

Parody and Interrogation in
Martha Lamont's Two Tellings of "Crow Is Sick"

Toby C.S. Langen
The Tulalip Tribes Lushootseed Program

Better than our traditions, whose transformation accelerates with the ever-increasing mass of knowledge accumulated in books, [oral] traditions lend themselves to an experimental research which requires a relative stability in its object.

-- Claude Levi-Strauss, "Comparative Religions of Non-Literate Peoples"

There is always the danger of coloring mythtelling with our own inclinations about the way we want to hear the stories now.

-- Sean Kane, Wisdom of the Mythtellers

I

Because Martha Lamont recorded stories with Leon Metcalf in the early 1950's and then again with Thom Hess in the early 1960's, she has left us a repertoire that includes two tellings, about ten years apart, of several stories. Some years ago I looked at both tellings of one of these stories, "Crow and Her Seagull Slaves." (Langen 1996) In Mrs. Lamont's second telling, concerns about personal agency and racial status latent or treated parodically in the first telling were expressed organically in the narration, so that Crow was at once a figure of fun and the icon of a lost but recoverable dimension of personality. "Crow and Her Seagull Slaves" is a parody that upends the conventions of betrothal and marriage in a back-handed celebration of personal agency on several levels. In the old days, the marriage of a young woman of high lineage was arranged by her parents, and she was closely chaperoned throughout her maiden years; in the story, Crow, though said to be of high lineage, goes out accompanied only by slaves to find a husband. All the way through the story, her would-be suitors treat her with respect, and she ends by getting the richest and most polite husband, who does not even notice the vulgarity of her behavior, which has been the subject of a running joke throughout the narrative. In this paper, I look at another story about Crow that Martha Lamont has left for us in two tellings, and I am interested to see whether the relations between the tellings of this second set of stories resemble those between the tellings of the first.

Like "Crow and Her Seagull Slaves," "Crow Is Sick" is a parody. Perhaps it is not strange that Crow stories should tend toward the parodic, since the conditions of crows' lives display an anomaly: crows, though scavengers and thus not holding the status of hunters like Eagle or Fish Hawk, yet never seem to want for food; and so, however humbly, they achieve in their lives that goal of commanding an abundance of food that is perhaps the most valued of the gifts that spirit powers bestow. Unlike "Crow and Her Seagull Slaves," which turns on their heads the conventions it deals with, "Crow Is Sick" accepts the conventions (of Indian sickness, doctoring and the winter dance) but fills the categories with parodic representations: the sickness is a hoax, the songs are jokes. Since the conventions themselves are not questioned by the story as Martha tells it, the parody has an opportunity to pose a serious question: what kind of damage is done when the conventions are not respected? The recent publication of the texts (along

with tape recordings) of Martha Lamont's two tellings of "Crow Is Sick" in the second volume of the Lushootseed Reader (Hess 1998), provides an opportunity to see how the storyteller's thinking about the story may have changed during the ten years between tellings.

II

The first telling opens with a passage of summary narration in which the narrator gives us the information that Crow had a lot of dried fish and her brother Raven was always thinking about how he could get at it. This information is delivered in a concentric figure containing a core that categorizes Raven as disreputable on account of his ungoverned appetite for food. The vigor of the diction shows us that Martha agrees with this characterization of Raven, and the employment of the figure lets us know that this is also the opinion of the community. This introductory passage is spoken with vivid intonation contours, strongly marked high-voice beginnings of the components of the concentric figure, emphatic falling pitch at the ends of sentences, and falling pitch plus pauses of significant duration at the ends of the outer rings of the figure; parallel members of the configuration are echoed in pitch, speed of delivery and intonation.

In the English text below I have given a rough sketch of the vocal coloring of Martha's delivery. The word order in the translation has been arranged so that the marking of effects falls on the same words in the English as in the Lushootseed. Later, a comparison of passages from the second telling will reveal the relative paucity of vocal effects in that version. I have used the following symbols:

/	pause (as, sentence final)	—	lengthening	→	no pause
//	longer pause	✓	emphasis	---	soft voice
)	hesitation (as for breath or to point an appositive)	~~~~	high voice	+++	rapid
		~~~~	rising rhythm (anapaestic)	↑ ↓	pitch variation

1. They were living there, Crow and her brother, Raven.//
2. Well then) lots of food belonged to Crow//
3. Lots of food: chum, dried, salmon, dried.//
4. He was in a state, Raven, her brother, /
5. He was in a state, this Raven: How can he gobble away from his sister her food? /
- 7-8. For very) disreputable is this Raven, greedy.//
9. A big eater. /
- 10-11. He is in a state about her food// and he doesn't know →  
what he can do to get this food of his sister's. →
- 12-13. Lots of food: dry chum is what they call that salmon.//

1. ʔəsʔistaʔb tsiʔit kaʔkaʔ ʔi tiʔit ʔaʔš, qawqs.
