“image” / “i” / “nation”: A THEORY AND PRACTICE
OF BECOMING AN A/R/TOGRAPHER

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One can argue that embracing technological models may produce students who are illiterate in the "proper" methods of communication. With rapid technological change, some fear traditions in their "original" form may be lost. Practices such as trying to recapture the artist’s intent should be abandoned as a way of opening up literacy discourse to multiple narratives. Failing to critically explore the possibilities of emerging models of thinking, teaching, and learning in a technological culture can produce a loss equal to the loss of tradition.

An a/r/tographer works toward a fluid practice between the domains of artist, researcher, and teacher in order to negotiate emerging forms of visual/tactile/auditory communication which include the body as a networked organism situated recursively within the larger structure of society. This study occurred during two separate semesters of an art education course for pre-service elementary teachers. Through interaction with hypermedia, social networking, installation art, and mash-ups, the teacher and students became artists, researchers, and teachers in a community of practice. A new form of teaching practice was envisioned that opens the possibility for both collective and individual understandings in the formation of curricula.

A set of guiding principles was invented through practice as a way of producing a deeper understanding of culture and self. The following principles were derived from engagement with emerging technologies: In<SCRIPT>ion, Flip the Script, (H)Activation, Sample, (Re)mix, and Avatar. (H)Activation produces a learning environment that disrupts the flow of teaching, learning, literacy, art, technology, etc., as a way of programming practice for the inclusion of multiple narratives. Utilizing bricolage or a Do It Yourself approach, an apparatus for
programming emerged, “image”/“i”/“nation”. The term “image”/“i”/“nation” is a play on the concept of the imagination. Through reflexive application the imagination is split allowing connections and disconnections through practice. By engaging in its application the teacher and students became better able to formulate new ways of negotiating curricula, literacy practice, and artistic production.
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A NOTE TO THE READER/AUTHOR

The purpose of this dissertation is to rethink assumptions of self in relation to literacy practice within the current technological landscape. Form and data intermingle throughout the format of the document. The document illustrates a non-linear journey and does not move in a straight line from point A to point B to point C. The intent was to understand better the self-creation of knowledge as a feedback loop in which information is repeated and inverted.

As an object the document is composed of layers of physical and virtual data as a means of creating a cultural interface. The metaphor of the cultural interface allows the reader/author to envision the document as a software package such as Microsoft Word™ or Adobe Photoshop™. The parameters of these software packages are boundaries that allow for the extension of thought beyond the context of the page in tandem with the manipulation of that content. Theory within the dissertation serves to illuminate the code that runs beneath the cultural surface, while practice utilizes code as a method of agency. Cultural parameters of how to interface with the document become boundaries to push against. As with any research document there are omissions; everything engaged with during the duration of the study cannot be encompassed. However, a space exists in these omissions to make links to content outside of the document, links to the reader/author’s own theory and practices.

The document format reflects theory/practice. The slice between the two sections permits a way of looking at theory and practice as a reflection of one another. By layering slices of the history of literacy practice and their reinterpretation within my own practice, the complexity of literacy is suggested, rather than prescribed, for the reader/author. Each of these layers exists as a way of remixing the parts in relation to the whole. The form of this document functions as a
mash-up or collage. Its construction resulted from the author’s rethinking of theory and its relation to practice.

As the transmitter, the organizer of the data in this document is not without his or her assumptions and beliefs. As the default point of origin for this document, I serve as filter and transmitter of the data to the reader/author. What is transmitted is meant as provocation for the reader/author to dispute or embrace. Throughout the dissertation the reader is encouraged to author this document through the practice of information aesthetics, relational aesthetics, and postproduction as attributes of remix. Information aesthetics allows form to follow data. An emphasis on text as data does not mean that the document is meant to be procedural or prescriptive. Data are not sterile; it produces affective results along with its effective correlations. Relational aesthetics and postproduction are methods of promoting remix of the data or modular units of the dissertation. These two practices permit the creation of a community of practice through interaction with the text, objects, ideas, etc., in their implementation in the classroom. Items in the dissertation are reconfigurable and modular in their presentation. Their modularity allows a re/programming of practice that is both singular in relation to the practicing teacher and plural in relation to its connection to the larger community of practice. It becomes the specific or discrete within the flow of practice.

As the reader/author you are able to recombine elements of the document by extracting concepts, ideas, and principles important to practice into a synthesized entity capable of use in the classroom. The physical document as a printed artifact is not the only dimension in this process. The electronic version also adds another layer along with both hypermedia maps of the dissertation and a corresponding Twitter™ feed. The Twitter™ feed is available here: http://twitter.com/msutherlin. There is also a set of hypertextual maps that can be accessed
through Prezi. The links for each of these will be posted at the beginning of each section. Each layer of this dissertation as a stand alone entity may leave the reader/author at a loss. This felt loss is a way of eliciting a desire to produce. As human beings we become desiring-machines, capable of connecting and disconnecting from ideas, concepts, and objects as a method of producing, consuming, and recording simultaneously. As one rearranges the parts of a human desiring-machine, the whole is transformed.
TEMINOLOGY

The terminology presented in the dissertation is hyperlinked throughout the document. The reader/author is not meant to read the list of terms below in a linear fashion; instead s/he can return to these definitions when needed by using the hyperlinks embedded within the document. The X denotes my own presence within the definitions. It allows for the recombination of these terms through the process of bricolage. The bricoluer is the handyman who works with his or her machines to perform the task at hand. These definitions are my machines that I utilize as a way of understanding my teaching practice. They are in no way meant to be “pure” representations of the terms and theories presented. To continue reading the document, skip to the ENTERDUCTION.

Avatar

In Sanskrit the word *Avatara* means “incarnation.” The virtual world allows for an embodiment in virtual space authored by those embodied in physical space. Embodiment of this sort does not require the representational body as in Second Life™ or World of Warcraft™. Embodiment can be manifest in an interaction between two individuals, a group, or the culture at large. The interaction with other individuals is performed through a cultural interface, or as Ulmer (2003) has termed it, the interbody. The individual is situated based on race, sexuality, nationality, location, etc. Within that situatedness, one can become part of a community of practice that is itself an incarnation of interaction.

A work of art can be perceived as an avatar or an embodiment of the reader/author in the physical realm as well as the interaction between reader and author. The avatar crosses over borders through incarnation. Movement as performance flows from the virtual to the physical.
and back again. Like the nomad described by Deleuze and Guattari (1987), the avatar acts as a form of de-territorialization through performance of both the conscious and unconscious. The individual can programs the avatar through an In<SCRIPT>ion or the default entry point into the event. It is a body written on and performed simultaneously (Britt, 2008; Ulmer, 2009).

**Being**

In Platonic thought Being addresses the question of the centralized self or Forms; in the work of Heidegger, however, Being or human being refers to an engagement with the world through the ontological process of becoming or the process of duration (Heidegger, 1978; Plato, 1908).

**Body without Organs (BwO)**

Deleuze and Guattari (1972) describe a non-representational virtual space containing attributes of chora as a Body without Organs. The BwO is the potential of the affective virtual body, to see without eyes, to touch without hands, to feel without skin. Virtual bodies are assemblages made from the extraction of memory and presence from the flow of becoming. Deleuze and Guattari (1972) describe three types of BwO. The full BwO is the healthy BwO; it is productive but not concretized in its organ-ization. Fullness refers to the flow in and through the BwO. The empty BwO is the Anti-Oedipus; it is non-productive. The third iteration is the cancerous BwO; the cancerous BwO is stuck in a cycle of self-perpetuation (Ulmer, 1994).

**Chora**

Plato describes chora in the *Timaeus* as the space between being and becoming, the psychological or virtual space in which the Forms materialize. It is the place for movement through both space and time. For Julia Kristeva, chora is the pre-symbolic stage that most closely correlates to the Lacanian Real, the space of the maternal womb, the mysterious female body that
is the space of generation and negation. Metaphorically, chora becomes the productive feminine void. The product of this generative space is the child. The separation of child from mother references the trace left behind. In the case of chora, something is generated; it is the virtual, left behind as ethereal trace. It is related to Lacan’s *object petit a*. Fragments of both self and other are left behind, fragments which refer to but are not symbolic of that which is neither present nor absent. Absence and presence relate to the current or flow of and through chora. Chora becomes a metaphysical space, the receptacle of the whole of absence and presence. Both chora and the Lacanian Real are non-representational. They are components of the world of affect (Kristeva & Oliver, 2002).

Kristeva describes two terms as being world constituting: semiotic and symbolic. The symbolic is the aspect of the text that allows it to refer; the semiotic, in contrast, disrupts the symbolic. The short-circuiting of the symbolic is the means by which the creative act is enabled. In this study, artistic practice works as conduction to disrupt the thetic or dogmatic function of the text. This is accomplished through the production of an opening or subversive break. According to Kristeva, there is an oscillation between the semiotic and symbolic (Kristeva & Oliver, 2002). Semiotic chora refers to the virtual trace that is the generative space of being. Through the appropriation of event(s), individuals assemble a virtual trace of their own identity that is infinitely (re)mixable. This identity is ordered by chora and creates a set of internal boundaries that form one’s sense of identity in the world (Kristeva & Oliver, 2002).

Kristeva’s work describes the double bind of the subject placed in a space of constant change and judgment. The subject should not and cannot stay a static entity. S/he must be in a dynamic process of identity formation. The semiotic is, therefore, pre-Oedipal in relation to the Oedipal phase of Lacan and the authority of the symbolic.
Chora is pre-symbolic, having no referent. The thetic phase, rather than chora, constitutes the subject through the representational encounter with the mirror. The thetic phase is the point at which the individual takes up a particular identification. Semiotic chora allows for the a-signifying rupture or the space prior to the mirror (mis)representation of self. The self as semiotic allows for the reconstitution of self in the symbolic as a never ending reiterative process (Kristeva & Oliver, 2002).

Discourse moves both with and against chora; this movement is what makes it both a space of generation and a space of negation. Through discourse the articulation of meaning is circulated and lost, formed and deformed. Chora is the space in which one realizes that all representation is problematic and all representation is poetic. Therefore, chora is metaphorical rather than representational. Semiotic chora can be seen as an opening in which the in/between or the flow of meaning is circulated. Instead of following the symbolic logic of what can be made of a particular text, semiotic chora asks what can be made from a particular text. It is heuretic, rather than strictly hermeneutic (Ulmer, 1994).

Duration/Extensity

Duration is the process through which “the whole of our past is played, restarts, repeats itself, at the same time, on all the levels it sketches out” (Deleuze, 1966/1988). According to Deleuze (1966/1988), difference as it relates to the multiplicity is the greatest contribution that Henri Bergson made to philosophical discourse. Bergson describes the multiplicity of difference through the binary of quality/extensity—difference of kind and difference in degree. Extensity and duration are directional. That is, extensity stretches beyond the present into the past, whereas duration is a collapsing of the past into the present. Like the reels on a cassette tape, that which is past gets larger as the future gets smaller. Extensity is equated with relaxation and memory while
duration is equated with contraction and perception. This relationship is explained further in the following quote by Deleuze (1966/1988),

In short, representation in general is divided into two directions that differ in kind, into two pure presences that do not allow them to be represented: that of perception which puts us at once into matter and that of memory which puts us at once into the mind. (p. 26)

Matter and memory become a means of oscillation in the space between the Platonic concept of substances and forms and Kristeva’s concept of the semiotic and symbolic.

Intertextuality allows for a structural understanding of texts in relation to the signifying practices of the culture at large (Landow, 2006). It is the understanding of texts made possible by pairing them with other texts. Kristeva states that intertextuality replaces the concept of intersubjectivity. According to her description, the poetic word is read at the very least as double. Intertextuality creates a dialogic space of texts. The semiotic nature of intertextuality functions beneath the surface of language, yet never without it. Kristeva expands on the work of Baktin in stating that dialogue is inherent to the nature of language and that every dialogue can become a monologue and every monologue can become a dialogue. The conversation among and between texts becomes a way of understanding the collective within the singular and the singular within the collective (Kristeva & Oliver, 2002).

“image”

The “image” or the virtual image is connected to both memory and perception. According to Bergson (1896/2004), two forms of memory are “indissolubly linked”—“recollection-memory and contraction-memory.” The present is divided into two instances. Recollection memory extends into the past while contraction memory contracts all moments in the direction of the future. Pure recollection is significant only in that it is ontological, seeking to recreate the event
as it actually was. All forms of representation are flawed; they are incapable of representing what “is.” Instead of recalling past moments in specifics, Bergson discusses the “past in general.” The “past in general” is similar to an ontological element that makes all pasts possible. There is no particular past in relation to a particular present. Only when a virtual leap into the ontological being-in the past has been made, can recollection begin to exist psychologically. Only the present is psychological; once the ontological leap has been made, the recollection can pass from a virtual to an actual state of being.

The work of Bergson seeks to take consciousness that is “coextensive with life” and determine how it becomes “self-consciousness.” Two separate understandings of consciousness emerge in the work of Bergson with relation to memory, the psychological unconscious and the ontological unconscious (Deleuze, 1966/1988). According to Bergson (1896/2004), every present is a past that has come into being. In his terminology, the past is “contemporaneous” with the present that has been. This becomes a paradox of memory. The past, therefore, coexists with the present. Bergson’s cone illustration defines the past as AB which coexists with the present S and includes all versions of AB, A’ B’, A” B,” etc. Each section of the past belongs to a being of the past in itself. It is a totality of the past or a collective past that resonates in the present. A and B are symbolic of the psychological unconscious and the ontological unconscious. Contraction memory and recollection memory converge at point S as “image.”
Imaginary

The Imaginary order contains both a pre-mirror, mirror, and post-mirror stage. According to Lacan, the pre-mirror stage refers to the identification of self as one with the mother. From the perspective of the baby, the pregnant mother and the baby interpenetrate one another as a form of symbiosis; they are two in one. The mother-child relationship shifts during the mirror stage of development. The child’s image in the mirror (self-representation in any form) produces a split from the mother. The mirror stage is the point at which the child is able to differentiate her/himself from the mother but recognizes the image in the mirror as other, rather than self. There is disconnection between the ideal “image” and the image present in the mirror. The mother becomes (m)Other or the first big other to the child. The post-mirror stage produces the “I” through entrance into the Symbolic order a split in the Imaginary occurs by the “wall of language,” causing the individual to disregard the prior unity with what is now the radical Other or place of alterity (Lacan, 1966/2006).

In<SCRIPT>ion

The origins of complexity in our cultural experience cannot ever be fully understood or known because culture loops back on itself in multiple iterations and permutations. The first
mark on any page is never the point of origin of meaning, nor is the mental “image” which precedes the inscribing. The inscription for Derrida is but one iteration, textuality, or mark; it is the point of entry into the event of writing, drawing, or making in general. The pencil inscribes graphite markings on the surface of a sheet of paper. At the same time it also transfers the symbolic and semiotic data held within the author’s drawn image to the reader of the text or inscription (Derrida, 1988, 2004).

As a neologism created for this study, In<SCRIPT>ion refers to mark making that transmits data as a reoccurring loop of virtual “image”/physical image through a network. The emphasis placed on the SCRIPT references both the actor’s script and the programmer’s code (Law & Hassard, 1999). The In<SCRIPT>ion is the programming of the script of “image”/image which carries with it cultural, personal, social, and political data. Scripted writings, drawings, or objects present the reader/author with an incarnation or avatar through which s/he can engage with others in a dialogue about the concepts presented. The avatar is both a process of becoming other and an enactment of the In<SCRIPT>ion. The performance of avatar allows its symbolic meaning to take on new layers of significance through a semiotic chain of associations (Gasche, 1987; Derrida, 2004).

Jouissance

Jouissance in French refers to pleasure at a loss. The Symbolic order as law or taboo limits pleasure by keeping the individual from enjoying something too much. Because of the limits placed on pleasure by the Symbolic, jouissance functions as a transgression of limits. The desire produced through jouissance creates a situation through in which the more one receives the more one wants. There is always a sense of loss in a transaction with the Other through the Symbolic order because it negates possibilities (Lacan, 1966/2006; 1998).
Lines of Flight

In relation to the production of meaning, Lines of Flight are molecular and exist in a state of constant motion. Conversely, molar lines bifurcate the subject as a means of producing a static definable entity. When viewed on a microscopic level, the molar line can be seen as a series of molecular Lines of Flight. For instance, good/bad is presented as a binary opposition, yet when the molar line “/“ is looked at more closely, one can attend to the molecular level on which the Lines of Flight play out. The molar line constitutes the plane of organization, which seeks to block the Line of Flight. On the plane of immanence, there is a smooth surface on which to become through Lines of Flight; the outside or molar line territorializes the multiplicity, and the molecular line undulates and connects all points together. It fills the finite space of discourse through the creation of the w/hole (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987).

Objet petit a

Lacan introduces the concept of the objet petit a that refers to the “other” through the use of the letter “a” which represents “autre” or other. The objet petit a becomes an excess that is left over when the Symbolic is introduced in the Real. The objet petit a is the unattainable object of desire that initiates the process of interpretation through the belief in a hidden secret. The “petit a” remains separate in relation to the object, allowing it to be combined with both other and Other. The big Other represents radical alterity. Lacan insists that the objet petit a not be translated because it allows for the formulation of an algebraic sign. The a of the objet petit a is connected to the other within Lacan’s Schema L. Its introduction into the Schema L represents a relationship of the other to the ego that is reflexive (Lacan, 1966/2006; 1998).

Plato’s Theory of Forms

Plato’s Theory of Forms refers to the ideal or virtual realm of ideas. According to Plato,
universal truth can be found in the forms; they are constant and unchanging. Substances are those things that make up the changing physical world. The world of substances is the ever-changing material world; it is never the same twice. By engaging with the world of substances through the process of becoming, an individual comes to know only the “illusion” of the world rather than its “true” nature (Plato, 1908).

Real

The Lacanian Real refers to the affective world that cannot be represented, pain, terror, love, hate, lust, etc., for instance. The Real is the state of nature from which we have been split off by the introduction of the Symbolic. It is a feeling of complete wholeness that is lost through the introduction of language. To seek to represent the Real is impossible because one is separated from the Real through attempts to enunciate it through language (Lacan, 1998, 2006).

Rhizome

According to Deleuze and Guattari in A Thousand Plateaus (1987), six principles make up the rhizome: connection, heterogeneity, multiplicity, a-signifying rupture, cartography, decalcomania. In their understanding, any point within a rhizome can and should be connected to any other point. Only through the treatment of the multiple as substantive ‘multiplicity’ can the dichotomous notion of One or individual as subject or object as representation cease to be. Deleuze and Guattari liken a-signifying rupture to the structure of a line of ants, a series of moving points that can rebound over and over even if it has been mostly destroyed. It is the process of de-territorialization and re-territorialization. No true dichotomy can ever exist because the lines will ultimately reconstitute into one. The rhizome is a map and not a tracing. It has multiple points of entry, and there is never a beginning or an end. “The map is open and connectable in all of its dimension; it is detachable, reversible, susceptible to constant
modification . . . It can be drawn on a wall, conceived of as a work of art, constructed as a political action or as a meditation” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p.12). The rhizome is a form of bricolage, according to Deleuze and Guattari, that

... ceaselessly establishes connections between semiotic chains, organizations of power, and circumstances relative to the arts, sciences, and social struggles. A semiotic chain is like a tuber agglomerating very diverse acts, not only linguistic, but also perceptive, mimetic, gestural, and cognitive: there is no language in itself, nor are there any linguistic universals, only a throng of dialects, patois, slangs, and specialized languages. There is no ideal speaker-listener any more than there is a homogeneous linguistic community. (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 7)

Deleuze and Guattari define the rhizome with the following equation: n - 1. The n stands for the multiplicity one already has available, while minus 1 refers to the extraction from the multiplicity. The multiple flows into the one, and the one synthesizes information as the formation of a unique understanding.

Symbolic

According to Lacan (1966/2006), the Symbolic deals with language and authority as it pertains to the signifier. The unconscious is structured like language. Within this realm, the father is dominant. It is the order of the Other or radical alterity. In Lacan’s description of the Symbolic, there is not a fixed relationship between the signifier and signified. The Symbolic order is the acceptance of the rules and regulations of the father and is aligned with the Oedipus complex.
ENTERDUCTION

The weaknesses of a book are often the counterparts of empty intentions that one did not know how to implement. In this sense, a declaration of intent is evidence of real modesty in relation to the ideal book. It is often said that prefaces should be read only at the end. Conversely, conclusions should be read at the outset. This is true of the present book, the conclusion of which could make reading the rest unnecessary.

_Gilles Deleuze_

Make the people think that they think and they love you. Actually make them think and they hate you.

_Paul Miller, a.k.a DJ Spooky_

The Enterduction to this dissertation is but one point of entry rather than the point of origin. The book and the dissertation are forms of cultural interface, a term derived from the work of Manovich (1999). Manovich states that cultural interfaces are the means by which we engage in cultural interaction. Although general categories of cultural interface emphasized by Manovich include the spoken and printed word as well as film, there are a plethora of other interfaces that are left out of American schooling which has been marked by the adherence to two primary modes of cultural interface, the printed and spoken word. Even though multimedia inundates every aspect of our day-to-day lives, in school we focus primarily on print or oral literacy. Beginning with the Greek invention of the alphabet and institutional practice originating from Plato’s Academy as the first school, literacy is an apparatus, a social machine; as an apparatus, it forms a matrix of interdependent dimensions that include technology, institution, and identity (Ulmer, 2005). In terms of the institutional practice of public school, the National Institute for Literacy (NIL) focuses solely on the improvement of reading instruction for children, youth, and adults. The National Literacy Act of 1991 defines literacy as “an individual’s ability to read, write, speak in English, compute and solve problems at levels of proficiency.
necessary to function on the job, in the family of the individual and in society” (National Institute for Literacy, 1991, p. (Sec. 3)). The terms read, write, and speak are meant to apply solely to language, and in this model, the English language. The understanding of literacy as a social machine or cultural interface allows for the realization that the primary objective of all texts in the public school setting could be indoctrination rather than innovation. A new understanding of literacy and of the multi-layered nature of texts allows for new ways of thinking that will open doors for cultural possibilities. Such possibilities illuminate the text and require that the “reader” engage with various components of meaning/making from multiple perspectives of an/other (Freire, 1970; hooks, 1994; Giroux, 1992, 1996).

I began this dissertation with a false problem. Ultimately the theory in the following pages was/is derived from the circulation and revision of theory in practice. The dissertation as a whole is an attempt at tracing the process of becoming an/other, a term referring to both the self and the other. An/other consists of the unknowable space that exists within an interaction as well as togetherness with one “another” and “an other.” It is meant to move beyond the illusion of the other in order to reach the placement as an Other, a place of alterity (Lacan, 1966/1988).

The following functions as a map of my teaching practice during the spring and summer semesters of 2009. There are, of course, omissions, substitutions, (mis)representations, and (mis)understandings that occur in the blocks of representation that follow. This document should be read electronically, rather than on paper, as a means of using the hyperlinks to construct it as an infinitely (re)mixable apparatus. The ability of the apparatus to appropriate or conduct is derived from the work of Deleuze and Guattari (1987) and focuses on their conception of the rhizome. The rhizome is never in a state of being; it is, rather, constantly growing. It is
expanding and contracting simultaneously; it is both explanation and contradiction (Deleuze, 1990; Deleuze & Guattari, 1987).

What follows is meant to be an exploration and an invention on the part of the reader. This will require time or duration to accomplish, for the reader must perform the text as an actor. The script has been presented, but improvisation is expected and encouraged. The reader must sift between the layers and create new meaning from the spaces between sentence and sentence, paragraph and paragraph, section and section. Duration and extensity are integral aspects of becoming. Perception places us in the subject matter of the dissertation or in the In<SCRIPT>ion on the page, and memory places us in the mind. Reading this dissertation takes on the properties of an event, but meaning never resides strictly in the present perception. Meaning resides in the memory of an event that has passed and in the future of a perception yet to come (Deleuze, 1990; Deleuze and Guattari, 1987).

In describing the process of becoming, Deleuze uses a literary reference to Alice from Alice in Wonderland. Alice becomes both bigger and smaller when she drinks the bottle marked “Drink me.” Each moment she is larger than she was and smaller than she will be; she is becoming. Becoming, as utilized in this study, is derived from the metaphor of the rhizome (n - 1), the “new sciences,” and complexity theory as they relate to educational practice. This dissertation acknowledges the Platonic idea of the physical world perceived through the senses; however, it is also attends to the affective performance in/through chora or the virtual. The document itself seeks to produce openings for the virtual or the BwO—the avatar—to be formed. The complexity of network formation is not about a singular instance as a stand-alone node but rather a flow of instances as a singular/plural, a line made up of dots inter-woven within a rhizomatic network. Such a network constitutes “world formation” through an ever-changing
state of becoming. It encompasses both growth and decay (Deleuze, 1990; Deleuze & Guattari, 1987; Nancy, 2007).

The paragraphs that follow can be read in any order; they are meant not as beginning, middle, and end. I have tried to think of the construction of this “framework” as less like a frame and more like a theory defined by work. The rhizome is in the process of becoming flock or swarm. In order to become, you must ingest the text as a measure of making it your own (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987). I have tried to configure the following pages not as a document but as an “image” or “incarnation,” what I have termed the In<SCRIPT>ion. The text must be viewed holistically. Like the space between artist/viewer, self/other, the text within the following pages has intentional gaps left for the anticipation of what will be and what could be created. These gaps are what allow for the In<SCRIPT>ion as (re)mix. Trace refers to the interpretation/creation of an “image” through a tracing of the hermeneutic circle. For an individual to create, the electrical impulses in the brain must manipulate the “image”. What is left after the tracing is a hole or space for creation. In this study, “image” refers to those forms of embodiment that deal with the visual, auditory, olfactory, etc., and may not directly connect to the physical in terms of object-ness. When dealing with poetry, an “image” can be constructed in the mind that re-presents the image. Visibility of the object through optics does not determine the construction of “image.” An individual can encounter a particular smell that causes him or her to think back to a particular memory. On a molecular level, the air that one breathes aids in the construction of “image.” The smell and the poem allow for the “image” to be created anew each time the poem is read or air is inhaled. As in the process of breathing, there is difference in each repetition—we inhale oxygen, we exhale carbon dioxide (Deleuze, 1994; Deleuze & Guattari, 1987).
Personal Investments

From 2007-2008, I taught elementary art in a district outside Fort Worth, Texas. It was important to me to teach elementary art because as an elementary student I was never afforded the opportunity for an elementary art education. I believe it is important to introduce students to the potentialities of art while still at an age when they are open to dialogue about creative practice. The art room, and potentially any classroom, should be an infinite/finite space, a space in which purposeful actions of the human body create transformations. Conduction or the process of appropriation permits the learning environment to be designed in such a way that it becomes modular, capable of configuration and reconfiguration by those who inhabit it (Ulmer, 2003).

Design or creative construction in art was not the priority of my former school district. Student art work was always hung in the hallways as a means of adornment; the content or ingenuity of a particular artwork was not valued by those who espoused the make and take aesthetic of traditional elementary art. This became very apparent at the end of the year when an administrator observed that there was no perceptible visual continuity to the artwork that the students produced; contrary to the administration’s expectations, each piece looked different and utilized different methods. The administrator’s definition of visual continuity was synonymous with my understanding of the concept of conformity. Conformity was the farthest thing from my mind when teaching elementary students. It was never my intent to teach students to conform to a particular mode of artistic practice. My goal was to give students a space in which to explore themselves and their ideas without my dictating the artistic product or materials.

I also discovered conformity was not simply about a particular aesthetic discourse. While teaching in elementary school, the obvious emphasis placed on literacy, that is reading and writing, was overtly apparent. If circulations of self are produced through the practice of literacy
as Ong (1982) and Havelock (1982) state, then teachers and administrators alike reinforced the predominance of a language-based understanding of literacy practice. Yet even more disconcerting is that it was a form of literacy practice that was about indoctrination, a hidden literacy. According to Macedo (2006), “What we have in the United States is not a system to encourage independent thought and critical thinking. Our colonial literacy model is designed to domesticate in order to enable the ‘manufacture of consent’” (p. 36). The consent produced is accomplished through the production of “image”. What Macedo points out is that literacy practices as they exist today are a perpetuation of dominant culture (Giroux, 1981). Fernandez (2001) states:

If we think of the term literacy as a semantic field of contradictory and repressed notions, opening the semantic field and revealing its structure, revealing what has been devalued and repressed, will help us to understand how the ideologies of literacy have limited us and how breaking open the discourse around literacy offers constructive promise. (p. 19)

The question for me became “What is the best way to break-up the dominant discourse to allow for different models of thinking?” Meaning circulates through discourse, and it governs the way people talk about and interact with objects and representations. The only way to counter the dominant discourse is to invent and permit multiple discourses or ways of knowing, to create new blocks that enter the flow and counter points defined by the discourse in question (Foucault, 1972; Ulmer, 1994).

My one hour a week with students (which was being reduced based on state mandates for physical education) found me struggling to invent a new discourse with students who went back to classrooms in which the opposite understanding of the world was being reinforced. What I realized through my teaching practice was that change does not simply come about through changing discourse, but rather change involves the collective invention of new blocks of discourse introduced into the process of becoming. Emergent negotiated curriculum is not a form
of pedagogy in which the teacher dictates the curriculum, nor does it allow total student control of curriculum content. Critical pedagogy cannot be forced; it must evolve through collective dialogue. The journey is collaborative and reciprocal (Ulmer, 1994, Whitehead, 1979).

In the fall of 2008, I began teaching at Stephen F. Austin State University in Nacogdoches, Texas. Nacogdoches is a rural town with approximately 30,000 residents. Stephen F. Austin State University currently has a student population of around 12,000 students. Upon arriving, my teaching assignment was Exploring Art 390: Scope and Sequence, a course for pre-service elementary educators, the very same students who will shape the way future elementary-age students engage in literacy practice. At the beginning of this study, I was in the second semester of my first full time teaching position at the university level. I had taught several classes while attending graduate school, but this was the first time I had the opportunity to focus solely on my art/research/teaching with intensity.

Looking at past incarnations of the course, I discovered it was always described as a combination of theory and practice in art education. Many of the elementary education students had never been in an art course or visited an art museum, and yet their lives are inundated by interactions with “image”-image. They are not only already viewing physical images, but they are also engaging in the process of producing and using “image” in both the physical and virtual domains. According to Deleuze, “…we think according to a given method, but also that there is more or less implicit, tacit or presupposed image of thought which determines our goals when we try to think” (Deleuze, 1994, p.xvi).

The concept of critical thinking was important to me at the outset of this study. However, what I did not realize at the time was that thinking in and of itself had its own image that served as an emanating point for thought production. The function of this course, from my perspective,
was at first to facilitate elementary educators in obtaining visual literacy and, more importantly, a form of visual literacy that is derived from critical pedagogy, a critical visual literacy. The research questions that initially structured the study are as follows:

In what ways can educators expand the concept of literacy for themselves through the use of hypermedia?

How receptive are elementary educators to the use of hypermedia to facilitate meaning-making?

How do elementary educators come to value emerging forms of literacy through their activities with hypermedia?

Purposes of the Study

The purpose of the study relates to emerging forms of meaning circulation that are “image”/image-based and construct the (con)text of what is described as cultural, new media, personal, social, and political literacies. As stated previously, literacy in all its forms is a social machine or apparatus that, through systems of power, governs the ways in which we interact with the more concrete aspects of culture (Foucault, 1977). Since the conception of this study, my beliefs have changed. Instead of dealing with only the concrete aspects of culture, I had to re-envision literacy practice. I sought to move beyond the visual as a thing while holding onto it as a “thing” and to think about forms of pedagogy that employ new measures of “image” production and usage or produsage (Bruns, 2008). This study seeks to reconfigure the apparatus of literacy in all its forms through post-structuralist means. While this study is completed under the disciplinary moniker of art education, it is not meant to be exclusive to that title. Its function is intended to be transdisciplinary, utilizing artistic methods as a means for understanding the processes of teaching and learning.
ITERATIONS OF SELF

The knowing self is partial in all its guises, never finished, whole [w/whole], simply there and original; it is always constructed and stitched together imperfectly, and therefore able to join one with another, to see together without claiming to be another.

Donna Haraway

The following section describes the self as it is constructed in multiple iterations. These iterations speak to the complexity of education in a democratic society. The one who interprets writes the interpretation. In the act of writing, the writer becomes reflexive about his or her preconceptions about culture, society, politics, and self. Through collective engagement with multiple iterations of self, the self becomes multiple and capable of configuration and reconfiguration through a multitude of (re)incarnations.

Institutional Iterations of Self

Metaphysics is a construction of literacy. Plato was the first to pose the metaphysical question: “What is?” This question addresses objects and their object-ness. Objectification of knowledge is identical with Foucault’s concept of discourse. Interpretation refers to the way in which we make meaning from both the structure and content of the visual and the context in which it is placed. There may be multiple interpretations of a single word that depend on the context of a particular sentence (Ulmer, 1994, 1985; Ong, 1982).

Aristotle classified the Greek alphabet. “Things,” as such, did not exist prior to Aristotle. To make the statement “this is a computer” is to define the object before me that consists of a screen, keyboard, motherboard, touchpad, hard-drive, etc., as a specific category of existence. Before Aristotle, there was no centralized being and nothing was selected out of the flow of the world by definition or constructed into taxonomical order. Taxonomical order produced a hierarchy through which disciplinary knowledge became a method of control. Those who had
access to knowledge had power. Power was then remediated through representation (Foucault, 2003; Ulmer, 2005).

Representation is always an expression of thought that can never fully realize the concept of the original thought. In *Of Grammatology*, Derrida (1976) provides the reader with a historical and cultural background for the uses and understandings of writing in Western civilization. The claim that Derrida disputes in the Western tradition is that writing is closer to speech and therefore an expression of speech. He criticizes Rousseau’s claim made during the Enlightenment of the mid-late 18th century that speech is primary to the written word. Rousseau believed that orality was closer to original thought and truth than representation. However, Derrida argues that it is not that speech is primary to the written word, but rather, that speech is writing and writing speech. One does not precede the other in terms of the primacy of their delivery because both are forms of representation.

Any form of representation is not an original thought, but an entry into a complex network of ideas. To seek to extract oneself from the network as an observer is to negate one’s presence and effect on that which is observed. Representation plays a part in the phenomenological approach as described by Husserl. The purpose of this mode of interface with a culture is to describe a particular phenomenon or set of phenomena as objectively as possible. Husserl believed that one could get to the essence of any experience through a bracketing out of the self. This means that the researcher experiences phenomena without preconceptions. The problem in this approach lies in the inability of the individual to essentialize experience because experience is always filtered through re-presentation. Under Husserl’s phenomenological reduction, culture is separate from the experience. Yet without culture, one has no way of describing the experience to another individual or the self as an/other to the self. The bracketing of experience through the
subject-object binary is a return to the Cartesian separation of mind and body. An individual represents information in physical or virtual form, with emphasis on those things that s/he finds important. This is the situated nature of knowledge. An individual brings to the dialogue an appropriation of experiences that cannot be separated from the situational interpretation.

Without adhering to them as a mode of operation, the defining features of cultural literacy appropriated in this study encompass those attributed to it by E. D. Hirsch. Hirsch claims that a culturally literate person is a person who possesses the “basic information needed to thrive in the modern world” (Hirsch, 1987, p. xiii). In his view, authors assign meaning and readers assign significance. Under this assumption, postmodernism is an attack on the true nature of the text that is ultimately determined by the intent of the author or artist. Hirsch’s definition is based on a “literacy of shared civilization, one civilization, Western civilization” (Fernandez, 2001, p. 30).

The basic information discussed by Hirsch in his definition of cultural literacy is part of dominant culture. Prominent skill sets and information are promoted in schools to this day through behaviorist models of stimulus response. Teaching and learning in the Texas public school system, the birthplace of the No Child Left Behind Act (U.S. Department of Education, 2002), functions to this day, quite literally, from the cowboy mentality of the “mythological” West. As a metaphor for practice, the cowboy seeks out knowledge that exists as a new territory in order to claim it for his or her own. There is a level of ownership that goes along with this type of thinking that makes schooling into a commodity. We see schooling as a way of filling the heads of students with knowledge rather than allowing for the production of knowledge. If as teachers we “brand” our students to think in ways that are similar to our own, then we have taught them; we have trained them.
At a recent school in-service, my wife was introduced to the concept of “horse sense” in which the predominant message was “train your student like you would train a horse.” Training as teacher practice imparts a lack of agency among students. Instead of allowing the student to construct her/his identity, educators force conformity to the common social and cultural structure. Despite this example, much of the cultural ideology is promoted through less overt methods. The goal of a majority of literacy practice is to indoctrinate the student into dominant culture through the promotion of systems of cultural myths that drive hegemonic understanding. That is not to say that all mythologies have a negative effect. A collectively constructed mythology can be culturally productive rather than culturally prescriptive.

