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Chapter 3

What Ethnographies Leave Out

In 1927 Margaret Mead prepared to write her second book on Samoa, *Social Organization of Manu'a* (published in 1930). Having completed *Coming of Age in Samoa* (scheduled to appear in 1928), which aimed at a popular audience, she now wanted to write a “monograph” to establish her place among “scholars.” Before beginning, she read a handful of what we now call “classic” ethnographies. “I gathered together a pile of the famous monographs of the period—Rivers’ *The Todas* (1906), Malinowski’s *Argonauts of the Western Pacific* (1922), [John] Roscoe’s *The Baganda* (1911), and [George] Grinnell’s *The Cheyenne* (1923)—and studied their arrangements.”¹

What Mead discovered, of course, was that the “arrangements” of each work were unique; there was no all-purpose model to which her Samoan data could be affixed and a monograph result. Each author presented a mass of material, and each had designed an internal architecture upon which this mass was hung. These two properties—rich ethnographic detail and cohesive supporting framework—continue to animate the anthropological aesthetic. We applaud works that contain both, and we remain unsatisfied by those with too little ethnography (they are “thin”) or too much architecture (“too theoretical”) or those in which the architecture is inadequate to support the ethnography (“too much detail,” “not well-organized”).

Mead’s teacher Franz Boas understood how an ethnography could fail in its architectural mission and had told her, “The trouble with a monograph is that you need the end at the beginning, and this is true of every chapter—you need each chapter in all the others.”² (Good advice for all ethnographic writers upon completing their first draft!) Boas, however, misunderstood from where the desired cohesiveness arose. He imagined it

lay within “the culture” an ethnographer studied. As his student Marian Smith explained, “Masses of data may therefore be worked over with no clear knowledge of what is to be gained at the end. A new hypothesis or a new slant [the architecture] will ‘emerge’ or be ‘revealed’ or ‘suggested.’ The data will ‘speak for themselves.’ This is the procedure by which the exponent of the natural history approach prefers to arrive at a hypothesis: they do not come from systematic thought but from systematically ordered data.”³

Anthropologists long ago freed themselves from such illusions: even in 1927, Mead was looking for architectural inspiration outside her Samoan fieldnotes. We know that a range of conscious and unconscious biases molds what we see, hear, and record in field notebooks. We attempt to reveal and control these biases, not deny them.⁴ We no longer pretend that there is nothing on our desk between the fieldnotes and the ethnography we produce. We acknowledge that along with fieldnote indexes and a progression of writing outlines, we turn to the substantive and theoretical writings of others for comparison and contextualization.⁵ When I wrote my ethnography of Elmhurst-Corona, my desk was covered with (1) two boxes of fieldnotes in the center, with my index to them sitting on top; (2) a succession of constantly evolving chapter and section outlines on the left, each keyed to fieldnotes, newspaper clipping files, and cited works; (3) file drawers, maps, and piles of books and photocopied materials on the right; (4) the computer screen where the ethnography was typed off to one side; and (5) the printer where it all came out on the other.

As index categories are formulated, writing outlines refined and expanded, and sources to cite reviewed and selected, we respond to the architectural pole of our aesthetic and move away from the fieldnotes. Yet the other pole, the desire to present as much “well-hung” ethnographic detail as the architecture will bear, constantly sends us back to the notes themselves. Anthropologist Sol Tax once told a despondent M. N. Srinivas, whose Rampura fieldnotes had just been consumed in a fire, “that no social anthropologist, not even the most industrious, has ever published more than a small portion of his data.”⁶ Tax had spent six years doing fieldwork in Guatemala, and his classic ethnography, *Penny Capitalism* (1951), chock-full of ethnographic detail, plus a set of articles, came nowhere near utilizing all his fieldnotes.⁷

Still, most anthropologists, who, like Srinivas, have less extensive fieldwork experience than Tax, remain driven to “use” the fieldnotes they produce in a comprehensive ethnography. There are different ways to do

so. Some ethnographies are more through-composed and analytic, others more raw and immediate, with many fieldnote examples.⁸ All, however, will leave out most of the direct experience captured in an ethnographer's fieldnotes. Indeed, they must do so if anthropology's two-poled aesthetic is to work its power.