2. huy gʷəl qah tiʔit sʔəʔəd ʔə tsiʔit kaʔkaʔ.
3. qah tiʔit sʔəʔəds:  
sʔuʔəbs ʔə(s)šab,  
sʔuladxʷ ʔə(s)šab.
4. huy gʷəl ʔəsxʷəʔiləxʷ say tiʔəʔ qawqs, ʔalšs.
5. ʔəsxʷəʔiləxʷ say tiʔəʔ qawqs.
6. ʔəščal kʷi gʷədəxʷləkʷdxʷyids tsiʔəʔ ʔalšs ʔə tiʔəʔ sʔəʔəds.
7. huy hikʷ ʔəščəp tiʔəʔ qawqs.
8. ʔəščəqʷ.
9. hikʷ dxʷsʔəʔəd.
10. [ʔəs]hiqʷəbyid tsiʔəʔ ʔalšs ʔə tiʔit sʔəʔəds.
11. gʷəl xʷiʔəxʷ gʷəšəshaydxʷs ʔəščaləs kʷi ʔudəxʷhuydxʷs, kʷi gʷədəxʷləkʷdxʷs  
tiʔit sʔəʔəʔəd ʔə tsiʔəʔ ʔalšs.
12. qah tiʔit sʔəʔəds.
13. sʔuʔəb tiʔit səscuucəbs tiʔəʔ sʔuladxʷ. (1)

The orderliness of the storytelling is audible even to beginning students who cannot follow what is being said. And its orderliness functions as a ground against which may be perceived the tensions between lexical patterns and intonation contours created when these do not line up exactly. (For example the qah [lots] in line 3 is drawn out and comes after a sentence-final pause; the qah in line 12, in a parallel ring of the figure, receives emphasis in the form of a distinct rising and falling intonation, but there is no pause before it to mark its position as the beginning of the closing ring. Still, both qah's receive emphasis [lengthening for the first, rising and falling "punch" for the second] and so echo each other plainly, positioning themselves audibly as structural equivalents.)

The story continues with another circular figure:

14. So, he made this sickness, something to make her sick, for his sister./
15. After all, he was an Indian doctor, was Raven.//
16. He made for her something to make her sick, for his sister. →
- 16-17. And so she became sick now, this Crow./
- 18-19. She became sick now, Crow, and then was groaning./
20. She didn't know how she was going to survive.//
14. huy, huyudəxʷ tiʔit sʔəʔə dəxʷxəʔə ʔə tsiʔəʔ ʔalšs[.]
15. huy, xʷdaʔəb tiʔəʔ qawqs.
16. huy(y)idəxʷ [ʔə kʷi dəxʷxəʔə tsiʔəʔ ʔalšs.]

17. huy, xəʔəxʷ tsiʔəʔ kaʔkaʔ.
18. xəʔəxʷ tsiʔit kaʔkaʔ.
19. gʷəl huy, ʔəgəqəxʷ.
20. xʷiʔəxʷ gʷəshaydxʷs ʔəščaləs kʷi ʔudəxʷhəliʔs.

As I have lined this section, lines 16b-20 function as a tail (2) to the circular figure telling how Raven makes his sister sick. On the tape, the echo of the xʷiʔəxʷ gʷəshaydxʷs ʔəščaləs kʷi ʔudəxʷ-- of line 20 with that in line 11 is plainly audible. Just as Raven did not know how (he was to get at the food), so now Crow does not know how (she will survive). The situation at the beginning of the story (Raven perplexed, Crow happy) has now changed. In the patterning of these first twenty lines of the story there sounds the familiar cadence of the narrator's control of our entrance into the world of the story.

In the next section, however, Martha largely relinquishes rhetorically figured summary for dramatic narration. She acts out a sequence of scenes and leaves us to draw our own conclusions -- guided this time by the echoes of certain repeated single words: echoes within the passage and echoes reaching back to the introductory section.

Crow is told by her brother that she is going to continue to be sick until he, as an Indian doctor, works on her. He calls her by her name, xənimulicəʔ, like a parent admonishing a child. His address to her is framed as a circular figure with at its core Martha's interruption explaining that xənimulicəʔ is Crow's real name, the core itself figured as a chiasmus.

