reality, Robert's journals communicate a return to drug abuse, deceit, and death. The content in the final pages, a month prior to his passing, shows Robert's acknowledgement of his demise and of his suffering from the pain of the disease and his choices.

RQ 3: Does Robert construct conflicting identities? How does Robert manage conflicting identities?

The most obvious conflicting identities in story three is the drug addict versus the

Christian. This internal conflict is the structure for all of the journal entries in the third section, as Robert writes to release the emotional chaos within him. Much like the other section, journaling is an outlet for expression, and is a way for Robert to cope with his feelings, communicate his thoughts, and validate his individuality. Managing the conflict, Robert focused his thoughts on aspects of the day that he was grateful for, worked to understand his religious ideology, and wrote letters to people that he never sent. All of these actions seem to support the notion that Robert was trying to make sense of reality that he created by his behavior.

Specifically, managing the conflict of addiction appeared to be a struggle for Robert. Many therapist, drug recovery groups, and addicts themselves have argued that addiction is never overcome, but instead, managed through acceptance, social support, and hard work. Although Robert continued to use drugs until his death, he did manage his identity of drug abuse through these techniques of participation in group recovery programs. The manual that he wrote, allowed him to help others, exhibiting his desire to sustain social support, while at the same time giving him a purpose to work hard at his recovery.

Also, Robert managed his identity conflicts through denial. Throughout his journal entries he demanded forgiveness from family and friends, and even God, not understanding why all of us failed to see his progression and change. Once Robert moved to Kansas, he maintained secrecy about his identity, lying about his health to his employers, and omitting the truth of his continual drug abuse to his clergy. His journals seem to be the only safe place Robert found to honestly explain his behavior, and express his feelings, giving him the opportunity to manage his conflicting identities.

RQ 4: How does emotion management frame Robert's narratives and identity construction? What are the emotional consequences of this process?

Within this series of diaries, Robert's emotion management was similar to the behavior he displayed throughout the second narrative, using strategies of masking and surface acting to support social rules and expectations. Although Robert had admitted to using drugs and was busy with recovery meetings, he used that behavior to mask his depression which led to continual relapse. His masking techniques allowed him to produce the manual for sobriety and become a facilitator helping others to achieve what he was unable to do for himself. Robert's public face compelled others to believe that he was a successful recovery story, or an addict who had turned his life around for the good.

At the time that Robert was masking his authentic emotions with behaviors of recovery, he was suppressing his emotions of depression, loneliness, and fear. Robert's journals became a best friend, or confidant. The pages are full of heartache for his family and longing for more purpose in life and support from others, and writing about his failures, relapses, and needs forced Robert to actually face the demise that he had constructed. Journaling was an avenue for authentic expression showing a progression in his writing, yet Robert was unable to translate authentic emotion management into verbal and daily behaviors.

The emotional consequences of authentic writing was challenging for Robert. Throughout all of the journal entries, the end of his life seemed to be the first time that he honestly expressed how his actions and experiences made him feel. The result of this private communication in Robert's last journal produced deep depression. Each day appeared to be a painful struggle to exist alone and facing the realization of his life

choices. In the end, the journals seemed to communicate a type of relief, along with fear, as Robert entered the hospital to die.

RQ 5: How does the private and written nature of journaling influence Robert's narratives and identity construction?

The private and written nature of journaling allowed Robert to express himself. While he wanted a best friend or companion with whom to share his emotions and challenges, he failed to achieve that type of relationship. However, his journals were an safe outlet for expression. Although Robert suffered in silence, using techniques of writing allowed him to communicate, helping him to cope with his emotional experiences and build an understanding of what his life was. In this last series, Robert's art of journaling gave him time to think and process and comprehend all of the difficult situations that he faced.

In addition to the security that the pages of entries provided, the journals also appeared to create a purpose for Robert's life. Writing built a positive identity, amidst all of the chaos and tragedy that Robert faced. His security in writing produced authentic expressions that constructed a man who managed conflicts, endured the daily grind of life, and struggled to overcome extreme trials. Robert always wondered if anyone would read these volumes of entries, and seemed to feel that if someone did read these they would gain a greater understanding of his true character. The honesty and emotional expression throughout the journals transformed the stories of Robert's monstrous actions into narratives of an injured soldier who battled and achieve small victories and tragic losses in a conflict.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Stories make us who we are. We live our lives through telling stories to each other, and build relationships through sharing experiences. Whether or not we actually interact with another person, we still construct narratives in our heads from abstract thoughts, all of which structure our lives, build our identities, and shape our reality. It is this process of composing stories that allows us to interpret emotion and construct a self.