Yet this direct experience is not omitted without regrets. There remain certain events that do not find a place within the architecture the ethnographer creates but which nonetheless remain etched in one's headnotes. What follows are two such fieldnote accounts from my Queens research that "got lost" or severely compressed as my book's architecture took shape and prevailed. The notes bring these episodes into my consciousness with a vividness no one else can share, but they also tell stories that may be appreciated by others. The first account finds established white residents claiming their place within the new multiethnic, multiracial reality of Queens. The second describes newcomer children who were growing up amid it.

Elmhurst Baptist Church Revival

Background

Elmhurst Baptist was one of three historically white Protestant churches I studied, and I had been there six times before attending the two evening revival services described in these fieldnotes. The church was pastored by Reverend Kelly Grimsley, a white American. His wife, Susie Grimsley, was Filipina. In addition to its English language service, Elmhurst Baptist also rented space to independent Spanish, Korean, and Haitian congregations.

I took no notes during church services but jotted down brief handwritten scratch notes in the subway on my way home, then typed out a full fieldnote account the following day. Aside from correcting typographical errors, printing out abbreviations in full, and adding a few words in brackets, these and the following set of fieldnotes appear as I typed them. The section on Elmhurst Baptist Church in *The Future of Us All* (pages 338–340) draws on my fieldnotes of twenty services and events, church programs and documents, newspaper clippings, and an interview with two members.

18 May 1988

I arrived at the church at 7:30 on a rainy night, and the large banner announcing the revival looked wet but still bright and white against the

dark stone church walls. The revival services program, to be used for all three nights, was distributed by Earl and the other older white American usher.

[Reverend] Kelly [Grimsley] said that this was an experiment for the Elmhurst Baptist Church. There has never been a revival in the 15 years he has been here. We have a full house tonight: the Boy Scouts, the Koreans and the AA [Alcoholics Anonymous] are all meeting in the church.

The congregation and choir, about 45, included two dozen Filipinos of all ages; about ten white Americans, mainly older people, women and a few men, but one young white man and woman; three Hispanics, a woman and a couple, who are [all] regulars; Claudia, the West Indian woman, and her daughter later at the coffee hour; one man who may have been Korean; and two [other] black people, a woman who came for [a] short time and left, and a man who came late, perhaps a Haitian. Susie [Grimsley], Kelly's wife, was in the choir, which was mainly Filipino tonight, with Claudia.

The older Filipino man who is [the church's] financial secretary led off the service with four or five hymns. The hymns sung in this church are mainly American hymns, of the 19th and 20th century. Some are published by the Rodeheaver Company, and Fanny Crosby is a composer of one or two we sang. "Love Lifted Me" was sung tonight.⁹

Kelly asked another older Filipino man, "a friend of our church," whom I have not seen at the service before, to give the invocation prayer. When we came to the [individual] testimonies, a Filipino man sitting with the invocation leader in the front row came up to the pulpit and introduced himself as Mr. Acosta, a minister from Iloilo in the Philippines. He is visiting New York, and was told about this revival by a woman [medical] doctor, whom he pointed out in the congregation. She is a regular member, about age 50. He gave a very well presented sermon on the need to accept Christ out of love, not out of fear. It was a well-paced, measured, rehearsed presentation, with several stories interspersed in his exhortations. It was a hotter emotional tone than anything I have heard here before from Kelly, who later told me he did not know that this was going to happen.

The [volunteered] congregational prayer, which followed, opened things up. Bert [Pueblos, a Filipino member] gave a prayer, addressing "Lord" throughout, and [he] was followed by the invocation giver; [by] a young white man with a beard, who speaks with the fervor of an ex-druggie Jesus person, about how God helps him, a sinner, in his life; and by the woman doctor, who was very fervent and tight in her presentation. Three

of [these] four were Filipino, and all expressed firm religious commitments on a personal level of [a] believer's expression that is different from Kelly's more social, haven in a heartless world, liberal sermons.

Kelly said again [that] this was an experiment. "We don't know what will happen. Perhaps I am too low-key for a revival, but tonight I will start things off, tomorrow Reverend Michael Easterling of the Madison Baptist Church in Manhattan, will put us on a roll, and by Friday night we will be out of control." His sermon, as he often does, criticized the TV evangelists for their hypocrisy, and also the glitter and glitz of modern life and pursuits. His examples of the lack of witness to Christ were the Chambers murder of Jennifer Levin, the case of the East Harlem white minister accused of sexual abuse of two teenage girls, and current cases of sexual excess or accusation. He also spoke, in his liberal tone, against the oppression in South Africa, of Palestinians in Israel, and the homeless and the contrast between the rich and poor in the US. He said [that] we are divided by race, age, sex, and turf, but we are all united under God. Christ's forgiveness of our sins was a gift of God's that we don't deserve; it was given purely out of love.