The body and performance are important to an understanding of cultural literacy of this type because ritual contributes to the perpetual memory of corporality. Ring the bell; the dog salivates. Consider, for instance, the morning announcements at any given school; the following words blare over the loudspeaker: “Please stand for the Pledge of Allegiance.” Students rise to their feet as the pledge begins. Some students, hands placed over their hearts, and others, hands by their sides, recite in unison, “I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the Republic for which it stands, one Nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.” This ritual activity is indoctrinates the student into a larger cultural practice through the actions of her/his body and the recitation of words, a pledge of allegiance. Such ritual shapes subjectivity through the unconscious appropriation of cultural scripts into the construction of self (Ulmer, 1994). Cultural scripts become an entry into the Symbolic order of Lacan’s (1966/2006) orders of the Imaginary, the Symbolic, and the Real. These three orders will be described in the Psychological Iterations of Self and corresponding hyperlinks.
Psychological Iterations of Self: the Symbolic, the Imaginary, and the Real

As a researcher, I have appropriated and disappropriated elements of psychoanalytic theory in the description of this project. According to Lacan’s *Seminar on “The Purloined Letter”* (1966/2006), the self is constituted through a triadic order: the Imaginary, the Symbolic, and the Real. These three psychic registers seek to mediate subjectivity through dialogue with the external world.

The Imaginary is aligned with the ego, which serves as a mediator between the inside/outside. The Symbolic deals with language and sign systems. The Real deals with neither presence nor absence; it is that which is not representable and cannot be accessed. These three registers are intertwined and manifest in what Lacan terms the symptom. For Lacan, the symptom is an embodied corporeal metaphor. For instance, one might choose to describe his/her love in the following way: my love is a rose. The symptom of love, both as individual and as emotion, is defined by the rose. The metaphor allows the self to take ownership of the symptom through objectification. Through conduction the individual becomes capable of making the metaphor “current.” This is accomplished in/through metonymy. Metonymy is where one thing stands in for another to which it is closely related. It is the substitution of a signifier, the rose, for a multitude of signifieds. The rose can become emblematic for an individual or group as a logo. The reactivation of these “dead metaphors” by appropriation allows the subject to be reconstituted as an “image” akin to the tangled and intertwined structure of felt fabric, through an endlessly reiterative chain of signifiers, the rhizome (Ulmer, 2003; Lacan, 1966/2006).

The Symbolic order deals with sign systems, which aid in the construction of the subject. In the case of this study, the subject or signified constantly shifts based on the situation. Traditional semiotics is the study of signs, which allows for the study of the signifier and the
signified. Saussure defined structural semiotics, the study of icons, indexes, and symbols. In a structuralist conception of semiotics, the icon functions by resemblance. The image of the stereotypical school marm would be a representation of teacher identity that functions based on the icon. An index of teacher practice in the classroom might be the student test scores. The symbol for teacher becomes the word teacher itself, which represents a certain being that is “teacher” (Adams & Searle, 1986).

Semiotics also allows for an understanding of both the denotative and connotative meaning of a given text. Denotative meaning is the literal meaning of a sign, the commonly held definition of the written word. According to Panofsky (1955), the denotative meaning of a visual image is the common meaning that all viewers from all cultures throughout history associate with a given representational image. This concept is problematic, however, in that there are always exceptions. The Swastika, for example, is a visual image which for many is immediately associated with the Nazi regime in Germany and the concentration camps and ovens of the Holocaust. The Swastika dates back to the Neolithic period of ancient India. Throughout most of its history, it has been a positive sign associated with benedictions or blessing (Wilson, 1896). This is not true today. Such an understanding of signs brings us to connotative meaning, which refers to the suggested or implied meaning of a text. It is the social, personal, and cultural associations of a particular sign. Connotative meanings illustrate the concept of metonymy, or the process by which one text stands in for another closely related one; for instance, an apple stands in for the concept of teacher. Connotative meaning allows the reader/producer of a text to move beyond ideological impositions of the literal. This concept is troubled by the pre-iconographic in which the representation is understood without cultural context. The only attribute needed to make meaning is the ability to apprehend the representation (Barthes, 1967).
Connotation and denotation are commonly compared to analog and digital code respectively. In this case both analog and digital are also a reference to the programmer’s code. Digital refers to the discreteness of units while analog refers to the continuous flow of units. Semiotologist Umberto Eco (1979) compares these codes to the playing of a record. When a record is spinning and the needle is following the grooves of inscribed information on the surface of the record, we believe the continuous flow of information coming from the speaker to be analog; however, the process of continual spinning is actually discrete. The record spins. The needle picks up the vibrations, sends it to the amplifier and out through the speakers. The seemingly analog becomes discrete through the transmission of information. These digital/analog cultural codes can be programmed through Lacan’s (2006) reinterpretation of Saussurean linguistics (Adams & Searle, 1986).

Saussure’s (Adams & Searle, 1986) structuralist formation of semiotics creates a system of signs indicated by the signified over the signifier separated by a bar, signified/signifier. The sign is the whole signified/signifier. Teacher/apple would be but one example of this relationship. Lacan flips the formation to signifier over signified and describes this reversal of the traditional concept by utilizing the terms metaphor and metonymy. Metaphor is related to knowledge, while metonymy is related to desire. Metaphor gives to the subject both repression and signification.

Post-structuralist discourse calls upon metaphor as an aid in its understanding of (con)text. Context is itself a malleable text in which metaphors allow for shifting meaning. Metaphor is twinned, according to Ong (1982), the minute that we discuss an “improper” signification. To state that a signification is “improper” is to assume that there is a second signification that is “proper.” When a metaphor is described as “improper,” it has fallen victim to the belief that that metaphor is only to be allowed with the acknowledgment that it is incorrect. Somehow the
“proper” meaning takes hold of signification prior to the introduction of an “improper” meaning and gives it priority. “In this sense, the second meaning has some of the disadvantages of an intruder (Ong, 1982, p. 41).” The intruder of the improper signification is derived through engagement with metonymy.

Metonymy refers back to another signifier in an endless chain. Metaphor allows for a slippage to occur through substitution. Desire in this instance becomes productive. One object or image as a signifier can be substituted for another signifier in a continual chain as an ever-expanding network. The signifier slips beneath the bar S/s becomes /S, leaving a space open for the subject (Lacan, 1998).

The relationship between metaphor and metonymy is illustrated in Lacan’s Schema L; it corresponds to the Imaginary/Symbolic axis identified as the origin of individual being. It serves to map the relationship between the ego and the ego ideal or the “I.” The Imaginary axis contains a’–a, referring to the imaginary objectification of the self which emerges through “The Mirror Stage.” The a—a’ axis corresponds with consciousness of the signifier, the ego or “me,” and the specular reflection of “other” formulated as ideal ego. This line crosses over the unconscious as a transgression of boundaries between the Symbolic and the Imaginary. The Symbolic axis is formulated through S—A, and is the realm of the unconscious which corresponds with the signified. S is the thinking subject or “I,” the subject that is tied to the Other or A and the ego ideal (Lacan, 1966/2006; Briton, 2002). Through the transgression of boundaries, the relationship with “I” and the unconscious is split, allowing for the realization of an/other. This is the relationship that is described by Barthes (1970/1974) in S/Z.
The following is a utilization of the L Schema in this study as a mash-up of the theories of Lacan (1966/2006) and Barthes (1970/1974). As a reconfigured model, the relationship between a and a′ allows for the creation of avatar. The avatar is incarnated as the dialogue that crosses over, splitting it and reorganizing the “I.” The avatar as Other allows one to work through imaginary relationships that correspond with identity formation. In the institution of teacher education, S represents the subject as teacher or student, a pre-determined state of being that refers to the objet petit a that constitutes its otherness. The teacher as other is derived from the imaginary relation in which the teacher identity takes on the ideal of the objet petit a’ or the object of desire. The objects of desire that signify teacher identity construct an avatar that is teacher or student. This is an avatar as an ideal rather than something that can be attained. Through dialogue or language, the avatar is performed, allowing for an opening in the “I.” The expectations held by students and teachers are imagined in the form of an unattainable ideal or excess characterized by the concept of jouissance. The avatar is that which provokes dialogue or language and simultaneously becomes dialogue or language. Jouissance becomes the desire for something more that transgresses the boundaries imposed by language (Lacan, 1998).
The *objet petit a* created through the signifiers of identity production allow an excess or surplus value that can be utilized in a desire to produce as a transformative process. Desiring-machines become machines coupled with other machines in an endless cycle. The organ-machine can be hooked up to an energy-machine in which one produces flow while the other interrupts. Dialogue permits interaction with students which in turn allows one to become an Other to the Symbolic teacher identity, to (un)become teacher. To (un)become can be a productive process of identity formation which is described by Deleuze and Guattari in Anti-Oedipus (1972). The proposition of the anti-Oedipus is the inverse of the Oedipal stage which is the entry into the Symbolic order described by Lacan (1966/2006). Surplus or excess produced by the introduction of the Symbolic into the Real is appropriated by what Deleuze and Guattari term the Body without Organs. Anti-production of identity allows one to embrace excess as an endless production of signification.

When dealing with semiotic, the subject or signified is constituted through a multitude of signifiers. This is in contrast to individual subjectivity that “sees” the self as an idealized whole rather than as a coalesced collection of fragmented artifacts and is equally true of national or collective identities bound together by real or imagined narratives, expressed in the form of myth. Myths are forms of fantasy that we may believe are governed by randomness; when put to the test, however, we discover that the myth is situated in the fiction of fact (Barthes, 1972). Through the application of a myth’s pattern or theme, fragmented artifacts and the connections made between them become a way of understanding the existence of intersubjectivity (Lacan, 1966/2006). The self or subject chooses to perceive being as a fixed state to avoid the trauma resulting from the recognition of its deconstructed or fragmented identity.
The aspects of cultural literacy employed in this study refer to a critical understanding of myths and rituals as scripts utilized in the creation of dominant culture. This is a document in which the “reader” becomes the author, a self that assigns both meaning and significance to the cultural signifiers that make up the process of becoming (Barthes, 1970/1974).

*The Plural “I” as Text*

Language splits the unified “I” as subject by introducing the concept of the Other (Lacan, 1966/2006). In this document and in my teaching practice, “I” have tried to deconstruct the notion of I in order to see it as part of the already preexistent cultural network.

This text as dissertation, teaching practice, dialogue, and artwork is broken up in such a way that it becomes *lexia*, blocks of signification. According to Barthes (1970/1974) the origin of a text is already lost from the beginning because the reader/author of the text is layered as part of an accumulated network of meaning. “[The] “I” which approaches the text is already a plurality of other texts of codes which are infinite or, more precisely, lost (whose origin is lost)” (Barthes, 1970/1974, p.5).

The letter “i” is used in this document in order to diminish the significance of the One or the authoritative eye as a way of increasing our understanding of the network of singular/plural existence, the experience of living as part of a collective community of learners that involves utterances of the middle voice. In the middle voice the subject is actor and s/he acts; it is reflexive voice. The middle voice, according to Ulmer (2005), is about action and affect. He cites Barthes (1986), stating:

... in the case of the active voice, the action is performed outside the subject, for although the priest makes the sacrifice, he is not affected by it; in the case of the middle voice, on the contrary, by acting, the subject affects himself, always remains inside the action, even if that action involves an object. Hence, the middle voice does not exclude transitivity. Thus defined, the middle voice corresponds exactly to the modern state of the verb to write: to write is today to make oneself the center of action and speech, it is to effect
writing by affecting oneself, to make action and affection coincide, to leave the *scriptor*
inside the writing—not as a psychological subject, but as an agent of action. (p. 18)

Unlike a priest, I as teacher cannot “speak” in the active voice in the classroom and expect my students to surrender their preconceived notions. The students must be willing to let go of their preconceived notions, and in so doing, “speak” from inside themselves, from the middle voice. This is the process of reflexive action. “To inscribe” is to become “an agent of action” allowing the psychological iterations of self to move beyond the psychoanalytic symptom to an understanding of embodied objects and images as active rather than passive constructions of the world. The middle voice requires one to write the phrase “to write” as a way of putting the self in action.

In a manner similar to Lacan’s (2006) appropriated inversion of semiotics, Barthes sets up a semiotic equation of S/Z. S/Z is a signifier without a set signified (Barthes, 1974). In engaging with the concept of S/Z there is an emphasis on the process rather than the product. S/Z is parallel to becoming and is utilized in the production of a writerly text versus a readerly text. Readerly text composes the bulk of all text stored in our libraries. S/Z produces a fractal ontology that exists as part of a circulation within the larger social network. This view of social signification as an endless production of meaning has important implications for our understanding of human subjectivity in education. According to Moxey (1994),

The interpreting subject becomes a sign for those who interpret its interpretations in the future. Semiotic theory thus prompts us to reevaluate the subjectivity of the historian [artist, viewer, teacher, student, etc.] as well as the function of interpretation. (p. 51)

Moxey (1994) allows for a post-structuralist understanding of the subject that reevaluates interpretations in a new (con)text. Interpretation that may be perceived as false or (mis)represented can become productive in the classroom discussion. By allowing the interpretations of the subject to become both a production and productive, the self or subject can,
if willing, reinterpret or deconstruct the self. Deconstruction of the self as an idealized whole allows a singular representation of both student and teacher to affectively become the mirroring of the mirror. From this transaction a network of information is created that serves as a picto-ideo-phonographic representation of self in relation to an/other.

Within the context of this study, the participants are pre-service elementary teachers. These are the individuals who will have some influence on the initial development of a child’s construction and sense of self. Their understanding of Barthes’ (1986) description of the middle voice will allow them to see how the Cartesian cogito of “I” think; therefore, “I” am is insufficient in the understanding of the importance of experience. Experience shapes and is shaped by the construction of self through appropriation; this semiotic understanding of self in which multiple associations are assigned to any given concept is crucial for critical pedagogy within the classroom. “To become” an educator/”student” is to disappropriate authority so that it might be appropriated by students (Harris, 1987). Through the disappropriation of authority, the teacher is allowed admittance into the “i,” the collective becoming of negotiated curriculum.

The application of the middle voice in the instructional setting permits the “I” as the signified subject to become multiple in relation to experience. Therefore, experience as a series of signifiers becomes interpretable in relation to the “i” as multiplicity. The two, the signified self and the signifiers of experience, mingle and merge simultaneously, resulting in extensity and duration. Extensity allows the individual to recognize and identify experiences through the process of recollection; simultaneously, duration permits one to appropriate new experience through the process of perception of that which is recalled and that which is experienced anew (Bergson, 1896/2004; Deleuze, 1966/1988). Appropriation is the flow of cultural fragments; it is both a conscious and an unconscious practice of self-formation about which teachers must be
increasingly aware. For the educator, there is a need to understand both the effective and affective attributes of communication within culture and the vital role it plays in formation of the self in the instructional setting. For educational practice, the “i” as stated is the critical “it”; it allows for production and critique simultaneously. As we move further into this notion of “i,” we must be careful to realize that experience without reflexivity becomes ideologically constraining rather than liberating for both the student and teacher (Deleuze, 1988).

Technological Iterations of Self

Teaching and learning involves interaction, and technology has long been the way in which humans have interacted with the world outside of themselves. From the first use of a rock to carve on cave walls to the most current touch sensitive device, technology provides a means by which people interface with culture. Today, to speak is to utilize technology to communicate to the world. Technology both shapes and is shaped by the individual. As such, technology mediates the inside and the outside but exists in both spaces. It is an augmentation of the human body that is attachable and detachable. Developing technologies are not simply objects, they are new ways of thinking about and interacting with the world. Educators must be willing to incorporate the use of developing technologies within their pedagogical philosophy if critical literacy is their goal.

When we realize that sight is merely the translation of electrical impulses, then we must concede that information is retranslated in the brain, creating an “image” in the mind. These images are mediated by the medium or mode of interface (Derrida, 1976). According to McLuhan (1962), “the medium is the message,” in other words, our senses are augmented because the media influences the way in which the message is perceived. Prior to the emergence of current technologies, contemporary modes of cultural interface were shaped by metaphoric connections to both the cinema and the printed word (Manovich, 1999). The primacy of these modes of interface
was due in part to the technological innovations that allowed for their dissemination. The printing press and the camera have similarly served as technological catalysts for ways of knowing. Interface methods are not restricted to the physical interface of the book and the film, but rather they are a set of conventions that facilitate in our interaction with cultural data. Beyond the physical interface itself, both the printed word and cinema as interfaces have their own grammar and metaphors (Derrida, 1976; McLuhan, 1962; Manovich, 1999).

The printed page has long been the way in which we imagine information to be presented. Pages are compiled into files and books. Files are stored in alphabetical order to give organization to the random assortment of data. These files can be placed into a larger data bank or filing cabinet. Filing cabinets can be placed side by side, creating an even greater data bank of physical data. These arrangements can then be placed into specific rooms, and these rooms in specific buildings, and the list goes on and on (Derrida, 1976; Manovich, 1999).

The book is yet another organizational system for the printed word. In the West books are read from left to right and from top to bottom. Books are organized through the use of sentences and paragraphs as discrete units arranged in a specific order to allow for the interpretation of meaning. Meaning gives the illusion of continuous flow. The camera allows the photographer to sample time through the creation of an image that has its own organizational principles. Within the still image of the photograph, multiple events occur simultaneously through the compression of time into a single image. Unlike drawing in which the artist must look away from the subject and look at the paper in order to inscribe an image, photography is seen as an extension of the human eye. It is a still image captured instantaneously; yet, there is always more information available than an individual can grasp at the moment the image is captured. The photograph is,
therefore, a memento, a fragmentary moment of reflection pulled from the flow of events (Batchen, 1999; McLuhan, 1962).

McLuhan (1962) speaks of the shift in information delivery that occurred with the creation of the camera. McLuhan (1962) describes the camera as replacing the written text as a primary source of information. According to positivists, by using the camera, the artist is able to “record” and reproduce a moment in time. In essence, the camera is seen as a scientific instrument. However, the reproducibility of the photograph allows for multiple incarnations and, therefore, multiple interpretations of the same image. Benjamin (1968) makes the claim that art has in essence always been a reproducible entity. Yet, he makes a distinction between reproductions and mechanical reproductions. According to Benjamin, mechanical reproduction allows imagery to keep up with speech. The fluidity and proliferation of images creates new opportunities for the populace to view images that they might not otherwise have an opportunity to view. Cinema takes the discrete images created by the photographic camera and places them in a continuous flow. The flow produced gives the appearance of movement (Deleuze, 1994; McLuhan, 1962).

A return to the understanding of the discrete in continuous flow is shaping the ways in which we interact with emerging cultural interfaces. As we begin to move towards a virtual form of interaction, it is clear that we are no longer interfacing with simply the computer as an object, but rather with a culture encoded in digital form. Cultural data is accessed and interfaced with in the form of written texts, film, audio, photographs, the Internet, and virtual worlds. There is space between these interfaces in which the concepts of present-at-hand and ready-to-hand as described by Heidegger form (1978). This augmentation of the human body through the objects we interact with is not apparent until we make a mistake. One goes through the day unaware of the connection to the outside world through their cell phone until it goes dead. At the moment of
disconnection, the cell phone becomes an exterior thing. Likewise, the computer user engaged in a virtual world is present in that world until the computer locks up or s/he log off. Internalization through action occurs when the object, whether cell phone or computer avatar, is ready-to-hand. The object only becomes other to the self when it is present-at-hand, when one is consciously contemplating it (Dourish, 2001).

Kittler (1999) claims that three forms of technological dissemination coincide with Lacan’s distinctions between the Imaginary, the Symbolic, and the Real. The typewriter is relegated to the Symbolic order. The film correlated with the Imaginary and the audio recording device is correlated with the Real.

The correlation between the Symbolic and the typewriter includes “signs of language in their materiality and technicity; they form, as letters and ciphers, a finite set which does not address the philosophical dream of an infinity of meaning” (Kittler, 1999, p. 45). What are important in these finite sets are the spaces between the blocks that make up the system. The systems are the reason why Lacan calls the Symbolic the “world of the machine.”

Kittler’s (1999) description of the Symbolic suggests that repetition produces the same effect repeatedly through mechanistic means. The concept of identity invokes a performance that is repeated again and again. Lacan (1966/2006) calls this repetition the “insistence of the letter” or the continual return to the letter as a mode of signification. This is an automatic production of identity through compulsive repetition. Lacan (1966/2006) described the circulation of the letter or the printed word as a once primary means for signification of self. But, the philosopher Gilles Deleuze (1994) argues that with repetition comes difference however slight that may be.

A concrete example of repetition and difference can be seen in the practice of stop motion animation. A movement is repeated but changed ever so slightly each time. The idea of identity
staying fixed negates the very act of living one’s life. I am not the same person I was when I began writing this sentence and certainly not the same person after I have read it numerous times. Each rereading or repetition, which is never exactly the same as the preceding reading, alters my understanding of the subject and of myself.

Both Ong (1982) and Havelock (1982) claim that literacy practice influences the formation of self. Foucault (1988) discusses writing as “the arts of oneself.” In his paper self-writing Foucault states, “The letter is also a way of presenting oneself to one's correspondent in the unfolding of everyday life” (p. 218). Through the experience of writing, an artifact of self is sent out into the world. The printed word functions as a continuation of the traditions of orality in a new medium. As culture shifts from the written letter to a very different form of circulation, the cultural interface redistributes the bodily senses in such a way that we cannot rely solely on past conceptions of literacy practice.

In a culture of informational aesthetics, data streams are interpreted as visual data. Twitter™ tweets consisting of 140 characters are pieced together as fragments in the flow of the information stream. One can visualize her/his data stream as a dynamic image through the process of data visualization. I could tweet this dissertation line by line and it would be approximately 3022 tweets. I could then use the Twitter™ API as way of interfacing with the data to form an image that becomes the dissertation. Because of the ways in which technology allows us to see the world, photos and videos posted on Facebook™ walls, fan memberships, and group affiliations contribute to identity as a performed image. The very concept of a Facebook™ wall creates a space that the individual inhabits. In today’s culture, the apparatus of self-construction is in a process of becoming. Instead of our focusing on what the next phase will be, we can (re)envision it moment to moment through the creation and performance of avatar. While this
dissertation was not placed into Twitter™ line by line, it can be viewed as a new iteration at the following address: http://twitter.com/msutherlin.

One might argue that this is nothing other than a repackaging of the notion of literacy to encompass evolving modes of communication. However, the very term literacy is too constrictive. The word itself denotes knowledge that is shared as a dominant understanding. The term also evokes illiteracy, and by so doing creates a binary. Instead, literacy/illiteracy is a continuum that embraces both sides of the cultural flow as a way of understanding evolving practices of communication. This study seeks to encompass a shared understanding without an adherence to the specific tenants of literacy practice. For instance, one can have an understanding of the dominant and shared understanding of the word patriotism while applying to that same term subtle nuances that both appropriate and hijack that meaning. Within the context of education and within the context of this study, it is acknowledged that many readers will understand the term literacy as naming the expected outcome of the conventional practices of instruction in reading and writing. To avoid needlessly confusing the reader, the pairing of “image”/image or the Institutionally, we continue to view the written word as the primary mode of communication. This primacy of the written word in the educational environment leads to a schism between the culture of school and the culture of the home, the place where the student experiences multiple ways of knowing and interacting with the world. As educators, we must bridge this gap so that we incorporate these multiple ways of knowing and experiencing into the classroom.
Film as a media is a technology that is rarely examined by the classroom instructor. Film is important because it allows the individual to see the feedback loop that occurs between the continuous and the discrete. Time is not linear. Much like the film that is constructed from discrete shots, time is composed of discrete categories of seconds, minutes, hours, days, weeks, etc., that are fabricated. Understanding the discrete within the flow has implications for the concept of history. History becomes a shared imaginary construction that can be engaged, revised, and created.

The movie or film acts as a reflective mirror through which the participant sees an “image” of him or herself. Because the Lacanian Imaginary is the mirror, the “image” of the body that is constituted through the technology of film can be more perfect or ideal than the actual body. Frame by frame the body is perceived as moving through space and time, but the body represented in film is fragmented throughout its continuity. The body’s apparent movement, created by a series of rapidly projected still pictures with slight alterations in the position of the body, is illusionary.

In *Cinema 1: The Movement-Image*, Deleuze (1986) discusses the development of film prior to World War II. Film is, in Deleuze’s description, an image concerned with the nature of spatial movement. This is the traditional formation of the Hollywood film. The actors in the film come in contact with a particular spatial event and have a direct reaction to those events. Movement through space measures time in the movement-image.

The difference and repetition within a film are a representative practice; intervals of exchange between the direction and location of the body being filmed allow for contradiction. Deleuze states:

> All identities are only simulated, produced as an optical ‘effect’ by the more profound game of difference and repetition. We propose to think difference in itself independently
of the forms of representation which reduce it to the Same, and the relation of different to
different independently of those forms which make them pass through the negative.
(Deleuze, 1994, p. ix)

Film captures these contradictions, and in doing so, reveals a schizophrenic or disconnected body.
Editing, however, produces a mytho-poetic representation of that body. The mythology of the ideal is a collective myth experienced by all through the media of film. Kittler describes the spectacle of technology as a means of control: the medium modulates the message. It must be noted that when Kittler made these claims he was referring to the Hollywood film prior to World War II, and not to the film that can be so easily captured today on almost any digital camera or camcorder (Mulvey, 1984; Kittler, 1999).

In Cinema 2: The Time-Image, Deleuze (1986) describes an image that is “image.” This is the unexpected image of cinema that allows one to experience the strange or the imaginary image of self. Actors in this type of cinema cannot act or react in an immediate fashion. The time-image produces a situation in which the connections between the camera’s shifting perspective is not rational or linear. The time-image is, therefore, montage or (re)mix in which connections are made between seemingly disparate sites/sights. The emphasis in the time image is the journey or the process of becoming.

As has been stated, the Lacanian Real in this study has been dissappropriated for the process of becoming that takes place in the non-representational space of chora. Becoming is the process through which the residue of the Symbolic and the Imaginary are sloughed off. One can never reach becoming because it is a way of maneuvering through the world that requires interaction and socialization, meaning that one cannot remove oneself entirely from the Symbolic or Imaginary orders. According to Kittler (1999) the technological counterpart to the Real is the gramophone or audio recording device. While I would argue that the gramophone does capture
the stops, fits, starts, pauses, etc., it does not record the whole scene because such recording is impossible. However, it makes attempts at the Real in ways that are not possible for all forms of technological practice.

For the purposes of this study, the digital video camera was utilized. Through the use of an audio/video recording device, a student becomes capable of recording the absences, the accidents, the stutters, stops, place fillers, fits, and starts. As the duration of the recording occurs, the ethereal qualities of the voice are captured. No longer is the voice lost to the utterances that follow it. Memory and perception are augmented by the ability to document real time events and play them over and over again. It is through this repetition that difference is experienced. Each time a repetition occurs, it layers upon itself. This layering is akin to the function of rhyme in poetry. Deleuze (1994) states:

As for the repetition of a single word, we must understand this as a ‘generalized rhyme’, not rhyme as restricted repetition. This generalization can proceed in two ways: either a word taken in two senses ensures a resemblance or a paradoxical identity between the two senses; or a word taken in one sense exercises an attractive enforced on its neighbors, communicating an extraordinary gravity to them until one of the neighboring words takes up the baton and becomes in turn a center of repetition. (pp. 21-22)

As the new center of repetition, a word in a poem, book, film, etc., allows for different understandings each time it is encountered. However, a word goes beyond the word itself. A phrase, a line break, the sounds uttered or images in juxtaposition allow for the paradox of difference within the same. At the very least, multiple meanings of a word or image allow for choice. The choice available is one in which multiple interpretations are permitted simultaneously. The smallest change can have a large impact. For instance, the function of a homonym, a word with the same spelling as another but without the same meaning, can influence the interpretation of an entire narrative, producing a difference in meaning that fills the gap between the repetitions. The structure of this dissertation functions as a homonymic pun. It has an
Enterduction and an Endroduction and between the two is the appropriated différance that is a means of circulation, or conduction. The power of différance and repetition is produced by the feedback loop. Interaction provides for repetition and transformation through that interaction.

Technical Reciprocity: The Posthuman Condition

Kittler (1999) diminishes the reader’s role in shaping technology. His argument is that the individual is limited by the technology of his time. Kittler is arguably one of the first to describe what is now called the posthuman condition. To be posthuman based on Kittler’s description is to be transformed into data through the subjugation of human agency. This view of the apparatus assumes that it will subsume the human condition in such a way that it will consume and be consumed by all conceptions of the human soul.

The Internet both allows and compels us to make the private public. The words we use in emails and posts to message boards, our shopping habits, and our interests, revealed in the sites we visit, become a way of tracking and constructing our identity. However, engagement with technology is reciprocal. Furthermore, the media can be short-circuited through subversive means. We engage the world through a series of screens (or spectator divides), and we are becoming versed in new ways of navigating, programming, and interfacing with these cultural screens. The impact of technology on the iteration of self far exceeds the physical interface of our technological gadgets; it is reshaping the way we think about reality and the possibilities that exist within it. At the same time we must ask the question: how do we produce an educational environment that allows for the possibility of input on the part of the student as a way of forming a feedback loop?

McLuhan (1962) discusses the shifting of the individual’s conceptions as the extension of the senses through a prosthesis, but to think of technology as separate from the human body is to
fall prey to the binaries that plague the majority of Western thought. As will be discussed in contiguous sections, even McLuhan’s use of the term prosthesis may be misleading, giving rise to a false understanding of the impact of technology on the evolution of the human body.

Man/machine is not a return to the impersonal industrial age of assembly lines and the repetition of the Same (Same is capitalized to denote repetition without difference); it is the ability to connect and disconnect from the flows of culture as a way of rethinking the presuppositions of the self (Deleuze, 1994).

In the electronic age, we are seeing a decline in the strictly linear thinking of the industrial age and an increase in multivocality. When each person has the ability to produce and interpret a work of art based on the technology of her/his time, the hierarchy of art production and individual identity begins to break down. If everyone can make and interpret art, the specialization of the artist as a skilled craftsman is no longer the defining attribute of artistic practice. Newer forms of art invite the viewer to become a participant in its making. In discussing what he calls the creation of new forms of art, McLuhan (1962) states, “This was the moment of transcendence of the Guttenberg technology. The centuries-old separation of senses and functions ended in a quite unexpected unity” (p. 202). A new monism has been restored. Through the application of such methodologies at the elementary and secondary levels of education, the readers are no longer passive receivers of information; rather, they are permitted to experience and to create the information through affective and effective channels (Ulmer, 1994).

*Picto-ideo-phonograpic Image*

The shift from the printed word to the cinema as a form of collective myth restructured the human consciousness in such a way that we are no longer signified by the written letter as a structuralist signifier, but by what Derrida (1976) terms the picto-ideo-phonograpic image.
According to Ulmer (1985), the creation of information in and through experience involves an interaction with Derrida’s picto-ideo-phonographic image which functions at three levels of communication: image, pun, and discourse.

Image, pun, and discourse deal with meaning through modularity and collage/montage methodologies. The picto-ideo-phonographic image can be equated with Deleuze’s (1986) time-image. Based on the multilayered approach to texts, Derrida accuses Lacan of being a structuralist, calling psychoanalysis a system that imposes a singular reading of the text of the self, rather than allowing a multitude of interpretations. In Derrida’s view the triadic order of the Symbolic, the Imaginary, and the Real close off meaning. Instead, the picto-ideo-phonographic image proposes image, pun, and discourse as ways of understanding the nature of texts. These three elements are intertwined in such a way that it is not about the subservience of one form of media to another; rather, forms of media converge and diverge and build upon the communicative qualities of other forms of media. Redistribution of media is not about a shifting of precedence, but a shifting of conception. We are not trading the written word and the spoken word for a new form of interface, but integrating them into our evolving repertoire (Derrida, 1976; Ulmer, 1984, 1994, 2003).

Because of new methods of interface that layer one on top the other, experience is mediated and described through Derrida's picto-ideo-phonographic image. The “picto” of the picto-ideo-phonographic image refers to the image of resemblance, “ideo” to its conceptual factors, “phono” to its auditory function, and graphic is its inscription. Derrida describes the inscription of the graphic as signature. The signature is the event or the writing or changing of the context of the surface through inscription. To trace the signature is to circumscribe the meaning of the artist, yet never fully to understand it. In literacy practice, the event of reading becomes a
second act of signature in which the absent writer is made present. Writing or inscription in the physical sense is a signification of the event or the act of writing (Derrida, 1988).

Image as graphic is information inscribed on a surface. That is not to say that the “image” can only be attended to through sight. Images are not relegated to the visible in terms of optics. Surface may even be attributed to sound waves as they cut through the air. The first wax cylinder created by Thomas Edison, its later version the vinyl record, and mp3, all involve the inscription or writing of data. The inscription on any surface that can be attended to by the senses can be defined as graphic or analog. This graphic data is translated into electrical impulse and inscribed onto the human data collection in the brain. The attribution of the graphic to more than the visual or even the visual and the tactile opens up the realm of possibility in terms of both the “image” and graphic representation for educators and their students. The graphic becomes the transcription of object and image into code (Derrida, 1988, 2004).

The Picto-ideo-phonographic image as code sets a scene for the performance of “image”/image or the In<SCRIPT>ion. Puns function through a play on words that incite multiple meanings that work within and against dominant discourse. In literary terms the pun is typically one word carrying elements of two or more meanings of the word in question. They rely on the sound of the word that is dependant upon context. For instance the following personal account, however banal it may be, illustrates the nature of the verbal pun. My step-father and I were having a discussion about the improvements recently made to his church. He mentioned a woman who had given an organ to the church. I immediately responded, “I guess that makes her an organ donor.”

Visual puns incorporate the verbal in relation to the image. For instance, in Bruce Nauman’s From Hand to Mouth, which consists of a casting of Nauman’s hand, arm, and mouth,
viewers are presented with the phrase “from hand to mouth” which references living from hand to mouth as well as the formal line of the piece, which draws the eye from hand to mouth. Mentally, we may even be creating an “image” that shows the duration of the hand moving to the mouth.

Within the picto-ideo-phonographic image, the literary and the visual pun collapse into one another, requiring sound, image, and (con)text. The individual who initiates the use of a pun understands the commonly accepted usage and creates new meaning for the text in question. In this manner, discourse becomes transferable between contexts in such a way that it creates something new in the space between. Such a site/sight redefines the relationship of reader and text, artwork and viewer, teacher and student. Each of these relationships refers to an incarnation of the individual as one or many of the juxtaposed terms. Within this new definition of pun, the “image” becomes a site/sight for the movement and performance/interaction of interbody (Derrida, 1976; Ulmer, 2003).

Electracy, Interbody, and Hypertext

The concept of cultural interface within new media discourse transforms into the concept of interbody, however, before moving into the concept of interbody, the term electracy must first be defined. Ulmer (1994) defines electracy as our way of navigating through the sea of new media. Electracy exists as an intermingling of technology, institutional practices, and identity formations. According to Ulmer (1994), the birth of electracy occurred with the invention of photography in 1830. New recording technologies have increased the scope of electracy by incorporating the whole scene as both presence and absence. They are able to capture the sight, sound, and motion of human interaction. Since Ulmer’s formation of the word, technological practices have made way for virtual human interaction, as well.
Ulmer (2003) describes what he calls a switch from interface to interbody. The interbody situates the computer as an augmentation of the human mind within its embodied state of the human body.

This embodied mind is positioned within a family, in a culture, a society, a historical moment (the “popcycle”). The person possessed of this mind is sexed, gendered, nationalized, classed, raced, ethicized, and so on through all the ideological categories used to describe identity. (Ulmer, 2003, p.162)

The situatedness of identity relies on categories that exist as part of the continual flow of identity formation. In Ulmer’s understanding identity is augmented with layers of classification while remaining unique.

Interbody dialogues deal with both representation and meta-representation through the In<SCRIPT>ion. Representation and meta-re-presentation or image/ “image” can be facilitated through the use of the conceptual construct of hypermedia. Meta-re-presentation refers to the formulation of “image” as a representation that is reflexive by nature. The interbody must become capable of bifurcation and unification in order to understand the self in relation to an/other. As Deleuze states in The Logic of Sense (1990), we must eat the words we speak and speak the words we eat. The analogy given is that of the circuit of the mouth that is connected to both speaking and eating. The connection to the ear is a circuit for speaking and the connection to the anus is a circuit for eating. The interbody is the Body without Organs or the “image” that only contains a center that is constantly de-centered and defined by movement; it is connectable in all dimensions. In today’s culture, bodies as “image” are embodied fragments; virtual images are like the breadcrumbs left by Hansel and Gretel and consumed by the birds as they journey through the woods. However, this narrative today would be inverted. It is not the animals alone that consume the crumbs. Hansel and Gretel, along with the town, city, state, rocks, trees, houses, etc., consume the crumbs as quickly as they are dropped, and the crumbs are then transformed through the
process of digestion. This is a journey in which Hansel and Gretel lose their center of origin while finding themselves. “I make, remake and unmake my concepts along a moving horizon, from an always decentred centre, from an always displaced periphery which repeats and differentiates them” (Deleuze, 1994, p. xxi). The recording power of the technology allows for the capture of what was once only possible in memory in order for it to be perceived infinitely (Ulmer, 2003; Deleuze, 1990).