While research continues to define and explain identity and emotion, the abstract nature of both of the terms makes them difficult to understand, especially without being able to see the construction of identity in action. The purpose of unpacking Robert's narrative was to witness the processes and outcomes of one individual's identity creation, and to examine how it was influenced by emotion. This study was able to capture both the public and private form of expression, as the narratives are composed of both journal entries and public reaction to the experiences articulated. In Robert's struggle to accept an identity, the significance of emotion management is framed as the conflict of identities are presented. And the purpose of capturing a variety of identities in the three stories, is not to liberate the ambiguity and uncertainty of life, but to show how we live within it.

In the remainder of this thesis, I will discuss how my analysis of Robert's narratives, identities, and emotions support the literature presented in the first chapter, while also showing the discrepancies and gaps that may be clarified by research in the future. Finally, I will present the limitations of this study, offering suggestions of possible direction to further our understanding of these topics.

Summary of Research Questions

RQ 1: How does Robert create identity[ies] through narratives told in his journals?

The three stories show how Robert identified within himself at least four identities of Christian servant, Husband/Father, Unsuccessful Businessman, and Cocaine Addict. Each of Robert's identities evolve through a different process. Some begin with the projection of a responsibility, such as his mission, fatherhood or work. Although Robert accepts the responsibilities that come with these particular identities it take time for him to complete embrace and accept the characteristics into his thoughts and behavior. The process of building an ideology of Christianity started in his home as a young child, but as Robert accepted the duties of a missionary, he eventually learned through experience and writing in his diary what it meant to him to have a belief in Christ, and to incorporate those principles into his life. Likewise, by having children Robert became a father, but he didn't completely accept a fatherly role until his fourth child was born. Also, because of the responsibilities that come with being a father and husband, he becomes emotionally overwhelmed and fights the desires to rejects those roles.

Robert completely rejects other identities until he is forced to accept them because the experiences create an inescapable situation, like those seen during his drug addiction. By writing about his battle of overcoming drugs it apparent that he draws upon his Christian identity, wanting to solely accept that perspective as a definition of self, rather than all of the mistakes and guilt that come with the addiction characterization. Yet, as the addiction grows, he's forced to recognize it as a part of himself. What is also interesting, is how Robert does not write about his homosexuality. He contracted AIDS

through homosexual activity, yet is never accepts it as an aspect of his identity.

All of the experiences that Robert chooses to write about define his different identities and create a complex, multidimensional being through overcoming challenges, and achieving successes, as well as facing failures. It is through the writing that we see the intricate process of construction and destruction.

RQ 2: What do the form and content of Robert's stories tell us about his identity construction?

An aspect incorporated into Robert's identity was the importance of keeping a journal, and the form of the stories show the purpose of the journal and the pattern of the narratives explain how Robert clarified experiences.

Robert was searching for approval among both his family and peers, having always felt rejected. The journal was one place where Robert found acceptance, being able to freely express anything that he felt comfortable to write. Most of the time, Robert just wanted to tell someone what he did every day, making most of his entries categorical lists or reviews of activities. Once Robert recognized that writing was private and safe, he began to share more, and the journal became an emotional outlet. Typically, Robert suppressed his thoughts and communication, fearful of what others would think, but he could only remain silent for so long. When he actually wrote of an emotional experience, it was his way of venting and acknowledging the situation, not actually a way of solving or fixing the experience. Finally, a third purpose of the journal was a way to document important dates and events in order to remember his life history. The act of writing down and experience, thinking someone else would want to know about him, made Robert feel important, and purpose to his life.

The patterns that Robert's narratives follow in order to explain his experiences can be grouped into three categories of successes, failures, and non-existence. When Robert was feeling successful he would write insightful and philosophical thoughts, such as the prefacing line from the mission. Prophetic statements and scriptural passages reflecting his Christian identity provided a way to guide his behavior, or urge him to be better. Robert's entries took on a new form when he felt like he was failing. In these times, the pattern was short statements marking a negative emotion or experience. There was little elaboration or explanation. And, Robert was consistent in writing unless he was overwhelmed, bored, stressed, embarrassed or scared. These extreme emotions prevented from all expression.