Crow tells him:

<p>You <u>should take pity on me,</u> → since I have gotten sick./</p>	<p>xəb čəxʷ ʔuʔušəbic huy čəd ʔuxəʔ./</p>
<p>You <u>should take pity on me and</u> work on me.//</p>	<p>xəb čəxʷ ʔuʔušəbic čəxʷ a bəʔac.//</p>

Martha then tells step by step how Raven sets to work and shows us how he sings his doctoring song:

ʔudxʷsləkʷdxʷyitəbəb dʔəʔ tsi xənimulicəʔ ʔə kʷi sʔuʔuməs, čəluʔuməs  
(It seems that someone wants to gobble away from xənimulicəʔ her dried chum, her dried salmon.)

And after the work is finished, he tells her what has been revealed to him: "People" want to gobble away her food, her dried chum; that is why she is sick. Only if she sings the song her spiritual helper has given her will she live. Crow's gullibility (if Raven were a different person, we would call it her good faith) is demonstrated, almost caricatured, in her parallel speeches before and after being "doctored." Her unquestioning belief in the way things should be -- a doctor should help people, a patient should follow what the Spirit reveals -- sounds in the repeated word xəb (translated here as "should"), which is given more and more a rising, drawn-out inflexion each time Crow says it. Martha gives just enough information about Raven's preparations for doctoring to invest his antics with an authenticity that is blown when he cannot resist including the name of his favorite food both in the doctoring song and in the "diagnosis," which come, we must see, not from the Spirit, but from his own belly.

The chum spawn at Tulalip in late November or early December and then there follows a period of about three months when no more fish come. The story is taking place during this period. As Martha depicts it, Raven's worry about getting his sister's fish is based on his own greedy nature, not on a fear of starvation. But when the notion that "people" are interested in Crow's fish is introduced -- even as a blind for Raven's scheme -- there comes also an acknowledgment between storyteller and audience that people are anxious at this time every year about whether their own dried fish will see them through; so that in raising the spectre of anxious, possibly envious neighbors, Raven is playing on a truth.

Crow tells him:

<p>I <u>should</u> sing my song → because I want to get myself well//</p> <p>I <u>should</u>./</p> <p>You invite the <u>people</u>./ And they can come.)</p>	<p>ḵub čəd ʔupigʷəd yəxi čəd huy ʔəxʰəliʔdubutəb.//</p> <p>ḵub čəd./</p> <p>ʔugʷihid čəxʰ ti ʔaciʔtalbixʷ.// gʷəl gʷəʔəxʰ əlgʷəʔ.</p>
----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

We notice that Crow is not scandalized at the thought of people's possible interest in her food. Part of what she will do to overcome her sickness is to spread the table for them. The word "pigʷəd" can refer to singing one's song as well as to the gathering of people at the winter ceremonies. Thus it is that Crow's decision to sing for her own well-being involves also her spreading the table for the well-being of others. It is not beyond possibility here that the sharing of food at this time of year acts to calm the community's anxiety about scarcity. We know from traditional teachings that one of the things in Crow's collection of what "should be" is that she incurs a responsibility to share as she gathers and puts by her fish, for the ability to get food is a gift of the spirit. Can it be the tug between the duty to share and the wish to provide for one's own needs that Raven is manipulating in his sister? It is often said that the food served at a gathering is a blessing, that in eating you are blessed: so that when Crow now says to Raven, "You invite the people and they can come," she is entrusting him with more than logistics.

People hearing the story laugh at Raven's reply. He says, "I'm not going to invite them. I'll just take the food you are going to feed them and give it to them; I'll just run around with it and put it out for the people." But Crow just answers with her slow, rising, "ḵub," "That should be all right." The words sʰuʔb (dried chum) and ḵub (which I have translated as "should") do all the work in this passage that authorial commentary would do in a European story; and their approximate rhyme counterpoints their relation as expressions of two very different temperaments.