The communicative circuit of hypermedia allows for multiple combinations of text, image, and audio through its ability to write the conscious and interpret the unconscious. Links or connections can be made to multiple contexts and content. These links can be both expanded and collapsed in order to configure a visual concept map. Furthermore, hypermedia encourages active readership. Through linkages both literal and metaphorical, the discourse of traditional modes of signifier and signified can be fragmented.

In this study I asked my students to understand the concepts of artist intent and the appropriation of the “image” in order to invert the rules common to representational display. Throughout our engagement with both virtual and physical bodies, I asked students to utilize appropriation as a means of enabling a deeper understanding of the texts that surround them. Such appropriated objects and images allow for différence as the artist/teacher/student adds layers of new meanings and associations over the image and its original meaning. Readers of screen-based hypermedia, in many cases, utilize the same program for both reading and creation. Because of this, reading and writing can occur simultaneously. Readers can choose to make notes or even dispute claims of the author without negating the author’s original intent. Like previous forms of annotation, they can add video, audio, and other representational devices as a means of obtaining voice and intertextuality (Landow, 2006).
Kristeva (1996) describes intertextuality as the intersection of dialogue, reader, and exterior texts. Through the introduction of these elements the text becomes three-dimensional. The fourth dimension is added through the event of reading. Utilizing Kristeva’s description of intertextuality, one understands that all texts become the appropriation and transformation of another (an/other).

Moreover, such an understanding of intertextuality—one that points to a dynamics involving a destruction of the creative identity and reconstitution of a new plurality—assumes at the same time that the one who reads, the reader, participates in the same dynamics. If we are readers of intertextuality, we must be capable of the same putting-into-process of our identities, capable of identifying with the different types of texts, voices, and semantic, syntactic, and phonic systems at play in a given text (Kristeva & Guberman, 1996, p. 190).

Intertextuality becomes a way of seeing from the eyes of another without becoming another. It allows a richer understanding of the ways in which texts function as a method of identity production. The identity produced becomes capable of movement between both dominant culture and various sub-cultures.

Through intertextual practice there is slippage of the signifier and the signified leaving a space open for the interpreting/interpreted subject. For instance, during this study some students in class who studied the Bio-art of Eduardo Kac connected their understandings, questions, ethical issues, and thoughts together in a large web. The web contained visual images thought to be pertinent by students to an understanding of Kac’s work. We discussed how a People for the Ethical Treatment of Animal’s (PETA) advertisement could be introduced into the constructed hypertext and analyzed for similarities and differences to Alba, Kac’s glowing rabbit. Someone brought up President Obama’s killing of the fly and the importance that PETA placed on its extermination. That same student did a (re)mix project on the media coverage relating to the fly incident and the omissions of other world events she personally felt were much more important.
She mixed together images of the media coverage including references to those events not discussed. Her comments and created artwork displayed her ability to tap into the *hypertextual imagination* (Miller, 2008). The *hypertextual imagination* is much more than the software. It allows students to make connections to their own lives and to the lives of others.

Hypermedia has been utilized by a variety of art educators. Carpenter and Taylor (2003), Taylor and Carpenter (2002), Gregory (1989), Kiefer-Boyd (1996), Taylor (2000), Tavin (2003), and Reese (2002) have all used hypertext in the classroom setting as a means of making meaning from the visual. Galbraith (1996) and Kiefer-Boyd (1996) have both researched the use of hypertext in training pre-service art educators, while Tavin (2003) has utilized this process in a reflective way with pre-service elementary educators.

Reese (2002) discusses hypertext in relation to narrative teaching practice. Narrative can generally be described as a myth, poem, story, artwork, performance, drama, or history that provides information from more than one perspective. It teaches students that there are always multiple narratives occurring and being constructed simultaneously. By combining narrative with hypertext, multiple viewpoints can be explored in a non-linear pattern. Through engagement with hypertextual thinking, students can become aware of self-learning and self-organization.

**Democratic Construction of Information**

Web 2.0 applications such as Wikipedia are bringing democracy to information (Bruns, 2008). In July of 2006, Stephen Colbert made the following statement regarding the Internet information wiki, Wikipedia, on his Comedy Central show *The Colbert Report*: “You see, any user can change any entry, and if enough other users agree with them, it becomes true” (Colbert, 2006). After completing this statement, Colbert proceeded to erase all references to George Washington’s owning slaves from the George Washington Wikipedia entry. This action addresses
one of the myths of our nation: our founding fathers could never have built our country through the exploitation of other human beings. Wikiality has become a space where, if enough people believe something, it does become “true.” It is the written form of the collective social myth (McCarthy, 2006).

The power of the popular media in constructing reality was made evident in a very real and literal way when Colbert asked his viewers to change the Wikipedia entry for elephants to state that the population had tripled in the last six months. The request by Colbert was taken-up in such a substantial way that the server for Wikipedia subsequently crashed due to the overload (McCarthy, 2006). While this is a dangerous concept for the uncritical individual, it presents tremendous potential for students as producers of meaning.

Utilizing Barthes’ notion of active readership, an individual is able to interpret the meaning of text based on factors that are constantly shifting. Active readership means being literate in all textual forms and refers not only to an understanding of the ways in which images and texts govern our behaviors, but also to the act of production. Readership is an act of creation in which, either conceptually or physically, the reader becomes a producer of the text. Active readers who are critically engaged have the ability to decode, analyze, and author an image. It is the ability to appropriate or acquire and utilize a visual text for one’s own purposes. “The goal of literary work (of literature as work) is to make the reader no longer a consumer, but a producer of the text” (Barthes, 1973, p. 4). It is no longer enough for educators to teach learners to consume texts; learners should be able to engage in the process of textual analysis as a means of (self)representation.

In an era of information overload, data proliferates and expands the ways we make meaning in the world. At the same time data obscures information through its methods of
presentation. Personal and group adherence to the text as an unchanging force in the construction of culture negates possible readings that might open the doors to a more complex narrative of culture. By employing active readership, students and teacher can engage in creative production as a means of interpretation that will allow for critical agency and informed citizenship that is reflexive by nature (Taylor, 2000).

Avatar as Apparatus

Throughout the course of this study, student avatars function as Bodies without Organs that allow for the flow of discourse both within and among the class members. The avatar becomes a dispositif or apparatus, the closest English translation for dispositif. Foucault’s apparatus describes a socio-technical system meant as a controlling agent. Literacy in its current formation in the educational system would fit this description; however, such a system can be produced as a new In<SCRIPT>ion. According to Deleuze's (1992) interpretation of Foucault's apparatus,

In the first instance it is a tangle a multi-linear ensemble composed of lines, each having a different nature. And the lines in the apparatus do not outline or surround systems which are each homogeneous in their own right, object, subject, language, and so on, but follow directions, trace balances which are always off balance, now drawing together and then distancing themselves from one another. (p. 159)

The description of the dispositif above is analogous to the process of teaching and learning proposed in this dissertation. The above description is akin to Deleuze & Guattari’s (1987) Lines of Flight. The dispositif becomes the creation of an affective logic that moves from the inside to the outside and back again in a never-ending reiteration. It is the avatar as dispositif that allows for an incarnation that can move freely between borders: mind/body, self/other, conscious/unconscious.
While this a lofty and idealistic goal, it is the goal that I have set for myself as someone who is in the process of becoming a teacher and co-learner with my students. There are many (mis)steps that occur throughout this process that break up the ideal I have cobbled together from the debris of my own practice. The avatar is the ideal, the virtual, the imaginary, incarnated and (re)incarnated in the actual situation. The performance that is allowed by avatar is distinct from the performance of institutional or cultural ritual because multiple cultures can be both participated in and invented simultaneously. This new dispositif is not only of hermeneutic (re)interpretation; it also involves a participation in artistic heuretic invention. It is the invention of theory grounded in practice (Ulmer, 1985, 2009).
Brunelleschi’s perspective represented the technological adaptation of architectures or constructions, just as Gutenberg’s book printing did with handwriting. Therefore it is no wonder there soon arose a feedback loop between book printing and perspective.

Friedrich Kittler

Teaching, research, and art practice are all activities that require an understanding of the cultural and social network in which they take place. The perspective of the artist/researcher/teacher will be discussed as it is incarnated through representation since there is no method of inhabiting the head of an/other. Words, images, speech, etc., are the ways in which a particular individual’s perspective is articulated as a representation of the event(s). However, I also attempt to pay homage to the pauses, stutters, and silences in the dialogue between my students and myself.

Representation has had a long tradition of privileging the voice of the author as researcher, the artist of an artwork, and the teacher in the classroom. The voice of the participants in the events of research, art, and teaching are rarely presented without editing. Editing refers to cleanup, organization, and direction of voice. Even those teachers, researchers, and artists who purport postmodern methodologies are oriented towards a specific goal. We are taught as readers and viewers to “see” and “read” from the perspective of the artist or author. This is the goal of literacy, to understand the intent through induction rather than conduction of images and texts. This is exhibited quite literally through the artistic technique of perspective (Berger, 1972).

Perspectives on Representation

Perspective is an artistic technique derived from the Cartesian coordinate system. In one-point perspective the viewer is given a single point on a horizon line or a “point-of-view.” All
objects converge on the picture plane at that point. There is only one location or space the viewer can stand in order for the viewer to fully understand the illusion of depth. It is an illusion because it is a representation on a two-dimensional surface that works towards the surface recreation of a three-dimensional space (Berger, 1972; Kittler, 2001).

Cartesian optics is the way in which the human body is made disciplined. Perspective paralyzes the body in order to create the ideal viewpoint and viewer. The viewer cannot move from his or her particular location and still retain a fundamental understanding of the image. The purpose of perspective is to give the viewer a way of knowing the world that is perceived as absolute.

It is like a beam from a lighthouse — only instead of light traveling outwards, appearances travel in. The conventions called those appearances 'reality.' Perspective makes the single eye the centre of the visible world. (Berger, 1972, p. 16)

Perspective serves as a way of controlling the viewer through self-regulation. Self-regulation as a way of understanding the world parallels the concept of discourse or objects of knowledge (Foucault, 1972).

According to Foucault (1972), discourse refers to the means by which we come to understand objects of knowledge as a form of representation. Foucault states that everything that is presented through discourse was already present through the mysterious silence that came before it and that runs as an undercurrent beneath. Discourse always points to a secret and distant origin that can never be fully grasped. This secret point-of-origin can be paralleled with the process of education and the one-point perspective of traditional teaching practice.

Multiple Perspectives: Layering Narratives

In many classrooms, the student is taught to “see” from the “point-of-view” of the teacher, the authority figure who holds the key to knowledge. The right answer is the one that is sought,
and meaning making beyond the text in question is undesired. Tangents akin to Deleuze and Guattari’s (1987) *Lines of Flight* or creative de-territorializations of discourse are often seen as a waste of time. Implementing the concept of *Lines of Flight* turns the one-point perspective of the educator into an interchangeable and transformational multiplicity.

Within the construction of multiple perspectives, there is a layering of voices similar to the process of collage. To return once again to an artistic metaphor, synthetic cubism, utilizing collage methods, produces a narrative space through layering. Narrative becomes part of the collage process as images and objects merge to form a new story. Layering allows for collage to occur through the juxtaposition of seemingly disjointed items. These fractal images composed of the flow of information from all directions allow for multiple reconfigurations of place/sight/site. These new configurations synthesize discourses in the space between. According to Foucault (1972):

> The frontiers of a book are never clear-cut: beyond the title, the first lines, and the last full stop, beyond it internal configuration and its autonomous form, it is caught up in a system of references to other books, and other texts, other sentences: it is a node within a network. (p. 23).

Kittler (1992) describes Foucault’s networks as discourse networks or inscription systems. A discourse network is comprised of technological and institutional aspects that allow for the collection, storage, and production of significant data. The data stored is physical, discursive, technological, and social. Because of this intermingling of data sources, “discourse must not be referred to the distant presence of the origin, but treated as and when it occurs” (Foucault, 1972, p. 25).

**Visual Literacy**

Visual literacy as a practice is not a new concept. John Debes first coined the term visual literacy in 1969. In his definition, we can see a broad understanding of the possibilities of visual
Visual literacy refers to a group of vision competencies a human being can develop by seeing; at the same time, he has and integrates other sensory experiences. The development of these competencies is fundamental to normal human learning. When developed, they enable a visually literate person to discriminate and interpret the visible actions, objects, and/or symbols, natural or man-made, that he encounters in his environment. Through the creative use of these competencies, he is able to communicate with others. Through the appreciative use of these competencies, he is able to comprehend and enjoy the masterworks of visual communication. (p. 25)

Debes discusses the integration of other sensory experiences, a concept that acknowledges that the visual image has always been informed by (con)text. Sound, smell, and touch are important in the formation of (con)text in his understanding of visual literacy. His description, however, relates visual competencies to the comprehension and enjoyment of masterworks. The term “masterwork” is a hierarchical model that privileges artist intent in the process of meaning-making. Visual literacy falls prey to the plight of all literacy models, in that it deals with taxonomical understanding of the image.

The concept of artist’s intent pertains to the message that an artwork conveys as interpreted by the artist. In this method of interpretation the image-maker has communicated a specific message to the reader through a series of visual codes. When the reader of those codes has no knowledge of them, it is assumed that he or she does not understand the image. Value is not given or assigned to those messages extracted from the image that do not directly relate back to the metaphor of the image-maker or artist. There is an inherent ambiguity when it comes to artist’s intent. We can never know what the artist intended in any direct sense of the word; we can only circumscribe or trace his meaning. The meaning produced is a map and not the territory, a representation of the w/whole, presence and absence (Baudrillard, 1995; Ulmer, 2005).

Visual literacy advocate Feldman (1976) states that because of our use of phonic symbols, the image of syllabic sounds that grew out of pictographs, we are forced to forget what the
symbols look like and remember only the sounds that they represent. When we learn how to read, we forget the symbol at a sub-cortical level. Understanding that letters stand for something else is an example of the symbolic nature of traditional verbal literacy as governed by rules rather than resemblance or indication. Semiotic notions of literacy allow for the inscription of meaning through the graphic. Graphic entities should be understood from both a pre- and post- mirror stage association in the same way that one must understand language from both a representational and a virtual standpoint (Kristeva & Oliver, 2002). Having both pre- and post- mirror stage associations gives the individual the ability to stratify meaning as layers within a given representational practice. These layers permit multiple entry ways, both personal and social, into the image.

Representation and Semiotic Stratification

According to Mitchell (1994), as a society we moved beyond the linguistic turn (Rorty, 1967) in philosophical discourse into a realm known as the “pictorial turn” in which there is a sense of discomfort with the relationship between the image and its verbal counterpart. Mitchell expresses concern with how the image operates on its viewer, how its history is to be understood, and what is to be done with the image itself. Mitchell has employed many of Goodman’s theories in his work with representation. Goodman (1976) begins his book Languages of Art with the problem of representation as an entry point into the visual image, and Mitchell (1994) describes three basic questions about representation: “(1) What lies outside representation? (2) Why are we so anxious about it? (3) What is our responsibility towards it?” (p. 418). The anxiety and responsibility towards representation described by Mitchell evokes yet another cultural turn, the affective turn. The affective turn deals with the body and emotion and belongs both to the mind and the body. The image becomes representation that can be performed. The performance of image makes room for multiple answers to the questions posed by Mitchell. The multiple answers
that arise are a way of understanding the performance of the image as an expansion and
contraction of the image. The term affect itself requires us to look at the very nature of causality,
but it does so based on complex relationships (Clough & Hailey, 2007).

Every inscription becomes a complex relationship between its representation and its
performance. The body as a writable text creates a relationship in which the surface of the body is
both written and written on through the event of writing (Derrida, 1988). A translation of this act
as literal representation is the process of tattooing. The tattoo as a signifier is imbued with a
semiotic significance to the tattooed through the event of interacting with the individual creating
the tattoo. However, the event is not fully constructed by the tattoo artist or the receiver of the
tattoo. The experience of being tattooed is the first inscription of the event. The second inscription
of the event is reciprocal between the tattoo artist and the tattooed. The tattoo artist physically
inscribes on the surface of the tattooed as well as virtually inscribes through the experience. The
individual tattoo inscribes virtually on the tattooist through dialogue or lack of dialogue
throughout the process. This analogy can be paralleled with the process of teaching and learning.
The teacher touches the student, and the student touches the teacher through the event of
teaching/learning.

The written “image” of affect is a form of semiotic association; the unconscious creates a
representation of the body that is an “image” of the knowing self. Continual retracing of the
“image” illuminates omissions while the process of assemblage or bricolage allows for the
invention of new meaning. The stratification of meaning produced has no definitive
representation, only multiplicities of representation. It is representation as the dynamic entity of
both interpretation and invention. Once the “image” has been created the cultural (con)text of the
“image” is taken into account. Identification of the existence of cultural norms gives an individual
the ability to find marginalized meanings within the cultural system and the self as part of the cultural system (Ulmer, 1994).

A Proposition for a Change in Visual Culture (Dis)Course

Rather than focus solely on the attributes of visual literacy that make it primarily visual, I propose “image”/ “i”/ “nation” as a theoretical apparatus. Such an apparatus, as it will be described in the section involving the dispositif, allows for flux in the implementation of (art) education practice. The term “image” refers to the virtual image, “i” to the collective dialogue, and “nation” to the incarnation of the self within the collective. Creative critical response works towards an identification of power structures inherent in literacy discourse (Foucault, 1978). Viewers of an image must sort through visual codes to make meaning of their own through the process of programming.

Art educators work within a particular set of parameters that govern the discussion of art education. Art education ultimately becomes visual art education, which places an emphasis on vision. This tunnel “vision” in art education is derived from a Foucauldian notion of visuality: power comes from seeing and being seen. Foucault explains this by describing Jeremy Bentham’s panopticon in which the unseen or omniscient viewer placed in a tower overlooking prison cells is utilized as a social control mechanism. The all-seeing tower is the example of self-regulation through the enactment of the gaze and objectification of the human body. It is the promotion of logic over sensation, internalization enacted as social control (Foucault, 1995).

In relation to visual culture one cannot simply focus on the gaze of the panopticon (social apparatus) as a defining attribute of social understanding, we must also pay attention to the gaze of the viewer. According to Mitchell (2002), visual culture is both the social construction of the visual, as well as the visual construction of society. Mitchell distinguishes between visual studies
and visual culture. Visual studies is the field of inquiry or the discipline while visual culture is the object of inquiry. Visual culture evokes Derrida’s concept of the “dangerous supplement”; it seeks to fill the gap or void that is created between aesthetics and art history. The visual experience of aesthetics combines with the art historical aspects of visual images and forms. Many educators in the public school setting fear this “dangerous supplement” because it transforms literacy practices to include movement, smell, sound, the visual, etc., (Derrida, 1976).

Art educator Tavin (2005) describes a form of visual culture utilizing two modes of practice. First, there is the object itself or what the object says. The functional definition of visual culture is the study of all things visual within a given culture. The second mode of practice refers to the interaction with the object of the experience. This becomes the cultural interface. The structure (visual object) of the system determines the mode of interface. What is being proposed is not a dismissal of the visual, but rather a shifting of conception as proposed by McLuhan (1962). The “image” of art education should be a movement-image and a time-image in which art education is constantly becoming, appropriating from the culture that which resonates in the gap between art and life. The emphasis on the time-image and the movement-image is not an adherence to a particular media; it is a way of thinking that allows for the discrete within the rushing flow of culture. Art education should intertwine the social, cultural, and political with the personal. If art education is attended to in this way, art educators and their students are able to move through both space and time in a way that allows for the reconfiguration of cultural artifacts and symbols as a process that is both individual and collective. Through this understanding of the world, students and teacher are able to view culture in a state of flux as both variable and emergent.

Visual culture in art education allows the visual components of the cultural interface to be
explored on a contextual level. The structuralist components of image interpretation become
dynamic when placed in a new situation or discussed through a particular presentation method.
Art educators have been developing apparatuses and tools for some time that allow the viewer of
a work of art to engage with the context, techniques, and concepts of a work of art (Carpenter &
Sessions, 2002), the context, subtext, and schooltext (Wilson-McKay and Monteverde, 2002), and
the exploration of visual culture (Jeffers, 2002). Context, techniques, and concepts display the
apparatus as three circles that allow the viewer of an image to determine content based on context
and techniques. Context in McKay and Monteverde’s description is the background information
of the image, as well as the way in which it is presented. Subtext refers to what the image is
saying without saying it. Schooltext refers to the interdisciplinary connections that can be made to
the image. Many of these forms of image interpretation have appropriated methods from other
theoretical frameworks such as constructivism, situated learning, social reconstructivism,
complexity theory, and hypertext theory, to name a few. These theories allow for a dynamic
representation of images that provide for multiple interpretations. These multiple interpretations
can and should be incarnated through the process of invention, the virtual made “actual.” As an
evolving discipline, art educators need an apparatus that explores the connection between
interpretation and creation, an apparatus that will allow us to make sense of our fragmented
culture in multiple ways. This actualization is a form of representation that functions as an
extension of self and becomes dynamic through the concept of performance of avatar.

The construction of the word re-presentation allows for multiple interpretations of an
image through multiple presentations. Representation has lead to a classification of things into
categories, and classification has led to an understanding of disciplines, objects, images, and
discourses as rigid structures. The development of a cultural classification system has been
dependent in large part on the comfort of those in charge. At this point in educational history, we have created a cultural interface that privileges one interpretation, the one backed by statistical “fact.” What if the assessment methods used to obtain these “facts” are asking the wrong questions? What if as educators we are working towards an image of education that at its outset was ill-determined? Should we not be engaging students in an understanding of the world as it emerges and not simply as it was or is?

Sweeny (2010) makes the claim that the cultural layering that occurs in contemporary technologies, including video games, is full of possibilities for art education research. Phones such as the new Droid™ with its Android™ OS have the ability to stream data from Facebook™, Twitter™, and Google Buzz™, all on the same screen as a series of layered clouds. Augmented reality applications on smart phones like the iPhone™ and the Droid™ are merging the physical and virtual layers of reality through the utilization of the camera to stream real-time data that is integrated with the image on the screen. With the exponential growth of technology, it may be difficult to stay abreast of the cultural shifts between the layers. This may provide an opportunity for students to take part in teaching by teaching the teacher. The teacher can then find thematic connections to the technology being utilized as a form of feedback loop.

Instead of embracing these cultural shifts, teachers and administrators who are unfamiliar with popular culture and fearful of new technologies relegate them to the realm of low culture. Instead of meeting students where they are, teachers too often force students to conform to outdated modes of practice. In education, this may manifest as an emphasis on form over content, and in art education, as the strict adherence to components such as Arthur Wesley Dow’s elements and principles of design. As educators, many of us are focusing on circulating modes of meaning-making that are a hundred years old. The point is not to do away with these forms of
meaning production, but rather, to focus on the components of a process of meaning/making that
can facilitate student understanding and agency in the culture of their everyday lives. Engaging
students on this level can work toward the making of connections to a wide variety of artifacts
otherwise dismissed by the student.

Gude (2004) has produced a list of postmodern principles that coincide with the need to
connect with the everyday: Appropriation, Juxtaposition, Recontextualization, Layering,
Interaction of text and image, Hybridity, Gazing, Representin':

Appropriation: Gude notes the prevalence of appropriation in a wide range of
contemporary curriculum. With regards to appropriation, Gude states, “If one lives in a forest,
wood will likely become one’s medium for creative play. If one grows up in a world filled with
cheap, disposable images, these easily become the stuff out of which one makes one’s own
creative expression” (para. 5).

Juxtaposition: Within juxtaposition there is a formation of assemblage through the
combination of a variety of images. Through the process of juxtaposition, students become better
able to understand the network of images that crash into each other through the process of
everyday life.

Recontextualization: The process of recontextualization is derived from deconstructivism,
a term coined by Derrida (1976). Through recontextualization students place images and objects
in new contexts in order to better understand the ways in which the image can be remade. Each
new context and juxtaposition with other images and texts gives new meaning to the work in
question.

Layering: Because of the proliferation of images due to their digitization, they are no
longer precious; images can be stacked one on top of the other, varying the level of transparency.
The stratification of images gives students the opportunity to witness the complex relationships of the unconscious mind.

*Interaction of text and image:* Gude presents the reader with the intermingling of text and image in such a way that neither becomes illustrative of the other component. Instead, the student is presented with the discursive spaces between image and text. The disjointed nature of the two allows for the creation of meaning in the space between.

*Hybridity:* Hybridity refers not only to the multimedia aspects of a work of art, but also to the blending of cultural boundaries. This blending adds to the complexity of the art experience. The student can, through juxtaposition, layering, recontextualization, appropriation, and the interaction of text and image, explore the human condition. What occurs is the melding of boundaries: man/machine, art/science, teacher/student, etc.

*Gazing:* Gazing, in both art historical and media studies contexts, refers to the act of looking and, through such looking, the attaining of a sense of knowledge and power. This gaze is most commonly directed at the “other” and refers to the power that seeing and being seen has over the viewer.

*Representin':* Representin' is a process through which the student’s own culture and personal experience becomes part of his or her creative expression. The slang version of representing, “representin’,” becomes the declaration of one’s identity through the use of video, objects, images, text, installations, etc.

In the case of art education, visual culture through its formulation and connection to such areas as media studies, cultural studies, film studies, and technology seeks to work with these principles. According to Tavin (2005), the purpose of visual culture is to privilege the visual in relation to multi-modal practice. Duncum (2004), on the other hand, claims that the visual cannot
be separated or untangled from the multimodal practice in which it exists and still retain its meaning. Synchronicity between all components of a text is essential to the meaning-making process. Duncum (2004) states that one cannot turn down the TV, turn off the audio track to a video game, or block out the written text of a website and understand the images inherent in each of these media. Duncum makes a strong argument for the inclusion of these components in the understanding of visual literacy because he gives credence to their ability to inform and construct representation.

Forms of critical pedagogy appropriated and dissappropriated within the context of this study are derived from the writings of educators such as Aronowitz and Giroux (1991), Giroux (1981, 1992, 1996), Giroux and Purpel (1983), Giroux and Simon (1989), Kincheloe (2005), Pinar (1998), Pinar and Reynolds (1992), and Ulmer (1985, 1994, 2003, 2005). These authors give a postmodern perspective to educational practice. They advocate a social reconstructivist agenda, promoting the mingling of identity within the educational arena. In art education, Cary (1998) and Efland, Freedman, and Stuhr (1996) take the postmodern concept of multiple voices and realities one step further in the construction of curriculum. Curriculum construction, as envisioned by Efland, Freedman and Stuhr (1996), consists of four essential instructional criteria: loss of faith in the grand or meta-narratives, the power/knowledge relationship, deconstructivism, and double coding.

Many art educators seek to engage students in understanding how images create ideological structures that on an unconscious level govern our behaviors, and many visual culture advocates take on the role of social reconstructivists (Tavin & Hausman, 2004; Efland, Freedman, & Stuhr, 1996). Art educators can choose to utilize a method of dialogic negotiation that gives
voice to their students (hooks, 1994). The spectacle, which is perceived as surface, can be utilized as a device for critical inquiry that engages the student in this dialogue.

How does the visual change when it becomes an event or dialogue rather than an object or image? Mirzoeff (1999) discusses the visual event in relation to the “network society.” In chaos theory the flapping of the wings of a butterfly causes a hurricane. This event comes about through repetition and difference. Deleuze (1994) addresses repetition and difference when he describes the festival; the festival is a paradox because it repeats, but each time it repeats, it is different. If an individual misses the festival it cannot be repeated. They can attend the next festival, but it will be different. The first time is carried to the ‘nth’ power. Therefore, power is inverted; the flapping of the butterfly’s wings memorializes all hurricanes, and all hurricanes memorialize the flapping of the singular butterfly. It is a universalization of the singular event; the flapping leads in recursive fashion to all hurricanes yet to come. In the classroom context an image or idea can lead in recursive fashion to a new idea or perception of the world. The event of coming into contact with the idea or image places difference within the context of the day-to-day repetition of the classroom environment. Provocation is the introduction of chaos into the classroom environment that produces a shift in the repetition. The repetition continues but in a new direction (Deleuze, 1994). This provocation is what charges the dialogue in the classroom in a manner similar to an electric shock.

Take, for instance, the work of Martin Creed; his Turner prize-winning piece “227: The lights going on and off” consisted of an empty room in which the lights flickered on and off every five seconds. For many, this artwork was a case of “the emperor’s new clothes.” The question “Where is the art?” focuses on the object while “When?” focuses on the event. The “image” produced by the work of Creed is that of sight/site and non-sight/site; it is full-bodied presence
and, conversely, complete absence from location or situated-ness. Creed states, “My work is about 50 percent what I make of it and 50 percent what people make of it. Meanings are made in people's heads. I can't control them (Reynolds, 2001).” What Creed teaches us is that provocation elicits emotion and emotion promotes dialogue. The artwork in question produces a doubly inscribed event in which the event itself is a catalyst for further dialogue outside of the museum setting (Mullens, 2001).
IN<SCRIPT>ION AND “image”: VISION IN FLUX

The posthuman does not really mean the end of humanity. It signals instead the end of a certain conception of the human, a conception that may have applied, at best, to a fraction of humanity who had the wealth, power, and leisure to conceptualize themselves as autonomous beings exercising their will through individual agency and choice.

Katherine Hayles

Visual culture can provide emblematic entryways into a broader scope of “image” interpretation and invention. In this model meaning does not inhabit a text; it circulates around and flows through the text. “Current” modes of circulation are electronic. They provide the opening by which the “canon” of visual culture citations can be applied to a much broader understanding of representation. Nowhere is this more prevalent than within the (con)text of the screen (Rosenblatt, 2005; Ulmer, 1985; 1994; 2003; 2005).

Debord (1994) describes the spectacle as images that essentially transform and become reality. This conception of reality construction is based on a commoditized culture in which having replaces being. However, in many cases the having can be simply the illusion of having or the image of having. In this way we have produced a cultural system that promotes the circulation of images as a circulation of self. According to Garoian and Gaudelius (2008):

Given that contemporary cultural life is always already immersed in spectacle, we affirm the necessity for a broad inclusive understanding of visual cultural studies through a ‘plurality of scopic regimes,’ which includes the transgressive and transformative power of art making. Indeed, for the purposes of art education curriculum and pedagogy, this inclusive understanding is imperative. (p. 28)

Literary critics define the spectacle in negative terms; the spectacle is understood to be the destruction of tradition as portrayed in Chinua Achebe’s Things Fall Apart. Tradition is viewed as the stabilizing factor that holds society together in contrast to colonialism which reconstructs and
recenters a culture. The title *Things Fall Apart* is an allusion to the poem “Second Coming” by William Butler Yeats.

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Turning and turning in the widening gyre
The falcon cannot hear the falconer;
Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;
Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world. (Yeats, 1919)
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Anarchy is defined here as the result of the loss and/or transmutation of traditions. To go against tradition is to listen to the voice of chaos, rather than to the voice of invention.

Conversely, the dystopia of collective consciousness is represented in numerous films, including *THX1138, Brazil, A Clockwork Orange, The Matrix, Children of Men, Minority Report,* etc. The spectacle has most commonly been viewed as a factor leading to dystopia. Passivity is attributed to the spectacle; however, passivity is not required by the spectacle. For most cultural critics, the television or film screen is the spectacle, and the viewer is the passive observer, supposedly not engaging with or thinking critically about the images or messages. Those who believe in the uncritical engagement with the spectacle fall prey to traditional notions of literacy and artists’ intentions as the emphasized signified. When privilege is given to the artist’s intent, the viewer is always perceived as passive and subject to the control of all media encountered. In truth, what the spectacle constitutes is a particular condition in which the image and reality merge to disrupt the given cosmology/ideology (Kim, 2005). The spectacle actually offers possibility, rather than simply unquestioned subservience.

In relation to spectacle, understanding what an image “says” is about understanding the historical context and the texts that construct that context. (Con)text is in itself a readable and malleable text (Moxey, 1994). Students should be encouraged to deconstruct and reconstruct complex images and seemingly common sense images through the process of appropriation as a
means of better understanding their inner workings. The conduction of “image” through assemblage perpetually (re)constructs the apparatus.

New Media(ton)

The typewriter, described by Kittler (1999), possesses a traditional concept of physicality. One needs to strike the keys in order to produce the image on the paper. Corrections are time consuming requiring the physical removal of the printed word from the page. With the introduction of the computer, corrections can now be made with the stroke of one key. Text becomes data that is translated into transformable “image” or pixels on a screen. This “image” can be shifted, rearranged, relocated, minimized, layered, and performed. This becomes an In<SCRIPT>ion of signature.

Derrida (1988) discusses the nature of the signature and the signing. The signature is the signing fixed to the page through the event. Signing then becomes the act of making marks, lines, cuts, or inscriptions. There is also a homonymic relationship between the concept of Saussure’s sign system and the act of registering authorship. Derrida’s notion of the sign is not the noun form of the word, but rather the verb “to sign.” It is not realized through the relationship of signifier-signified but through the act of writing the signature, the event of slicing the surface or the signifier/signified. The typewriter contains a correspondence with the physical inscription. The harder the typist presses the keys, the darker the letters. The computer has no physical correspondence between the pressure placed on the keys and the “value” of the letters. Instead, the virtual nature of the In<SCRIPT>ion is foregrounded (Hayles, 1999).

Derrida (1976) states that the separation of body and soul in Western philosophy developed with the apparatus of writing. Writing is the interior made exterior through the process of inscription. Writing is perceived as artificial exteriority, as “clothing.” Husserl and Saussure
have contested the act of speech as a form of “clothed thought,” yet there has never been doubt that writing is the “clothing” of the spoken word. For Saussure, writing becomes the mask worn by speech, a perversion of thought. Writing is described not as the visage of language, but as a disguise. According to Derrida (1976):

Strange “image.” One already suspects that if writing is “image” and exterior “figuration,” this “representation” is not innocent. The outside bears with the inside a relationship that is, as usual, anything but simple exteriority. The meaning of the outside was always present with the inside, imprisoned outside the outside, and vice versa. (p. 35)

Yet as with all forms of technology, one ultimately absorbs it as part of the self. Plato was skeptical of writing because he felt that it was exterior to the self, and yet, he utilized writing in order to critique writing. Many times one must utilize the technology that one criticizes in order to disseminate one’s message. Once a new form of technology becomes absent from the mind, it becomes present to the body. Simply put, the spoken word is a form of technology that we have already integrated into the circuit of the unconscious. The computer and the cell phone, like the spoken, written, and printed word before them, are approaching the status of full integration; for some individuals this integration has already been realized.

Because of the history of Western thought, the myth of the isolated, individualized, and dematerialized consciousness has lead to the belief that the Cartesian schema dominates the digital realm (Munster, 2006). We are already connected to cultural interfaces such as iPods, iPhones, cell phones, and interfaces such as Facebook, MySpace, Twitter, Ning, Second Life, etc. As I sit here now at my dining room table, I am connected to a network. I am “virtually” connected to an electrical outlet, which connects to a larger electrical grid. I drink coffee purchased from the grocery store and warmed by electricity while I am connected to the Internet, which is connected globally. This network of discursive systems have aided in my formation of
“I.” What do such connections say about the sense of embodiment existent and persistent within technology? Can embodiment pertain to my existence within the virtual world of a cellular phone? Do I have presence on MySpace and likewise absence? What does one envision collective embodiment to be? (Angus, Cook, & Evans et al., 2001). According to Munster (2006):

Virtualization, understood through transitions and transactions between information and the materiality of our bodies, involves a multiplication of affect, of the capacities of conceptualizing, perceiving and feeling embodiment. . . . The virtual dimension of matter, that is the capacity of bodies to enable this transition, is really an ongoing question: how can our biology continue to become different? (p. 115)

The Body Subject/Object

In the *Phenomenology of Perception*, Merleau-Ponty (2002) proposes that the body is neither subject nor object, but an ambiguous third party. As a third party it plays a critical role in the process of perception. A sense of the body is the means by which the perception of an external reality comes into being. Merleau-Ponty’s notion of intersubjectivity calls for an intertwining of self and other. Rather than separate the self and other into two subjective entities, Merleau-Ponty seeks to challenge and even reverse these concepts. One such example is the concept of touching and being touched; when an individual is touched, he or she is touched and touching simultaneously. We cannot separate the space between from the objects of our intention because the space between can just as easily become the object of our attention and subsequently, intention. Intersubjectivity forms a camouflage in which one form blends into a more dominant form (Merleau-Ponty, 1964). This concept creates a connection point between the work of Derrida and Merleau-Ponty through the Derridean (2004) notion of *différance*.

The human body is at once a phenomenal body and an objective body; it is both present and absent. It has a double belongingness in which it inhabits both the “subject” and the “object.” The body is a thing that exists among things; it is flesh and it is bone, and yet body is neither
thing “seen” nor “seer” of things alone. “The world seen is not ‘in’ my body, and my body is not ‘in’ the visible world ultimately: as flesh applied to flesh, the world neither surrounds it nor is surrounded by it” (Merleau-Ponty, 1968, p. 138). My own gestures are not as visible to me as they are to the an/other who sees and interprets them. Likewise, I see with my eyes but without a mirror, I cannot see my eyes. Mirrors are technological devices that enable reflection. Teaching practice functions in much the same way. Students’ interpretations of the classroom situation allow for an understanding of the classroom body. In applying the Derridean notion of différance, one pattern will emerge while another recedes. Each (re)reading of the classroom situation and the research data provides for the emergence of new patterns. Metaphor and metonymy enable the recognition of these patterns. My way of looking or my “image” of the research allows for emergence and diminution of patterns. Each pattern plays out on the BwO through the self-organization of the de-organ-ized body.