The service lasted about two hours.

Afterwards, [at] the coffee hour in the church hall, I asked Kelly if he felt it unusual that the control of the service was distributed among several others (a multivocality), sort of like the early church with gifts of the spirit appearing spontaneously. He said yes to my question, and added quickly that he didn't know Reverend Acosta would speak, and that made another sermon, his [own], almost unnecessary. He also said he hoped that the Antioch [Baptist Church] choir [coming on Friday] would not tone down for a "white" audience, which black churches sometimes do. (An ironic way to see it, in that this church is not white, but half Filipino, and only a third or less white, if historically it is a white church.)

The whites here included Vic, the [church] treasurer; the woman who has lived in Elmhurst for 68 years, and a woman who looks like his sister¹⁰ and [who] sang a duet with the Filipino financial secretary from the choir; the woman from the South who lives in Rego Park, and told me she doesn't like the TV evangelists, but is from the South, "So I know revivals."

Bert Pueblos sings in the choir, as do his wife, who served coffee, his two sons, and his daughter, who sat next to Susie [Grimsley]; he introduced them all to me. Bert—Kelly thanked [him for it] in the service—made the [revival] banner in front, and the flyers [advertising the revival].

Annefiora, the organist and choir director, talked with me. She has been at the church for 17 years, and has seen big changes in the congregation. She is Italian, and taught in Latin America for three-and-a-half years, so she speaks fluent Spanish. She lives in Jamaica Estates, where many “Asians” are moving in: “Filipinos, Chinese, Koreans.” She teaches music at Newtown High School, and said they are getting a new principal; the current one is there just a few years, [and] is moving to Long Island. She said she finds the Asian students more disciplined, and harder working than the Latin Americans. I told her about the [New Immigrants and Older Americans] Project, and she asked about the music that is used at the Presbyterian and Lutheran churches [I am attending], as well as about the [ethnic] composition of the congregations.

20 May 1988

It was a warm night, unlike the last two rainy evenings. Ruby [Danta, a member of my research team]¹¹ and I arrived at 7:30, and met Kelly and Bert standing in front waiting for the Antioch [Baptist] minister and choir to arrive. I asked how things were last night—about the same number of people [they said]. Reverend Easterling had a different approach: he gave a questionnaire, which Bert showed me, about being born again and again as a concept, rather than being born again just once as some other churches practice.

Inside people were sitting and waiting, talking with each other quietly. Claudia [the West Indian Elmhurst Baptist member] had another daughter, Pat [with] her husband and little girl, who sat with Claudia. Next to her was the regular Hispanic woman. The other regular couple, [a] Puerto Rican woman and Nicaraguan man Ruby found out, came in and sat in the same pew with a younger couple, perhaps their son and his wife (this woman was introduced to Ruby as Puerto Rican). There were about 26 Filipinos tonight, including the choir members now sitting in the congregation, and dressed casually except for the older men and the woman doctor. There were about ten elderly whites, the men in ties and jackets. The younger bearded white man came with a young black woman whom I haven’t seen before.

The Hispanic woman went forward after a while, and began leading people in hymns, asking for requests. She seemed to take the initiative in

getting things started, asking [Claudia's daughter] Pat to play piano, which she did, serviceably, but not very well.

Kelly then came to the altar and began, saying that the [Antioch Baptist] choir is here, having had trouble finding the church. He was relaxed, and talked about the first two nights a bit. "It's the same crowd" here, an older white man told me in the coffee hour, and it was.

Reverend Laura Sinclair, in her mid 30s, came to the altar to join Kelly in one of the heavy wood chairs. She wore an afro, a black robe (Kelly always wears a jacket and tie), and a *kente*-styled long scarf falling on both sides of her robe. She spoke very forcefully and dramatically, with a[n American] black English accent, and very clear enunciation. Eight women in blue robes, her choir, came in and sat in the front row. One had a young child with her. Another woman, the church's youth director, also came, sitting in the congregation with her young daughter. They both came with the choir from their place, as did a young black man who came much later in the service. The pianist and choir director, a man in his mid 20s, came in with them, and asked for help in moving the piano sideways so he could face the choir standing in front, and also see the congregation.