It is not necessary to suppose that Crow is stupid because she does not pick up on the possibility for disaster in Raven's suggestion. Her "ḵub" seems to me to indicate that her mind is on her illness and on what she has to do to get well, on the way things should be. Raven's speech is a little ambiguous, anyway. When he says of the food that he will "put it out," he uses the word "(ʔulə)ʔahəd," which simply means to put something somewhere. In a footnote to the text in the *Lushootseed Reader*, Thom Hess remarks, "A more precise wording would have been ʔuləpaɣyid [to distribute to someone]"; and indeed this is the word Martha uses when speaking about what Raven does later in the story. ʔahəd, unlike paɣyid, is not something you do for someone's benefit (it does not have the -yi- infix which would make it a benefactive), and yet Raven treats it as if it were a benefactive, expressing the recipient of the food as the direct complement and treating the food as an oblique. Perhaps Raven has chosen this fuzzy word and given it a syntactic disguise in order to conceal from Crow just what it is that he is going to do. His speech after

"I'm not going to invite them" is rushed by us very fast and on a single-level intonation.

The last part of the story begins with Crow's singing her song, goes on to describe how Raven distributes (paɣəd) the food, and ends with a scene focalized by Crow in which she comes to understand what has happened while she was singing.

Crow's song, like Raven's, is a parody (after all, they're only birds):

xʷiʔəxʷ ʔudidaʔacləp ʔə kʷi kəyəkahaʔ  
Don't you folks be calling me "Crow--ee--oh"

ḵʷulʰəxʷ dxʷhiʔidaʔ kʷi ʔudidaʔaclayiyəp  
Just you folks now call me dxʷhiʔidaʔ.

ḵəw ḵəw, ḵəw . . .  
Caw, caw, caw . . .

The identity of one's spiritual partner is never disclosed in public, so we would never hear the name of a spirit power in a song. In this sense, then, the song reminds us of Crow's canoe song in "Crow and Her Seagull Slaves" -- not only is Crow doing the thing she is not supposed to do, but she is telling the world about it. And yet, her canoe goes along under some kind of power, without being paddled. Here, in the story we are considering, Crow has lots of food, just as someone who really had dxʷhiidaʔ for a partner would. Elders at Tulalip and Swinomish, commenting on the recent carving of a canoe, stress the fact that the proper proportions of the canoe and the influence of its shape on the action of the water as it affects the canoe's speed and buoyancy were all known to ancestors through the gift of the spirit, without any need for blueprint or slide rule. This ancestral technology is what Crow rides in with her seagull slaves. We might ask of Crow's song about dxʷhiidaʔ whether it conceals a like truth.

While she is singing, Raven carries out his planned abduction of the food. This part of the story is spoken very quickly, with a minimum of intonation effects and relying on a number of parallel elements to reproduce the repeated back-and-forth of Raven's trips with the food. Many statements are "closed" with a falling cadence, while Martha goes on to the next without pause; sometimes when there are pauses, there is no falling cadence, but a hanging or rising intonation.

- 68. Meanwhile, Raven distributed the food.//
- 69. He was running around with the food.)
- 70. Again and again he took away each new serving./
- 71. A particular thought came to his mind:/
- 72. He just went somewhere and was eating as he went.
- 73. He just went somewhere and was eating as he went. //
- 74. A particular thought came to his mind: the ongoing spigʷəd of his sister.//
- 75-76. Again he went after another serving, and it got used up, the food belonging to Crow. →  
+ + + + +
- 77. And it just was gobbled up by Raven, this food of his sister/ the reason why he made for her this  
+ + + + +

sickness/

- 68. hay, paqatəbčəxʷ ʔə tiʔəʔ qawqs tiʔəʔ sʔəʔəd.
- 69. saxʷsaxʷəbtxʷəxʷ tiʔit sʔəʔəd.
- 70. bələʔuχʷtxʷ tiʔit dəčəxʷ sbəč.
- 71. ʔaliləxʷ kʷi cədit ʔəčs.
- 72. xʷulʷ ləčədil gʷəl lələkʷəd.
- 73. xʷulʷ ləčədil gʷəl lələkʷəd.
- 74. ʔaliləxʷ tiʔit ʔəčs tiʔit spigʷədəxʷ ʔə tsiʔəʔ ʔalšs.
- 75. bəʔuχʷc tiʔit ʔitkʷəlq.
- 76. gʷəl bəkʷil tiʔit tusʔəʔəd ʔə tsiʔəʔ kəʔkəʔ.
- 77. gʷəʔ tuχʷ ʔəxʷsləkʷdubəb ʔə tiʔəʔ qawqs tiʔəʔ sʔəʔəd ʔə tsiʔəʔ ʔalšs, tiʔəʔ dəxʷhuy(y)ids ʔə tiʔəʔ sʔəʔ.