Visible/Invisible Body

Derrida sees text as “image”, an “image” of the body that is written and rewritten. Derrida and Merleau-Ponty differ in the ways they describe the body, but with respect to memory and perception, they are remarkably similar. Derrida suggests that the draftsman is in danger of (mis)representation from the outset of his drawing because of his inability to render the invisible (Batchen, 1999). There is an inevitable return to the surface of the image. There is no way to represent the image; yet the word is still necessary. Through the presentation of the obvious erasure, the “image” seeks to reveal itself through X or the act of crossing out. This is the purpose of the practice of refleXivity as defined by jagodzinski (2008). The human stain is presenced by crossing it out.

X is the difference between the visible and the invisible that renders the “image” “visible.”
Merleau-Ponty (1968) describes the ruins of a castle. The only way we understand them as ruins is because we know that at one point a castle stood in that location. In other words, the visibility of the ruins intertwines the visible, the debris of existence, with the invisible. The (re)construction of “image” is a way in which we make the invisible accessible. When one engages with a representation, s/he is also engaging with a culture that has evolved over time. The “image” that one engages with always has a back-story.

In the (con)text of this study the visible and the invisible are rendered incarnate by the fragments of the semester which are manifest in the videos, artworks, and dialogues I had with students. We can never reclaim past experience as it was, for it never truly was. We have multiple pasts that repeat themselves in recursive fashion. There is no true story of the semester; all stories, including this story, are edited from the outset.

What is apparent is that “I” am always present. The “I” referred to here is the Symbolic “I,” the signified. As the teacher, “I” am embodied in and signified by the camera, the writing implement, the paper, and the task at hand. Students are conscious of the fact that “I” am present in my absence. They perform the script of the actor. What does it mean to be a good student? Many times the student performs the role and follows the script. As the course progressed, some students became better able at creating an In<SCRIPT>tion through “image”; however, with (h)activation comes the loss of ownership and authority (Lacan, 1966/2006).

The In<SCRIPT>tion of art, teaching, learning, research, etc., is the event. The body’s purposeful movement and interaction with material and virtual worlds becomes semiotically represented as metadata inscribed in the art object and the event simultaneously. The “image” becomes an In<SCRIPT>tion when it embodies the concept of the actor’s script, meant to be a dialogue between the actor and the world while at the same time being
analogous to the computer script. This embodiment is the avatar. The In<SCRIPT>tion is the job of the programmer. The programmer becomes Amerika’s (h)activist, capable of inscribing a reconfigurable apparatus that allows for interactions between viewer and object, viewer and viewer, viewer and artist, and the teacher and student that disrupt the common metaphors associated with classroom practice as a means of enabling change. Meta-representation of the data or metadata makes the invisible visible through the visualization of data (Amerika & Willis, 2003).

Networked “[I]mage”

The body as described by Merleau-Ponty is an integrated system or a network. The five senses have been traditionally seen as discrete methods of interfacing with the world, each sense separated from the other four. Generally speaking, one cannot hear color and see sound; however, individuals deprived of a particular sense are still capable of describing attributes of that sense. In instances of synesthesia, blind individuals have been known to attribute certain sounds to a particular color. These occurrences are not rare, but rather common. In fact it is not uncommon for individuals to describe colors as warm, hot, cold, sharp, or hard. Sounds have been described as soft, harsh, piercing, and rough. These descriptions integrate experience, making it difficult for us to separate the visual from the tactile or the auditory, etc. We experience the world with our whole being—the integration of the whole experience that speaks to all the senses at once (Merleau-Ponty, 1964).

The metaphor of sight or vision applies to the concept of emergent aspects of visual culture. Metaphors help us think; they are embodied concepts. In the computer realm, folders, pages, and windows became the visualization of the interface. The Windows™ operating system developed this metaphor further by allowing multiple windows to be opened at once. Author
Turkle (1999) describes the ways in which the construction of self has been recognized as fragmented through the multiplicity of database formation and interaction.

The self no longer simply plays different roles in different settings—something that people experience when, for example, one wakes up as a lover, makes breakfast as a mother, and drives to work as a lawyer. The windows metaphor suggests a distributed self that exists in many worlds and plays many roles at the same time. (p. 645)

The seen body or visible body is contained within the spectacle of surface. There is a differentiation between the seen and the seeing body. The seeing body is capable of moving beyond the visible body. This is the acknowledgement of the virtual body or the extension of the body beyond its physical form. The human body appropriates through a boundless chain of non-linear actions, what Merleau-Ponty (1968) calls “centers of meaning” that move beyond its physical limits to enable transformation.

There is a reciprocal insertion and intertwining of one in the other. Or rather, if, as once again we must, we eschew the thing by planes and perspectives, there are two circles, or two vortexes, or two spheres, concentric when I live naively, and as soon as I question myself, the one slightly de-centered with respect to the other. . . (p. 138)

Merleau-Ponty places an emphasis on the lived body and its double belongingness. De-centering of self in relation to an/other, even if that other is one’s own body, is accomplished through the tracing of the hermeneutical circle of interpretation. When short-circuited, the flow of signification within this circle becomes a means of contact with an/other, the reflexive relationship of touch. Questioning provides the method for the short-circuiting of the flow (Reynolds, 2004).

By engaging in heuretic practice, one is capable of intertwining the philosophy of alterity espoused by Derrida with the embodiment of Merleau-Ponty. Derrida engages with the idea of the body/object and expounds upon it, making it a surface on which to inscribe textual notions of the self. The inscription of self through text causes many phenomenologists to describe Derrida as
only linguistically inclined and uncritical of the experience (Reynolds, 2004). “It is not a simple analogy: writing the letter, the sensible inscription has always been considered by Western tradition as the body and matter, external to the spirit, to breath, to speech and to the logos” (Derrida, 1976, p. 35). As pointed out by Barthes (1986), “to write” is reflexive. I am both writing and writing about writing; through the process of writing about writing, one engages in the middle voice through action in the space between.

Student reflections and classroom dialogue are always in the process of becoming. By imagining new incarnations of self that appropriate parts of the classroom dialogue, the dialogue itself becomes charged. The charge that occurs allows the teacher in these situations to facilitate student/teacher conversations through the conduction of the network. This is a form of conduction that seeks to mediate the network through its self-organization. Like a living organism, the classroom grows and forms as an imagined community. As an imagined community, it plays itself out in a virtual space through interactions with objects, ideas, and one another. These interactions constitute the avatar as an In<SCRIPT>ion.
(RE)SEARCH: AN A/R/TOGRAPHIC CASE FOR ART AS RESEARCH

The methodologies used to conduct this study are derived from action research as it relates to a/r/tography. As a precursor to a/r/tography, action research allows for the implementation of new methods of practice. The term action research was first coined by the social psychologist Kurt Lewin toward the end of World War II. As a researcher, Lewin saw the liminal space or the space between as a potent area for research practice (Kincheloe, 1998). The configuration of this research was based on the concept of communities of practice. He believed that he could learn by collaborating with communities of practice through progressive problem solving. The process of action research is not clean-cut; it is messy and emergent in its application. The researcher makes reflexive decisions throughout the cycles of the research. S/he observes, implements, and reflects making adjustments throughout the duration of each cycle. Action research is a form of living inquiry—a reflective and reflexive process. It is an open system in which what is being researched emerges through the research itself. Throughout this study, I utilize methodologies inherent to a/r/tography discourse that are derived from the tenants of action research and are realized through the practice of arts-based educational research (McNiff, 2002).

As a form of arts-based educational research, a/r/tography’s main difference lies in the construction of the teacher’s identity as artist, researcher, and teacher. It takes the idea of teacher as researcher as derived from action research and adds the third layer of artist. The triple relationship of the individual is what is to be studied. Irwin (2004) cites Aristotle who discusses “three kinds of ‘thought’: knowing (theoria), doing (praxis), and making (poesis). . .” (p. 27). A/r/tography is a self-study of one’s own practices as an (a/) artist, (r/) researcher, and (t) teacher in order to gain a more holistic study of art education theory and practice (Irwin, Springgay, & Kind, 2005). Many art educators have taken part in the practice of a/r/tographic inquiry, including
Darts (2004), De Cosson (2003), and Irwin, Beer, Springgay, Grauer, Xiong, & Bickel (2008) among others.

Irwin (2004) describes a/r/tography as métissage or a language of the borderlands. It is a language that is about both convergence and divergence, and only through the understanding and comparison of both, can understanding of the complex relationships of a/r/t be achieved. The three layers (artist/researcher/teacher) overlap in this study as a form of cultural production through the process of appropriation as authorship. Roles also overlap in this study, allowing student to become teacher and teacher and student to become co-artist/researchers.

Teacher and Student Becoming Co-researchers: (Re)Search

The concept of teacher and student as co-researchers first requires one to ask: what is research? In a positivist model the researcher, often an outside observer of the classroom, seeks the truth. This truth, the answer(s) to the research question(s), becomes the central node in the network; all other information/knowledge branches out from this central point. The positivist research model parallels the concept of teaching practice as it has been traditionally envisioned in the educational system in the United States. The educational administrative structures and governmental agencies, again from outside the classroom, determine what should be taught and how it should be taught. These mandates, while well-intentioned, remove agency from teachers as professionals. Throughout this study, I have attempted to foster the concept of teachers as researchers, as co-constructors of the curriculum with students. When we invert these existing power structures, when we realize that no knowledge exists without the knower, the discovery model shifts. What happens when the term becomes (re)search? (Re)search implies a continual re-visitation. Discovery is inherent to this re-visitation, but it also makes way for the invention of new theory and practice (Kincheloe, 2003).
What if education and research were reconceived as a search engine? Each time a term is searched and (re)searched more information or data, both valid and invalid, is accumulated within the network. The appropriation of this information by students would then evoke the following questions: What is the significance (importance and signification) of this data? What can we do with this information? What assets are already present within the classroom in the form of objects, expertise, and information that can be utilized along with this information to enhance curriculum development (Kincheloe, 2003)? Searchers do not always find what is expected, nor are their results always finalized. The semiotic chain produced allows for associations that outreach the intent of the searcher. (Re)search that allows educators to access/assess information and utilize it in an educational setting is necessary if they are to help their students become creative meaning-makers in a culture that is moving from a print-based paradigm of literacy to an "image"/image paradigm.

Arts-Based Research

Barone and Eisner (2006) make the case for arts-based-educational-research or ABER. They list two primary criteria necessary to qualify a work as arts-based research: 1) the researcher must be engaged in artistic activity meant to enhance the human condition or experience. 2) the researcher holds certain aesthetic qualities or design elements that intermingle with the process of inquiry and the “text”/research [“image”]. During the time this argument was being propounded by Barone and Eisner, the primary examples of ABER were literary, yet the authors suggested the possibility of non-linguistic art forms as a mode of practice. These non-linguistic forms are inclusive of both visual and performing arts.

The purpose of ABER is not concerned with the certainty of the findings. Instead, ABER seeks to illuminate new perspectives on phenomena that occur in the educational setting. Its
function is to draw attention to those aspects of educational practice, which are presupposed (Barone & Eisner, 2006). I would argue that there is a connection between revealing presupposition in ABER and Bergson’s *Method of Intuition* as described/reinterpreted by Deleuze (1966/1988). Deleuze’s interpretation of Bergson’s method is justifiable; however, he is known for reinterpreting the ideas of philosophers in ways that make them both foreign and akin to the original idea.

*Bergson’s Method of Intuition*

First rule: Apply the test of true/false to problems themselves. Condemn the false problems and reconcile truth and creation at the level of problems. (Deleuze, 1966/1988, p. 15)

In his description of this rule, Deleuze discusses the nature of the traditional education system. In some educational situations, the teacher “poses” the problems; the student’s job is to find the solutions. There is a certain constraint that comes with this model of teaching and learning. Real freedom lies in the ability to identify the problems. Finding and positing the problem are of great importance. Finding deals with the act of discovering what already exists, and invention gives being to what did not already exist. The problem according to Deleuze and Bergson is most often easily solved once it has been discovered and stated (Deleuze, 1966/1988).

In the conception of this study, I started out with a false problem. I began with the intention of changing the face of visual literacy. What I discovered through my journey was that the definition of literacy itself was the apparatus that needed to be questioned. Through the discovery and statement of the problem, I began to find ways in which to (re)think and invent new modes of communication.

Complementary rule: False problems are of two sorts, “nonexistent problems,” defined as problems whose very terms contain a confusion of the “more” and the “less”; and “badly stated” questions, so defined because their terms represent badly analyzed composites. (Deleuze, 1966/1988, p. 17)
Bergson (1896/2004) discusses the concept of non-being and the problems it presents with regard to disorder as it relates to the possible. Within non-being exists the idea of being; within the possible there is a connection to the real; within disorder there is order. We assume that disorder is less than order. It is this idea of more or less that causes us to analyze problems badly because we think of them as differences in degree rather than differences in kind. This is especially problematic in relation to the original intent of this study. At the beginning of my research, the complexity of literacy practice was negated by my own adherence to a visual mode of communication. Instead of seeing the differences in kind, I pitted the written and spoken word against one another. Since its inception and through interaction with students, I have begun to see literacy practice as the layering of differences in kind. Through this layering process these elements merge with one another (Deleuze, 1966/1988).

Second rule: Struggle against illusion, rediscover the true differences in kind or articulations of the real. (Deleuze, 1966/1988, p. 21)

For Bergson (1896/2004), dualisms are ubiquitous: memory-matter, duration-space, quality-quantity, recollection-perception, etc. Bergson is, however, well aware of the composite nature of reality. From this perspective, people only see differences in degree where there are differences in kind. Experience allows the individual to gain awareness of the line between self-other, mind-body, sense-non-sense, etc.; one must be able to move beyond the perception of experience towards an understanding of its conditions or pure differences in kind. As previously stated, the real refers to becoming. It is the active construction of self through conduction; therefore, it is the In<SCRIPT>ion that is the default entry point into the event of complexity. Differences in degree apply to the actual nature of the experiences; whereas, the differences in kind apply to the virtual nature of the experience. The line one gains awareness of is the line between matter or the physical world and memory or the world of the mind. The accretion of
memories over time helps to shape perception, and likewise, perception aids in the shaping of memories. Deleuze (1966/1988) reformulates the concept of mind-matter as mind/matter going up through the middle, connecting and dividing, redistributing the way in which they act upon one another. Differences in kind aid in Deleuze’s construction of what he will later call the molar line that is both rift and connection between pure differences in kind. This is where the second aspect of rule number two comes in; it could be called an addendum to the second rule.

Complementary rule to the second rule: The real is not only that which is cut out (se découpe) according to natural articulations or differences in kind; it is also that which intersects again (se récoupe) along paths converging toward the same ideal or virtual point. (Deleuze, 1966/1988, p. 29)

In other words, problems, when properly stated, are generally solved of their own accord. When pure differences in kind are discovered and the gap between the two is created, one becomes better able to discover the point at which the two converge, one inserting itself into the other.

Third Rule: State problems and solve them in terms of time rather than of space. (Deleuze, 1966/1988, p. 31)

While differences in kind are understood to be the difference between two different things or tendencies, this is true only on the surface. The division between duration and space is the primary Bergsonian division; all other divisions are involved in, derived from, and culminate in it. Space determines that “…the thing can only differ in degree from other things and from itself” through augmentation or diminution. Time or duration allows for “…the thing to differ in kind from all others and itself” through the process of alteration or transmutation (Deleuze, 1966/1988, p. 31).

An example of this is a match, which inhabits both space and time. When struck, the physical composition of the match changes through process. We are no longer presented at the
end of the process with a match but rather with a piece of charcoal with a wooden stem. There is a point, however, within the process at which the match is neither charcoal nor the match in question. It is in the process of becoming, and both differences have converged. The classroom dialogue, like the match, is the catalyst for individual change. Through dialogue, differences converge as a way of connecting with an/other. Both individuals come out on the other end of the conversation changed. It requires time for transformation to occur; this is true for the transformation of the teacher, researcher, and student.

*Designing Arts-Based Research*

The design elements that make up ABER consist of format and language. In the methodology of a/r/tography, this translates to art and writing or image and text. The format of this research is different from traditional research methodologies that include a background to the problem, an overview of related terminology, research methodology and design, data analysis and presentation, and implications for future research. ABER studies utilize the format that best fits the nature of the inquiry and provides for the most effective interface. Within this study in particular, I have chosen an electronic format to create the effect/affect of text as image and image as text (Barone & Eisner, 2006).

Language as it is utilized in ABER studies is typically categorized as “(a) evocative, (b) contextual, and (c) vernacular” (Barone & Eisner, 2006, p. 97). In this study, the “*images*” and objects engaged with by students are evocative of conceptions of self within the embodied experience. Evocative language is meant to invite “the reader to fill gaps in the text with personal meaning” (p. 97). The choices for language use are connotative rather than denotative, and metaphors are utilized and contextualized by the event(s), both past and present. The event(s) are described in the vernacular of the students who lived them. Student videos and comments are to
be read in the format through which they were originally communicated. Original communication is an impossible attempt at the Real, the unedited experience of reality. The absence of the Real produces gaps in the text that “create a virtual world for the reader to inhabit vicariously. This virtual world can be located through the physical realities it evokes.” (Barone & Eisner, 2006, p. 98).

This study proceeds in cycles that culminate in a reflective practice of art production and curriculum modification. I am constantly (re)evaluating myself as artist/researcher/teacher. As the study progresses, I continue to ask myself if I am truly making a difference in both teaching and learning? Am I learning from my practice in a way that allows for the adjustment of my teaching practice? Are students learning from the adjustments that I make? Connections between seemingly unconnected events are made through the process of reflection and juxtaposition as rhizomatic inquiry and discourse analysis. The text is not written in a linear temporal pattern; rather, it is written in a way that allows for modular consumption and reconfiguration.

Complexity a (Frame)work for A/r/tography

**Student= S**

**Professor=P**

S: But that’s not what my supervisor wants. He wants a frame in which to put my data.

P: If you want to store more data, buy a bigger hard disk…

S: He says to me: ‘You need a framework.’

P: Ah? So your supervisor is in the business of selling pictures? It’s true that frames are nice for that: gilded, white, carved, baroque, aluminum, etc. But have you ever met a painter who began her masterpiece by first choosing the frame? That would be a bit odd wouldn’t it? (Latour, 2004, p. 64)

Complexity theory serves as an underpinning organizational (frame)work for this dissertation. Complexity theory is able to accommodate the viewpoints of differing insights
without trapping itself in the concept of universal truth or the “proper.” In order for a phenomenon to be classed as complex, it must manifest two necessary qualities: emergence and self-organization. Complexity has been described as a “new science” derived from such areas as cybernetics, chemistry, physics, information science, and systems theory. Recently, it has been applied to a wide range of social areas including family research, economics, health, politics, business management, economics, and psychology (Mason, 2008a). Davis and Sumara (2006) state that the field of education is currently employing complexity theory for both research and pedagogical purpose.

Its application produces openings through which contiguous pairings of theory such as actor network theory, deconstructivism, the rhizome, and the cyborg can serve as metaphors for educational practice. These theories both allow for structuralist and post-structuralist discourse as a means of making-meaning and give rich description to the classroom experience. “Unlike most other discourses that employ the prefix ‘post’ in their titles, including postmodernism and post-formalism, the post of post-structuralism is not meant to signal a problematizing or even a rejection of structuralist sensibilities but rather an elaboration” (Davis & Sumara, 2006, p. 67).

Post-structuralism builds upon the concepts set forth by Saussure who claimed that language was a set of discrete word units. Rather than simply analyze the discrete units as separate entities, the post-structuralists look at the (con)text or situation in which the units are created (Davis & Sumara, 2006).

Instead of following the three R’s of traditional literacy practice: reading, writing, and arithmetic, Doll (1993) poses four new R’s. Curriculum should be rich, recursive, relational and rigorous. Each of these new principles allows for curriculum that follows the flux of living systems. Living systems are studied within the “new” biology as in the work of Ilya Prigogine,
Gregorie Nicolis, and other members of the “Brussels School.” Metaphysics plays a pivotal role in the “new” biology. Metaphysics provides what traditional categorical sciences do not, the ecological means by which to interact with the environment.

Bricolage is the method by which the structure of complexity theory is made evident to the researcher and the reader. According to Kincheloe & Berry (2004), there is no direct method with which to produce bricolage. Within bricolage, “i” must take into account the “i” as a bricoleur, as a producer of knowledge or a meaning-maker, the “i” that is part of a relationship with nature and culture. The interaction that takes place is not a simple interaction or dialogue with the world. Instead, the interaction that “i” have with the world is one that is definable by material and virtual means that are particular to my place in time and the civilization from which “i” come. The “image” that “i” produce gives representation of my roots as an “image” of “nation.”

Ideas do not come into being fully formed; they are always in the process of being formed or becoming through the exploration of connections (Whitehead, 1979). Through becoming or duration, accumulation through both conscious and unconscious choice occurs. We subscribe to notions of self much like one would subscribe to a cable television service or magazine; we then inscribe these notions through expressions of the unconscious (Law & Hassard, 1999).

Throughout the process of becoming, an individual’s life span becomes shorter; what has come to pass becomes longer. This process is described in relation to Bergson’s conception of the process of pure becoming as articulated by Deleuze (1988, 1990) and Deleuze and Guattari (1987). Bergson, Whitehead, and Deleuze have all sought to describe the process of becoming. Becoming is the dynamic aspect of being that deals with the world revealed by the senses and known as the substances or the simulacra; mere shadows of the forms, substances are the material
world. Within the concept of becoming, paradox characterizes the analysis of language. I propose that through the process of becoming, one sees glimpses of the Real.

The idealized central self comes about as a means of constraining fragments of the Real. “I” am myself because “myself” is that which endures beyond the decay of my body. In this study a different perspective is taken with regard to the process of becoming. Instead of seeing the inconsistencies and (mis)representations as unsettling, this study seeks to display them as the (un)utterable gaps that allow for virtual coexistence.

Virtual Coexistence

Virtual coexistence allows for a complex understanding of time in which past and present merge to form “image”. Based on Bergson’s philosophy, the act of appropriation becomes n+1 and n-1, the multiplicity as described by Deleuze and Guattari (1987), and yet it is simultaneously the origin of the multiplicity. Appropriation becomes a process of layering—both collage and décollage—addition and subtraction. It becomes both the territorialization and the de-territorialization of self—of Being. In Bergson’s writing, n-1 refers to the selective nature of memory in which only certain aspects of the event(s) are remembered. The layering of representational elements becomes selective rather than inclusive. Experience, in Bergsonian terms, becomes personal experience only when it has been appropriated from the general experience (Deleuze, 1966/1988).

Understandings in the construction of self, culture, and society can come about through assembling the unconscious. This process is called bricolage; it is the manner in which the bricoleur constructs a mythopoetic “image” of the event(s). The event of assemblage or bricolage contracts into a point in the present. However, it is not without extensivity. Through the
recognition of extensivity or the interpenetration of moments, we can then demarcate the transformative experience in the classroom.

These experiences are translated into patterns of self-organization. These self-organizing patterns are not imposed by the artist/researcher/teacher, but are articulated through becoming. The result is what is sometimes called the butterfly effect, associated with the shape of the resulting structure produced by the Lorenz attractor, a 3-D model of chaotic flow of a Lorenz oscillator, which is the result of a non-repeating pattern. This pattern could be referred to as the pattern of randomness. The butterfly effect is meticulously responsive to conditions; the slightest change in the initial conditions of a dynamic system can drastically affect the long-term conditions of that system as a whole (Doll, 1993).

*Being in/through Appropriation*

The question of Being has long been the question of phenomenological research from Husserl’s *Logical Investigations* (2005), first published in 1900, to Heidegger’s *Being and Time* (1978) first published in 1927. In *On Time and Being* (1972), published in German in 1969, Heidegger’s Being recedes in favor of appropriation. In its traditional understanding, appropriation denotes ownership or an assimilation of other. In this case, appropriation is not an assimilation but rather a realization, a realization that accumulation of self is both born and born(e) through physical birth and the communication of information. This understanding takes into account that those born are not yet appropriated and are not fully formed at the start; however, through becoming, appropriation is inevitably born(e). The “I,” or in this case “i,” that speaks is already a singular plural, a nine, the largest single digit before becoming two, yet made up of the multiple. The number ten consists of two digits, a one and a zero. While Lacan (1966/2006) might say that the emphasis on nine becomes symptomatic or a way of giving reason
to irrationality, it does serve as a metaphor for the collective appropriation of thought culturally incarnated in the individual.

According to Heidegger, appropriation is non-metaphysical, and time is the way in which appropriation appropriates. To say appropriation appropriates, according to Heidegger, is to say nothing in terms of mere sentence structure, and writing about appropriation is an obstacle. In itself, it is a prepositional statement. Heidegger circumscribes the process of becoming. To think, to make-meaning, has always been aligned with the task of tracing being from appropriation. Appropriation is the material and the conceptual process associated with the metaphysical process of becoming. Heidegger’s description of appropriation is the event. The Stoics refer to this as the interpenetration of bodies. It is the drop of wine in the ocean which becomes part of the mixture and which coexists with all parts of the ocean. All outside events, i.e., “to become red” or “to become green” as do the leaves on trees, is a result played out in the incorporeal surface of the mixture, the plane of immanence (Deleuze, 1966/1988; Heidegger, 1972).

In the classroom situation both the teacher and the student introduce concepts. In my teaching practice it has become apparent to me that my students bring an accretion of experiences that they have appropriated into their understanding of reality. These appropriated concepts are fragments that coalesce as “images” that play cinematically in the mind of the individual. These “images” are produced through interaction with objects and individuals; this applies to both student and teacher. The experiences formulate culture and are formulated by culture. While the reciprocal nature of interaction has been discussed in this document multiple times, it bears repetition (and difference). Through interaction with students, my perception of teaching and learning is altered along with the perceptions of the students.
Heidegger (1972) states that appropriation is neither here, nor is it there. Taking a molecule of water from a river is not appropriation. The river in itself is appropriation, ebb and flow produced within the discourse of chora. The body of the river becomes a receptacle for the process of becoming. Appropriation must take memory into account along with perception. In order for a memory to be perceived, it must be presenced. To presence is to bring new ideas, concepts, and understandings of the world into the open. Dialogue creates an opening or space in which what is normally unheard can be voiced and new learnings revealed.

The classroom body becomes the surface upon which dialogue flows. Cultural issues that are difficult to discuss are many times presenced in and through classroom dialogue; this requires the history of the individual in relation to the collective to become part of the dialogue. To become in the classroom situation one must be willing to hear and to listen to all dialogue as a means of encouraging change. Partial understanding can occur in and through dialogue as a means of virtual coexistence with an/other (hooks, 1994). Student and teacher inhabit the same virtual space without necessarily adhering to the other’s position. Change will not occur immediately, nor will it be drastic, but the interaction or the touch between bodies creates an In<SCRIPT>ion that formulates as a memory.

Bergson describes the nature of memory as virtual coexistence (Deleuze, 1966/1988). Virtual coexistence becomes the past in the present. Through dialogue the “images” of the past are brought into the present and reinterpreted through multiple narratives. This allows not only for the coexistence of past and present, but also for the coexistence of “bodies” in the classroom dialogue. The body proper serves as a physical boundary; however, we are all connected in the virtual network. Conduction between virtual bodies means that each time a new individual is added to the conductive network, the flow is modified. In the “current” conception, the purpose of
a network is to transport information without deformation, while allowing unmediated access to
every piece of information, a “double click” mentality. In its original conception, representation is
a dynamic system, never a static entity; it is in a state of flow in all directions (Law & Hassard,
1999). Like the rhizome, it branches, adds to and subtracts from. Each time the structure is
revisited, it is refined not by one, but by many (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987).

The feedback loop is the production of meaningful and significant communication through
multiple repetitive instances and self-referring closures. Feedback loops describe how an event or
phenomenon in the past affects the present and/or future. Through reiteration, an event gains
potency. That which has already happened is perceived at first as past, and yet simultaneously it
becomes present (Davis & Sumara, 2006).

Birnbaum utilizes the feedback loop in her 1978 video work Technology/Transformation:
Wonder Woman. In this work, Birnbaum appropriates footage of the television series Wonder
Woman. She splices the film footage in a way that allows her to loop the transformation sequence
from Diana to Wonder Woman. The film footage becomes repetitive; over and over we see the
fantastical transformation from woman to Wonder Woman. This makes us aware through sight
and sound of the significance of the loop. The circular logic that is inherent to the production of
the “image” is derived from an embedded-ness. Work such as Birnbaum’s holds up a mirror to the
world, reflecting the complexity of the world and society through the recursive crystalline growth
of the bricolage (Kincheloe & Berry, 2004).

The “image” of knowledge acquisition in the West mirrors a biblical association to a tree,
the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. The categories of good and evil create a perceived
hierarchical dichotomy from root to branches. This vertical structure places good at the top, evil at
the bottom. However, when looked at from a new perspective, A-B, becomes B/A, an articulation
that leads to a pairing rather than a hierarchical division. This pairing is recursive in so far as there is a folding of one into the other. The molecular units of appropriation formulate and flow at the cellular level while the molar units are those that are unified. The molar line is separate from the molecular in that it seeks to territorialize; it is the bar that separates self/other, man/woman, teacher/student, etc. Molar lines define the “text”/ “image” in ways that produce differences in kind rather than differences in degree. A difference in kind is not one of polar opposites, but one in which the diverging lines have to be followed “beyond the ‘turn of experience’; then still further beyond, the point of convergence of these lines has to be rediscovered, and the rights of a new monism restored [the Möbius strip]” (Deleuze, 1966/1988, p. 73).

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This new monism is a conceptual realization of the Real or becoming; it is the affective space of the positive/negative, the inside/outside. If one were to take a microscope to the line and magnify it, perception becomes changed. The line vibrates back and forth between slice and mark; it becomes a w/hole and to some extent (un)knowable. Yet what we will also find in this chiasm/barrier is the molecular and the quasi-molecular (jagodinski, 2002). The molecular is that which is rhizomatic and allows the body to transform at the cellular level; it is the personal line or the line of identity. The Line of Flight is the third type of line, the line that allows for cracks in the system. The Line of Flight is, therefore, the microscopic event that can change the current system
of power (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987). Each of these lines is not without its perils. However, all three lines are at work at the same time (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987; Pisters & Lord, 2001). Through the philosophical concept of monism, unity is restored to that which may otherwise be perceived as at variance. These convergent and divergent connections are conceived through the “image” of the root.

The Rhizome and the Cyborg: Roots and Circuits

Deleuze and Guattari (1987) describe the concept of the rhizome or n-1, the “image” of crabgrass. According to this “image,” the only way that One can exist is to subtract it from the multiplicity it already inhabits. The individual must be plucked from his or her situated-ness within the network. The intermingling of a rhizomatic network is like felt. Its existence as a discrete entity is understood as present/absence. In the creation of felt, “the fibers move in a worm-like action as they are agitated, curling around themselves and pulling up to the root end” (Steel-Stickland, 2006, p. 6). The interconnected nature of the rhizome with its becoming both
surface and line allows for a complex understanding of social situations, institutional practices, and the promise of educational transformation (Springgay, 2008).

In the physical realm a rhizome can be perceived as a system that encompasses such plant life as roots and radicals, tubers and bulbs. In the animal world packs of rats, wolves, and flocks of birds can be seen as rhizomes. Burrows such as the ones made by earthworms and moles take on rhizomatic form. Instead of constituting a singular trunk as in the formation of a tree, the rhizome branches out, enveloping and including the best and the worst. There is no hierarchy to this method of reality construction. The rhizome deconstructs the notion of hierarchy because there is no central point of origin; rather, it is a constantly expanding construction.

The rhizome illustrates that textual interpretation is not only the “work” of the artist/teacher/researcher, it is also the “work” of the viewer/student/participant. This is a powerful concept in relation to the viewer/student/participant as creator of his or her own reality. It, in effect, reconfigures the Cartesian dualism that separates the mind and body…self and other.

“Work” is also the job of the bricoleur as described by Levi Strauss (1966). In French, a bricoleur is a handy man or handy woman who makes use of tools to complete a task. In the realm of a/r/tography, it is researcher-as-bricoleur. The researcher-as-bricoleur must disregard or abandon his or her quest for pure truth, which is distinct from the Lacanian Real. In effect, the bricoleur must focus on the givenness of the situation and his/her social relations with other researchers. The bricoleur works with the materials at hand to create something entirely new, a hodgepodge, through the process of reorganization. The recognition of the work of the bricoleur allows for the acknowledgement of the ways in which s/he shapes the construction/production and interpretation of knowledge. Bricolage is a process which expands, mutates, grows, and alters knowledge while
it reflects and refracts the social world. Bricolage is the product of our respect for the complexity of the lived world. (Kincheloe & Berry, 2004).

Derrida states that the bricoleur is “somebody that does not care about the purity or the stability of the system s/he uses, but rather uses what’s there to get a particular job done” (as cited in Kincheloe & Berry, 2004, p. 163). The bricoleur is capable of working with the information given in order to accomplish the task at hand. It is the equivalent of working to create change within a preexistent system. “Bricolage is mythopoetic, not rational. The idea of bricolage produces a new way to think without establishing a new system” (Kincheloe & Berry, 2004, p. 163).

Bricolage both allows for and resembles Haraway’s (1991) definition of the cyborg (n+1). Haraway places no division between “self/other, mind/body, culture/nature, male/female, civilized/primitive, reality/appearance, whole/part, agent/resource, marker/made, active/passive, right/wrong, truth/illusion, total/partial, God/man” (p.532). Haraway goes on to state:

To be One is to be autonomous to be powerful, to be God; but to be One is to be an illusion, and so to be involved in a dialectic of apocalypse with the other. Yet to be other is to be multiple, without clear boundary, frayed, insubstantial. One is too few, but two are too many. (p. 532)

In her *Cyborg Manifesto*, the world or objects created by human beings help us to interact with the simulations of the world. In other words, there is no division between wo/man and the objects of the world. Computers become the borderline between the virtual and the ion. “At the heart of the new possibilities for the appropriation of formal systems is the computational object, on the border between an abstract idea and a concrete physical object” (Turkle & Papert, 1990, p. 131). Computers are not disembodied forms without substance; rather they are bodies that are de-organ-ized and re-organ-ized as a means of reconstituting the system. This is the power of computers; they provide us with new ways of interacting with the world that push us
closer to the understanding that all interaction is mediated and that only through this mediation can we reach towards the impossibility of the Real.

In a very literal sense, the cyborg mirrors the work of Stelarc, the man/machine hybrid Australian performance artist, whose technological prosthetics have allowed him to embrace and control the automatic nature of human experience. We are ultimately bound to the world of objects; yet this binding is not one of confinement. To bind or intertwine with bodies is to ingest their very nature, to appropriate them into the self and make them part of the self as a means of agency rather than denial. According to Stelarc’s website, “the body is obsolete”:

Bodies are both Zombies and Cyborgs. We have never had a mind of our own[,] and we often perform involuntarily—conditioned and externally prompted. Ever since we evolved as humanoids and developed bipedal locomotion[,] two limbs became manipulators as we constructed artifacts, instruments and machines. In other words we have always been coupled with technology. We have always been prosthetic bodies. We fear the involuntary[,] and we are becoming increasingly automated and extended. But we fear what we have always been and what we have already become-Zombies and Cyborgs.

(Para. 1)

Stelarc’s third arm, an extension of the body itself, gives new insight into the notion of embodiment. His body sends signals to the prosthetic apparatus; wires/nerves/cables/muscles all move in tandem to the signal sent from the body/mind. This man/machine hybrid undermines the very notion of the Cartesian separation of mind and body. His creative body of work examines what it means to move beyond the post-human body and is the beginning of the attachable/detachable Body without Organs described by Deleuze and Guattari (Gaudelius & Garoian, 2008). To become cyborg is to become avatar through incarnations of the many as one.

Rhizomatic Durations of A/r/tography

A/r/tography in its conception is connected to the concept of the rhizome, cyborg, and the avatar. A/r/tography plays out these incarnations through the determination of when one is an artist, a researcher, and a teacher and when these roles collide. A/r/tography as it has been
conceptualized is the interpenetration of art and –graphy, the act of creative, living inquiry in the presence of scholarly writing. It is the In<SCRIPT>ion on the recording surface that can be consumed by its producer as well as its user. A/r/tography is not a singular discourse; rather it is an assemblage of “image”. The premise of a/r/tography is the coexistence of difference rather than its eradication. Within the methodology of a/r/tography, the concepts of contiguity, openings, metaphor/metonymy, reverberations, and excess will be discussed (Springgay, 2008; Irwin, et al., 2008). The in/between is a non-hierarchical space or opening that can be thought of as a component of the fourth dimension or the chora space between being and becoming. Paradoxically, it is at the same time a relational process rather than a definable, fixed space. The space between bodies-physical-social-emotional is part of the in/between.