The content of the narratives explain the dominant identities that shaped who Robert was. It would be unfair to only describe him off as a destructive monster, tragic individual, or notorious liar because that is just a single piece of the story. Robert was also a creative employee, a hard worker, a supportive friend, and a loving father. The complete content shows all aspects of his identities, whether or not they reflect him in positive perspective.

RQ 3: Does Robert construct conflicting identities? How does Robert manage conflicting identities?

It's obvious that Robert constructs conflicting identities. His religion affiliation doesn't support drug abuse or homosexual activity, creating a tension between Christian servant and drug addict/homosexual. Also, his kids knew him as a dad who loved their mother, and his wife saw him as a husband. This positions husband/father opposite homosexual. Part of the cognitive dissonance that Robert experienced was because he

had conflicting identities.

Interestingly, Robert manages his identities in two ways, first through journaling, and second through rejections. Journaling was a traditional, therapeutic method for Robert to organize thoughts, express feelings, and articulate opinion without the social pressure of a judgmental audience. Because he felt restricted, or perhaps embarrassed about communicating all of his thoughts and behaviors openly, writing in his diary offered him that expressive release, while at the same time making it concrete what he accepted in himself and what he worked to reject.

A final way of managing these conflicting identities was through rejection. Robert obviously eschewed homosexuality, and after accepting that he was an addict worked to end that identity as well. Robert loses his company, compelling him to reject his business character, his wife divorces him so he is no longer recognized as a husband, and he is excommunicated from the Church terminating his Christian foundation. The last identity that Robert clings to is that of a father, and until hours before his death, his kids reject him. No person can die identity-less, but Robert's identity management almost forces that conclusion to occur. Even now, a year later, his body is in a graveyard, but isn't identified with a headstone. If it weren't for these diaries, it would almost be as if he never existed.

RQ 4: How does emotion management frame Robert's narratives and identity construction? What are the emotional consequences of this process?

The management of emotion in which Robert engaged, mostly suppression and surface acting, was performed in order for him to appropriately abide by the social rules that guided behavior for being a father, Christian, and employee. Many entries reveal his

authentic moods of depression, lack of motivation, and fear, while he write of experiences that shows a public face of a diligent leader, and a hardworking and responsible personality. By the time Robert was heavily involved in drug use, surface acting was second nature to him, and he fooled himself into thinking he had everything under control. Even more, when Robert was facilitating others toward sobriety yet struggling to be free of drugs himself, he used techniques of displaying empowerment and courage while feeling helpless and alone.

Robert used emotion management strategies of deep acting through the actual act of writing in his diary. By writing about his accomplishments and successes, he was able to trick himself into feeling worthwhile, even if it was just for a moment. Writing about his challenges and failures helped him to believe that he was honest, allowing him to escape the feelings of denial and guilt. Through journaling, Robert avoided feeling his authentic emotions that were too painful, and eventually conjured up new ways to think and behave, helping him to function.

These strategies had immediate consequences that were satisfying to Robert, permitting him to achieve his basic goals of living without anyone knowing who he really was. By masking his authentic emotions, Robert appeared more professional and in control, developing a public identity of ability, rationality, and confidence. But this facade came at a high cost. When Robert removed the camouflage that he spent so long building, many people felt betrayed, and therefore his relationships suffered. Robert's overall goal of achieving acceptance was unattainable once others believed they couldn't trust him.

These strategies of emotion management helped Robert abide by the social standards within society, yet it is because of this tactics that he rejected who he was, as well as why others rejected him.

RQ 5: How does the private and written nature of journaling influence Robert's narratives and identity construction?

Journals are a private form of communication, giving the illusion that they are therapeutic, are safe, and are without negative effects. While this may be the case for some, the journal was not such a safe outlet for Robert, who sustained detrimental consequences due to his intense privatization of communication.