As we might expect, this is the part of the story, a set piece like the visits of each suitor in "Crow and Her Seagull Slaves," that is most similar in each telling. The family and community members who came to help Crow spread the table are not visible to Raven; they are just hands serving food. Yet we may wonder what they thought about his helping in the kitchen. Perhaps to address this question, in the second telling, Martha says he had put himself in charge of the food. Still, as an Indian doctor, he might well have been expected to be singing and drumming for his sister. It may be that, having used his power to injure her, he does not want to be around where her sq̄lalitut is. We know that in his own mind, whatever harm he has done her is only a side-effect of his wish to cheat her, and perhaps this may explain what is meant in the sentence in which I have been unable to decide how to translate the word pigʷəd, which can mean either a power song or a winter gathering. As he runs back and forth stealing and eating the food, is he thinking of her song or of the gathering (and the kitchen)? Since it is a thought that occurs to him, I imagine he thinks about her singing, about the fact that she will be all right. Perhaps that thought even whets his appetite. After all, the food has been on his mind all along.

At this point, Crow, having sung and danced until her sq̄lalitut is satisfied, is assisted to resume her seat. She comes back to consciousness of her surroundings and looks around. Maybe she does not remember what she agreed to in her previous distress: she is looking for the spread table, but sees none. And then, in her renewed clarity of mind, the truth comes to her: not only the truth about her brother's behavior, but also the more complicated truth of her situation. This scene is told from Crow's point of view; only at this point in the story do we know what she is thinking, whereas we have known all along much of what has been on Raven's mind.

- 78-79. And so, it comes to an end, the song of x̄nimulicəʔ, and so
- 79-80. she sits down, she is better)
- 81. And so, where is the food? →
- 82. No food./
- 83-84. So she knew now, x̄nimulicəʔ, that it was not really true that he had brought it to the people; it had just been eaten by Raven./

- 84. He was her brother, Raven./ [Someone (Levi? Leon?) says, "Hm."]
- 84. Her ʔalš, Raven./
- 85-86. And so, she was troubled in her mind, this Crow, for she still had gotten well, this pitiable Crow/
- 86. This Crow who was worthy of pity./
- 87. Her brother, this Raven, was the cause of everything.-[Martha begins to laugh.]
- 88. That's the end, that's it. [She laughs.]
- 78. hay, huy tə spigʷəd ʔə tsi x̄nimulicəʔ.
- 79. hay, gʷədil.
- 80. x̄ubil.
- 81. hay, čad tiʔəʔ sʔəʔəd.
- 82. xʷiʔ.
- 83. haydubəxʷ ʔə tsiʔəʔ x̄nimulicəʔ tiʔit sxʷiʔs əwə gʷəsutəts ʔə tiʔit suʔəʔtxʷs tiʔəʔ ʔacitʔalbiχʷ.
- 84. xʷulʷəxʷ ʔuləkʷtəb ʔə tiʔəʔ qawqs, ʔalšs tiʔəʔ [qawqs,] [brother] tiʔəʔ qawqs.
- 85. hay, xəʔəxʷəʔtəč tiʔəʔ kəʔkəʔ.
- 86. tuχʷ huy ʔuhəliʔil tsiʔit sʔušəbəbdxʷ kəʔkəʔ, tsiʔəʔ kəʔkəʔ sʔušəbəbdxʷ.
- 87. ʔalšs tiʔəʔ qawqs dəxʷtəšs ʔəh.
- 88. diʔ shuys, diʔ. (3)

An elder commenting on another telling of this story said that even though Crow had been tricked by her brother, she still had been able to make use of her own capacities to understand. Martha makes no pause after the statement that Crow was troubled in mind; acoustically, she links it with the following statement that Crow is now well. It is not (or not only) the previous topic, her brother's making away with the food, that causes her distress. The reiteration at the end of the story of the word sʔušəbəbdxʷ ("pitiable") -- a word whose meanings Martha explores over and over again in her stories -- reminds us of Crow's earlier request to Raven: x̄ub čəxʷ ʔuʔušəbic čxʷa bəʔac (You should take pity on me and doctor me). By the end of the story, then, sʔušəbəbdxʷ also means one who has been taken pity on -- abused -- by Raven. Through this word as through a funnel are brought together several concerns.

In one of the quotations at the head of this paper, Levi-Strauss raises the question of the stability of oral tradition. He refers of course not to the stability of individual tellings, but of underlying, not directly articulated structures, the collection and relation of images and concepts that remain central to a narrative or ritual, in his opinion, no matter how its surface "contents" may change. Theorists such as Jack Goody, however, hold that their research has shown them that as oral traditions persist, they collect both structural elements and surface contents at their "new edge," while the principal of homeostasis operates to drop away old structures and contents at the "old edge." In oral traditions that remain unrecorded, this change is perceptible only in particulars and only to the older people; but it goes on, presumably, in the same way that it goes on in literate societies, where we can look back and see what we no longer believe.