These are all concepts that exist in correlation to chora or the third non-representational space. The space provided is not meant to be one in which the artist/researcher/teacher fills in the __________. Instead the space is a space in which ideas, concepts, durations, In<SCRIPT>ions, etc., are situated in contiguity, lying next to one an/other. It is the energy of proximity and its relation to an ongoing process. Like the neural process of thought production, it is the synaptic firing of a neuron. Sublime beauty lies in the jump—the leap into the unknown. Like a streak of lightning from sky to earth, the jump illuminates the world and creates both rupture and connection simultaneously, an electric blue rip through both space and time that connects and divides, attracts and repels. There is electricity that flows through all living things. Like a child who has discovered the pleasure/pain of static electricity, we shuffle across the chora carpet of the world, anticipating the relational jump between bodies (Irwin, 2004; Springgay, 2008).

Openings and reverberations are all part of an intertwined relationship. Openings become the way by which the a/r/tographer seeks to generate meaning through metaphor and metonymy.
According to Springgay (2008), “a/r/tographers envision openings as cuts, tears, or cracks that resist predictability, comfort, and safety” (p. 41). Openings allow the co-existence of rupture and contradiction to be made possible through contiguity. This becomes the magnified molar line that takes in the molecular construction of self as many. Reverberations produce creative links; they are like ripples in a pool of water that alter the original represented image. They indicate the complexity of representation. Excess allows the a/r/tographer to understand the world in complex ways. It is the space between absolute knowledge and the shortfall of partial knowledge. When performing an a/r/tographic study, it is common for the study to be envisioned differently based on the time, place, or the (con)text in which it is presented. The reading self becomes the authoring self through performance. The results vary based on a variety of variables: X=?.

RefleXivity is the process of critical reflection on the human instrument. Self-reflexivity allows the a/r/tographer to make his/her suppositions apparent to both students and the readers of the text through reflection on the self and “the second self” as an instrument. Instead of reducing myself and students to subject or object—instead of separating body/mind, man/machine, in the paragraphs that follow, I will seek to elaborate on a theoretical method of self-reflexivity—an (un)becoming of self and a becoming collective. X is emphasized to call attention to the positionality of the researcher/plural, the difference between—X and X. It is also a reference to the self-X qualities inherent to autonomic computer systems. It becomes a deconstruction of categorical references. It is the erasure of self through the presentation of self (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Jagodinski, 2008).

As an a/r/tographer in this study, I examine my own educational practices as an art-educator and determine how I utilize the connection between traditional literacy models and emerging apparatuses to facilitate the meaning-making process of elementary educators. Through
this self-study, I am looking at the ways in which my own teaching acts as a model for elementary educators as well as their receptiveness to hypermedia, not only as a software tool, but also as a theoretical construct. My educational practices are investigated through data gathered from observations, hypertext constructions, reflective student videos, student/teacher avatars, and interviews. The following were the original questions utilized to structure my study:

In what ways can educators expand the concept of literacy for themselves through the use of hypermedia?

How receptive are elementary educators to the use of hypermedia to facilitate meaning-making?

How do elementary educators come to value emerging forms of literacy through their activities with hypermedia?

What I found as the study progressed is that these questions were only the beginning of the research process. New questions emerged and were added to my understanding. The original questions have been documented here because they illustrate the emerging nature of research and the ways in which it evolved and continues to evolve. As the study progressed, these questions were revised based on the information gathered from the practices of art, research, and teaching. The newly formulated questions are presented below:

In what ways can [we as] educators expand the concept of literacy teaching and learning for themselves through our use of hypermedia [as a method of teaching practice]?

How receptive are elementary educators to the use of [the] hypermedia [metaphor or hypertextual imagination] to facilitate meaning/making [in the construction of self]?

How do elementary educators come to value emerging forms of literacy [cultural interface/interbody] through their activities with hypermedia [practice in the construction of self]?

How is hypermedia reshaping culture in a way that makes the institution of education and the ontology of teacher and student infinitely (re)mixable in both the virtual and physical realms?
Rhizomatic discourse will be the method utilized for the analysis of the data. I have chosen to write in a manner that promotes poli-vocality. My purpose is to recognize the plurality of experience and voice rather than only the singularization of my own voice. Hypermedia makes this possible. The way the data is written and described is a way of contrasting the voices to show both convergence and divergence. As Denzin and Lincoln (2005) point out, the concept of voice is multi-layered; it has gathered a variety of meanings over the years through its use by different researchers. In the past, this voice was pure voice or “a voice from nowhere” (p. 209). This voice was represented through abstracted representations of the events. Voice, both written and spoken, is seen in postmodern discourse as the individual voices of the participants, their actual words; it includes the pauses, stutters, silences, fillers, and stops. The transcriptions/recordings of the student voices in this study provide an analysis of my own teaching practice. I am not doing research on them, but listening to them and their analysis becomes part of my understanding.

Student voice is utilized as a way of revealing particular discourses and gaps are left for the “reader” to fill in. The sources of data include video journals, sketchbooks, artworks, classroom discussions, and interviews. These were collected in the form of spatial hypertexts and a social networking site. The data became multi-layered through the interweaving of student teacher dialogue. The ability to layer discourses one on top of the other permits the creation of a virtual collage in which multiple voices occur simultaneously. This is a form of analysis in which there is no definitive answer. Instead new understandings are created through each reading of the research as a layering of narratives. I make my own connections to the students’ analysis of the experience(s) as a way of finding openings into their understanding of hypermedia as a (re)configuration of the senses. The temporal scheme of this study has been and will become
more de-centered through its electronic format. The sequence of events is out of “order.” This produces a layering effect meant to deal with juxtapositions of image and text and will become a way of interacting with the unconscious of the reader.

An apparatus was created through my engagement with theory and teaching practice during the course of this study. The apparatus that emerged, “image”/“i”/“nation,” was then utilized as a way of interpreting the data. The divisions of the apparatus create a system that allows me to work with the data and the classroom situation through representation/provocation, collective dialogue, and a reconstitution of a collective/individual understanding.

*Derridean Rigor/Rhizomatic Validity*

Lather (1993) describes what she calls Derridean rigor/rhizomatic validity. Derridean rigor is a system that seeks to disarm authority through subversive practice. This subversion is subtle and is characterized by the refusal to assert itself as a form of radical change. Derridean rigor “is what it does” (p. 680). It becomes a logic of particulars rather than a logic of universals. Within the particulars of this study, literacy as an apparatus of/for social interaction is questioned and deconstructed.

The *rhizome* is paired with Derridean rigor in order to foster its re-*In<SCRIPT>ion*. This re-*In<SCRIPT>ion* is not one that follows the centralized conception of the tree but that of the root or network. Within the *rhizome*, creativity is evoked through social practices. This form of creativity has the ability to deterritorialize the current conception of practice and to situate it between what has come before and what is yet to come. Lather (1993) cites McWilliams’ 1992 dissertation in which she sets forth a research design for pre-service teachers in the following phases:

1) an initial reflexive phase where researcher theoretical and political investments were put under scrutiny by moving back and forth among various contestatory discourses in a
way that resituated the researcher away from the “transformative intellectual” come to “save” the oppressed

2) an empirical phase that focused on student-teacher constructions of teacher work; and
3) a final reciprocal phase designed as reflection in action and an extended co-theorizing process that contested and reconstructed the researcher’s reading of the phase II data. (p. 674)

This type of design allows the artist/researcher/teacher to (re)situate, (re)think, and (re)mix practice.

Cycles of the Study

In both cycles of the study, I introduced pre-service elementary teachers to hypermedia as a means of rethinking the concept of self-organization. Modeling of hypermedia facilitation was meant to enable educators to see how meaning/making is a component of critical visual understanding and involves representation of the visual in relation to a wide array of other sensory perceptions. While traditional teaching methodologies espouse the central authority of the teacher in the meaning/making process, the dialogic model seeks to form a space in which negotiation can take place. My teaching involves the construction of materials, readings, video, audio, images, etc., as a means of producing a set of semiotic nodes within such a negotiated space. These nodes can be both connected to and connected from by both student and teacher as a method of building understandings about reality.

In Spring 2009 Cycle One of this study was implemented utilizing Visual Understanding Environment or VUE, an open-source authoring platform for spatial hypermedia. While Eastgate Systems has developed two separate software packages (Tinderbox and Storyspace) for hypertext authoring, their disadvantages in the classroom include both cost and the difficulty of use. Four separate aspects influenced my decision to use VUE for this study. The first and most obvious reason is that the program is free. Since the entire class took part in the construction of hypermedia constructions, I wanted to keep costs to a minimum. VUE also uses drag and drop
functionality. Users can move images, video, websites, etc., by clicking, dragging, and dropping. Thirdly, VUE has a presentation mode that is beneficial to the performance aspects of hypertext. The final aspect of VUE that made it most beneficial to this particular study deals with the aesthetics of the program. Nodes can be created and shaped in a variety of forms, colors, font, formats, etc., as a means of image construction.

I attempted to promote curriculum development by both teacher and student through a process of dialogic negotiation. Hypertext allows “non-linear” inquiry and intertextuality by creating multiple entry points within the complex network of classroom interaction. The accessibility and structure of hypertext allows for student individuality. Because of individual differences, the curriculum must allow for multiple perspectives and divergent approaches. I tried to allow for divergence while facilitating the acknowledgement of intersections and connections. This is where the concept of the rhizome is helpful in relation to dialogue.

Three sub-cycles were designed for the purposes of the first full cycle: Reading, Deconstruction, and (Re)construction/ Appropriation.

In the Cycle One: Reading, each student represented his/her identity through the selection of an image. We dialogued about the ways in which identity could be represented in such an image. The terms symbolic and literal were used in relation to identity interpretation. These two concepts were intended to leave image selection as open as possible. I modeled for students a hypertext created from a photo taken in the virtual world of Second Life, a virtual environment that gives its inhabitants the ability to visit virtual locations and have simulated experiences on virtual plots of land called “islands.” My intent was to show students a part of my own identity, a part of me that exists outside of the (con)text of the classroom setting.
During this first cycle, students’ image selections ranged from Polly Pocket and Strawberry Shortcake to personal snapshots and images of home. Students were asked to incorporate the Feldman model of art criticism to interpret their images. Step by step, students described, analyzed, interpreted, and judged their images based on an understanding of the visual elements inherent to each image. The discussion included the ways in which visual elements can have both a cultural and formal interpretation.

The intent or purpose of this process was for both students and teacher to discover more about themselves as a community of learners, for students and teacher to uncover methods in which ways of seeing have shaped their identities, and conversely to find ways of gaining agency with regards to “image.” Concepts inherent to the second and third cycles were consistently interwoven into the overall process. The delineation of cycles within the study is not meant to be prescriptive, but rather to identify an overarching set of themes for each stage of the research.

Cycle One: Deconstruction melded together two of the instructional practices involved in the implementation of a postmodern curriculum as described by Efland, Freedman, and Stur (1996). During this cycle, students were introduced to and discussed the power structures that govern the dominant forms of reading an image. Power structures inherent to the image both omit and conceal. All texts are constructed based on human motives and counter-motives (Pinar & Reynolds, 1992). Every interpretation of meaning is an interpretation of an interpretation.

The cycle depended predominantly upon students’ discussion of the images that were utilized. In the process of deconstruction, I attempted to point out those socio-political and cultural forces that have influenced and continue to influence my own interpretations. Students added to their reflective hypertexts in a way that deconstructed or circumscribed the images that they chose to utilize. Students were asked to determine what influential power structures they saw
at work within their own images, as well as, those elements of the images that had been omitted or presented through absence.

In Cycle One: (Re)Construction/Appropriation, the prefix “(re)” refers to synthesis rather than construction. Students worked with the connectedness of concepts made visible through hypertext construction. This final cycle makes visible the cultural construction of our classroom setting and expands the notion of authorship and meaning-making. Similar to the processes used in the construction of a wiki, the final cycle of this study is democratic, employing methods of equopotalility.

In this cycle or stage students gathered all maps from all students and appropriated them into their own existing structures. Students expanded upon their own interpretations through the interpretations of others. Merging all class maps together, students were able to see the ways in which their understandings of the world are affected by the understandings of individuals and concepts with whom they come in contact. During the third cycle, students also constructed their own meanings based on the two prior experiences that they had had with their chosen image.

Cycle Two of the research took place in the summer of 2009. During this cycle, I utilized the concept of social networking as a means of promoting collective meaning making and (self) representation. Students purchased USB video cameras that were used to record three one-minute reflection videos per week. These reflection videos served as a way for students to further address topics discussed in class and to make meaning of their own.

I created a social networking site using the web application Ning. Ning allows its users to make social-networks that revolve around a specific theme. In this research, the title of the network was and is A/r/tography. Students posted pictures and described their research throughout the course of the summer. Many students even incorporated personal photographs and
personalized their pages. This stage of the research proceeded in a more loosely based pattern of interpreting, sketching, researching, and creating the final product. Informal interviews were conducted throughout the process along with students’ documentation of their research and construction.

In this phase, we discussed the elements and principles of art as allegorical themes. The traditional formal elements and principles were presented in relation to their social application in the classroom (Gude, 2004). In our discussions about these elements and principles, we tried to gain a better understanding of what new emerging principles might be arising from social issues.

During Cycle Two: Inside (The Personal), several things were occurring simultaneously. First, students kept video journals in which they reflected upon information learned, perplexing attributes of the course, and the process of making art. I had allowed us a week and a half to both construct and install a color theory installation in the gallery of the art building. This installation was meant to engage the formal as well as the conceptual qualities of color theory. Students used found and constructed objects in the construction of these installations. They documented the process of sketching, group discussion, and construction of their installation through their video reflections. We were also reading excerpts from the book Contemporary Issues in Art Education by Gaudelius and Speirs (2001). These readings served as a backdrop for the artistic engagement in the classroom.

In Cycle Two: Outside (The Social) students researched, sketched, discussed, and collaborated to create an outdoor installation. As in the first cycle, students continued the process of reflective video journaling and commenting on the work of other students. We researched both the local site and the materials that were used. We met with professionals in both forestry and agriculture in order to learn more about the environment, and we documented the entire process.
For the remainder of the study, these cycles will be discussed based on the conceptual threads rather than on the actual events. My goal is to create a narrative of events that allows the juxtaposition of issues and practices as a rhizomatic network of connections. Student/teacher avatars extracted from the network are based on their relationship to the larger structure of the network and serve as both a micro and macro connection to global communication and media.


int x = 30;
PFont fontA;

void setup() {
    size(500, 500);
    background (102);
    println("Hello World!");
    fontA = loadFont("Ziggurat-12.vlw");
    textFont (fontA, 32);
    noLoop();
}

void draw() {
    PFont font;
    font = loadFont("Ziggurat-12.vlw");
    textFont (font);

    String s =
        "Hello World! ";
    text(s, 15, 20, 450, 450);
}

Hello World! This is the emphatic declaration of presence and complete absence in computer programming terms. It is the first line of code learned in almost any of a thousand or more computer programming languages. The Insertion of self becomes virtually traceable, one in which the declaration presences an absent representation of the physical body and yet writes the virtual body. Binary code is the way in which the digital is made visible through a series of 1’s and 0’s, 1 = presence while 0 = absence. An image or object that is converted from analog to digital becomes discrete, and that discreteness is what makes new media programmable. This is a fundamental conceptual shift in the nature of objects, images, teaching, learning, education, art, research, and a plethora of other discourses. The conceptual shift began with film which gives us insight into the discrete nature of all reality as both continuous and fragmented, both digital and analog. According to Manovich (1999):

Cinema sampled time twenty-four times a second. So we can say that cinema prepared us for new media. All that remained was to take this already discrete representation and to
quantify it. But this is simply a mechanical step; what cinema accomplished was a much more difficult conceptual break from the continuous to the discrete. (p. 50)

The break from the continuous of the analog to the discrete of the digital described by Manovich opens possibilities for the reprogramming of metaphors of classification. The comment “this is this” becomes “this is X.”

Manovich (1999) describes the principles involved in the designation of objects as new media: 1) **Numeric Representation**, 2) **Modularity**, 3) **Automation**, 4) **Variability**, and 5) **Transcoding**. These are described below as a means of illustrating their relationship to the practice of programming:

1) **Numeric Representation**—All forms of new media are made up of numbers, i.e., binary code.

2) **Modularity**—All forms of new media have a fractal structure that allows them to be composed as larger objects while still retaining their original construction. Pixels, scripts, and characters are but a few examples.

3) **Automation**—Principles 1 and 2, numeric representation and modularity, allow for automation or the use of mathematical algorithms to create something new. This in part removes human intentionality from the event of creation. Two levels of automation exist: “low-level” and “high-level.” Low-level automations are mathematical algorithms such as a Photoshop filter. High-level automations refer to the introduction of artificial intelligence or A.I. High-level automations allow for interactivity with the computer.

4) **Variability**—Principles 1 and 2 also allow for potentially infinite versions of the new media object.
5) **Transcoding**—Transcoding is computer cosmology transferred to the realm of culture. In other words, the computer layer affects the cultural layer, producing a new way to see and interact with culture.

Because of these principles we are able to see culture in a new light. Culture becomes transcoded into forms of cultural interface/interbody that can be programmed. Bourriaud (2005) states, “Artists today program forms more than they compose them: rather than transfigure a raw element (blank canvas, clay, etc.), they remix available forms and make use of data” (p. 8). The practices of programming and object-oriented programming allow the artist to program objects through a script; however, this script is not one the participant must follow, such as an acting script. Instead, “every work is issued from a script that the artist projects onto culture, considered the framework of a narrative that in turn projects new possible scripts, endlessly” (p. 9). Bourriaud titles this generation of artists along with DJs and Web Surfers, semionauts. These semionauts produce *Lines of Flight* through a sea of signs. These same practices can be utilized in the classroom environment as way to flip the script of traditional (art) education practice.

**Flipping the Script: Cyborg Pedagogy as the Conduction of Flow**

To flip the script, according to the various online slang dictionaries, refers to a deviation from the norm. This relays the concept of short-circuiting experience and does so by way of a feedback loop. It is a site that establishes a sense of recursivity. According to Davis and Sumara (2006), recursivity is the establishment and application of a rule, reapplication of that rule to the initial result, and continuous reappllication of the rule in a never-ending reiteration. Reappplication of the rule can be likened to tracing a Möbius strip and does not involve a sense of self-perpetuation but rather a continual flipping of the script. This process can produce incredibly complex systems. Complex systems are formed in patterns known as fractals. Fractal images do
not get simpler as you magnify them; rather they get more complex, a trait known as scale independence.

The complex human image is present in a form of *cyborg pedagogy* as described by Angus, Cook and Evans, et al., (2001), who cite their work “et al.” as a way of crediting their students for their input. This form of pedagogy, as they explain it, is not one in which they teach a particular course; instead, they deliver only one lecture at the beginning of the course. Beyond that, their purpose is to “orchestrate the course [conduct]: prepare the class discussions, arrange extra course office hours for smaller discussions; assess the journals according to clearly set out criteria; and de-center ourselves as much as possible” (p. 197). The questions presented to the class are not questions from which they expect to see correct answers produced; they look for “convincing, thoughtful, imaginative and knowledgeable answers situated in the concrete circumstances of their [the students’] own lives, the readings discussed, and the issues raised in class” (p. 197). The material for the course is chosen neither entirely by the teacher nor entirely by the student. The course becomes a reciprocal exchange in which one material folds into the other. One does not become other; the one becomes many that are already connected within the discursive network.

*Cyborg* pedagogy is outlined though three points of contact that are interconnected: *situated knowledge, cyborg ontology, and border pedagogy*. Situated knowledge refers to research/teaching that is firmly situated in the circumstances of the real events. The connections from the self to the world at large are never arbitrary. All connections are important, and importance should be given to connections made by both student and teacher. The cyborg is the *In<SCRIPT>tion* of the avatar, the incarnation that appropriates through being, both born and reborn(e) of the very states it consumes. The avatar enables the crossing of the border. As avatar,
students are able to critique the suppositions once held about binary logic. The following are a set of principles constructed for this study as a way of further understanding my own teaching practice.

Cyborg Ontology: The Self-X

The intertwining of an/other already exists. One is incapable of extracting oneself from the network. Haraway states (1988), “The topography of subjectivity is multidimensional; so, therefore is vision. The knowing self is partial in all its guises, never finished, whole, simply there and original; it is always constructed and stitched together imperfectly, and therefore able to join one with another, to see together without claiming to be another” (p. 119). Vision refers to the performance of embodied objects; its meaning is not confined to just what the physical eyes see. This allows for the connection with an/other that is always partial; it requires a sense of objectivity, rather than identification, that allows for the realization of bodies as nodes within a network of bodies. Each body is recursive, and in educational practice this requires an understanding of the fractal properties of self as a means of understanding the self. In the case of the fractal self, the self becomes self-X, a variable that changes based on the situation and the material conditions (Haraway, 1988; Schneider, 2005).

In autonomic computing, self-X properties are those properties that facilitate a system’s knowledge of itself. The properties that compose the self-X are as follows: 1) self-organization, 2) self-configuration, 3) self-healing, 4) self-optimizing, and 5) self-protection (Liu, 2006). This classification is modeled after properties already inherent in living systems. I have adapted each of these properties to the teaching and learning situation. When a system is self-organizing, its structure appears without exerted control or constraints from outside the system. Much like the orchestration or conduction of classroom activities, self-organization refers to the ability of the
student to organize discrete units of information for him- or her- self as a means of understanding the whole.

Self-configuration allows the system to dynamically adapt to changes in the environment. When the situation changes in the classroom, the self must adapt. Adaptation is as important for the teacher as it is for the student. The teacher should not continue on a predetermined route if the classroom situation would be best served by a course correction or a completely new direction. To persist in a predetermined course which ignores the needs, interests, and skills or lack of skills of the students is counterproductive. The Line of Flight is what allows for meaningful conversation and, quite possibly, learning on the part of both the student and the teacher (Liu, 2006; Deleuze & Guattari, 1987).

Systems that are self-healing are those that can recover from mistakes or failures. Systems, be they classrooms or individuals, must become capable of self-healing in order to be effective. It is through failures more than through successes that an individual or structure learns. Due to this realization, participants within the structure of the system and the system itself must become able to identify and repair their/its own mistakes (Doll, 1993).

Self-optimization refers to the ability of the system to monitor and adjust based on the conditions of the environment. When conditions in the classroom change, so must the student and teacher. They must be capable of making adjustments in the classroom setting as well as in their mental states (Doll, 1993).

Finally, the self-X is self-protecting, meaning that it is capable of identifying and defending itself against corrupt information (Liu, 2006). This does not mean that the self-X is guarded with respect to the transgression of borders, but that the system or individual is capable of identifying that information that would seek to invade for the purpose of corrupting or masking
the structure. For Haraway (1991), the transgression of borders is a primary function of the progressive individual. When borders are crossed, the individual becomes better able to take up all positions rather than simply the one.

Situated Knowledge: (H)Activism

One who appropriates the signs of others as means of producing the self rejects the concept of artistic “genius.” Instead, appropriation and dissappropriation allow for the formulation of a cultural mash-up, a blending of boundaries of “high” and “low,” “left” and “right.” In the 1960’s Robert Rauschenberg created a series of works that he called combine paintings. These paintings consisted of a series of images and objects juxtaposed together. These paintings, according to Rauschenberg, were an exploration of the gap between “art” and “life” (Kotz, 1990). Appropriation, as utilized by Rauschenberg in his work and by myself in this paper, is about discovery and invention that separates it from the concept of assimilation. It gives individuals agency in the world through the disruption of dominant culture. Through appropriation, the individual is given the power to activate what Ulmer (2003) terms dead metaphors or the stereotypes and clichés of culture through a rhizomatic chain of signifiers. This is an engagement with metaphor/metonymy as a process of programming culture.

The movement towards engaging cultural production is slow moving in the academic arena. Students of a much younger generation have taken up this practice as cultural producers through their participation in social networks such as YouTube, Facebook, MySpace, delicious, etc. A study conducted by the Pew Internet and American Life project found that over half of American teenagers could be categorized as media producers and fifty-seven percent of teenagers who utilize the Internet can be categorized as media producers. In this study the concept of media production is defined by the following criteria: “blog or webpage, posted original artwork,
photography, stories or videos online or remixed online content into their own new creations” (p. 3). The study found that most of the participants had engaged in two or more of these activities. Furthermore, one-third of teenagers share their media productions with others (Jenkins, 2005). This cultural shift is not a passing fad; it is the restructuring or transcoding of culture.

Bricolage is the French word for Do It Yourself. The expert performer as the authority on the mode of practice or discipline can no longer be relied upon as the primary mode of educational practice. Like the counterculture movement of the 1960’s, the punk movement of the late 70’s and early 80’s brought about the subversive concept of DIY or Do It Yourself, the resistance to expert or professional processes. DIY is the belief that an individual can perform any tasks at hand by him/herself with the materials s/he is presented.

Shoddy handi-cam camera work of the backyard filmmaker, informal editing, skewed registration of self made t-shirts and posters, the patchwork construction of jackets and pants were at one time all signifiers of this aesthetic. Mass media and popular culture have appropriated this sign system as a way of appealing to the need for subversion. Yet what has occurred is the Hot Topic-ization of the world in which signifiers of change have become globalized and commercialized. Understanding that such aesthetic signifiers have been hijacked by mass media requires a change of methods by those who are part of the cultural resistance. Engagement in subversive practice must convert the artist/educator into a cultural (h)activist (Sweeny, 2008a).

Art educator Darts (2004) describes what he calls a visual culture jam. He and his students took to the street, producing a cultural performance similar to a flash mob. Flash mobs are impromptu meetings in which a collective group of people get together to produce what is essentially a large scale piece of performance art. The group Improv Everywhere has initiated a number of these flash mobs through the use of the Internet, texting, social networking sites, and a
variety of other forms of contemporary technologies (Todd & Scordelis, 2009). Head Games, the show created by Darts and his students, served as a form of public pedagogy in which the private is made political. Through the disruption of everyday experience, Darts and his students (h)activated the public space, creating an opening for dialogue.

Internet artist Mark Amerika proposes the idea of the author as a Network Conductor. He believes that individuals must become (h)activist cultural producers (Amerika & Willis, 2003). Theodore Nelson first discussed the idea of hacker ethics in 1974; however, a code of hacker ethics was not finalized until Stephen Levy published his *Hacker Code of Ethics* in 1984. The *Hacker Code of Ethics* deconstructs the media perpetuated concept of hackers as destructive components of the culture and the society in which they operate. To hack is to reconfigure rather than to destroy; hacking is more concerned with the process of invention rather than destruction (Levy, 2010):

> Access to Computers—and anything which might teach you something about the way the world works—should be unlimited and total.

> Always yield to the Hands-On Imperative!

> All information should be free.

> Mistrust Authority - Promote Decentralization.

> Hackers should be judged by their hacking not bogus criteria such as degrees, age, race or position.

> You can create art and beauty on a computer.

> Computers can change your life for the better. (p. 458)

Asking our students to become cultural (h)activists is about asking them to question our authority as teachers and academic institutions. This can be a disconcerting prospect for student, teacher, and institution. When we give up authority, the question becomes how to define the concept of
teacher. What does a teacher do and how might I become a teacher? The following is a short excerpt from a class dialogue that took place in Second Life about the Hacker Code of Ethics:

Jaime Hubbenfluff: “hackers should be judged by their hacking not bogus criteria such as degrees, age, race or position” - is that not satire?

Kyle Jharls: There can be no ownership if people have complete access to everything

Kyle Jharls: “no” as in i don't agree with the thought, it is satire'

Jaime Hubbenfluff: oh

Phoebe Bregonis: Judging from the tone the code of ethics takes in the code of ethics, it sounds like he thinks that authority is a “bogus” institution that is simply there for the sake of keeping us from moving forward.

Matthew75 Swashbuckler: Who is the authority here then?

Phoebe Bregonis: It's an annoying institution that should be contradicted at every turn because it is pointless.

Matthew75 Swashbuckler: “here”

Phoebe Bregonis: I think that's probably you, the professor.

Matthew75 Swashbuckler: Why should I be the authority...my degrees?

Matthew75 Swashbuckler: Do you not have something to bring to the table?

Jaime Hubbenfluff: “here” as in our classroom or secondlife?

Crissa Gummibaum: its how we've always been taught

Crissa Gummibaum: the teacher is the authority

KateLynn Chauveau: well, even if someone should be judged by their hacking alone, who is to say what degree of skill is in the hacking itself?

Tonnerre Tigerfish: true and you elders

Crissa Gummibaum: because its implied that they know more than us

Kyle Jharls: You have the experience, we are hear to learn from you

Phoebe Bregonis: I'm not saying that we don't have anything to contribute or to say or that our opinions are not valuable. (Sutherlin, 2009e)
As can be seen in the above dialogue, the concept of authorship and authority become difficult to disappropriate due to student expectations. Katelynn commented that the skill level of the hacking must be judged. In the case of hacking, however, judgment does not emerge from a centralized entity such as the teacher or institution; it is a decentralized network of hackers, an online community. In an example such as the Linux OS, the code is open-source through a GNU General Public License. Programmers can add to the code, improving it incrementally just as growth is manifested in a living system. In other words, hackers are valued for their contribution to the system rather than for the system itself. The benefits of their participation far outweigh the time they invest. It is a system known as the “gift” culture in which one’s status as a hacker is not determined by what he has in his possession, but by what he gives away. Time, energy, code, etc., are all part of this gift-giving paradigm (Hann, Roberts, Slaughter, & Fielding, 2002).

Ownership, copyright, and the concept of artistic “aura” are perceived limits for the educator, student, and institution (Benjamin, 1968). The obligation to publish imposed by the university as an institution forces the idea of authorship upon academia. Authorship, according to university standards, requires the writer to take ownership of his or her work. The question of ownership limits the constructive promise of collaboration (Amerika & Willis, 2003). Sweeny (2005) asks the following questions of educators:

How often do educators include students in the process of constructing knowledge, challenging their own authorial status? What is gained through the acknowledgement of new technologies, new ways of seeing and making? What, if anything, is lost? We, as always, have a choice in the matter. Do we mourn the death of the author and the destruction of aura, or do we celebrate the creation of new aesthetic possibilities that are a product of contemporary digital technologies, possibilities that are quite familiar to students in a digital age? (p. 18)

This study seeks to (re)configure traditional conceptions of visual literacy to include new forms of cultural practice that must engage a critically discerning “i” as circuit of the body. Body,
as used here, is inclusive of all bodies: bodies of ideas, bodies of people, social bodies, cultural bodies, curricular bodies, artistic bodies, etc. In this study, “\(i\)” is a homonymic pun referring to both self and eye. A critical “\(i\)” enables those involved with literacy facilitation to uncover the power structures that govern the ways in which they and “I” view and understand the world. This practice of critical graphics is translated into performative creation and exploration. Rather than allowing images and language to govern our thoughts and actions as truth, we are able to give them new meaning and new form through their utilization in new (con)texts involving the introduction of “image”.

Authenticity and authority, two components of major importance to Walter Benjamin, are illustrated in the concept of the original. There can be no copy without the original, and the existence of an original requires a specific space and time for the event of creation. If space and time are essential in the production of an original, then there is no way to produce an original without introducing the concept of becoming. Becoming refers to interaction with the work, and becoming is constantly in process. It is the journey one must take; at the same time, in relation to an original, it is the point at which one must decide that something is complete. In the case of classification, it is to state that something “is.”

As previously stated, “What is?” is a metaphysical question. We discuss the ways in which images construct our perceptions of reality, and yet, we sometimes fail to turn the lens back on ourselves. The transmutation of self into image is most notably described through the analogy of celebrity to spectacle. As a generalization, society members want to recreate the “image” of the celebrity as their own, but the celebrity is nothing more than an image. Baudrillard (1995) states that such a relationship is cyclical. Simulacra or false images overtake the “real” to become hyper-real or reality at a heightened state perpetuated by image. Embodied images created
through the appropriation of the “image” of self are a form of authorship that is at once singular/plural/singular . . . ad infinitum (Nancy, 2000).

Sweeny (2005) further develops the point made by Benjamin by introducing the concept of digitized cloning into visual understanding. The computer allows for exact copies of the same image—direct replicas or clones. New media is formed through numeric representation or binary code. This binary code is information. We are no longer looking at the image itself, but at a graphic representation produced through a specific numeric order. These images can be produced and reproduced over and over. The proliferation of images produced through digital technologies creates a central conceptual question. Every time an individual utilizes a computer to copy data, he or she is creating an act of cloning. The question at hand is this: What happens to presentation and/or representation through the process of cloning? According to Sweeny, new criteria must be applied when one cannot discern the difference between an “original” and its clone.

Cloning involves the proliferation of an image without degradation. The cloning of a living being has already occurred with the sheep named Dolly. While Dolly may be the most famous example of cloning, she is not the first. Frogs, mice, and cows had been cloned prior to Dolly’s creation. Unlike the earlier clones, Dolly was given a proper name, a signifier of importance. Dolly the clone is not a clone of a generic sheep; she is a “Dolly,” a new category of existence. Derrida discusses the proper name in relation to importance and uniqueness. Obviously, Dolly is a singularity in that she is one entity; however, she is one among many. To be a “Dolly” is not to be simply a sheep, but a particular type of sheep. “Dolly” becomes a **Body without Organs**, an interchangeable set of abstract machines. As a single sheep, Dolly was an entity unto herself. The abstract machine “Dolly” is the multiple within a singularity; she is a category of existence. “Dolly” is then a cultural coupling that can be connected and disconnected.
to direct the cultural flow of consciousness. Depending on the context of the situation, “Dolly” is permitted to become something other than “Dolly.” “Dolly” is fractured into multiple Dollies. They/She become(s) a contiguity of sheep and sheep. The being “Dolly” becomes an entirely new being or category of existence. Deleuze describes the multiplicity of identity that can occur through the process of pure becoming:

Pure becoming, with its capacity to elude the present, is the paradox of infinite identity (the infinite identity of both directions or senses at the same time—of the future in the past, of the day before and the day after, of more and less, of too much and not enough, of active and passive, and of cause and effect). (p. 4)

To become an infinite physical being is impossible. Identity, however, is capable of multiple incarnations. Pure becoming is to become simulacra, a form of simulation that is more real than reality.

Sweeny discusses the nature of the clone in the realm of the digital as well as the physical; the clone is the virtual Body without Organs or the avatar. Its production process is cancerous, caught in a perpetual cycle of self-recreation. However, if one takes this clone and appropriates it for a new purpose, one of subversive transformation, it can be rendered healthy once again. It can be disconnected from and reconnected to the cultural network in order to become something other than what it “is.” Through cultural context, the representation or physical body of “Dolly” can be introduced through a multiplicity of incarnations. “The simulacrum is not just a copy, but that which overturns all copies by also overturning the models: every thought becomes an aggression” (Deleuze, 1994, p. xx).

If there is no original, if everything is constituted, as simulacra then there is no original knowledge. As such we must concede to Foucault’s (1972) statement in The Archaeology of Knowledge that discourse must be treated situationally. Knowledge becomes a knowledge of the parameters of the situation as well as one’s location within it. The concept of incarnation allows
for student and teacher to choose the form of embodiment within a given space as a transgression of borders. Artists, students, teachers, and researchers, seeking to intertwine their own work with the work of others in a community of practice, foster the obliteration of the time honored split “between production and consumption, creation and copy, readymade and original artwork” (Bourriaud, 2005, p.6). These choices may be conscious or unconscious in their enactment. Although I am Matthew, I am also Caucasian, I have blonde hair, I have blue eyes, I am a male, etc. I have agency in the world, and I have the ability to make choices. The choice made may be in favor of or in contrast to what the culture at large believes I should be. Categories serve as a means through which I can appropriate multiple modes of discourse into an interpretation of self. The trace and the In<SCRIPT>ion become artifacts of self, produced within a singular context that is universal through the conduction of “image.”

**Border Pedagogy: Producer/Consumer Networks**

Through acknowledgement of the self-X and the inclusion of appropriative (h)activation an individual becomes capable of becoming a producer and user of the “image,” a produser. Traditionally speaking, when an individual uses a computer or any material object, they are called a user. This section references the concept of digital eXhaust or the user-produced trace that occurs through interaction with the computer and the inscribed trace produced though interaction with the world of objects. Metatags and metadata are embedded in the interaction with the computer and the world of concrete objects. Interactions produce information that allow for an unconscious organization on the part of the user. Produsers are those individuals who engage in the process of produsage. That is, they are those individuals who, either overtly or covertly, are taking part in the organization of content through activities that previously would have been considered strictly consumptive use (Bruns, 2008). According to Deleuze and Guattari (1972):
For the real truth of the matter—the glaring, sober truth that resides in delirium—is that there is no such thing as relatively independent spheres or circuits: production is immediately consumption and a recording process (*enregistrement*) without any sort of mediation, and the recording process and consumption directly determine production, though they do so within the production itself. (p. 4)

Forms of *produsage* are open for participation and communal evaluation. The act of *produsage* assumes a certain quality control through probabilistic rather than linear means. Probabilistic methodologies are able to deal with the uncertainty of user constructed content and organization. In regard to *produsage*, it is believed that if enough individuals engage with a particular material, the bugs will be worked out, and quality will be its outcome. It is what Michael Bauwens describes as equipotentiality, or the belief that while each individual’s skills are not equal, each individual has a valid contribution that he or she can make to the project (Bruns, 2008).