The private and written nature of journaling allowed Robert some form of communication and expression. He faced extreme situations, dealing with depression and financial problems, and everything else that could have remained insurmountable had he not taken the moment to reflect and write about his feelings. He was able to overcome and achieve a lot because of journaling. But at the same time, this therapeutic technique is also what allowed him to suffer in silence. There are a variety of direct statements to specific people throughout these journals that will remain forever unsaid. There are issues that were never broached, and consequences ignored because writing momentarily relieved him, and satisfied his need to communicate. There is a negative side to journaling that is rarely noted.

Also influencing Robert's identity, the writing prevented him from publicly expressing who he was, impeding his ability to build relationships. My fundamental interest in this project is to get to know my dad. Fortunately, there are these journals so

that I can understand how he saw himself. Unfortunately, there are these journals that didn't allow Robert to share how he saw himself with me while he was alive.

Implications for Narrative Theory and Research

The study of personal narrative is part of the study of everyday life (Langellier, 1986). Narratives allow us to understand our culture, interpret the impact of social pressure on behavior, and gain insight into individuals' life experiences. The point of Robert's stories is not to provide a general outlook on human behavior, but rather to reveal an interpretation of one life narrative in such a way that others can relate to the story itself or the strategies that were used to navigate through thoughts and action. This description and analysis teases out the factors that shape private communication, showing how the expression is influenced by emotions and builds an identity.

Supporting the literature on narratives, Robert's stories follow a fully-developed structure, beginning at a young age of maturity and continually building until his death (Labov & Waletzky, 1997). We can see this building process of experience through the writing, as Robert tells stories that relate to past events, or through his specific references to books, metaphors, and themes throughout the journals. His experiences are remarkable in that they are both commonplace and unique at the same time. There are many stories that tell of Christian service altering people's lives, or of the entrepreneurial struggles to begin a small business, and there are even stories of white-collar drug addicts, and the lonely deaths of AIDS patients. But what makes Robert's narrative significant is that it contains all of these stories, and is detailed from his personal perspective in a diary.

Robert reveals a private sense of himself, using the stories as a lens to guide his future behaviors.

Robert's stories support the literature on narratives in that they are structured in a linear way, due to his consistency in journaling, allowing his experiences to develop into a sequential narrative. Journals don't typically support this sequence because of the spattering of non-connecting events, and the irregularity of entries. But because he was quite consistent in his journaling, not only do we get the momentous events that directly influenced Robert's decisions and behaviors, but we also see the everyday experiences and commonplace activities that shape Robert's individuality over time. Because the data are excerpts from journal entries, and not pieces of an interview, there is no storytelling of any event that is artificially provoked. This process of narration is multidimensional, allowing Robert to simultaneously narrate his life story while also being a private audience to his own writings.

The study of Robert's personal narrative also highlights particular gaps in this literature, the most obvious being the absence of emotion in the definition of a narrative. Specifically, Fisher's (1987) narrative paradigm is accurate in stating that we construct our lives around stories, as he contends that "...narrative is a concept that can enhance understanding of human communication and action..." (p.20). However, the paradigm is limited when Fisher introduces "...the concept of narrative rationality" (p. 87) assuming that each story we communicate is only valuable when considering "...fact, relevance, consequence, consistency, and transcenden[ce]..." (p. 89). In the case of Robert's stories, the inconsistencies are what became significant and add value. For example, during his fight to privately overcome addiction by himself, Robert's writings don't hang

together properly and his diligence to God appears hackneyed and out of place. But these facts prove relevant and consequential in altering his identity.

Another gap in the research on personal narratives is the actual issue of stories within diaries and journals. Most narrative research revolves around ethnographic studies (LaPastina, in-press; Miller, 2002b), group/personal interviews (Clark, 2001; Mishler, 1995), or performance studies (Ellis & Bochner, 1992). While more research on written narratives is being developed, such as the stories of breast cancer survivors shared through internet chat rooms (Sharf, 1997), there are very few longitudinal studies, such as that found in this research project. Journals are a different form of communication, presenting an alternative view of a narrative that deserves more attention. While Robert's stories contain characters and experiences, all is not explained, and some of the stories don't necessary hang together coherently. Connections are made at different times, climaxes rise and fall in unusual ways, and foreshadowing isn't recognizable until after the fact. Yet, these narratives are still significant in providing insight into human behavior, the process of identity construction, and the influence of emotion management.