Their first selection was a wonderful moving gospel piece, with one of the members leading the women. They all began to sway together with the gospel piano before beginning to sing. This was a rocking performance, not the watered down "white church" presentation that Kelly feared might happen. Reverend Sinclair then welcomed everyone, and said that while people meditated on the next selection she wanted them to think about the two words "'I Can.' After the choir is through, I'll be back with 'I Can.'"

[Individual] testimonies followed. An Antioch member began with a short thanks to God because her sister had hip surgery recently, and everything was all right. Another said she wanted to just thank the Lord for this day. The young white man spoke, as did a Filipino man. The testimonies, except the white man's, were fairly short tonight. An elderly white woman finished the testimonies.

The congregational prayer was at first silent, Kelly not leading off, and then Bert spoke, but that was all. The choir followed with another hymn, much slower, featuring a solo from one of the women. They all swayed in time as she sang, as did one of the young Filipino women who seemed quite enthusiastic about the music. I looked around a couple of times while they sang. The elderly whites were less expressive than the Filipinos, but no

one seemed dismayed or uninvolved in the music. Only on a few occasions did people clap with the choir, and here more Filipinos and Hispanics and Claudia clapped than did the elderly whites.

Reverend Sinclair gave “I Can,” contrasting the “I Can’t” attitude as an expression of sin. “I can’t go to church because I’m too tired [or because] I don’t have the right dress.” Later, in the coffee hour, Bert’s children were joking with his wife about how they had heard and said these things. She also mentioned South Africa, Martin Luther King, John F. Kennedy, oppression in the South, the homeless and hungry, showing the “I Can” attitude to overcome sin.

The pianist then sang “Amazing Grace” to the tune of “Danny Boy.” This is an Andrae Crouch arrangement,¹² as I asked him [about it] later in the coffee hour. He seemed surprised that I knew this, and was caught, and said that he listened a lot to Andrae Crouch, and his arrangement was similar. Several Elmhurst Baptist members told him how much they liked his solo, including several elderly white women.

The offering was collected by the white usher, the Nicaraguan man, the (Filipino) financial secretary, and Bert.

The [Antioch] choir then began singing, in a gently but firmly bouncing manner, “Come, Come to Jesus.” Reverend Sinclair said if there is anyone who has never accepted Jesus, now they could come forward, and stand with Kelly, and pledge their faith in Jesus before everyone. No one did, as the choir sang on and people began singing with them, and clapping at Reverend Sinclair’s urging. Things were [now] heating up, and exciting.

Next she said, if anyone would like to renew their faith in Jesus they could come forward, but if they wanted to make that renewal in their heart, silently, and stay where they were, that was all right too. People sang another verse or so, and then an older Filipino woman in front came forward, and Kelly put his arm around her.

She was soon followed by the Hispanic woman, and then by the Rego Park white woman from the South. A few moments later, another eight older whites all came forward, including all but three men or so of the elderly whites present. The two sisters, in Elmhurst 68 years, were among them. They all stood as we sang “Come, Come to Jesus.”

It was remarkable. A symbolic embrace of “their” church by the older whites, nearly all of them, in a changed congregation where they are the minority, and in a service led by a black Baptist minister and choir. They

were symbolically demonstrating both their claim to the church, and their right to be here, to be included, if they are no longer “the owners” they once might have been.

The coffee hour was very open and friendly. The Filipinos, though tending to sit together, and joking and talking together, also socialized with the others. Many, especially the elderly whites I thought, made an effort to speak with the [Antioch] choir members, and make them feel welcome, though they also tended to stick together, knowing each other and not the [Elmhurst Baptist] congregation members. It was a friendly atmosphere, with about 60 people. Again the service lasted two hours, and I left a bit before 10 pm.

Public School 89 International Festival

Background

In addition to this account, I observed the PS 89 International Festival in 1986 and 1988, and my description in *The Future of Us All* (pages 333–334) draws on all three sets of fieldnotes, programs, newspaper clippings, and an interview with school principal Cleonice LoSecco. The book also provides extensive coverage of Community Board 4’s district cabinet and its district manager Rose Rothschild. Hsiang-shui Chen, Steven Gregory, and Milagros Ricourt were all members of my “New Americans and Old Immigrants” research team.¹³ For this event, I took scratch notes during the outdoor activities, added to them following classroom visits, and typed this fieldnote account shortly afterward.