I wanted to consider Levi-Strauss' claim about stability as I looked at the two tellings of "Crow Is Sick" because it seems to me we can see a structural change between them: not that structural elements are discarded, but that a relation between them that is foregrounded in one telling may be backgrounded in another. Although, for example, Martha tells us this only in the second version, Crow is Raven's little

sister. In this first telling, Martha deals exclusively with the cross-gender relationship (brother/sister), not the age-differentiated one [sq̄a (older sibling or cousin of either gender)/suq̄w̄a? (younger)]. Perhaps this is because as a brother, Raven has the responsibility to provide food for his sister if she needs it, a relation that is material to (and upended in) this story, while his duties as an older brother include disciplining and instructing her children, a relation that does not seem to figure here. We might say in considering this story that the ?alš relationship can serve as the vehicle for concerns that are more immediately emotional, while the sq̄a/suq̄w̄a? one is more socially structured. (We should remember, however, that in another story of Martha's, "The Seal-Hunting Brothers," the perceived failure of the brothers to provide for their sister results in an attempt on their lives.) Let us say, then, that in this first telling it is personally, not publically, that Crow may feel she has been abused most seriously, despite her embarrassment about the food. But because her brother is an Indian doctor, the perversion of the relationship extends itself into another realm. We do not know how Raven has made his sister sick, though probably Martha's traditional audience would have an idea. Was what Raven made for Crow programmed to self-destruct when it heard her song? or did he know that her sq̄alalitut was strong enough to contend with his x̄w̄da?əb? The things we don't know make it impossible to gauge how dangerous his attempt on her well-being is.

The quotation from Sean Kean at the head of this paper raises the other half of the question about the stability of oral tradition, namely a concern about the distortion inevitable in the attentiveness of outsiders. Kean frames this distortion in terms of desire, but ignorance is just as influential. It seems to me that the way to deal with this distortion is to lay it bare at every turn, to express opinions, and to offer variant opinions, so that the presence of what is not understood is continuously felt.

Spiritual sickness, such as Crow experiences, is very much a matter of emotions; becoming a dancer involves learning to control strong feelings; and relationships are constructed of emotions. When Crow realizes that her brother has been instrumental in her getting sick as in her getting well, it is in the context not only of her family life, but of her life as a dancer (which involves her membership in a family of the spirit, a longhouse family). We cannot say that this first telling is "about" the implications of the misuse of x̄w̄da?əb power, or about the vicissitudes of a brother-sister relationship in which the sister overshadows the brother, or about the influence on individuals of a community's anxiety about starvation during a time of hardship -- for these concerns are inseparably mixed, and the mix is unstable.

### III

Two striking differences between the first and second tellings of "Crow Is Sick" are that Martha begins the second telling *in medias res* with an ironic portrait of Raven that can be appreciated only by those who already know the story, and that her delivery is relatively devoid of expressive effects. How might we begin thinking about these differences?

In the 1960's, when Thom Hess worked with her, Martha Lamont was in her eighties. At the beginning of the recording, Martha's voice is hoarse in comparison to the way it sounded ten years earlier. For much of the second telling, she is declaiming, making an effort to project sound. In other stories, including ones from her work with Metcalf in the 1950's, she uses this fast, declamatory style -- but only in parts of the story. In assessing its use in the Hess recording, we must consider the possibility that she has to use her breath in a way that will compensate for her hoarseness and maintain a steady flow of sound.

We also notice that in the telling to Hess Martha is more likely to jump from point to point, suppressing the links between ideas. I have heard other storytellers at Tulalip who are now in their eighties do the same thing. As I have thought about this, it has occurred to me that it happens because the older people do not get around as much as they used to and so depend on regular visitors for their audience. In Martha's case, her dependence on visitors was extreme, because when Thom worked with her she was bedridden. In talking always to the same people a storyteller may tell only the parts of the story each time

that expresses what she wants to tell it again now. In addition, when Martha worked with Thom, she knew that her husband would be going over the tapes and transcriptions with him, making the rough places smooth. Under these circumstances, perhaps she did not feel a need to adapt the story for the needs of a newcomer. Certainly we can say of this second telling that it is different from the first in the ways a story told to one who has heard it before is different from a story told to a novice listener.