*Produsage* outcomes are described as “artifacts” because they are always incomplete; they are pieces of the w/whole. The information found within a *produsage* environment represents only a temporary snapshot of an ongoing process. It is the modular within the stream; it is only part of the whole and not the w/whole itself. Wikis and open-source software are the perfect example of equipotentiality. Each time a user updates the page, a new snapshot of the stream has been created. Users can continually update these ‘artifacts’ in order to improve the content of the page. This does not mean that every addition will be kept; some information will always be sloughed off in the snapshot while remaining present in the w/whole. The “image” becomes a form of narrative that tells a story of process.

*Network as Narrative*

Narrative is not just a thread that follows a temporal or spatial line; it can also be conceived as a network, a semiotic network or script that runs throughout all aspects of reality.
Through narrative, one can link together events that would otherwise be disjointed and discrete by creating a chain based on associative qualities. The creator of the narrative is no longer subject to the constraints of time, cause and effect, or collective value systems. The associations created become semiotic and affective and effective, allowing for the understanding of self and one’s situation within a community (Nobre, 2004).

The network society produces new territories in both the conscious and unconscious mind that are just beginning to be explored in the field of art education literature, and according to Sweeny (2008b), they have yet to be thoroughly explored in art education curriculum as a discipline. Elfand (1995) proposed the curriculum structure of the lattice as a revisioning of the spiral model of curriculum proposed by Bruner (1977). The lattice allows an understanding of the connections between art and life through a series of nodes at the point of connection. This type of curriculum makes way for a connection between theory and practice. A network curriculum moves from theory to practice to theory. Networks are like living systems that allow for change and adaptation over time, so that both theory and practice are adapted through the process. The visual structure or “image” of these networks is that of the rhizome. They have very little initial coherency in their visual apprehension. However, through exploring the linkages, the participant becomes better able to discover the presence of patterns.

Pattern and randomness enable the application of a simple rule in order to gain complex results. Randomness becomes the situation from which pattern emerges. Within the concept of posthumanism, pattern and randomness is paired with presence and absence. In the figure (Fig. 2) below, Hayles (1999) reconfigures the semiotic square. Absence is placed diagonally across from randomness; presence is placed diagonally across from pattern. The line connecting presence to pattern is labeled replication. The line connecting randomness and absence is labeled disruption.
Absence reveals the illusive nature of presence. Presence implies the idea of being fully present, but there is no method that permits total presence; we are always presented with a loss. In classroom dialogue, it is not possible to have all voices heard. The absence of the narrative that could have been provided by those voices also impacts the concept of multiple narratives. These absences can provide opportunities for disruption. When a disruption is introduced, it knocks a pattern out of synchronization, causing randomness. Randomness allows for the unexpected, which can then lead to new conversations.

![Diagram of posthuman semiotics](image)

Figure 3. Hayles (1999, p. 248) diagram of posthuman semiotics

The network of human perception and memory is consistently created and recreated through patterns and randomness. Through movement between these, a network comes into form that allows the individual to see the world not as dominant nor as sub-culture, but rather the world becomes fractilized into an "image" of dialects, slangs, and specialized languages. The origin of knowledge is decentered, allowing for new nodes to be added to the network.

Complexity theory describes the architecture of networks in three separate ways: centralized, decentralized or scale-free, and distributed. Centralized networks are those networks that are clustered around a central node. It has been hypothesized that time is a contributing factor
in the belief that the educational network is centralized or centered around the teacher. This results in the belief that all information must pass through the teacher as a means of verification. The negative aspect of such a system is that the students are vulnerable to experiencing complete failure, because if the central node (teacher) fails in the performance of his or her job, the whole system can crash. Distributed networks can continue to function even if nodes are removed; however, the delivery of information becomes much more difficult. If nodes within a system fail, a greater number of transfers are required before all information is received by the system. Scale free networks have two major advantages: 1) nodes are evenly distributed and therefore allow for efficiency in the transmission of information and 2) the network is able to withstand shock because the system can continue to function regardless of the failure of one node (Davis & Sumara, 2006).

These properties apply to individuals as well as concepts. When one builds a complex “image” of self, s/he is able to accept new information because the acceptance of new information into the network does not destroy the network completely. New information shifts “images” that compose the network. Agents within a scale free network are connected to every other agent through a small number of connections as in the game “Six Degrees of Separation to Kevin Bacon”; every individual, including Burt Reynolds, Johnny Carson, the local weatherman, or the kid down the street, can be connected to Kevin Bacon through a relatively small number of links if a comprehensive knowledge of the social connections is understood.

Social networking sites such as MySpace and Facebook are making these connections even more visible to the human eye. Applications on Facebook that give visualization to such data have already taken shape. For instance, the Friend Wheel on both Facebook and Twitter allows one to visualize friends as nodes around one’s self, the centralized node. The Friend Wheel takes
friends who are also friends with one another and draws a line between the two. It makes the “six degrees of separation” into a dynamic visual representation that continually changes as more data is accumulated.

Understanding data accumulation as folksonomy rather than taxonomy eliminates the top down structure of the hierarchical system of capitalism. The divisions of proletariat and working class blur because anybody who has a keyboard is able to “tag” information and classify it through the process of self-organization. These tag clouds are yet another visualization of data that can be mined from any number of social networking applications such as Delicious and Digg.

Decisions made through Internet produsage, however, are not always conscious. Consider the online store Amazon; each time I purchase a book, DVD, MP3, digital version of a film, yoga ball, tennis racket, wine rack, or toaster oven, the store catalogues that information in a database. This database then categorizes my purchases, searches, tags, etc., into three separate recommendations: social, personal, and item based. Social recommendations tell the consumer how many people purchased this item after viewing it by providing a statistical analysis. For instance, “What do customers buy after viewing this item?” The answer, a listing of three items generally purchased with a corresponding percentage of customers, is provided at the bottom of the webpage. This is a personal recommendation because it is based on the content of the page that I am viewing. Item based recommendations are also personal because they are based on previous purchases as well as new releases. This process is part of what is termed consumer facing (Iskold, 2007).

Through Internet technologies the spectacle of culture has transformed its visuality. As (art) educators practicing the deconstruction of “image” in the curriculum, we must be conscious of the forces that seek to shape our desires from the inside out. Anti-commercialism, presented as
a slew of logos and slogans, has gone commercial. I have recently been offered the opportunity to purchase a T-shirt with the logo Destroy Popular Culture. Rebuild. Repeat. The choice of the T-shirt with its mantra for subversive practice is based on my previous purchases of Derrida’s Of Grammatology (1976) and Deleuze and Guattari’s (1987) A Thousand Plateaus. The concept of capitalism as a driving force in the process of desire has been masked as a suggestion that requires us to look closely at unconscious desire and the construction of self.

The active construction of self can be facilitated through the use of the computer in relation to simulated media. Fry and Raes (2007) understood the potential of the computer and the power of programming as an artistic device. Working together at the MIT Computational Aesthetics Lab, they created Processing™, a programming language for the visual artist. It has enabled artists to create their own interfaces. These interfaces allow for data visualization beyond the typical graphs and charts. These works of art literally become works of art that express data in a variety of interesting and unique ways. Data mining for these interfaces comes from a variety of sources. Consider, for instance, Narrative Network™, the Internet data mining and mapping software produced by the public relations firm Waggener Edstrom. The Narrative Network™ tracks conversations related to particular companies online. During the 2008 presidential campaign the software mined both traditional and electronic media as well as the blogosphere for any mention of the candidates. These new data mining and visualization software applications have tremendous potential for the field of art education and arts-based research.

Produsage gives educators a vocabulary for discussing the ways in which culture affects the user/producer’s ability to make decisions. The ways in which technology causes adaptations in the body requires us to ask questions about how technology is shaping the student and in what ways the student is shaping technology. The virtual abilities of digital technology permit the
expansion of our capabilities and capacities in such a way that it requires us to rethink or (re)mix the apparatus of education.
DOUBLY INSCRIBING THE SELF: DISPOSITIF (APPARATUS)

Introduction

The metaphor holds, the poem invokes the next line, word leads to thought and back again. Repeat. The scenario: internal becomes external becomes involution. The loop of perception is a relentless hall of mirrors in the mind. You can think of sampling as a story you are telling yourself— one make of the world as you hear it, and the theater of sounds that you invoke with those fragments is all one story made of many.

Paul Miller, a.k.a DJ Spooky

What is dispositif? The answer to this question is important in regard to this study. It is the instrument for the analysis of the data. It is integrated into every aspect of the study including: dialogue, interpretation, and the making of art. In French the word dispositif roughly translates as apparatus or device; however, it can mean any or all parts of a “socio-technical system.” Foucault (1977) defines the dispositif as the relationship between “everything at once” and society, a massive undertaking of interdependent heterogeneous parts used to exert control. To some the dispositif is a massive contraption that wages war on the human body through the subjectification of the Self; yet, subjectification, as described by Lacan (1966/2006), Althusser (2008), and Foucault (1977), does not have to be perceived in this manner. According to Deleuze (1992), subjectification can go underground; it can become a burrowing system of pathways that can become a feedback loop of transformational practice. It can be a means through which the individual becomes better able to engage in the process of producing the self, while at the same time consuming the self as a form of agency. Deleuze (1992) gives the following rhizomatic reading and interpretation of the dispositif as a device for transformation and information production.
This dimension of the Self is by no means pre-existing determination which one finds ready-made. Here again, a line of subjectification is a process, a production of subjectification a social apparatus \textit{dispositif}: it has to be made, inasmuch as the apparatus allows it to come into being or makes it possible. It is a line of escape. It escapes preceding lines and escapes *from* itself. The Self is neither knowledge nor power. It is a process of individuation, which bears on groups and on people, and is subtracted from the power relations which are establishing as constituting forms of knowledge [*savoir*] a sort of surplus-value. (p. 159)

The excess that is produced allows for the programming of the apparatus. The DJ’s turntable and the programmer’s code are examples of the \textit{dispositif}, a device that can be utilized to formulate a seemingly infinite number of combinations. Put a recorded text on the turntable, set it in motion, and let it flow; or scratch it, reverse it, cut it. Translate the text into code; layer it; invert it. (Re)inscribe the text through a loop; (h)activate the text. This is the process of \textit{détournement} described by Debord and Wolman (1956), a hijacking of the text for one’s own purposes. The apparatus or \textit{dispositif} described in the following pages was not created by myself as instructor prior to the study and imposed upon students but was constructed as the study progressed, arising from the practices of both teaching and learning. The apparatus or \textit{dispositif} is the pattern that emerged from the data, and it is through this pattern that I present the data back to the viewer. This pattern is by no means meant to be a prescriptive measure of how literacy practice should be facilitated in the classroom. Instead, the apparatus or \textit{dispositif} is the re/turn that allows the data to be visualized.

In education, pedagogy has long dealt with the concept of repetition and/or re-presentation as a means of distorting the event in ways that allow for openings. Maria Montessori invented what she called the didactic apparatus which consisted of a series of panels, physical frames upon which fabric was stretched. Each fabric panel was split down the middle to create a divide or opening. Some of the panels were adorned with buttons while others contained eyelets and laces. The acts of buttoning and unbuttoning, lacing and unlacing, construction and
deconstruction created a set of activities requiring inversion or unlearning. In the process of teaching and learning, we must allow for (un)learning. As students learn, they deconstruct and appropriate new information into their preexisting repertoire. In this form of educational practice, specifics are important in the ways they relate to the process of learning, of constituting knowledge through auto-education. One can revisit a concept or a series of concepts as a means of self-education and self-organization. Art objects function similarly in relation to pedagogical practice (Montessori, 1914).

*Art as Pedagogy / Pedagogy as Art*

To create a work of art is to enter into an interaction with the world. Meaning resides neither in the object, viewer, or artist, but in the interaction. Any work of art that a viewer chooses not to engage with collapses into surface. Any concept that a student refuses to engage with in a course of study is also prone to the same fate. The richness of pedagogy and art is not simply the obvious. Instead, the layers of meaning within any learning experience or artwork must be examined for the information they can provide in relation to understanding the “*image*” and its importance to the culture as a whole. The process of auto-education correlates with the tracing of the hermeneutical circle (Eagleton, 2001).

To state “I am an artist” or “I am a teacher” is to proclaim nothing in relation to a fixed state. The only way for an individual to become an artist or educator is to engage in the process of becoming artist or teacher. Phenomenological hermeneutics provides the researcher a means by which to study phenomena, be it art, pedagogy, curriculum, artist, or educator. The hermeneutical circle facilitates the circulation of meaning through the creation of flow. Hermeneutics is the interpretation of linguistic and non-linguistic expressions. It is the circulation of meaning in the world through context. In this study, hermeneutics will be applied to the construction of “*image*”
as it relates to the concepts of artist, researcher, and teacher. Each of these phenomena is equally important in the construction of teacher identity.

Art is a part of the construction and conduction of curriculum and dynamic teacher identity. It prevents the concretization and territorialization of a discipline and allows for *Lines of Flight*, which seek out the problem rather than searching for the solution. Once the problem is defined, the solution is not far behind. In this a/r/tography, students enrolled in ART 390 were presented with the opportunity to act as an artist would, not only in the process of creating art which functions as a curriculum avatar, but as a community of practice.

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Signification is determined through allegorical reference within hermeneutic interpretation. Hermeneutic discourse illuminates the concepts of fantasy and myth. Fantasy or myth allows one to see what he desires to see and hear what he desires to hear. The use of the “image” of the Möbius strip allows us to think of art as a (s)p(l)ace (both a place and a space) for unknowability in terms of an/other and the grand meta-narratives that govern praxis. The Möbius strip shows us that the outside can be made inside and vice versa. The same is true in regard to curriculum theory. Double *In<SCRIPT>tion* is both preconscious and unconscious; it makes the subject real because it transforms from one surface to an/other within the same structure. Lacan states (2006):
. . . [D]ouble inscription will, reveal the topology that governs a Möbius strip. Because it is only from this cut, this surface, where one has access at any point to the inverse, without having to cross any barrier (having only one face then), it later finds itself provided with a verso and a recto. The Freudian double inscription, consequently, could not be equated with any kind of Saussurean bar, but rather to the actual practice that proposes the problem, in other words, the cut that the unconscious, when it gives up, testifies that it exists nowhere but in it . . . (pp. 314-315)

Those concepts that are automatically engrained in the psyche as “the way things are” can be unveiled through continual retracing. Each time the circle is traced the meaning is allowed room for change. “I could interpret this sentence forever.” As Miller (2008) describes, “It’s a milieu where a network is defined as a quote ending a quote: ‘and a system is defined as another quote of a quote’” (p. 17).

Structuralism and post-structuralism allow for an understanding of “image” as discourse. Discourse allows for the flow of dialogue that has stoppage, meaning that it functions in blocks. Poststructuralism allows for the contextual reinterpretation of an object or image. According to Foucault (1978), “Discourses are tactical elements or blocks operating in the field of force relations; there can exist different and even contradictory discourses within the same strategy; they can, on the contrary, circulate without changing their form from one strategy to another opposing strategy” (p.102). Discourses can function modularly through the recombination of multiple discourses in different contexts to create something radically new. This parallels the programming capabilities of hackers previously discussed in the Hackers’ Code of Ethics. If students are capable of (re)programming culture, they can produce an infinite number of possibilities for themselves.

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In this space there is room… *Enormous Room.* This is a space for the recombination of the “known” with the “unknown.” No one part of the hermeneutical circle can be understood without its relationship to the w/whole. The w/whole is both a full-bodied presence and a complete absence. It is both “whole” and “hole” (Ulmer, 2005). It is about understanding being-in-the-world as part of a network. The tracing of the hermeneutic circle leaves a w/whole, a space for the production of new meaning. What is left out of the tracing becomes fodder for invention. The slash functions as a means of illustrating both gap and connection. It is the stitch that holds together the interpretations as a chasm of infinite possibility (Ulmer, 1994). The network (examples: classroom, culture, society, etc.) does not transfer information undistorted, but rather it conveys artifacts of data and experience, which are partial recreations of the Real.

The chasm provides an opening through which student and teacher, viewer and artist can produce new understandings of each other. Ulmer reintroduced the concept of heuretics, the logic of discovery or invention. Artistic experimentation is the primary model for heuretic practice. It becomes a way of combining theoretical practices in order to note how meaning circulates in the world from theory to method as a generative process. It allows practice to emerge from theory in such a way that it is both singular and plural. Methods and models generated are practically applicable in terms of the specific situation and theoretically applicable in terms of the process of invention. To pair interpretation and invention with one another—interpretation/invention—presents a situation in which the interpretation is theoria in relation to invention—outside/inside (Ulmer, 1994).

An example of this can be illustrated through the use of images as a starting place for inquiry. As the teacher, I can introduce images of the work of Tim Hawkinson as a means of spurring discussion. The piece *Überorgan* in particular might spark interest in notions of pun and
language play because the piece itself is constructed to look like a series of musical/bodily organs. The introduced image can then be discussed, based on the historical (con)text of the image as well as any personal associations that members of the class may have. As students engage with the image, they begin to see how the conceptual and/or physical attributes of the image can be (re)mixed. The interpretation, therefore, leads to appropriative invention or a short-circuiting of the hermeneutic circle. Students are encouraged to ask the question, “In what ways might I remake this piece?” The student is not producing a copy of the original. Instead, he is appropriating concepts and techniques into his existing repertoire for the purpose of invention.

Teaching and learning take place in the (con)text of the classroom which includes both objects and conceptual understandings. The classroom is an Enormous Room, an allegorical room that is an extension of the self and which moves beyond the four walls, making room and embodying a space of for memory, description, and experience. The concept of teacher as artist is informed by pedagogy as a form of representation, and the classroom environment is a representational aspect of that pedagogical practice. Teachers construct the social and the environmental ecology of their classroom, the means of interface (interbody). When a teacher constructs his or her classroom, he or she is setting up a particular method of interface (interbody). That interface (interbody) shapes the ways in which students and teachers interact. If the physical and virtual space of the classroom can be seen as a modular entity, it can greatly improve the quality of the educational experience through the production of a sense of ownership. Students can make choices about the nature of their physical environment and conceptual practice (Ulmer, 2003).

Art and curriculum are negotiated processes, processes of collaboration. Dialogic models of art education promote multiple voices; they take in the positive and the negative, the “good”
and the “bad.” Multiple voices promote the principle of equipotentiality in which each member of the community can make a valid contribution to the conversation. Such a community self corrects. Within complexity theory, a system will go through repetitive actions until some impetus sends it into chaotic action. Chaos is the rich amorphous conglomeration from which creativity can emerge. Chaos theory is opposite from the cause-effect locus that has determined much of modern education. Although there appears to be no observable pattern to this new chaotic operation, it has taken on a new pattern that may not be symmetrical in its construction and, therefore, may not be directly observable by the human eye (Freire, 1970; Doll, 1993, hooks, 1994).

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Following Ulmer’s reintroduction of heuretics, I seek to invent a neologism of my own: “image”/“i”/“nation.” Each of these words is surrounded by quotation marks. The implicit question that resides in each is what “it” evokes or call forth. What is to come in the consecutive sentences comes only from “my imagination.” The apparatus of “image”/“i”/“nation” is a pun on the word “imagination.” It calls attention to the creative aspects of the process that “image” interpretation requires. The purposes of both mental and physical presencing are served by “image.” It is an artifact of the physical and virtual realms. The “i” refers to the self and its decentralization. The “i” is also a prosaic reference to the human eye. It serves the purpose of
inverting the emphatic “I.” Furthermore, it is “image” of the event(s). Finally, we come to the last appropriated component in the new apparatus, “nation.” A nation is a group of people residing in a specific geographic territory who have a shared history that is either real or imagined. Nation has connotations that can be both global and local; “nation” is a de-territorialization of nation, the (de)construction of the (his)story of a nation through the introduction, not of a new mythos, but of a new narrative.

In relation to the concept of “nation,” I am reminded of the Michael Gondry film “Be Kind Rewind.” The film takes place in Passaic, New Jersey, which is the supposed hometown of Fats Waller. Be Kind Rewind is the name of the video store and physical birthplace of Fats. The video store, still using VHS tapes, has all its tapes erased through a freak accident. In order to keep the store afloat, the two individuals in charge, played by Mos Def and Jack Black, must create their own versions of popular films. Jack Black’s character Jerry creates the term “Sweded” to describe this personalization of these films. Metaphorically speaking, the Sweded films become a rewriting of social history. Memory plays a role in the construction of history, and in this case, it is a new memory recreated and remapped on the streets of Passaic. As Kerr (2009) points out, the film functions through the endorsement of memory’s flaws. “Paradoxically, memories—especially when aggregated—are often flawed, incomplete, imperfect, or even inaccurate. However, instead of being considered detrimental, this ‘human error’ is implemental to social memory, as indeed it privileges the common bonds between people and their pasts” (para. 1).

Toward the end of the film, the Sweded movies are confiscated due to copyright issues. The legal claim is that the tapes as objects are property of the studios. As the story unfolds, we discover that Fats Waller was never born in the store. The story had been created to give hope to the character played by Mos Def. His belief in this story was so strong that he caused others in the
community believe it as well. At this point in the film, the community comes together to create an original film of its own. One of the community members, played by Mia Farrow, makes the following statement at the beginning of the process, “Hey, our past is ours so it can be whatever we want.”

The associative qualities of the elements of “image”/ “i”/ “nation” are many times perceived as fixed, but their physical and virtual associations are the means by which each of the three terms can be mashed together, allowing for the remixing of an “image” through multiple lenses.

Form, a container, communicates and encases the concepts conveyed, Because we are beginning to write differently, we must begin to (re)read differently. According to Derrida, reading [performing the act of reading] has come to the forefront, rather than writing. In reading we must begin to read the silences, those words that go unwritten or unspoken. We must read—between-the-lines—of the “text” or in this case, the “image” (Derrida, 1976).

Derrida states that the perception of the separation of body and soul came about because of the apparatus of writing. Writing is the interior made exterior through the process of inscription. Writing is perceived of as artificial exteriority, as “clothing,” “clothing” of the spoken word. For Saussure, writing becomes the mask worn by speech, a perversion of thought. Writing is described not as the visage of language but as its disguise.

Strange “image.” One already suspects that if writing is “image” and exterior “figuration,” this “representation” is not innocent. The outside bears with the inside a relationship that is, as usual, anything but simple exteriority. The meaning of the outside was always present with the inside, imprisoned outside the outside, and vice versa. (p. 35)

The written “text” is a mode of interface that permits recognition of repression; however, the interbody allows for the dialogue of “image” through the concept of interaction. This dialogue allows the “image” of self to be performed in a way that is similar to performing an/other.
Dialogue becomes a text that is up for interpretation whether it is social, classroom, artistic, economic, political, or otherwise. Dialogue, which gives form to an invisible object, is an example of *Sonic Sculpture* (Miller, 2004). The Sonic Sculpture is the structure referenced by the ruins in Merleau-Ponty (1964) and the absence made present by the inscription in Derrida (1976). A body is given to the omitted.

In a discussion of new media, the computer becomes a form of interbody as a fetishist object. As with Derrida’s book, it is a container that allows us to interact with the information. Yet instead of prescribing the mode of interaction as in the formation of a page, the screen of the computer allows for fluid movement across the surface of the screen. One can produce bodies, inside of bodies, inside of bodies that go down to the microscopic level of understanding. These bodies or smooth surfaces can be stacked one on top of the other. The *avatar* is the body, which is the “container” for these recursive bodies. They are Bodies without Organs; they are de-organized. The *BwO* becomes the space for performance of the *rhizome*.

The *BwO* allows for experimentation. “You never reach the *Body without Organs*, you can’t reach it, it is a limit” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 150) because it is not a body in the physical sense of the word; rather, it is a de-organ-ization of the “actual” body into a set of potentialities, possibilities that flow in all directions. Such a flow is a “process” or a recording of production. The recording of production is by its very nature the production of consumption. Just as a snail metaphorically consumes space and time as it moves across the surface of the ground while producing a trail of slime, the BwO is the surface on which *Lines of Flight* are both produced and consumed simultaneously. Like the fading snail trail, which indexes the snail, the BwO also fades. The recording occurs in tandem with consumption. Consumption takes place temporally and spatially in and through production in such a way that it is both consumed and
recorded simultaneously through the act of documentation. It is then consumed and produced consecutively by the viewer/reader following the recording.

It is a strange subject, however, with no fixed identity, wandering about over the body without organs, but always remaining peripheral to the desiring machines, being defined by the share of product it takes for itself, garnering here, there, and everywhere a reward in the form of a becoming or an avatar, being born of the states that it consumes and being reborn with each new state. (Deleuze & Guattari, p. 16)

This “process” of recording, of consuming and producing, illustrates the process of becoming. The “strange subject” makes traces on the Body without Organs as an incarnation of a dynamic-self, an avatar. Irwin (1998) described the avatar in relation to art education:

We need to envision our own collective rebirth as we continually learn and relearn the importance and place for art education in our personal lives and in our collective lives as members of society. It is in the cycles of birth and rebirth, carnations [the flower is used by Irwin as a metaphor for the flesh] and reincarnations, that art and art education will be meaningful to all members of society. (p. 50)

The concept of avatar and shifting identity embraces the concept of contradiction. In an aside, Miller (2004) makes the observation that Biggie Smalls and Walt Whitman grew up and lived in the same borough in New York City. He cites the line, “So what if I contradict myself—I am large, I contain multitudes” (p. 63), as being capable of attribution to either author. The blurring of authors through site/cite enhances the poignancy of the quote. Sampling enables multicultural thought and action in a world of stereotypes. The cacophony of sounds speaks louder than an individual voice, and an individual voice is made up of a cacophony of sounds, and some contradict one another.

Student avatars are incarnations of practice that are made visible through the recording of process. Recording involves the consumption of the each of the states produced, which in turn is recorded and consumed once again. Specific to this study, avatars were created through classroom dialogue, online representations, and artworks. Each of these incarnations can be performed
through the process of interpretation and invention. These performances also become interpretive instances as an instantly reiterative process of becoming. There is no conclusion to this process; instead the “reader”/“interpreter” is meant to infer meaning from the process. To quote Paul Miller, a.k.a D.J. Spooky (2004), “The story unfolds while the fragments coalesce. …—the self as ‘subject-in-synchronization’ (the moving parts aligned in the viewfinder of an other), rather than the old twentieth-century inheritance of the Cartesian subject object relation” (p. 84).
“image”

You can just feel the details. The bits and pieces you never bothered to put into words. And you can feel these extreme moments...even if you don't want to. You put these together, and you get the feel of a person

_Leonard Shelby, Memento_

Matter, in our view, is an aggregate of “images.” And by “image” we mean a certain existence which is more than that which the idealist calls a representation, but less than that which the realist calls a thing.

_Henri Bergson_

The In<SCRIPT>ion of “images” has the ability to provoke the process of teaching and learning. Such provocation is a means of jolting oneself out of slumber. It is slumber that seeks to squelch reflexive thought. Derrida (2002) discusses the moments that occur when he is just falling asleep or in a state of half sleep. It is this temporal space that Deleuze and Guattari (1987) term the “intermezzo” which refers to a movement in a space of interbeing in which the racinating function of the rhizome never ceases. It is in those moments, those in/between moments, when one fears the “images” that he or she has created, when he or she questions process and method. I have also had many half-sleepless nights, many nights in which “images” flash in my brain with cinematic effect. These “images” speak to the seriousness of teaching as a profession. When one is awake, conscious, and working, the seriousness and importance subsides. When one is in a liminal or meta-cognitive space, these images provide provocation for reflexive practice. Within the process of reflexivity, I acknowledge that my own perspective, as well as the ambiguity of all forms of communication, influences the representations, all communicative devices meant to convey information that I produce.
I open with the following student video reflection on representation. This student-created video is multi-layered, and the effect is that of a copy of a copy of a copy. The viewer is presented with the first layer, the drawing itself, an image created by pencil put to paper, and the second layer, the discussion of the drawing filmed by the cell phone. The third layer consists of the images and sounds made in the room while the recording is being recorded. These include the sound of a television in the background and the cracks and pops of the video camera as it is steadied.

The video begins. We see two cell phones resting on a bed. The folds of the off-white flowered sheets threaten to engulf the edges of the cell phones. The screens of the phones are bright, their blue tinted light grainy and harsh, peering up at us through their casings. The “image” on the screen looks at us as we look at it. Our point of view shifts with the camera as it pans from one cell phone to the other. A finger reaches down to interact with the cell phone. It opens the menu and presses play. There is a muffled sound of a television in the background.

TV-*You really don't remember me*

Student voice: Ok, next this is a sketch that we did in class, and it is actually a sketch of Veronica. I actually never liked doing portraits of people because I have a lot of difficulty drawing the nose and the ears and all of my eyes and mouths that I draw all look the same. This looks nothing like Veronica, so I am sorry for drawing you this way. . .

Sometimes I have panicked about the data in this same way. “I have a lot of difficulty drawing the nose and the ears and all of my eyes and mouths that I draw all look the same.” I am a teacher talking about students, and on the other hand, student comments are painfully revealing of my practice. As I go through the process of evaluating my practice, it becomes evident to me that in some cases I was doing the study that I set forth in my proposal. Instead of allowing my practice to orchestrate or facilitate student learning, I sought to impart the skills that I felt were necessary in relation to art education. Re-listening to audio recordings of “discussions” is painful
for me because the digital information is a representation of the Real. It is not real in the sense that it gets at the whole, but rather, it is Real because of omissions, silences, rewordings, and imposed interpretations I see happening. A student makes a comment, and I reword it in my own terms. Instead of asking the student to expound, I find myself explaining for the student. In this section, I attempt to allow student voices to speak for themselves. However, in speaking for themselves, I must mediate their speech; there is no way to include everything. There are always omissions and generalizations, this is but one (re)mix.

Network (Re)Mix

TV-*You really don't remember me*
Memory is a funny thing.
The minute I look away to record the events I am in danger…
Of (mis)representation
I am sorry for drawing you this way...

The above (re)mix connects self with an/other, an interbeing. Being is not the same as representation. “To be” or “not to be, that is the question” or so it was posited in the famous soliloquy by Hamlet. Yet, just as Hamlet is haunted by the ghost of his father in the famous Shakespearean play, we too are haunted by conceptions of self. Derrida (1994) states that ontology or the study of being in the world is hauntology because phantom representations haunt conceptions of self. In Derrida’s definition, the self becomes nothing more than an apparition. We are constantly haunted by what could have been. Liberation comes from the realization that instances of being-in-the-world, that is our actions and interactions, are not singular points in space in time but rather a series of ever moving points.

According to Deleuze and Guattari (1972), “There is no such thing as either man or nature now, only a process that produces the one within the other and couples the machines together. Producing-machines, desiring-machines everywhere, schizophrenic machines, all of species life;
the self and the non-self, outside and inside, no longer have any meaning whatsoever” (p. 2). We are coupled with the world as a Body without Organs. We are “image” connectable in all directions, like the schizophrenic who has no notion of a centralized self or an “I” produced through interpellation (who is it, it is me) connecting and disconnecting from notions of self (Althusser, 2008).

“If Hamlet has something of the definiteness of a work of art, he has also all the obscurity that belongs to life. There are as many Hamlets as there are melancholies” (Wilde, 1891). To become Hamlet is to become the personification of the multiplicity of social and cultural roles we enact; conversely, it is also the name for a small town. It is both a proper name and communal site. Like the actors or actresses who have played the role of Hamlet, we are many playing one and one playing many; the roles we play are constantly in flux and depend on (con)text. According to the philosopher Heraclitus, one never steps in the same river twice or encounters from moment to moment the same person twice. The world is in a state of constant flow; nothing stands still.

POET(ic) “images”

The cyborg, Haraway’s (1991) metaphor of n+1, allows for a form of appropriative action in the construction of self. Its realization as cyborg pedagogy allows for the utilization of hypermedia as teaching practice. This study employs hypermedia methodology as a way of promoting teaching and learning in the classroom. One might assume that hypermedia is inherently rhizomatic. However, what one can actually conclude from the use of hypertext and hypermedia software is that they are inherently multi-linear. Hypermedia and hypertexts as software applications require a POET, that is a Point Of Entry Text. Ultimately, there is a logic to hypertext and hypermedia that is
mythopoetic bricolage. Several POET(ic) metaphors frame the process of bricolage. Berry propose the first four (Kinchloe & Berry, p. 208), and the fifth is an addendum made by my own interpretation of the other four:

1.) Trees and forest  
2.) Overhead Transparency  
3.) Hypertext  
4.) DVD. (p. 108)  
5.) Wiki

The Wiki as discussed in the construction of the dispositif allows for democratic negotiation of voices through feedback loops of reading and writing. These metaphors assist the reader in understanding the relation of the part to the w/hole. “The POET is poststructural “ (Kincheloe & Berry, 2004, p. 108). Instead of the linear formation that constructs a book, the POET has no delineated “beginning, middle, or end” (p. 108). The reader/author applies layers of meaning to the original text as a way of merging and inventing discourse regarding the POET and its associations. The original text is not destroyed, only augmented.

Throughout both the spring and summer sessions of 2009, I sought to conduct the classroom environment. Conduction, as it is used here, is the appropriation of materials as a means of creating a flow that allows for the movement at the molecular level as a Line of Flight. This is an associative process in which lines of association are the guiding force behind the creative actions of art and pedagogy. Conduction produces a bricolage, an assemblage of “images” that becomes record, production, and usage of the creative act itself.

(Un)Becoming Artist

What do you think happens to people who aren’t artists? What do you think people who aren’t artists become? I feel they don’t become: I feel nothing happens to them; I feel
negation becomes of them. (cummings, 1934, p. 9)

“I Am an Artist” / “I Am not an Artist”

In a/r/tography the question moves away from being or non-being and non-nonbeing. A/r/tography becomes more than the production of institutionally approved artifacts, its origin skewed. The question of who is transformed to when. When is a person an artist, and when is an experience art? Through post-structuralist discourse, art refers to a rich and complex construction of one’s own life. It is a subjective movement through space and time as a process of becoming. Within this understanding of the world, the self branches and multiplies (Irwin, et al., 2008). It becomes both the one in many and the many in one. “Today, many times the voice that one speaks with may not be one’s own” (Miller, 2004, p. 85).

I started the process of becoming an art educator as a studio artist intending to teach studio art at the university level. The role I played at the time had a prescribed definition. As a studio artist, I saw myself as an artist first, an educator second. Art practice was self-centered without critical reflection of pedagogical practice. As teacher and practicing artist, I sought after modernist notions of originality and uniqueness which meant the exclusion of collaborative practice. During my MFA graduate studies, I quickly realized that authorship served as a major inhibiting factor to collaborative educational experiences; concerns regarding who would receive credit for the final product superseded the construction of knowledge. According to art educator Gude (2001),

> Even art programs that have consciously sought to expand their pantheon of artistic heroes to include women and people of color have tended to persist in teaching that good art is always the product of great individuals. Very few art programs effectively contextualize the making of art within complex social interactions. (para. 16)

The importance of collaborative educational experiences lies in the concepts of collective intelligence and the collective unconscious. Individuals learn from one another through a dialogue
about the process. In studio production there has always been a strict segregation between artist/artist and artist/audience. Due to the frustration that I experienced with segregation of individuals into artistic “islands,” I began creating artworks that invited the viewer to participate with the piece and enter the dialogue. It was a form of pedagogical practice enacted in the art gallery. The piece was not fully completed by me; rather it required the assistance of the viewer in its creation.

High-tech or low-tech objects with pumps, motors, motion sensors, micro-processors, etc., became a means by which I sought to broaden my understanding of the “art object.” On my part, it was an attempt to emphasize the relationship between the viewer and the object. In my view, without the presence of the viewer, the object itself was useless, an incomplete circuit. I was unaware at the time that the object was a surrogate for self. The self that created the artwork and the self that approaches the artwork are already connected. The artwork merely allows for a tactile realization of the event. One is already folded into the other from the start; the self is fragmented, allowing for an interpretation in which the self is the artist, the viewer, and the viewer as artist. These object assemblages were extensions of body manifest in an object; my attempts to take myself out of the meaning/making process were negated by the act of creation—we are never fully separate, yet we are never fully whole.

Objects of any sort provide for a manifestation of self that can be either physical or virtual. The self becomes embodied in a particular object, but the object remains as only an artifact rather than a full definition of identity. The self is therefore fluid and moves between viewer and artist, culture and participant. The mere existence of the object is both product and provocation of creation. Nancy (2000) states, “If ‘creation’ is indeed this singular ex-position of being, then its real name is existence. Existence is creation, our creation; it is the beginning and the end that we
are” (p.17). Returning to the concept of programming discussed previously, the producer and viewer are no longer the discussion of importance. One flows into the other in an endless chain of production/consumption. The original producer becomes a transmitter that allows the next producer in the chain to become the producer in an endless network (Bourriaud, 2005).