Finally, the nature of private communication in journals was assumed to be a safe forum for expression, free from the social pressures of a public audience, allowing the personal narratives to be more authentic (Andrews, 2002). While some freedoms can definitely be assumed, such as the ability to freely roam among an array of times, thoughts, or identities (Brockmeier, 2002) Robert's writings demonstrate that diaries are not emancipated from the criticisms of the harshest critic, oneself. Journaling may be therapeutic in some forms, but alternately, the private writing can also turn into a form of communicative suppression. Not only do Robert's stories reveal that his self-pressure was

detrimental to both his feelings and self-esteem, regularly identifying himself as a failure, but also the narratives were a strategic method Robert used to avoid confrontation and feelings of guilt.

Implications for Identity Theory and Research

While constructing a sense of self and working to understand who we are and our purposes in life, we face ambiguity, uncertainty, and evolution. James, Cooley, and Mead, the American pragmatists, have defined identity as understanding self through interaction with others (Holstein & Gubrium, 2000). From this perspective, we learn that developing our identities is a result of experiencing life with others. During these interactions we create a framework of expectations, goals, and potential characteristics that we want to incorporate into our personality. This insight, coupled with the influential work on ambiguity by Eisenberg (2001), begins to further clarify the process of coming to know oneself by showing how we are constantly working to reduce uncertainty in our minds by shifting and changing our behaviors. Although we live in an unstable world that is constantly evolving, the stories that we construct create the boundaries and rules that we use to interact. And while Eisenberg (2001) suggests that a coherent, stable identity is forever elusive, this thesis research suggests that the act of written narration can be a mechanism for understanding the uncertainty of the past, managing the emotions of the present, and creating and maintaining a cohesive identity across future contexts.

Researching journals is one way to uncover the actual developmental progress of understanding oneself through negotiating ambiguous experience. Journals are not meant

to make sense as a narrative, but they do tell stories that shape our character and influence our decisions and interactions with others. Supporting the literature, Robert's journaling reveals the natural progression of negotiating identities. The emotional process of building an identity occurs during both Robert's public interactions and during his private personal reflections. Robert's diaries show how the stories that we use to make sense of reality, and give meaning to our experience, can be told to a listening audience or communicated in a diary. Either method maintains the purpose of reducing uncertainty and is significant in the process of identity construction.

Robert's diaries also account for changes in identity due to age. It is important to understand that individuals use situations and interactions of a single experience to develop particular aspects of their character. For instance, Mark's death is one experience that Robert uses to evaluate and alter his beliefs in God, the value of his family, and the importance of his work. But what is more interesting about these journals is to see how similar experiences change identity depending on one's age and place in life. An example is Robert's reaction to the lack of money. On his mission, he's embarrassed to ask for help and is incredibly concerned about his debts. Similarly, the experience of the business is a stressful financial situation, and Robert is still embarrassed, has a difficult time asking for assistance, and worries over his accruing debts. He can write about the stress of the experience, but emotions paralyze him, and Robert can't do anything but work harder and suppress the worry. The element of time within the journals reveals patterns of similar behavior and shifting ways of dealing with ambiguity and uncertainty.

Another interesting aspect of identity that Robert's journals acknowledge is the notion of overlapping narratives. There are several stories that naturally occur all at the same time. Using journals to research identity can account for and develop the overlapping stories to reveal more thick conclusions and rich results. Through studying journals, researchers can unpack how individuals negotiated between several contexts, and among a variety of people answering the call by Fine (1994) to "work the hyphen" (p.88).

This thesis research also introduces questions about understanding the influence of social pressure and family relationships as they relate to identity. Because Robert relied so heavily upon the expectations and the framework of characteristic that he admired in others, it becomes interesting to see how influential public pressure is in shaping one's identity. Also, the patterns of behavior among Robert's father and brothers pose the question of power of family relationships. No matter how much Robert rejected his father for neglecting his family, or Keith for lying, or Mark for his homosexuality, Robert's own identity and writing included all of those same behaviors. It would be interesting to understand how much control we actually have over our behavior, and how much is an engrained identity from our past.