We know that there must have been for Martha and Levi a great difference between working with Thom Hess and with Leon Metcalf. The two men with tape recorders had very different approaches to the work, and one recording of Metcalf's, made when he was eliciting vocabulary, is memorable in this regard. The recording is full of laughter and joking, and yet also, to my ear, of something that does not seem like fun. Leon barks out the English word and Martha and Levi rush to see who can answer first, sometimes stepping on each other's lines and laughing. Leon, who feels he must repeat each word after them, steps on their lines as often as not. Then he barks out another word, for all the world like a schoolmaster at a spelling bee, or perhaps like a drill sergeant. No professional fieldworker would behave this way, but Leon was not a professional. He was at Tulalip because of his feelings for the Snohomish people, to whom he felt he owed a personal debt and because of his Christian faith. He may have known Levi when they both worked in the logging industry at Tulalip as young men, and coming back to the reservation with his tape recorder fifty years later was greeted as "son" by a man who had befriended him in the early days (Miller). These personal feelings coexisted in Leon with other attitudes more typical of his class, generation and race about the poor and the dark-skinned. I cannot help wondering how this mix came across in the work with Martha and Levi. Even though we cannot know, it is nonetheless something of which we must take account.

### IV

Martha begins the second telling by letting us know in the opening five lines that Crow is sick. there follows a section framed by statements that Raven is very worried about her. this is the first:

6. He was worried about his sister, Raven was.
  7. He was worried about his sister, about how she could get well, as she was sick.
  8. She was not getting better.
  9. And so he worried now, this Raven.
6. ?ux̄w̄ax̄w̄aq̄w̄bitəbəx̄w̄ ?ə ti?ə? ?alšs, qaw̄qs.
  7. [x̄w̄ax̄w̄aq̄w̄bidəx̄w̄] tsi?ə? ?alšs dx̄w̄al k̄w̄i ḡw̄ədəx̄w̄həli?ils ?ux̄əł.
  8. x̄w̄i? k̄w̄i ḡw̄əsuχ̄ubils.
  9. huy ḡw̄əl, x̄w̄ax̄w̄aq̄w̄əx̄w̄ ti?ə? qaw̄qs

No reason is given for Crow's illness; if you do not know the story, you will think Raven's anxiety honest. Martha uses here a neutral word for how Raven feels, x̄w̄ax̄w̄aq̄w̄bid, to be concerned about someone. In the first telling, she spoke very differently. She began with x̄w̄əłil say (lines 3 and 4), which implies a failure of self-control ("in a state") and then, after categorizing him as a greedy eater, intensifies her description to ?əshiq̄w̄əbid, which has the sense of "fixated on" (including "infatuated with"). x̄w̄ax̄w̄aq̄w̄bid, then, in this second telling, conceals more than it reveals.

At this point, the community -- not given a speaking role in the first telling -- intervenes, telling Raven: "You should (χ̄ub čəx̄w̄) figure out something for your sister; after all, you are supposed to be knowledgeable (χ̄əł ti ?əsḡw̄əhaydx̄w̄, "as if knowing")." It is they, not Crow, who sound the note here of how things should be; and Raven's powers are referred to in a way that is either discreet (people say about others, but not to them, that they are x̄w̄da?əb), or doubtful (χ̄əł ti means "as if"), or critical (why has he not thought of this already?). As constructed by the community, this is a more complex assessment of

Raven than Martha's authorial comment in the first telling, huy, x^wdaʔəb tiʔəʔ qawqs (After all, Raven was an Indian doctor).

Raven sings his song, which is the same in the two versions, but first he tells Crow that those responsible for her illness are not just unidentified "people," but her very own neighbors (di-ti-t adq^wuʔaxad) -- perhaps the same ones who have just been talking to him. As his song ends, Martha repeats the statement that Raven is worried (x^wax^wadq^wax^w) about his sister, who is ill. The neighbors, however, intervene, telling Raven: "Just say that xanimulicaʔ needs to sing her song (xubax^w ʔuʔiltəb), because that's obviously why she is sick." They are evidently alive to Raven's unreliability, but they have no idea that he may have made her sick. And indeed, in this second telling, nothing is said to indicate whether he has.