These works simultaneously point towards my existence as a conductor or appropriator of materials and the viewer’s capacity as a producer/consumer of the object. As such they formulate a means of cultural interface through which pedagogical inquiry can take place. Even though I was absent from the physical space of the gallery, “I” was present within the object. These works were the beginnings of my experimentation with the concepts of artist/viewer as performer, artist/viewer as producer, and artist/viewer as conductor of meaning (Derrida, 1976; Ulmer, 2003).

Human beings are complex systems rather than surface stereotypes. To assume is to fall back to the surface. Surface becomes the playing field, the plane of immanence (everything all at once). To use a POET(ic) metaphor, we cannot see the forest for the trees. We seek solutions to problems we don’t need answered and lack knowledge of problems we do need answered. Culturally, we are inundated with information overload; in contemporary culture, silence is a rare commodity. Silence produces a return to memory through both the ontological and psychological unconscious as described by Bergson (1896/2004). Through this return, we are faced with both representation and presentation of the events. This section will be a deconstructive exploration of the centralized self and its expansion to a concept of interchangeable parts or fragments.

Embodied Duration/Extensity

THERE was a child went forth every day;
And the first object he look’d upon, that object he became;
And that object became part of him for the day, or a certain part of the day, or for many years, or stretching cycles of years (Whitman, 1921, p. 135)
As human beings we are subjects because we are bound up and intertwined with other beings and material objects. The relationships between things are the means by which the world is constituted. These things include not only physical objects, but also language as the production of the virtual object. We are constantly in a process both of being constructed by the world and also of constructing the world from cultural experience. To be human is to be in dialogue with the world. Objects are process, and processes are objects. The deconstruction of an object permits a loss.

The loss of objects allows us to formulate them as subjects and ultimately to see them as parts of ourselves (Turkle, 1999). These physical and virtual traces become an In<SCRIPT>ion of the invented avatar(s) developed through interaction with reality as a readable and interpretable text. This text is art in all its flawed and mythopoetic grandeur.

OOP or object-oriented programming is a process of interaction between scripted objects in the world of the computer. As we will see in other sections, objects have agency within the collective network. They have both properties, i.e., hair color, eye color, height, weight, gender, and functions that aid in embodying interactions, i.e., sleeping waking, showering, dressing. The object embodies the interaction but is not the interaction itself, rather it is a process that permits interaction. Through détournement, students, artists, teachers, and researchers are able to (re)script the object in a way that allows for multiple points of entry (Shiffman, 2008). These multiple points of entry are facilitated through the programming practices of the semionaut (Bourriaud, 2005; Debord & Wolman, 1956).

As semionauts, students and teachers can create traces through signs by imagining links that may exist even between disparate sites, objects, ideas, or images. Through sampling multiple ideas, objects, sites, and images, students become producers of the (re)mix. This necessitates
vigilant activity on the part of the “semionaut,” as well as the diminishing of the dividing line between reception and practice as a way of re-territorializing particular cartographies. Within this re-territorialization, there is navigation between these sounds, ideas, objects, sites, and images as a means of produsage (Bourriaud, 2005; Bruns, 2008).

Our journey begins with a return to the past, a past of past experience to discover virtual traces that deal with students’ memories and perceptions of art. The following is an application of Bergson’s second rule within his Method of Intuition that deals with pure differences in kind. In his description of “image,” he discussed memory/contraction-memory or the ontological unconscious and affectivity/ recollection-memory of the physiological unconscious, addressing the “image” in the mind. Regarding the physical image, we can look at the following structure to aid in the immediacy of apprehension: perception/object/matter. The division of “image” and image gives us the mind-matter binary described by Bergson (Deleuze, 1966/1988). The following student responses deal with either image and/or “image” with respect to their previous art experience. Students made the following statements with regard to the prompt: Describe your best art experience.

Mia: I once took an art class at A.C. [Angelina College], and we painted a picture following step by step the instructor as she gave a lesson on mixing colors. I actually have that picture framed (my husbands' request), but I can't really say I am proud of any of my attempts at art--they are never exactly what I had hoped they would be, so I never feel proud of them.

Sherry: I would say that I have not had a great art experience. I have made a lot of little things, but nothing that whoas me. I would have to say that when I made a movie of pictures for my grandmaw one Christmas, I was really proud of myself.

Joan: The first thing that I think of as possibly the best art experience I have had was when I was younger and we were each asked to make our own collage. It had to be the best art experience because I did not have to draw[. I]nstead I was creative through magazine cut-outs and newspaper clippings to describe who I was.
The painting, the movie, and the collage become objects of experience. These objects help students and teacher to think about the abstract concept of art in embodied ways. Through programming, these objects become “image” that are multisensory experiences reconstituted through memory as virtual coexistence (Deleuze, 1966/1988). Virtual coexistence occurs through the virtual object, which is tied to sensation. Sensation is therefore the experience in all its presence and absence. The student recalls the experience; however, the experience recalled focuses on the product of the experience. If art is experience as Dewey (1934) claims, then the object serves as a record of the experience that is infinitely reprogrammable through both memory and perception. Mind and matter work in tandem to envision new purpose and functionality.

One might ask what is the connection to art/education and research. The answer addresses preconceptions and how they construct the classroom and research process prior to the experience. As students and I work together, we coexist as representations of our pasts within the present. As the art/researcher/teacher, what I see missing in myself is projected onto students and vice versa. The lack or w/ hole, the presence of an/other and the lack constituted allows for continual revision of discourses through desire. The tension that occurs in this relationship is what Lacan calls jouissance, enjoyment and yet enjoyment accompanied by a sense of loss. The point when what we have desired is realized is also the point at which we discover that our desires, as they have been previously constructed, cannot be realized. Many times, students who engage in art have a certain expectation of realism. This produces a negative art experience for the student because the expectations of realism often cannot be met on the very first try. The “image” of what the student intended to create does not match up with the image that is before him or her. Both pleasure and pain exist in the process of creating a work of art. The art object or product becomes Kristeva’s (Kristeva & Oliver, 2002) abject or an object of attraction and repulsion. The object
originated from within the individual; it is a product of his or her purposeful actions on the world, yet it does not meet up with his or her ideal. It embodies jouissance (Lacan, 1966/2006; Ulmer, 2005).

Jouissance exhibits itself within Heidegger’s (1978) concept of Dasein or being-in-the-world; being is inseparable from the physical world in which it exists. The world is not simply an object as a static entity, but rather, it becomes a medium through which interaction occurs. Thinking is not separate from being; rather, they are intertwined. Objects become the means by which we embody abstract concepts, uses, and functions. The objects, be it a hammer or a CPU, provide a means of being-in-the-world. The connection to jouissance can be further expanded through Heidegger’s concepts of ready-to-hand and present-at-hand. While these two terms are separate, they occur together through the process of entanglement.

Heidegger’s (1978) concepts of ready-to-hand and present-at-hand are processes of physical/virtual appropriation through which objects that are ready-to-hand become extensions of self. When an object is ready-to-hand, it is performed. This performance plays out the mental use of the object. The performance stops when I realize I am performing the object; it then becomes present-at-hand. Objects allow us to perform subjectively, yet the minute we realize the performance, they once again become objects. This does not at all detract from performance but emphasizes its importance (Dourish, 2001).

Appropriated objects can become tools, but not simply tools as tools, but tools used for a specific task as conceived by the mind. They are what Heidegger terms equipment or “something in-order-to.” Equipment can be connected to other equipment, linked up in ways that require a symbiotic relationship. There is no longer a discernable distinction between ready-to or present-at; the two distinctions return to the cyborg of Haraway (1991) as a way of thinking about this
relationship. Subject and object are no longer distinctions; one melds into the other. This melding of subject and object becomes an augmented reality in which the virtual and the physical collide. This augmented reality exists in the active space between the two concepts that opens through performance and dialogue.

During the summer term of 2009, students and I engaged in a discussion of the one-minute sculptures of Erwin Wurm. Wurm’s sculptures consist of a visual diagram or a map and a series of everyday objects: street cones, water bottles, trash cans, chairs, oranges, bananas, etc.. The task is for the sculpture maker/viewer to recreate the object based on the visual map. The body plays an important role in these sculptures as objects are inserted into every orifice as a way of augmenting both its form and function. Wurm’s work inserts the world into the body and the body into the world as a means of understanding their interpenetration. This is not an issue of prosthetics because for any object to be a prosthetic assumes that the world and its objects are foreign to the body. The body is augmented, added to, and extended, not for the purpose of gilding the lily, but as a way of understanding what it means to be part of the Stoic Mix or aliquid (Latin translation: something). Being transforms into something in which the self becomes inscribed on the plane of immanence. Because of the infusion that occurs, it is not uncommon or unexpected that individuals would struggle in attempting to doubly inscribe these items as a whole rather than a binary. The phrase “doubly inscribe” refers to the recreation and creation of the object (be it street cone or trashcan) as a medium for a recreation of “image” and avatar (Deleuze, 1990; Lacan, 1966/2006).

Double In<SCRIPT>ion is the intertwining of the mental image of the object and its physical form as a creation of “image,” what the object “is” as it is present-at-hand. It is also the functional value or performance value of what it “is;” for instance, I eat a banana, and it is ready-
to-hand. To recreate the object is to fractalize its ontology; it becomes a “vibratory” space that makes attempts at the real. We know that the object in question “is” a banana; yet, we use it as something else. It “is” a banana, but it becomes something more. The body proper is incorporated into this process and becomes the unity of subject/object through performance which vacillates between the two modes of existence (Lacan, 1966/2006).

We engaged in our own process of performance with one-minute sculptures. Students randomly selected three words from a bag and chose objects to embody those words. While the following may seem contrived and possibly teacher/researcher constructed, “I,” nonetheless, give you the description of the student performance as it was jotted down immediately following the conversation.

The first image is titled Honor Reality First. Two students worked together in the creation of this one-minute sculpture. Its title and execution took into account the nature of reality and its connection to experience. The two students addressed how reality is often perceived as something that exists “out there,” and in honoring reality, they felt it appropriate to honor what they understood to be its origin in terms of perception. Utilizing the objects at their disposal, in this case bananas, they created a halo around the head of one of the girls. Next to the bananas they placed a set of markers that extended out from the head. In explaining why they used markers, the students cited their ability to make marks and alter reality in some way. Cups were placed in direct line with the ears to call attention to the importance of sound/information entering the body through the ears. In the background of their sculpture, a halogen spotlight focused on the figure created an ethereal or spiritual effect.

After reflecting on the student performance of this one-minute sculpture, I realized that I needed to acknowledge the importance of the student description in relation to the body-in-the-
world and the world-inside-the-body. As I think about this student sculpture in relation to the educational system in the United States, I cannot help but wonder if the transcendental philosophies that we hold so dear in relation to critical thinking are not separating us from sensory perceptions that might otherwise be beneficial to the overall experience of living life. Posthuman philosophers make the claim that the body has been transformed into information. If accurate, the body would be the first prosthetic as described by Hayles (1999). The more common understanding of prosthesis is as an artificial device or apparatus that replaces a missing body part. However, I would argue that the body as prosthetic pertains to Merleau-Ponty’s concept of ruins. Ruins reference that which is not visibly present and yet exists. Even that which has not yet been invented has a presence within the body. In this way the term prosthesis takes on the Eastern Orthodox Church definition of prosthesis in which it is both the preparation of the Eucharist and the table or surface upon which the Eucharist is prepared. Within this plane of immanence, there is no separation between the preparation and the surface for preparation. Furthermore, after the preparation has occurred, the body of Christ (all elements of the world) are ingested and absorbed into the consumer’s body. At the same time one cannot deny the agency of the consumer; uncritical absorption of these elements is not the argument in question. We are constantly circulating through experience and critical analysis of that experience. One does not negate the other, and one should not be given more precedence than the other. The split subject becomes an/other to the self (Hayles, 1999; Ulmer, 2003, 2005).

A second student performance was constituted through the work *Loose Looking Lists*. In this piece students simultaneously performed the creation of a drink and the drinking of that drink. It is a representational attempt at produsage as a process out of sync with time that allows for multiple understandings of process and product. A student sat with legs crossed on the floor in
front of a smudged white wall in the gallery. The items used for the construction of this list were an orange, an ice tray, a straw, and a cup. The image began with a frontal shot of the student. The white wall behind her emphasized the outline of her body. The items were stacked one on top of the other, the cup held in hand, the ice tray on top of that, and the orange at the pinnacle. The straw pierced the surface of the orange and connected it to the mouth, creating a complete circuit. About midway through the video, the camera began to turn. It rotated three hundred sixty degrees, finally returning to its original location. The performance is an inversion of product in which the list is turned topsy-turvy.

In the work *Side-Splitting Take Charge Books*, students stood with hips together, holding two ice trays side by side. The ice trays created the illusion of a traditional book while their bodies formed the book itself. During the performance, the bodies drifted apart. Using a rope connecting the two students, the book pulled itself back together, thus taking charge of its own situation. By de-territorializing its borders, the book, a container for information in the physical realm, became an object of power. Information pulled at its structure as a means of getting away from its book form, but the book would not allow this split. To de-territorialize is ultimately to re-territorialize in recursive fashion. Information and understanding are (re)worked through separation and re-connection.

In looking at these performances it is important to acknowledge the function of the unconscious in the creation of the titles. Much like the Surrealist practice of exquisite corpse poetry, the titles were constructed in part by the laws of chance. Once the three random words were drawn from the bags, the collective unconscious/intelligence of the students self-organized the words into a coherent title. In the construction of these one-minute sculptures some students
were aware of these unconscious undercurrents while others did not uncover their presence until the classroom dialogue took place.

These performances provide(d) an in/between space for slippage between the signifier and the signified. Students moved beyond the creation of objects to the performance of student understanding of semiotic relationships that allowed them to see the object as something more than itself. The chain of signifiers permitted the objects to be programmed with new meanings and functionality by students. Such signification is important to a redefinition of creative thinking. Student sculpture/performances oscillated between subject and object. The object was created, interpreted, and performed through a process of double In<SCRIPT>ion.

Because students completed these sculptures in groups, they formulated their own signified for the signifiers as a collective language, a recursive sub-culture in the classroom. Imbued with new meaning, these signs were taught by each group to others in the class as a means of permitting them entry into the new discourse created. This allowed students to explore the specialization of discourse and the ways in which subtle nuance inhabited meaning. The concepts inherent to this practice are transferable to the understanding of an/other. As individuals, we can only ever have partial knowledge of what the significations produced by an/other individual or group mean; however, we can engage in dialogue that adds new parts to the whole of our understanding.

The network of the Internet makes dialogue a more expansive process, adding more people to the collective conversation. After the completion of these “sculptures,” students posted them to YouTube and then to the class Ning Social Network. The dissemination of these videos via the web deals with the social nature of network produsage in the new paradigm. Once posted, the videos received two comments from people outside the classroom. The lack of comments
speaks to the inability of the Internet community at large to understand the signifiers produced. The first comment “dochebag” and the second “WTF?,” were not positive reviews to be sure. Those who made these comments were not privy to the discourse of the classroom and, therefore, could not appropriate them into their understanding of the world. As a class, we had already built a (con)text for these “sculptures” by watching the Red Hot Chili Pepper’s video Can’t Stop and several of Erwin’s one minute sculptures. Out of context, these student works took on the properties of absurdity. Had we contextualized these videos in the sidebar of YouTube, they might have become more accessible to those viewing them who were outside of the conversation.

The discussion of outside response to “these” sculptures draws a connection to the discussion of connotative and denotative code as presented in the The Psychological Iterations of Self. The new slang of our sculptures was specific to a particular group as a smaller portion of a larger class. The group work was understandable to the class due to the (con)text created around one-minute sculptures. As students programmed these sculptures with digital code or discrete units of communication, they invented a new visual discourse. By placing these video sculptures on YouTube, students entered their invented discourse into a global community. Because of this action, this discourse between a small number of practitioners has the potential for exponential growth. Other individuals or groups outside of this classroom have the ability to appropriate, remix, and reintroduce this and other discourses into the cultural flow as a never-ending cycle.

Programming, as it relates to student understanding of the world, is important because it provides a concrete/virtual experience that can enable a powerful mode of change in their world. Both digital and analogue media allow for an In<SCRIPT>ion of the objects through the metaphors of “the DJ and the programmer, both of whom have the task of selecting cultural objects and inserting them into new contexts” (Bourriaud, 2002, p. 6). Instead of viewing all
aspects of interaction as the “way things are,” students can apply artistic principles learned through semiotic programming to re-vision their “image” of the world. Although their “image” has been influenced by cultural memory and perceptive factors, they can remake that image through the process of becoming. To alter a phrase first spoken by Gandhi, “Be[come] the change you want to see in the world” or in the case of the following section, (un)be[come] the change that you want to see in the world.

(Un)Becoming Teacher

To make oneself understood is not the same thing as teaching—it is the opposite. One only understands what one thinks one already knows. More precisely, one never understands anything but a meaning whose satisfaction or comfort one has already felt. I’ll say it to you in a way you won’t understand: one never understands anything but one’s fantasies. And one is never taught by anything other than what one doesn’t understand, i.e., by nonsense (Lacan, 1990, p. xxvi).

“I Am a Teacher” / “I Am not a Teacher”

Such statements are (un)becoming of a professional. Teacher identity comes into being through a variety of domains that are not relegated to the pure effect of education or a degree. The effective domain is generally described as being productive and intentionally efficient, while the affective domain is relegated to a realm of pure emotion. The poetic, which is understood to belong to the affective domain, is mistakenly perceived as being a weak method which provides only entertainment. In contrast to this misconception, what the poetic does provide is “image” creation. These are the virtual and physical “images” that influence our perceptions, actions, and understandings of the world.

Being a teacher refers to the perceptions and memories or “images” one has with regard to teaching. Becoming refers to the evolution of teaching practice. When one becomes a teacher, s/he engages in the practical concepts relating to teaching practice. S/he must deal with the situational elements that occur in the classroom and alter his/her practice accordingly. The term being refers
to the things of the world. In a classroom situation, each student has a particular being, as do the desks, chalkboard, projector, etc. The space between Being and becoming is Chora; it is the space in which the alteration of teaching practice takes place.

My “image” of teaching plays a role throughout this study. My perceptions of “teacher” at the time I began this study were conflicted. These internal conflicts altered my teaching practice in ways that made me feel uncomfortable. By understanding representations, both effective and affective, “i” was able to critically reflect on my own practice. As teachers, we, both pre- and in-service students and “I,” learned to learn through an embodied interaction within a “community of practice.” The insight that effective/affective, literal/metaphorical, sense/nonsense, teacher/student are not binary oppositions, but rhizomatic durations, permits me to see the possibilities inherent to a practice of practice (Bergson, 1896/2004; Deleuze, 1990; Deleuze & Guattari, 1987; Britzman, 2003).

In the Socratic method, one of the first modes of teaching documented by the philosopher Plato, oppositional ideas or concepts were pitted against each other as a means of stimulating a debate which served the function of illuminating new understandings of the world through the merging of opposites in Chora or the space between. These new understandings resulted in new ways of being-in-the-world. This Socratic dialogue was performance; prior to the invention, it was the orality of a culture that informed educational practices. Schooling as an institution of practice was facilitated by the introduction of literacy. Plato wrote down the teachings of Socrates, and since Plato, questions of ontology have been driven either directly or indirectly in the West by engagement in some form with his philosophical writings. Technology and institution became fused within the apparatus (Ulmer, 1985).
Teacher as Performed Embodiment

The concept of teacher as performance artist brings the subjective understanding of teaching and learning to light. During the time this study was being conducted, I held several sessions which addressed the concept of teacher identity in Second Life. During one of the sessions, I decided to use the abilities of Second Life to disrupt representation. What follows is my audio journal entry as I was trying to formulate this idea in my own mind. It was recorded stream of consciousness.

What I plan on doing is I am thinking or toying with the idea of using a Second Life avatar as... um... a means of disrupting the space around identity or within identity... or around identity... or between identity When you are thinking about how space is constructed... with Second Life, you have a Virtual Space and you have a real space... students will know me as the physical person that “I” am but they will also know me as my avatar representation... I plan to try to disrupt this space by taking my avatar which maybe they would assume would look like me and giving it three separate incarnations. The first is to transform my avatar as a female figure looking at how femaleness as a visual representation impacts students’ understandings of me as an educator. I want to challenge the idea that representation can be sort of... uh... held captive by a particular group that only certain groups can look in certain ways and, for instance, challenge that idea of what it means to be feminine in the minds of these students. From a feminist perspective, feminine does not have to mean being female in form. I want to question how they interpret femaleness in terms of imagery. I am not planning on provoking discussion in this direction until we actually get to that point because what I am bringing them in for is to discuss their own identity; it is my hope uh that they will possibly think about the
repercussions and the . . . um . . . what is problematic for them about me representing myself as a female . . . um . . . within this discussion of identity. Whether or not they feel I can have any sort of identity by representing myself as a female . . . I take on any sort of feminine qualities in their eyes because they may or may not have certain conceptions of what it means to be female.

From a standpoint of reflective practice, this exercise was superficial at best. The students in my class were predominantly female (only two male students out of 85 students in all classes). The choice of representing myself as female was intended to be a way of discovering if my image as a male in the physical realm was inhibiting the conversation and dialogue occurring within the classroom. The section that follows is a portion of the dialogue from that performance.

“I”: Would you feel comfortable being the opposite sex?

RG: I don’t think so. It would be kind of weird.

ER: I agree with Grant.

FR: I feel like my representation represents a different me, like, undercover.

ER: It would defeat the purpose of representation.

“I”: What would defeat the purpose of representation?

ER: We are all representations of ourselves.

“I”: But you could be anyone.

DJ: Yes but no matter what I believe[,] you are still representing yourself.

My sessions in Second Life with elementary educators provided me with an ontological leap into a new conception of the research topic. The comment by DJ (ironically enough) continually looped through my brain. “Yes, but no matter what I believe [,] you are still representing yourself.” No matter what form I took, my performance allowed that visualization to
embody “‘I’ as the perception of the w/hole. Representation as past experience was still held by
students so that I could not fully become other. Knowledge is power; student perceptions and
memories of me distort the event. I could not fully be female because students knew me as other,
not only other to who they were as females, but other to my own “image.” Whether “I” was a
hippo, a cockroach, a table, or a chair, the signification held through the performance of “image”;
when students consciously thought about who I was outside of Second Life however, the chain of
signification was broken. Butler states:

If every performance repeats itself to institute the effect of identity, then every repetition
requires an interval between acts, as it were in which risk and excess threaten to disrupt the
identity being constituted. The unconscious is this excess that enables and contests every performance, and which never appears within the performance itself. (p. 28)

Just as in the act of writing described by Derrida (1988), the unconscious is “signed” through the
event of the signature. The In<SCRIPT>ion becomes the way in which we write the self as
“image.” These “images” are discrete and continuous fragments, data or information inscribed on
the surface.

The In<SCRIPT>ion of the events: A return to the first day of class

Day One: I walk into class and pace around the room waiting for seats to fill. The room is
quiet. I walk outside to check the clock because I have forgotten to wear my watch today. I walk
back into class and over to my computer where I fiddle with my email. I look up to see that two
more people have entered the classroom. I go back to my email and glance at the small digital
clock at the top of the screen, seven minutes to go. I tell the students that there is no need to sit
silently. They give a murmured chuckle. Seven minutes pass and class begins.

Each semester Teaching Art for Elementary Educators has a similar beginning. As I stand
in front of the class and look across the many faces, it becomes apparent that my sex puts me in
the minority of those choosing to enter the elementary education profession. Having taught
elementary school as a male, I am well aware that each individual who enters the classroom brings with her the cultural stereotypes associated with male teachers. Such stereotypes combined with past experiences of art education merge to form an “image” of what the class will become, and yet neither my students nor I are without agency in the classroom situation.

“I”: “Ok, well my name is Mr. Sutherlin, not Dr. Sutherlin, I have not finished my dissertation, so I am just Mr. Sutherlin. . . Even if I had finished my dissertation you could still call me Mr. Sutherlin. I would not be offended. . . In fact, I am not sure that I would not prefer that.”

I tell them a little about myself, and then we go around the room, learning something about everyone in the classroom.

“I”: “All right, the first thing we are going to do is a sketch. If you will look on the board, you will see the following question: If you could be anyone in the world, who would you be and why? Please draw an image of this person along with your explanation.”

Student: “What if I don’t want to be anybody else; what if I only want to be myself.”

“That is fine, just tell me why you want to be yourself rather than someone else.”

This student’s question made me realize that it was quite possible that many people were offended by my question. Could it be possible that each might take a moral stance as a means of defiance to all outside cultural influences? Many stated that the only person whom they would ever want to be was “myself” or “me,” existence in a vacuum of individuality. The following is a list of descriptions from student drawings:

I drew, well tried to draw myself. I have been through my share of hard times in my past and have finally come out on top. I am proud of the person I am, so right now in my life I would not like to be anyone else but the person I have become.

I would like to be myself because I can control my actions and opinions better than anyone else would. Also, because I don’t drink/smoke, I have already made a difference in children’s lives already.
I like being me. It’s the only person I really know how to be. I’ve gotten pretty good at being me, so I’m going to stick with it.

I am happy just being me. I have a wonderful family and great friends. I am excited about where my life is and where it is going. The thing I am most excited about is becoming a teacher and spending the rest of my life with kids.

If I could be anyone in the world, I would want to be myself in a few years because by then I will successfully be at a job and maybe have a family.

Autonomy pervades these descriptions of self. Through the process of interpellation, to be “myself” is to be generic; yet, if we can apprehend with our senses, we become capable of knowing the subject—”myself” or “me”—through interaction with it (Althusser, 2008). Within a description of “myself” are those elements that shape the selfhood of the students in the class. Each class member also drew an image of who s/he wanted to be. In most cases this image was generic like the generic “myself.” The representation of self was devoid of detail, a symbol for selfhood rather than a full divulgence of identity or the Real. Their classifications of self were as things, static objects that had been created with an objective in mind, the answering of my question, the question “I” posed: if you could be anyone in the world, who would you be and why?

Other students embraced the idea of becoming someone other than “myself,” an incarnation as someone other or an avatar. This idea allowed them to think about the qualities they would like to exhibit. The students who embraced this idea found examples in the entertainment industry. In the first example, we discover a desire for another being that is multi-layered. It is not enough to simply separate these layers; it is necessary to understand how these layers flow one into the other.

I would want to be Bella from Twilight because she has an amazing personality and gets to date a hot Cullen boy named Edward and his life story is really interesting in the books.
In this example, the student blends the boundaries between cinema and the printed word. In the classroom discussion about her chosen avatar, the student discussed attributes of the characters in the film *Twilight*, released three months prior, and the book *Twilight*, written several years earlier. The “hot Cullen boy named Edward” is not an idea that was determined solely by reading a description in the novel. This is made apparent through the student’s addition of the phrase “his life story is really interesting in the books” as if the Edward Cullen previously spoken of was not this same Edward. Rather, the actor playing Edward, Robert Pattinson, merges with Edward Cullen, the character in the film, who merges with the Edward Cullen, the character in the book. Edward Cullen is not simply one of these entities; he is both, all, and none of them.

Edward is not the person this student wants to be; the student wishes to be a person who has an intimate connection to Edward. There is affective desire produced in the student’s physical body that makes him/her want to become Bella, an individual who will have direct physical contact with Edward. In other words, the student has illustrated the interactivity necessary to assume identity. Yet it is interesting to note that Bella’s “amazing personality” is not described. We have no knowledge as to what the student envisions an “amazing personality” to be. Based on this description, to be Bella without interaction would be simply to be a singular, a dot in space.

If I could be anyone else in the world, I would be the actress Debra Messing. I believe she is very classy and poised. She appears to be comfortable in her own skin and being a successful actress helps, too. : )

The “image” portrayed by Debra Messing becomes one of class and poise; yet we have no way of knowing what lies behind this “image”. What we do know is that to this student the image portrayed by Messing is one in which the actress “. . . appears to be comfortable in her own skin.” This is where the spectacle can become a generative tool, rather than one of negation. A space has opened for dialogue about what we do not see. Why would an individual want to be someone who
is comfortable in his or her “own skin,” and what is the meaning of the phrase “own skin?” Do we truly own our skin?

Skin becomes a metaphor for representation or image. Whether or not an individual can own his/her representation either gives or negates power. To own one’s representation is to be comfortable with that representation and to utilize it as a source of power. The concept of image in relation to the spectacle of celebrity provided a plethora of topics to discuss in the classroom.

Such questioning is analogous to the concept of Merleau-Ponty’s visible and invisible and Derrida’s writing of the body. In our discussion and drawings, the “image” of appearance has become the new mode of circulation and the “image” is what becomes the attachable/detachable machine that is a conduit of flow, but what if the “image” is more than physical-appearance? In retrospect, there were some aspects of this conversation that I cut off and directed more fully than “I” should have. I believe my frustration with what I deemed as a less than satisfactory direction of the discussion on my part was the result of my failure to apply the principles of the bricoleur, of taking the tools at hand and using them as a means of permitting a new method of “seeing.”
The Mirror as an Inversion of Self

The mirror or looking glass provides a metaphor for an inversion of “self.” It is an inversion which subjectifies/objectifies that which is observed, and yet the observer and observed are both observing one another. In metaphorical terms, the mirror produces a reflection that can be reflected again and again in a recursive pattern. Recursive reflection becomes subjective interpretation. Educationally, mental reflection allows one, as a form of assessment, to step outside his or her teaching practice. Assessment is not only about the evaluation of student learning. It is also about the evaluation of teaching practice. Reflection by the teacher on his or her teaching practice culminates in an incarnation of practice.

Being/Becoming Alterity

The material universe, the plane of immanence, is the machine assemblage of movement-images. Here Bergson is startlingly ahead of his time: It is the universe as cinema in itself, a metacinema (Deleuze, 1986a, p. 59).

The teacher identity or the conception of teacher identity is an assemblage that is based on the experiences of those who render it (re)incarnate. These cinematic assemblages are constructed from the experience of the teacher in conjunction with popular culture references to teaching as a profession. The (re)thinking of my teacher identity became my most difficult struggle. This struggle originated not only from student understandings and misunderstandings of the concept of
teacher, but from my own as well. The movement-images that I created produced an identity or image with which I had to contend. As for many individuals, there is for me a Being that resonates: Teacher or Educator. Throughout this study, I tried to (re)think the position of teacher from a perspective that was the inverse/reverse of what I had conceived teacher identity to be. This led to many failures and will, I am certain, lead to many more failures; however, just as in artistic practice, the practice of teaching requires risk. Teaching is not a safe profession. Rather than centralizing the teacher identity as one individual, one way of Being, one representation of self, “i” should take comfort in the fact that “i” am part of an ever evolving network that allows for the current of becoming.

“I” am at a liminal point in my career as “I” am moving out of public school and into the university setting. As a teacher, “I” am relatively new to the field of education. As a student and son of a teacher, “I” have been involved with education since the age of four. My mother is a teacher whose model “I” have at different times espoused/declined, her primary credo being “Save time, do it my way.” This authoritative model of student interaction functions after the efficiency model. “Madeline Hunter, that avatar of efficiency education, has given us the blueprint to retro education of the 50’s. But print is dead; our illiterates roam the streets, unable to read or write or deal with bureaucracy” (jagodinski, 1997). Efficiency education is a product-based model that is less time consuming for the student and the teacher. It is a perpetuation of instruction as a meta-narrative that perpetuates a narrowly defined model of teacher and dictates the “image” of teaching. The “tell them what you are going to teach them, teach them, and tell them what you taught them” model creates a system of separation. I am going to teach you about X today, not XY or XWZ. This authoritative model perpetuates the understanding of learning as
something dictated by the teacher who knows to students who do not know which limits the possibilities of learning for students and teacher alike.

Throughout the course of the semester, students’ artworks reflected their fascination with the spectacle of popular culture at what I considered at the time to be the most basic of levels. Instead of asking questions which explored their fascination with popular culture, I became frustrated by their inability to move beyond the spectacle. My frustration resulted as much from the perceived time constraints of the course as it did from my inability to see the importance of my students’ interests. I understand now that the inventions of students should have been better integrated into my teaching practice. What I did not understand at the beginning of this study was just how important the making aspect of this project was to a reconstruction of interpretation. The aspects of making not fully explored in the first cycle were integrated into the second cycle as a way of understanding interpretation and creation as reciprocal.

I had always thought of the hypermedia construction as being the invention portion of this study, but it was performed individually rather than integrated into the classroom conversation. One of the major turning points in this study for me came during a class discussion of what I termed critical visual literacy. In my understanding, critical visual literacy required the reader/interpreter of an image to see the hidden agenda of the image and in so doing to become liberated from its holding power. I centered the class discussion around a particular set of images that I had found in various online locations. I deliberately chose images dealing with issues of sexuality and gender because of the overtones of their message. I believed sex and gender to be two of the easiest characteristics for students to identify within the image because of their pervasiveness within visual culture.
The first image was an advertisement with a photograph of film star Rock Hudson. The caption at the top of the advertisement reads *IT'S A PSYCHOLOGICAL FACT: PLEASURE HELPS YOUR DISPOSITION*. Beneath the caption is an image of two women. One stares aghast at the woman across from her who wears the head of a dog; the “other” woman is obviously a female dog or “bitch” whose disposition is less than congenial. In the frame below this image, Rock Hudson sits petting a collie of similar coloring while smoking a Camel cigarette. I began the analysis of the image. Instead of allowing for student possibilities, I filled in the blanks for them.

“*I*”: Cigarettes are paralleled with sex or at least heavy petting. The image can be seen in the screenshot from VUE below.

As we progressed through the images, it became clear that the discussion was less of a dialogue between student and student or student and instructor and more of my monologue. As the teacher, I began to construct the (con)text of the discussion and therefore to determine the interpretation of images. We went through various images, including a Louis Vuitton advertisement in which “*I*” felt the sexual message was the most overt. A woman stands in front of a target, her legs spread slightly, knives surround her legs as if someone has been aiming at the target. The central point of the target lies between the woman’s legs. We discussed the semiotic relationship between knives and penetration and the ways in which it shaped the tagline: Shoes for Women and Men.

Afterwards, we constructed our own maps of images taken from magazines. Most of these images were advertisements, which contributed to the (con)text of what was to follow. In their groups, students took their images and pasted them on a large sheet of paper. They then began to look through other magazines for more visual associations. As they looked, they tore out images that related to the initial image in question and pasted those images to the sheet of paper. Working collaboratively, they came up with an entire network of images that related back to the initial image. They drew connections on the paper between the initial image and the appropriated images
from the magazines. The appropriated images were then connected together through the same process. Words and phrases marked the connections and illustrated the connections.

What I discovered very quickly was that almost all of the student interpretations became sexual. My hypothesis for this is two-fold: 1) I created a psychological (con)text that relied on sexual interpretation as a means of understanding and making meaning from the image and 2) students sought to give me, as the teacher, the “right” answer. While these two aspects are separate, they are not mutually exclusive. Furthermore, it speaks not only to the practice of image interpretation but also to the practice of education as a whole. The theory that has been created and illustrated in previous/contiguous sections was greatly influenced by this hypothesis. More directly, it influenced my conception of visual literacy as a means of forcing a way of “seeing.”

Below is a reflective journal entry of my own practice written during the course of the study:

Today we worked on the construction of our paper maps. These maps were meant to aid students in the process of image interpretation. What we discovered was that many of the interpretations were culturally constructed in some way. One image interpretation troubled both other students and myself [image below] as well. The image was that of a man in an Ice Breakers Gum ad; students began their discussion of the image with a label. “GAY” in big bold letters was inscribed at the bottom of the page. They then proceeded to describe through their use of images and text why this image represented the word “GAY.” Their associations went from fresh breath to love interest to BOYS to desire to marriage (ring). It branched in a variety of directions. In the top right-hand quadrant of the image was an ad for Just for Men. “GAY” was also associated with fruity cocktail drinks, party, and disco. I am not quite sure how to address this interpretation without making those who created it feel guilty about what they have produced. While the image does seek
superficial attempts at acceptance, it has strong undertones of prejudice. Some students have even asked me to take it down. I have used these instances as opportunities to discuss the issue further; however, this has not yet been done in the class in which it was created.

(Journal, Monday, March 2\textsuperscript{nd}, 2009)

Today we discussed the maps in each of the classes. Before beginning the discussion, I explained the importance of etiquette in my set. I told students to be sure to be sensitive to the feelings of others as they discussed the maps. Each group discussed their map and how they made the connections they created. One student did bring up the fact that the map of the group with the Ice Breakers Gum ad troubled her. There was a little tension in the room, but I tried to mediate it as best possible. Students who constructed the map stated that it was not that they were saying that these things were qualities that they necessarily perceived this individual to exhibit; however, they did
acknowledge some of the stereotypical phrasing, imagery, and lack of sensitivity to the issue of homosexuality. This brought us to a broader discussion of imagery that we use in the classroom and how it can affect student self esteem and sense of self worth. I think I handled this situation the best that I could without imposing my own interpretations on the students who created the work. (Journal, Wednesday, March 4th, 2009)

Determining the Dialogue

As a teacher it is important to my teaching practice to be sensitive to those voices that are counter to my own beliefs. If I am accusatory in my teaching practice, it will only breed guilt and resentment. This is not always an easy task. It is something that I work on constantly. The following discussion unfolded several days after the first. It also demonstrates the directive qualities of the first image interpretations, but does so through more questions than did the discussion of the first set of interpretations. As you will see, I still direct student comments; however, in this instance, students’ felt more confident and played a greater role in directing the conversation. They described the images based on their own experiences and the memories of those experiences. In the following dialogue, we were looking at images drawn by students who were in my class when I taught elementary school. The discussion was based on visual culture and the elementary student’s depiction of the perfect toy for a boy and the perfect toy for a girl.