27 May 1987

I arrived at PS 89 at 8:45 am and met Chen and Steve, who both took pictures. Milagros arrived later, after the parade. The crowd was very much as last year, the same mix of faces among the children, and [also among] the parents, mainly women, many Hispanic and Asian—including Koreans, Chinese, and South Asians, with some Indian women in various styles of South Asian dress. There were, as last year, a few men, [and] grandparents, and this year one or two newspaper photographers, [including] one from *Newsday*.

The day was not nice, in the 50s or 60s, jacket weather, and raining very lightly through the march and dancing. The kids were lined up [to one side of the school] on Gleane Street on the sidewalk, with police barricades at the end opening on to Britton Avenue, and in the midblock. An art show was posted on the fence in front of the school facing Britton Avenue. Many of the mothers were carrying food, in bags or in dishes wrapped in foil. A police “No Parking Wednesday” printed notice was fixed to the telephone poles on Britton Avenue; hand lettered on it was “miercoles” [“Wednesday” in Spanish]. A printed program was passed out to the crowd by a student.

Traffic was still moving on Britton as the parade was about to begin. Yesterday at the district cabinet [meeting] Rose [Rothschild] had made a fuss about the marching through the street, calling it unsafe, but, I think, really being bothered about something else—perhaps conflict between her and [PS 89’s principal] “think-headed Mrs. LoSecco,” as she termed her, dating to when Rose was PTA president at PS 89. The public address system, as last year, was terrible—a large, long table piled with about six components, yet inaudible sound when announcements were made, and loud, but undistinct music for marching and dancing. Mr. Steven Klein, the parade coordinator, who last year was dressed in a tuxedo, today had on a cream colored double-breasted suit, ruffled shirt, large bow tie, and Borsolino hat. Steve, who thought he looked a lot like [his teacher, anthropologist] Stanley Diamond (he does), later talked with him. Klein said when he came to the school about seven years ago the kids just paraded through the street. He introduced the dances, which is one of the things he teaches in PS 89.

At 9 am the school color guard came to the middle of the cleared space on Gleane Street next to the school. A Hispanic girl carried the American flag; she was dressed in blue and purple, the western dress from the OKLAHOMA production group who later did the Virginia Reel. Behind her were three school flags carried by: a Hispanic boy with white shirt and pants, vest, and straw cowboy hat, also in the OKLAHOMA group; a black boy in the outfit of the [French] minuet dancers; and a black girl in a long dress. After a recorded “Star Spangled Banner” was played, without any singing, the color guard returned to the street and the school building, and the parade began.

The first group was boys in black pants, white shirts, white lace ties, and paper cocked hats, something like pirate hats. The girls wore long dresses. A teacher of Class 4–15 told me this group would dance the minuet; the

costumes were “like the court of Louis XIV or XV.” The first minuet dance class carried crayoned paper flags, of their own countries presumably. The next class had yellow paper sashes with their home countries written, crossing their chests. These included: Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, El Salvador, Colombia, Venezuela, Bolivia, Mexico, Nicaragua, Peru, Guyana, India, China, Philippines, Ecuador, Korea, America, Laos, New Orleans, Guatemala, Honduras, Viet Nam, Italy, Cuba, Nepal, Costa Rica. One of these classes had banners: “The International Festival PS 89”; “PS 89 Bilingual Class 5-401,” a Spanish language class.

As they marched out, they went right into the street, with help from the [110th Precinct] Police. Britton Avenue had been cleared of traffic; a police van blocked the Gleane Street intersection; and a police scooter, followed by a school car with p.a. system playing march music, led off the parade down Britton. It followed the same route, pretty much, as last year: turning north on Layton, coming back down Petitt, and returning on Ithaca to Britton, where the kids went back into the school on the Hampton Street side.

Following the minuet classes, 5-411 [and] 5-401, came class 403 with several paper signs: “Computers”; “Bits and Bytes”; “We Are the World”; “Languages.” Another class had a paper collage of pictures, including a large one of astronaut Sally Ride, with the message: “We Are the Future.”

Class 5-409 were wearing the western outfits. One of the kids said they were for a school production of OKLAHOMA, and they would do a dance from that. This class had [a] banner with a score of paper flags on it. They also had a sign with a world globe and the message lettered: “Friendship.”