As Crow begins to sing, there is a pause. She needs to give instructions to her household: "You folks just give the food away (xub ələp ʔuʔabyid). The people will be invited by Raven, and it will be okay if they eat (xub tuʔətəd) right where they are." Now Raven gives his speech saying he will not invite people, but just run around with the food, and Crow replies, "Well, maybe that will be all right (xub)." This time, Martha tells us about Crow's state of mind: "She said this because she thought Raven was honest." There is a problem in Crow's statement that it will be all right if people eat right where they are. What does she mean? Is she thinking of just having a serving table and letting people carry their plates back to their seats, as is sometimes done at small gatherings? Guided by the parallel line in the first telling, Thom Hess comments, "This line is really what Raven suggests, not what Crow recommends. Therefore, on paper it has been placed as part of Raven's words. On tape, however, it sounds like what Crow is telling her people. Clearly Mrs. Lamont is anticipating what Raven is going to recommend." It does indeed sound on the tape as if these are Crow's words. It occurs to me to wonder whether just as Raven's imprecise ʔahəd put out) in the first telling may have led Crow to agree to something she does not fully take in, so Crow's wording of her directions in the second telling give Raven an opportunity to misdirect the feeding of the people. It is interesting that precisely at the same point in both stories there occurs the same kind of puzzle.

The narrative of Raven's malfeasance with the food is presented in a split-frame figure: the narrative begins, then stops while something else is told about, then takes up again. Like this part of the story in the first telling, the delivery is high-voice and staccato, using parallel phrases to imitate Raven's rushing back and forth. One difference is that Raven gives the order for the serving to begin. People are spoken of as dishing up (ʔəscilʔcil). Here we realize that the food that Raven is making off with is not just his sister's fish; people who come to such gatherings usually bring food of their own to contribute to the table. It is not only his sister he is stealing from now. At this point Martha brings in words we have heard before:

- 62-63. Really disreputable was this Crow, greedy.  
 64. Bad in a big way.  
 65. A big eater.
62. huy, cik^w ʔəscəp tiʔəʔ qawqs.  
 63. ʔəscəq^w.  
 64. hik^w saʔ.  
 65. hik^w dx^wsʔətəd.

-- and she adds, "And this is how he made his sister pitiable (sʔuʔəbəbdx^w) in regard to her feeding the people.

As in the first narrative, when it is discovered that there is no food, Martha develops a little real-time scene. This time, however, it is not a dazed Crow who is looking around, it is the community: "What's the matter with xanimulicaʔ? What's going on? Is she feeding the people? No?" It is now that Crow sees her brother in action, and the split frame closes with a description, imitated in the rhythm of the words, of his

gong back and forth with stolen platesful.

As the story ends, the result of Raven's misbehavior is not Crow's sadness, but the sadness of the people as they come to understand what has happened. Raven gets a name in the community that refers to his misdeeds (ʔax^wk^wəlxqs, wide-open nostrils). Martha comments that he just ruined the feast given by his pitiable (ʔuʔəbəbdx^w) sister, Crow, or xanimulicaʔ, as her name was when she was sick.

Is this second telling the same mixture as before? Or is it a story with a fundamentally different outlook, a different structure, than the first?

#### Notes

1. The Lushootseed text is from Hess 1998 and retains his lineation and spacing. I have omitted the false starts he records and included without marking them his emendations. Thus, any material in square brackets in the Lushootseed text in this paper are my own emendations and my own responsibility.
2. Circular and concentric figures may have extra lines at the close of the outer ring. These lines may constitute a cap, a summary or punch-line to the figure, or a tail, which leads from the figure toward what follows in the story. For a fuller explanation, see the "Annotator's introduction" in Bierwert, ed.
3. In the English for line 83 I have added the initial "so" in order to reflect the echo of the first syllable of the first word in the Lushootseed (haydubax^w) with the initial "hay" of lines 78, 79 and 81. All have the same quite noticeable inflection.

#### References

- Bierwert, Crisca, ed. 1996. Lushootseed Texts: An Introduction to Puget Salish Narrative Aesthetics. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.
- Hess, Thom. 1998. Lushootseed Reader with Intermediate Grammar, Volume II: Four Stories from Martha Lamont. University of Montana Publications in Linguistics, no. 14. Missoula: The University of Montana and the Tulalip Tribes.
- Langen, Toby C.S. 1996. "Nostalgia and Ambiguity in Martha Lamont's "Crow and Her Seagull Slaves." Pp. 87-105 in Memory and Cultural Politics: New Approaches to American Ethnic Literatures, ed. Amritjit Singh, Joseph T. Skerrett, Jr., and Robert E. Hogan. Boston: Northeastern Universities Press.
- Miller, Jay. 1995. Interview with Leon Metcalf. In siastanu: The Wisdom of a Tulalip Elder, ed. Vu Hilbert. Seattle: Lushootseed Research.