Implications for Emotion Theory and Research

The study of emotions is a continually growing field of research that acknowledges how individuals privately conceptualize life experiences, and publicly manage behaviors. Throughout this thesis research, emotion has been recognized as the catalyst that motivates an experience, builds a story, and constructs an identity. As seen

in this project, emotion is integrated into every aspect of our lives, guiding our way of knowing and helping us cope with our ambiguity and uncertainty.

The literature defines emotions as a sense or component of expression resulting from internal stimulation (Hochschild, 1983). This definition unites both the public and private aspects of communication, allowing flexibility for individual interpretations. It illustrates how individuals are both rational and emotional at the same time, in every situation. This unique combination is further supported by the interpretation of emotion by Robert throughout his journals. Robert relied heavily on his journals to experience, express, control, and manage his emotions. The perspective from which he wrote each entry was guided by feeling, revealing how he interpreted reality and worked to develop his character.

Supporting the literature, Robert used strategies of managing his emotion to comply with social expectations and pressures. Each of the major identities that he constructed were built from a framework of social rules and systems. When he was on his mission, Robert was completely obedient to the mission rules, and even felt guilty when he was “wasting time.” He used strategies of deep acting on difficult days when he didn’t want to proselytize, trying to motivate himself to work. Once Robert became a father, he accepted the notion that he must provide for his family, sacrificing all of his time and energy to build a company. And, in the end, Robert hid his drug addiction, even from himself, to escape the social characterization of being an addict. This conformity to social expectations allowed Robert to display socially acceptable behavior, and affirm a positive identity. Although we value the expression of emotion, Robert was bound to expectations, and this often led to dissatisfaction.

The consequences of Robert's emotion management strategies were costly, just as Hochschild (1983) projected they would be. The disharmony, depression, and dissonance that Robert expressed in his sense of identity made it difficult for him to trust others and publicly communicate. The journals gave him a secure outlet to articulate and understand the reality of his experiences, but the private outlet created emotional suppression in other public environments. While Robert continued to construct identities through journaling, the emotion management masked many of those identities during interactions with others.

This thesis research reveals different consequences of emotional expression and management depending on whether the feeling is communicated publicly or privately, and it raises the question of emotion's role in manipulating, changing, or destroying social processes. For instance, hierarchy seemed to play a role in formulating emotions of fear and inferiority on Robert's mission. If the emotions had been interpreted differently, it would be interesting to see how that could have altered his behavior and experiences. Or perhaps social processes resulting from family relations that were influenced by emotion could have affected the company and Robert's definition of success differently had the emotion been positively interpreted.

Limitations to the Research

There are limitations to this thesis research that could have altered the outcome of the data. After an evaluation of the account, some of the critiques are the subjective nature of the material that could have been perceived differently through interviewing the individuals involved in the experiences. Also, different conclusions concerning identity and emotion management could have developed through a comparative study of journaling participants. And finally, while Robert does represent a variety of

stereotypical and marginalized groups, it is unknown how well he actually represents members of different races, genders, cultures, and ethnicities.

One of the greatest advantages of this project is the subjective nature of the material, giving a personal, emotional perspective on identity creation. Yet this attribute also becomes one of the study's weaknesses as well. Although the integrity and credibility of the piece was sustained through triangulating the data, using a variety of sources and member checks, the three stories in the research are mainly told through two perspectives, Robert's and my own. A way to overcome this issue is through in-depth interviews. There are many characters that appear a variety of times throughout the journals, and their insight into the experiences that Robert wrote about may have altered the presentation of the story. Unfortunately, due to the timeliness of the project, the sensitivity of the stories revealed, and the distance sustained by the major parties involved, interviewing was not available to supplement the finding of this research.

Another unique attribute of the data, that also becomes a limitation, are the span of time that the diaries cover. The 30-year duration created a the opportunity for a longitudinal look at identity creation, as most of the journals found were complete and chronological. However, a comparative study could have presented both qualitative and quantitative findings that could more completely describe the process of building identities, and the role of emotions within that process.

Finally, it is unknown how well Robert represents the larger whole. While his stories are unique in that they represent a variety of marginalized groups, he is privileged as a white male American. By researching a set of journals from a variety of genders, cultures, and socio-economical backgrounds we could possibly understand the role of

social pressure on identity development, the implications of maturity on emotion management tactics, while also finding patterns of communicative strategies within the narratives.

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