Class 4-405 were dressed in white, with couples of boys and girls carrying flower arches about three feet across. The kids told me this was for a Filipino dance they would do. They had been rehearsing since April, a boy said. The teacher looked Filipina; I remember that her class did a Filipino stick dance last year. Actually, none of the dances or costumes from last year were repeated this year; overall the costumes were more imaginative, with more classes dressed uniformly in costumes oriented to the dance they performed. Classes with students all in their own [various] national dress were fewer this year; perhaps half or more last year, but less than half this year.

The kids in a class dressed in blue with orange polka dot costumes—long dresses of this material for the girls—told me they would do “a Spanish dance.” Another class was led by a hand-colored map of the 48 US

states, with the legend: "This land is made for you and me." These kids were going to do a Swiss dance; the boys had shorts and colored suspenders.

A class in [various] home country dress, carrying handmade flags, had a banner reading: "Visit the World—Come to PS89." Another, dressed similarly, had a "Peace—Goodwill" banner. Class 2-103 banner: "Bienvenidos—Welcome." Class 2-102: "Different People from Different Countries." More paper flags were carried by the first and second grades that finished off the parade.

I saw the Korean bilingual class again, with the same teacher as last year, with most of the kids in Korean dress. I also saw a dozen or so Chinese kids, the girls in Chinese [satin] tops and pants. I talked to the teacher who said this was a bilingual first grade, just started at PS 89 in September 1986. Her children were from Hong Kong, Taiwan, and mainland China, she said, and speak Cantonese, Taiwanese, and Mandarin.

Class 1-17 banner: "We've Got the Spirit." Class 1-16: "We Are the Children of the Rainbow," wearing [various] home country dress.

A class in Greek costume, with boys wearing white skirts and white stockings (many of them; some wearing pants under the skirts) were in the middle of the march, as I had walked up to Petitt to join up there. One girl said: "We're doing a Greece dance" (sic) when [I] asked her what the costume was. Another class had a banner reading: "Celebrate our Nations," with many flags on it.

A few people along the way watched the parade. The cool and rainy-damp weather accounted for fewer watching than last year no doubt. The Little Friends preschool [children] at Ithaca and Britton were out on their front steps watching. As the parade came back into the school, the police directed traffic at the Hampton-Britton intersection, stopping cars for kids to pass, then halting the parade for the cars to continue up Hampton toward Roosevelt.

As I returned to the Gleane Street side of the school for the dances, I met Rose Rothschild. She was in a bad mood about the children having marched in the street, not on the sidewalk as she had stated they would yesterday [at the district cabinet meeting]. She said she would write "the commissioner" to complain that the 110th Precinct had allowed this to happen. She said they did not have a parade permit; she wouldn't give them one. "I'll give [outspoken Elmhurst civic activist] Ron Laney a permit, for spite, and see what they do."

As I arrived the dances had begun. (See program for numbers and classes.)

1. Minuet (France), had the same amazing mix of faces—Asian, Hispanic, fewer white, a few black—as last year. As they finished, a mother said, “Que lindo!” [“How cute!” in Spanish]. They then left around the corner to enter PS 89 through the Britton Street front entrance. The p.a. system was lousy.
2. Virginia Reel (U.S.A.). The girls wore long dresses with bonnets or kerchiefs, and the boys white shirts and pants, colored vests, and straw cowboy hats. At Mr. Klein’s urging, people began clapping . . . 1, 2, 1, 2. The crowd was a couple of hundred, mainly mothers, with Asian and Hispanic women predominating by far.
3. Flower Dance (Philippines).
4. Flamenco (Spain). The girls wore long, ankle length skirts, of a blue material with orange polka dots. The boys wore black pants, white shirts, and polka dot cloth sashes around their waists. The kids seemed quite well rehearsed, and one could hear the spirited foot-tapping on the streets of the flamenco rhythms.
5. Swedish Schottische (Sweden). Boys in white short pants, with dark print colored suspenders; girls in white blouses, blue skirts, and white aprons. European peasantry looking costumes.
6. Jiffy Mixer (U.S.A.). Boys and girls were all dressed in white, with colored elbow bands, waist sashes, and (for some) bow ties for the boys. Girls in two classes wore headbands with three small feathers over their foreheads; the others had spangly red headbands. One class had blue pants and skirts instead of white like the other two.
7. Jingo Lo Ba (African). This was the biggest hit of the day, with wildly enthusiastic applause and shouts from the audience. This was Mrs. Montgomery’s second grade class; she is black, and last year did a Jamaican dance. The girls were dressed in black leotards, with tiger skin cloth miniskirt and bra-top cloth wrapper; the boys in Hausa-style over shirts and black pants. The kids danced enthusiastically, shaking their hair around, and moving their arms up and down. Mrs. Montgomery looked like a West African woman, with a blouse top and waist tie of the same cloth as the kids, black skirt, and nicely tied head cloth. The kids looked mainly Indian and East

Asian, with a few Hispanics. I noticed no white or black kids, but Chen saw one black kid.

8. Children's Polka (Germany). Several kids were wearing their coats, in the cold, overcast weather. The rain had stopped but the feeling was still damp. The crowd was the same size as last year. There were many cameras, including Ellen Young, the unsuccessful [Chinese] School Board [24] candidate in 1986, who had a second grade child in PS 89; also several videocams, including one for the school, set up next to Mr. Klein's p.a. table.
9. Tamborine and Spring Dance (China). This was the Chinese bilingual first grade class. Nine girls, each with two ring-hoops with bells, were dressed in Chinese-style shirt and pants. Ten boys with wrist bells, dressed in short pants and running shoes, waited on the side as the girls danced. When they finished, four of the girls took off their costumes, shook out their pony tails, had red paper carnations put in their hair, and joined the ten boys. While they danced, the other girls stood on the sideline with the teacher who was directing the boys and girls, and they mouthed the words to the recorded song.
10. Dei Leider Stompf (Switzerland). The girls wore white blouses, blue skirts, and white aprons; the boys white short pants, blue suspenders, and bow ties. Like their costumes, their dance was very similar to 5, the Swedish dance.
11. Miserlou (Greece). Boys and girls wore white skirts, though some boys had pants on underneath, while others wore the white stockings of the Greek outfit. The girls wore several paper flowers in headbands. The music was "Never on Sunday." Two of the teachers directing the classes in this dance were black.
12. Two long chorus lines of three classes stretched up and down the entire dance area, with six lead dancers in front; they danced quite well, while many in the two lines barely made it. They all wore black pants, white tops and gloves, white socks, cardboard bow tie and three shirt-button bibs, gold or silver spangled top hats, and carried black white-tipped canes. Very Broadway looking. They danced to [the song] "New York, New York."

To end, Mr. Klein introduced Dr. Thomas Piro, the assistant principal. He explained that [PS 89 Principal] Mrs. LoSecco could not be here today,

but International Day was an important tradition for the parents, the teachers, staff, and children. “It seems that every year it gets bigger and better. It’s a day when we recognize the backgrounds of many of the children who come to our school.” Most of the parents had deserted Gleane Street and the cold by now, so by the time Dr. Piro ended the audience was just about gone. Dr. Piro thanked Mr. Klein, the staff, and the 110th Precinct. Ms. McCarthy, the other assistant principal, wound up: “Thank you for coming and giving us your children.”

At that point it was 10:45. Everyone was invited into the school for food and to visit the classrooms. A man dressed in Indian shirt and pants with white vest and turban, who had been taking pictures, invited us in when we told him who we were; he turned out to be a white American teacher, caught in the spirit of International Day, I guess.

Steve, Chen, and I went to buy more film, and then returned to visit several classes. We went into the mini-school [building] to find the Chinese bilingual class where Chen talked with the teacher, a parent, some of the kids, and Ellen Young. We also ate there, and [again] next door in the Spanish bilingual first grade, 1-13A & B. The place was full of mothers, the kids having gone to the lunchroom for the school lunch. We talked with the teacher who showed [us] a chart the class had made listing the birth-places of students and their parents. She pointed out that most of the kids were born in the US. The parents were from Argentina, 2; Chile, 1; Colombia, 32; Costa Rica, 2; Dominican Republic, 15; Ecuador, 16; El Salvador, 5; France, 1; Mexico, 6; Peru, 5; US, 5; Uruguay, 2.

Another teacher told us this may be the last year of such a large International Day. Next year several classes and 24 teachers will be moved to other schools in the district to relieve the overcrowding. In addition, Mr. Klein told Steve, Rose Rothschild at the Community Board [office] is giving them difficulty.

We talked with another group of first grade girls in a regular class, and Steve took their picture before we left. They were Indian, Puerto Rican, Vietnamese, and Chinese. The Chinese girl was told by another Puerto Rican girl that “Carlos” said she was his girlfriend. She said to tell Carlos to come out in the hall; she wanted to punch him in the nose.

Rakhee, the Indian girl, told me they had their “home country” food in the class today. She had brought “samosa—the triangle, you know?”