“I”: Bratz are the perfect toy because they are fun to play with. What do we notice in terms of the differences between [the drawing of] this Bratz doll and [of] this Bratz doll?

Student 1: She has clothes on.

“I”: She actually has clothes on.

“I”: This one almost looks more like...what?

Student 2: A prostitute.
“I”: Almost like a prostitute.

“I”: The midriff is covered, the dress is long, and you can see that there is still an adherence to appropriateness within the child’s drawing. Because they know they are in the educational context and they know that they can't draw a Bratz doll like this because it is inappropriate for the context that they are in. So that is just another thing to consider. How do we set up a context of openness within our classroom so that images can be discussed . . . that it doesn't seem like . . . um . . . we are going to impose our values? That is a difficult thing because I know that in this classroom I impose my own values. I know I do it. It happens all the time.

Student 3: Ok, you know how the girl drew the Bratz Doll with the longer dress. Is that saying that like, you know how like toymakers . . . because like teenagers dress how the real Bratz doll dresses, do think that like she, do . . . think that like kids would still wear them if they had like you know real clothes on and maybe the toymakers don't know that like kids will still like the dolls if they had real clothes on, you know.

“I”: That is a totally different interpretation I had not thought of.

Student 3: That is what I was thinking of like that she would still like it even if it had real clothes on.

“I”: So even if the doll was covered up, it is a possibility, according to this image, that she would still play with it.

Student 3: She would still play with it.

“I”: That is interesting take on it; I had not thought of it in that way. Does anybody else have any ideas relating to that?

Student 4: Before Bratz were Barbie.

Student 1: Yeah and Barbies are still successful.

Student 5: We like our Barbies, and she had clothes on.

Student 6: And girls have always dressed like that.

“I”: So, if you are thinking about a dissection of Barbie, is Barbie an ideal or realistic notion of women?

Student 1: She is still ideal but *chuckle* her clothing is more realistic.

Student 2: Now Barbie has tattoos and stuff.

Student 1: Yeah, but you still . . . then we have always had Barbie. Barbie would not be able to stand up straight because of her measurements.

Class: *Chuckle*
Student 1: She is not realistic.

Student 3: Yeah.

Student 1: So she's . . .

Student 3: I like the clothes they make for Barbie versus than like Bratz. If I had kid, I don't think I would let them play with dolls that wear clothes like that; that is like sending a wrong image to them.

Student 7: Then are you going to let them play with GI Joe cause most guys don't look like that either.

Student 1: Well . . .

Student 7: Or dress like . . .

Student 3: Probably so because my parents are both in the military.

Student 4: That is also a military context; it is not like the terrorist or criminal . . .

Student 1: Your issue was that is not a modest way to [dress] whereas GI JOE it might not be ideal for everybody, but at least he is dressed modestly.

Student 3: They are changing Dora the Explorer too. Like, she has like long hair and like a shorter skirt or dress or whatever . . .

Student 1: YES! Yeah they made Dora slutty. How do you do that?

*Chuckle*

“I”: That is all good conversation to have in relationship to this as the landscape changes, and it is constantly changing. That is something that we have to be aware of. Culture is always in a state of becoming rather than being fixed. It is never this is culture; rather, culture is constantly flowing into the next moment so you know at this very moment we are seeing transition in our culture so, if we can be critical about the transitions rather than necessarily think ok this is the way it is and this is the way it is always going to be, we can start to understand how it is affecting children.

The Micropolitics of Consumption

Three signs adhering to the window of a sandwich shop stare at me with all their cultural significance as I stare back. The first broadside proclaims $3 Toasty Bullets; the second, $4 dollars Toasty Torpedoes; and the third, $5 Toasty Subs. These “signs” shape and are shaped by the way I engage in the process of food consumption, labeling, interaction, and production. The
signs produce a vivid image of the warm sandwiches while also utilizing a discourse of martial attack. By naming, consumption has become an act of war based on the desire to satiate hunger. Hunger or desire becomes something that must be attended to through violent action: the shooting of a bullet, the launching of a torpedo, the deployment of a submarine. Such an attack on hunger can overshadow the intimate nature of food. We consume it, and it transforms into energy that allows us to take action in the world. Those who create the food we eat put effort into its creation. They are able to do so because of the energy they have attained through their own food consumption. It is a network of interaction rather than an overwhelming force arriving to make things “better” by dominating or subjugating an enemy. How does the environment in which we exist shape the unconscious through consumption and in turn how does the conscious recognition or reflexive analysis of such consumption allow us to rethink the metaphors that we live by.

During both the spring and summer semesters of 2009, I tried to introduce multimedia as a provocation for classroom discussion; on some days this method worked better than on others. On one particular occasion we were discussing the power of animation to display images that might otherwise be too graphic or horrific to display in traditional film. It was at that point that I chose to show a film clip from YouTube titled *Food Fight* by Stefan Nadelman. The description by Nadelman calls *Food Fight* a “chronologically re-enacted smorgasbord of aggression.” He gives a synopsis of the food representations on his site. However, he states that it may be more “fun” for the viewer to discover the food representations on his or her own. Before showing the film, I made the statement that images have power and that a critical eye is needed when deciding what images are shown in the classroom and how they are presented.

My intent was to show that one piece of media could have multiple interpretations and that each of those interpretations could be equally valid depending upon the perspective of the viewer.
As students and I discussed the film after its completion, the class was polarized; one group of students was appalled while the other group thought it was “the funniest thing I [they] have [had] ever seen.” We discussed the representations utilized and many of the students were concerned about the use of stereotypes to depict such horrific acts of war. From the perspective of those students who were appalled by the visual representations, the depictions of Americans as hamburgers and chicken nuggets, British as fish and chips, Germans as bratwurst and pretzels, Japanese as sushi, etc., went beyond political incorrectness. Those students who found the imagery to be funny thought of the entire film as satire and had no problems with the foods chosen as representations of nationality.

Throughout the discussion, I tried to work as facilitator and keep my own personal viewpoint separate from the discussion by playing devil’s advocate for both sides of the argument. While no one was ultimately “converted” to the other’s point of view, the process of becoming cannot be relegated to a particular class period. Some students opened up to the conversation while others, clinging to their viewpoint on the world, completely shut down. The drastic change I had hoped to see in student perception of these images was not realized for many during the class period. What I felt at the time was a failure may have, in fact, been something that students continued to think about for some time beyond the end of the class.

Discussions of national identity and spectacle were also engaged in through the deconstruction of prominent cultural icons, including those that most directly relate to children and childhood. Instead of allowing students to deconstruct these images for themselves, I took the route of efficiency. I showed a short clip from the video Mickey Mouse Monopoly. The film discusses the spectacle that Disney has made of innocence and how that innocence relates to the conception of childhood. As Giroux stated in Jenkin’s The Children’s Cultural Reader (1998,
“…the Disney Company has become synonymous with a notion of innocence that aggressively rewrites the historical and collective identity of the American past” (p. 45).

Some of the first responses occurred before the film was even finished. Comments of “that’s crazy” and “yeah, right” were heard throughout the room. When the video ended, I asked the students, “What do you think?” The first responses were that “some people have too much time on their hands” and “I watched Disney films all my life, and I don’t think that way.” Some of the students were offended by the suggestion that Disney might be anything other than a moral authority on what is “good” and “right” in the world. I tried to engage the students in a discussion of this video on a level other than a strictly emotional response, but the damage had already been done. Acknowledgement by the student that Disney was in any way responsible for the dissemination of anything other than truth would be an admission of complicity and guilt.

What I failed to perceive during the interaction with students is that Disney was part of what made them American. To question Disney was to become un-American in their eyes. Many thought that the points made by the critics in the three-minute clip were too strong and that no child would interpret or internalize the imagery in a similar fashion as these critics had. What this exercise allowed me to see was that the carefully constructed “image” presented by a teacher should question rather than accuse. I had accused them of wrong doing rather than allowing the “images” to unfold before their eyes. I failed to create a safe place in which beloved images could be questioned.

I also asked the question, “What does the song Someday My Prince Will Come mean to you?” One student said immediately, “What should it say, someday my asshole will come?,” as if the song presented only a system of binary relationships, prince-asshole. I then asked why she should have to wait at all? This question spurred a conversation about “feminism” in its familiar
guise and a discussion of the glass ceiling and the workplace, etc. One student immediately piped up with a comment that was impressive in relation to the construction of “image”. When an individual mentioned the glass ceiling, she said, “Isn’t your [the other student’s] discussion of the glass ceiling perpetuating the image of the glass ceiling.” Her comment was misunderstood, and the class went back to discussing the inequality of women in the workplace. I redirected them back to the student’s comment because I felt that it was pertinent to the discussion. The metaphor of glass is utilized because of the ability of those seeking promotion to look up and see what they could attain if a barrier did not exist. However, what this student had realized was the ability to reprogram the metaphor in a way in which the idea of a glass barrier lost all power. Her comment alludes to the way in which Representn’ perpetuates myth. Glass can be both transparent as well as fragile. Fragility is an attribute of the comparison that is rarely considered. Her second signification took on the attributes of the “intruder” who crosses boundaries without regard for culturally and socially constructed norms (Ong, 1962).

This was what Ulmer (1994) calls a eureka moment. What if cultural consumption is not simply about regurgitation of the pre-existent metaphors or dead metaphors? What if it is about the enlivening of those metaphors? Repetition of the signified gives the metaphor of the glass ceiling power, while repetition with a difference activates the semiotic chain of metonymy (Ulmer, 2003).

The purpose of the “image” in “image”/ “i”/ “nation” is provocation. It is the utilization of “image” as a generative tool that allows for dialogue and new conceptions of self and reality. The concept of “image” constructs not only the way that we think about certain aspects of our lives; it constructs an “image” of the process of thinking itself.
MAFALDA

If you could be anyone in the world, who would you be and why? In the answering of this question, a complex incarnation came into being with the description of one student’s avatar and the attributes of the avatar she would like to exhibit. The student (Mafalda) is originally from Argentina. She is approximately thirty-five. The person that she would like to be is an Argentinean comic strip character named Mafalda, characterized as a socially and politically active child. She is not naive in any sense of the word. The following paragraphs may seem disorienting, but keep in mind that each time Mafalda is discussed, she is connected to both the student and the character in question. Mafalda becomes the singular plural, the many in one, and the one in many, following the molar line of Mafalda as a means of producing a complex “image” of self. Such molar lines aid in the production of molecular lines that can become Lines of Flight that allow for a de-territorialization of self. The relationship is not an either/or, but a layering of strata through the process of becoming.

Mafalda and I had many formal and informal discussions about the process of education. Mafalda’s personal experiences and cultural background differed from my own; however, it was the interaction with her as an/other that allowed me to de-territorialize my own preconceptions about children and childhood. In conversations with Mafalda, I was able to gain a better understanding of the constructed-ness of innocence as it is related to childhood. We think of children as empty vessels, waiting to be filled. This picture of innocence not only affects our perception of children, but it affects the methods we use to teach them. As Duncum (2002) points out, childhood is culturally constructed as an “image”. According to Jenkins (1998),

Childhood—a temporary state—becomes an emblem for our anxieties about the passing of time, the destruction of historical formation, or conversely, a vehicle for our hopes for the future. The innocent child is caught somewhere over the rainbow—between nostalgia and utopian optimism, between the past and the future (p. 35).
The child is always in the process of becoming, just as with Alice (in Wonderland) who finds herself at each moment being larger than she was and smaller than she will be. We are all in the process of becoming. It is not simply the child who is not fully formed; none of us is ever fully formed. We are always in the process of becoming more than what we are and simultaneously less than what we will be. I am not the same person I was when I began this sentence.

The following is a description by Mafalda of the comic strip character. Mafalda’s description is in her second language English:

Her name is Mafalda. She is a cartoon from Argentina (place that I am from) Mafalda is a girl that is very smart, always think ahead. She is very fun and creator. So many times she is very controversial too. She got a great imagination.

Drawn by cartoonist Quino (Joaquín Salvador Lavado), Mafalda deals with socio-political issues in a satirical and comedic way. Mafalda’s comedy is similar to that of Charles Shulz’s Peanuts in that its characters speak counter to the myth of “childhood.” She is revolutionary and outspoken. This is not unlike the student who chose her as avatar. In many of our classroom discussions, I saw Mafalda shaking her head from side to side in disapproval when a student would make a blanket cultural statement about the “way things are.” In the beginning it took some time to get Mafalda to open up, but once she became comfortable, she contributed greatly to the classroom conversation and provided an alternative view in our conversations (Foster, 1998).

Working off the trope of “out of the mouth of babes,” Quino endowed Mafalda with the right and the ability to say what others could not, either because they were constrained by their sense of adult-world propriety, because they were blinded by hypocrisy and self-righteousness, because they were disingenuous and self-interested, or simply because the burdens of everyday life had left them unable to perceive with acuity the world around them (p. 20).

In an introduction to a Spanish sampler of Mafalda, semiologist Umberto Eco states,

El universo de Mafalda es el de una América Latina en sus zonas metropolitanas más adelantadas; pero es en general, desde muchos puntos de vista, un universo latino y esto hace que Mafalda nos resulte mucho más comprensible que tantos personajes del comic
estadounidenses; además, Mafalda es, en último análisis, un “héroe de nuestro tiempo,” y no se debe pensar que ésta sea una definición exagerada para el personajito de papel y tinta que Quino nos propone. (p.18)

Below is my rough translation into English:

The universe of Mafalda is the milieu of a Latin America in its more advanced metropolitan zones; but it is generally, from many points of view, a Latin universe that finds Mafalda to be much more comprehensible than so many comic American characters; in addition, Mafalda is, in last analysis, a “hero of our time,” and it is not conceivable to think that this person is a fictional, exaggerated person of paper and ink that Quino proposes to us.

Quino, the artist of this comic character, has explored the thematic topics of authoritarianism, medicine, and love and matrimony, which for Quino are not synonymous terms. His later work has dealt with the topics of gender issues and homoerotic themes. These topics were groundbreaking, shattering many Latin American taboos at the time they were first discussed (Foster, 1998).

Mafalda’s background (a collapsing into one) as an Argentinean was invaluable in helping me to see beyond the image of childhood as it is constructed in the United States. We had many discussions about the need for a critical understanding of elementary age students. Mafalda had been an elementary teacher in Argentina and was now going back to school in order to obtain certification to teach in the United States. The knowledge base and critical “i” that she brought to the classroom helped me better understand how to work with students in the construction of the curriculum. It gave me new insights into teaching that allowed for the transformation of the research itself. Because each student played a part in its construction, I alone was not responsible for controlling its emergence.

From our very first conversation, Mafalda understood and acknowledged that knowledge is power. The gaining of knowledge is a choice a student makes, rather than something that can be
imposed upon him. Mafalda’s believes that the individual must open his mind to allow for knowledge to flow through. The following is a transcription of our first formal interview.

“I”: In today's society what do you consider to be emerging forms of literacy, if any?

Mafalda: Well, I don’t know. Maybe it could be something like . . . uh, for example, for a new process of learning literature, like we can see uh, uh in the TV. We have all the time. New things coming. New images coming. We have programs. We have books. We have today technology is coming very quickly and fast to take over, and we do have now . . . we do do have . . . we don’t sit too much to read a book to do things old fashioned. We in front of the computer. We reach. We read. We cross all those barriers.

Mafalda’s statements relate to the multiplicity of inputs that we have in the current cultural interface or, in her case, interbody: “We reach. We read. We cross all those barriers.” Reaching refers to physical action; it is an incorporation of the body into the literacy process. She cites television, books, technology, and the computer as means of understanding emerging forms of literacy practice. These modes of understanding formulate a system of touch and embodiment of interaction. The individual in this scenario must be capable of moving fluidly between physical and virtual space as a means of understanding the world. As the interview continued, I learned even more about Mafalda’s worldview.

“I”: Do you feel that any of these emerging forms of literacy should be taught in school? If so, why?

Mafalda: Yes! No question about it. We already have it. It is natural for them. Yes we should. It depends what kind of literature you want to teach. Uh . . . if you, for example, in the elementary school in the way that I like to teach more, you have to introduce the new with the old. Like old-fashioned books and give the experience to read. Go back to pictures and image to see what the book is talking about. I like to contrast and compare. I think that is a good way for them to learn. You can get a different . . . this writer like this other like this. We can see what they have in common. We have to be open like we were talking about.

“I”: Describe how you would teach literacy in your own classroom?

Mafalda: I was in a classroom five years ago. We have huge books. We used the rug and sit down and open the book. Those have huge images, and they would say, “Oh, Madonna!” or “Oh, Coke!” They did not know that they were reading, but they were.
“I”: How does your teaching of literacy relate to visual literacy?

Mafalda: Visual literacy will make them to think. It is not just what the image shows but what is behind the image.

“I”: What importance do you place on visual literacy?

Mafalda: Well, I think, uh, uh, well when I see an image, I can start thinking about different things, and maybe, I will see things that nobody else sees, few people see different things. I will not see other things that everybody else will be seeing. I do believe that you see what you also have in your mind. What your knowledge and your concept that you have. I saw things that maybe nobody else saw, and I did not see things that they say look at this or that. Like a graphic that you have in your mind or the knowledge that you have in your mind.

“I”: What relationship does literacy have to making meaning of our world?

Mafalda: From your life, from everything that you learn from the moment that you are born. You will read and you will learn from your everyday life. Also, you will read, and you will learn from the school. Lot of things will come from the everyday life.

“I”: Do you feel that it is important to incorporate critical thinking into literacy instruction?

Mafalda: Well, I think that it is very important because we have different places and different people that do literacy practices. They will put their own view in what they do. They will try to convince people what they think. You can be part of the thinking or you can be out of the thinking. They will open the door. We need to think; we do not need someone else to think for us . . . It is a line, a very thin line, how to approach it so that we do it right. (Sutherlin, 2009a)

Mafalda discussed the nature of critical thinking in her response. It is not a critical thinking in which the teacher determines the knowledge to be learned, but one in which the student “will open the door” to learning experiences. This is a form of learning based on student interest and derived from cultural influences that are critically analyzed. She also discusses the very precarious nature of student learning in this type of environment: “It is a line, a very thin line, how to approach it so that we do it right.”

“I”: What knowledge do you have of hypertext programs as a method of teaching and learning? Could you imagine these programs as helpful to literacy? If so, how?

Mafalda: I love hypertext now. I did not have any knowledge of it before now. It is easy once you learn how to use it. I think that it is very important. It is open. It is wide open.
When I was doing my hypertext, the first one that we did, and I put that image that I choose, I did because I like the colors and the place. But when you say that now we have [to] do images to connect those. I thought oh my goodness, what I’m going to do. All I see there is the light with the bright colors. So, I start thinking in other way. Well, what is this place, let’s go back. Who found it and what this means to these people? It was nice that I came from that picture to my father and my roots. Well, that is a place of immigrants. It is very nice. Very nice! (Sutherlin, 2009a)

Hypertextual Produsage

Mafalda’s first encounter with hypertext was, as stated, in this course. Throughout the course Mafalda expressed an interest in learning more about hypertext not only as a software application but as a theoretical construct for teaching and learning. By building contextual linkages, Mafalda was able to reflexively consider her subjectivity. Through my own interactions with Mafalda, I was able to engage with my own subjectivity by setting the concept of literacy in motion through dialogue. As you will see in the following descriptions of Mafalda’s hypertext, she analyzed the image not only for its formal aspects, but also for its contextual background.

Description: This picture represents the wall of an apartment in different colors, red, light blue and yellow. We also see two windows, one [at] the top and the other under it. The windows’ colors are different, the top one is blue and the other one is red. The blue window is close[d] and the red one, it is open. We also see a light holding [hanging] from a pole to the right of the picture.

Interpretation: This picture it is a cultural symbol of Buenos Aires. Almost every person who knows something about Buenos Aires will says it is “La Boca,” a typical poor neighborhood of Buenos Aires. It retains a strong European flavor, with many of its early settlers being from the Italian city of Genoa.
Formal analysis: I see a good contrast and balance in this picture. The colors are bright and divided in three different sections. They use the primary colors, red, blue, and yellow. They give life to the picture. As we see this wall shows all horizontal lines, keeping a perfect pattern. The texture is rough and thick. This picture shows a good balance and harmony.

Judgment: In my opinion I do believe that this piece of work really shows the reality of “La Boca.” I had the privilege to visit this place in the past and what you can see, it is what this neighborhood it is about. (Sutherlin, 2009b)

In the second cycle of her hypertext, Mafalda connected her image of “La Boca” to the tango and the famous tango dancer Carlos Gardel. In describing the tango, Foster (1998) makes the following statement:

The tango is correlated with the city in such a tourist—and semiofficial images—as a juxtaposition between dance poses and the backdrop of the cityscape, either viewed panoramically (Avenida Corrientes) or as specific locales (the multicolored mosaic of wooden houses in the alley Caminito in the waterfront district of La Boca) . . . (p.53)

Mafalda acknowledges the iconic status of her chosen image by stating: “This picture, it is a cultural symbol of Buenos Aires. Almost every person who knows something about Buenos Aires will say it is ‘La Boca.’” La Boca is literally translated as the mouth. Malfalda’s inclusion of this
image in the hypertext allows it to speak about the nature of her own identity in relation to the
culture at large.

Also present in Mafalda’s hypertext was an image of her father. This image was connected
to both an image of Italian immigrants and to the map of Argentina. Mafalda’s father was a first
generation immigrant to Argentina from Italy. Mafalda found the connection to her personal life
interesting, considering the starting point of her inquiry. This personal connection from a
recognizable and almost stereotypical image of Argentina was one that displayed the ability of the
student to move from the macro to the micro. Mafalda became aware of how global imagery and
ideas can be analyzed for their local implications. She was no longer analyzing the image based
on its disconnectedness from her determination of self. The image became part of the (con)textual
framework that aided in the construction of self in a very specific and very real way.

Also displayed in Mafalda’s hypertext was an image of the tango. The tango is another
generalized and stereotyped image of Argentina, a familiar image most recognize yet without
understanding its political and personal implications. In tango, “the private is political” (Foster,
1998, p. 56). The dancer or narrator of the tango essentially plays out his mourning for his
unrequited love and his denunciation of the individual who has spurned him. As the author
Savigliano (1995) explains, “tango is a strategy with multiple faces: music, dance, lyrics,
performance, philosophy . . . None of these aspects reproduces or reinforces the others” (p. 12).

What Savigliano (1995) does for and with the tango is to appropriate it for her own
purposes, while still acknowledging its negative impact on Argentinean identity. In my many
conversations with Mafalda, this was also her intent. She wanted to utilize images that she felt
were easily recognizable as Argentinean in origin. At the same time she stated that she sought to
complicate those images by expanding their contextual framework. The tango is an appropriate
metaphor for détournement. Images are appropriated from the language of tango that have multiple meanings and incorporate the rhizomatic aspects of cultural interaction.

As a political theorist, Saviglinao utilizes tango as a dominant stereotype of the culture and utilizes it for the purpose of decolonization, because as she puts it, she has “no choice.”

If I reject my stereotype I fall, caught in no where. Caught in endless explanations of what I am not and justifications of what I am. Caught in comparisons with the colonizer. By assuming the tango attitude and taking it seriously, I can work at expanding its meaning and its power. My power, actively tango. Tango is my strategic language, a way of talking about, understanding, exercising decolonization (p. 16).

The decolonization spoken of here is more than simply a decolonization of political control. It is a decolonization or a de-territorialization that is made possible through a semiotic understanding of tango as an art form. Lines of Flight are produced through a greater in-depth understanding of the context of tango as a metaphor for life rather than confining it to a form of dance. The complexity exhibited by such an understanding of tango allows the viewer to apply the conceptual elements of tango to the formation of identity. In this case, Mafalda was better able to construct her own identity through the production of a map rather than a tracing. Each of the components of her hypertextual construction danced around the other, forming an “image” of self through constant movement.

My interactions with Mafalda were very influential in my understanding of emerging literacy practices and cultural influence in the construction of identity. While working with her, it became apparent to me as a teacher that I could not rely simply on my own personal understanding of the world as a means of providing a (con)textual framework for teaching and learning. In the case of Mafalda, research into her cultural background made me better able to connect to her worldview. While there is always a distance, an unknowable component, to all interaction, it is only through interaction that we can come closer to ascertaining the real through
the process of becoming. We can never reach the BwO as educators; the only thing that we can do is provide a space in which dialogue can occur for the construction of student avatars.
“Program the machine so that each time a tape is played on it, it produces different time characteristics.” So the plan(e)—life plan(e), writing plan(e), music plan(e)—must necessarily fail for it is impossible to be faithful to it; but the failures are a part of the plan(e) for the plan(e) expands or shrinks along with the dimensions of that which it deploys in each instance (planitude of n dimensions).

_Pierre Boulez/Deleuze and Guattari_

De-territorialization is a becoming that is a becoming minority. Becomings move up the middle rather than from one point to the next in a linear fashion. What then does it mean to become “i” in relation to the rhizome and the discourses of artist, researcher, and teacher? Discourses formulate objects of knowledge that we think with and through. They color our perceptions and our memories of a particular situation through the appropriation of life experiences. The majority dictates discourse through the molar line; however, that is not to say that all molar lines are negative in their function. The molar line is merely a re-territorialization. One cannot become man because man is the “molar entity par excellence, where as becomings are molecular” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 292). They formulate as becoming animal, becoming child, or becoming flock. The following section is the presentation of blocks of becoming. The reader who reads this section creates a new becoming since becoming does not consist of a subject distinct from it and has no term. Each block of becoming is taken up and becomes the subject of a new block of becoming.

De-territorialization/Territorialization of Pedagogy

Former teachers, media depictions, museums, teacher education programs, experiences with/in art, preconceptions of research, etc., all shape our relationship to the discourses of art,
research, and teaching. Within and between each of these discourses, there should be an acknowledgment of *Lines of Flight*. These lines allow the artist/researcher/teacher to de-territorialize each of these discourses in a way that permits the flow of one into the other. An individual is never either a molar line of unity or a BwO; we do not experience an “It’s this” or It’s that” scenario. Rather, one de-territorializes with the inevitable re/turn to territory. The classroom setting is not immune to this de-territorialization and re/turn. Collaboration within the classroom involves the collaborative flight of the collective rather than the solo flight of the individual. Effective teaching requires us: 1) to be able to lengthen the duration of flight or de-territorialization of subject matter and 2) to facilitate recognition of when one is trapped within a territorialized structure of surface. These two principles apply not only to students, but also to the self-reflexive position of the researcher/teacher.

“We Are the Running of the Race / We Are the Course”

This distinction is important because one concept most certainly does not negate the other; instead, it expresses a re-conceptualization of order. When we engage in the process of creating/teaching/learning curriculum, we are becoming through (re)formation. The continual process of (re)formation is reflected in the origin of the word curriculum. The Latin source for curriculum is *currere*, a verb that means to run the race-course. As a verb it includes the idea of doing along with naming. Today, our typical understanding of the word as a noun meaning the track itself unnecessarily limits our understanding of curriculum as an activity. An awareness of the etymology of curriculum justifies curriculum students’ research into the relationships between “academic knowledge and life history in the interest of self-understanding and social reconstruction” (Pinar, 1998).
Academic knowledge and life history merge through *In*<SCRIPT>*ion* on the recording surface. Recording of process is both production and consumption. We process and are in process of that which we consume. These recordings serve as discursive blocks for interpretation and creation. In this section the reader is presented with student reflections on art, research, and teaching. These reflections include videos, comments, hypertext constructions, and wiki entries. When set in motion, these pieces move along; they are part of the flow of the curriculum (Pinar, 1998).

The curriculum can be compared to a coursing of an electric current as described by both Pinar (1998) and Doll (2000). It is this electric flow that the curriculum theorist must tap into, a flow that courses through the inner person. By tapping into this flow, a dialogue ensues. The job of the teacher/student is to conduct the network through the appropriation of “*images*.” Network conduction is meant to “shock.” “Only that which shocks can spark a coursing connection between reader [conductor] and text [“*image*”], reader [conductor] and the world” (Doll, 2000, p. 253). “*Images*” that are shocking add to what should be the perplexity of the learning experience. Perplexity engages students in the process of “*image*”/ “*i*”/ “*nation*.” Through an overload of the traditional teacher/student relationship, a new (s)p(l)ace is opened up for and through “*image*”.

During the spring semester, students took images and made associations with their own (con)texts. These associations culminated in a hypertext, which displayed these associations as a system of links. The links show the progression of student thought processes; however, they do so through a system of images, sound, and video that are appropriated. These appropriated images become layered associative collages. If all writing and speech connects to the unconscious, then these associative maps are an attempt to see how images of self are developed and circulated. In reflecting on this data, one of the most glaring omissions is the lack of engagement with these
images after the creation of the hypertext. These student-constructed hypertexts should have been recursive starting points for more discussion, and as I look through the images, videos, sounds, and texts, it is easy for me to recognize my preconceptions of research at work.

**Missed opportunities: False starts**

**EXAMPLE 1:**

The image above is from a student hypermedia construction in VUE. An individual can navigate through the hypermedia using the links the student has constructed. The original image chosen by the student as a representation of self was Simon the Chipmunk from Alvin and the Chipmunks. The student did not give a reason for this choice other than stating that it reminded her of her childhood. She also states that the glasses on the Chipmunk are a signifier of his intelligence.

As I navigated through the hypermedia construction, I came across a link to the song *Witch Doctor* sung by Alvin and the Chipmunks. I clicked a link that sent me to YouTube, and I
watched the video. As soon as the video started, I realized the opportunities for discussion that I had missed by not including this student’s hypermedia construction in the classroom conversation. I was so focused on being the one who constructed the classroom environment that I missed an opportunity to allow for a student’s understanding of the world and an opportunity to facilitate a *Line of Flight* from that understanding.

The video starts out with the following scene:

A (stereotypical Native American) drumbeat plays in the background

Alvin: Hey, Dave!

Dave: Yes, Alvin.

Alvin: Where are ya, Dave?

Dave: Right here, Alvin.

Alvin: Where?

Dave: Over here, hanging my latest mask.

Alvin: How come you collect masks Dave?

Dave: Because masks are like show business, Alvin. Primitive people use masks in religious and tribal ceremonies. Show business grew out of these ceremonies. . . .

In a traditional critical theory setting, a way to incorporate this would be to launch into a diatribe on postcolonial discourse, which would only make the student(s) feel guilty about the inclusion of the video in the hypertext or which would incite other students to like or dislike the video. In retrospect, this link could have been treated as a starting place for discussion, not a discussion in which I the teacher dictated its outcome, but rather a discussion that allowed for *Lines of Flight*. As stated at the beginning of this section, I have introduced two principles for my new found understanding of the benefits of the molecular line: the ability to sustain a *Line of Flight* and the ability to recognize when either students or I am falling into an unproductive or non-democratic molar line. The introduction of image or object can aid in the provocation of
dialogue through the introduction of another point of view. Images or objects that are perplexing or require dialogue allow for this to occur. These objects can stand in as an incarnation of the teacher or avatar.

EXAMPLE 2:

The second example deals with the concept of teacher. Below is the student description of the image:

The description of this image contains hands holding the word Teacher. I felt this is appropriate because I plan to be a teacher. The word Teacher is in different colors making the image brighter. The hands are a charcoal or pencil color making it blend in to the background, letting the word teacher stick out more.

What was present in this description was an understanding of the interpretive and active components of teaching. In her formal analysis, the student states:

Space is used between the hands and the word Teacher. It creates a negative space around it. Line is used to create the shape of the hands holding something and the word itself using marks to form letters.
Through her description, one could understand the practice of teaching as a process of inscription in which the teacher identity is formulated through marks. These marks form the label of what it means to be a teacher through the creation of a label. “I am a teacher” proclaims a form of selfhood. Her analysis connects with her interpretation of the image.

I really connected with this artwork. It symbolizes something important in my life. It has great meaning and is symbolic to my teaching experience. I like this image because it feels that teachers are important in the lives of others and teachers should be appreciated more. It also symbolizes that holding Teachers responsible for their actions, contributions, and other duties are brought to my attention. I feel that being such an important role model, teachers should be aware of the hands of life that they are dealing with. Holding precious lives in our hands symbolizes my teaching career.

While we discussed the possibilities involved with teacher identity throughout the semester, this particular hypertext would have provided a concrete association for students during these discussions. Through our dialogic interpretations of the concept of teacher, we would have been able to collectively discuss teacher identity as a means of further constructing the hypermedia.

Revising practice: A re/turn

Much that was left out or ignored during the spring term was incorporated into the summer term. Things that I felt were omitted, looked over, or dismissed were brought to the forefront. One of the most important changes that I tried to make from the very beginning was a change in the way the class was presented to elementary education majors. From the very beginning of the summer course, I encouraged students not to think of themselves as elementary educators making art projects, but rather to think of themselves as artists. I explained the concept of a/r/tography on the first day of class, but assured them that calling oneself an artist was not enough; one had to engage with/in art to become an artist. We talked about how a/r/tography allows one to explore the relationships of artist, researcher, and teacher. Students who were
actively engaged took on the role of artist from day one. The complexity with which they engaged materials and processes was drastically different from the participation of students in previous semesters. Students became a/r/tographers participating in their own community of practice.

The community of practice was fostered through the use of a social-networking site created through the web application Ning. On this site students posted photos and videos that pertained to both the class and to their personal lives. Instead of purchasing a textbook for the course, students were asked to obtain USB video cameras which they used to create reflection videos and to document their a/r/tographic journey. The text of the course was constructed by student interaction with materials that where both written and constructed by the students themselves. I provided the POET (Point of Entry Text) and students appropriated “images” as a means of discourse.

Two major collaborative installation series served as course milestones. Through this process, students engaged with both constructed and natural environments. The first series was an installation in the main gallery of the art building at Stephen F. Austin State University. The second series was an environmental installation at the Piney Woods Native Plant Center, owned and operated by the university. For each of these installations, students created individual sketches. These sketches were posted to the Ning site and discussed by the members of each group. In most instances, the group discussions resulted in a combination of ideas suggested by individual group members. Once an idea for their installation had been chosen, students worked together to create their installation while documenting the process through photos and video.

Students explored both environmental and social ecology throughout the duration of the course. Ecology in this context refers to the interaction between individuals, objects, events, and ideas. The summer session allowed for the exploration of the virtual body, an exploration
grounded in the classroom experience. Working with recursive practice, students were given parameters that were infinite/finite. In the first major project students were to create an installation that envisioned the practical and metaphorical use of the elements and principles of traditional visual literacy practice.

Students created individual sketches that were posted to the social networking site and discussed amongst their group members. The individual ideas were evaluated and a final sketch for the group’s installation was created. Through discussion, the group decided what components to keep and what components to throw out. This allowed for a feedback loop in which there was a constant return to that which was already discussed. By the time each group’s installation was placed in the gallery, they were very excited about both the process and the product. This excitement was reflected in their avatar representations; however, I can never be completely sure if this was merely performance for the course.

*Student avatars: Recording plan(e)s*

During the time we were working on the first set of installations Vader, one of the students, posted a video of his car on the Ning site and discussed its relationship to art. The customizations he made included alterations to the front grill, the tail lights, and the winged door hinges, a perfect example of Dewey’s (1934) concept of “[t]he intelligent mechanic engaged in his job interested in doing well and finding satisfaction in his handiwork, caring for his materials and tools with genuine affection, is artistically engaged” (p. 4).
I have been reflecting on art and . . . uh art in my past, and I realized that even . . . art does not just have to be on paper with pencils and ink and stuff. I have realized that things I do to my car . . . my cars and trucks in the past are also considered art so even if it is uh aftermarket products or hand made, it is still art and . . . uh . . . this is my latest art creation that I have. I hand made the . . . uh . . . front grills, custom fabricated . . . um . . . myself. The doors are a kit. Beauty to one person is not beauty to another, and I think that is just beautiful right there . . . .

Beauty in the traditional sense refers to form, and in this case, Vader introduces us to the beautiful form that exists within the car as a commercial object. The changes are minor, but they have a drastic impact on the concept of the car. The car moves from the realm of singularity, in terms of the make and model, to a realm of multiple possibilities. The purchaser of a car can leave it as is, or he can make his/her own mark on the object. As the viewer we are presented with several layers of artistic incarnation. First, is the car itself; it embodies the time, energy, and experience of Vader. Second, we have the reflection or performance of the car as Vader explains it to us. Third, we have the unintentional, (con)textual elements such as the wind and the sound of his shoes scraping against the dirt and rocks as he walks. Is the car art, and has Vader made his case for the car as an art object? This argument is less important than the dialogue between the object and Vader. Within this video we are presented with an encounter. This encounter causes
Vader to engage with his preconceptions about art. It also permits him to wrestle with the concept of beauty, which he determines is in the eye of the beholder, yet once again the concept of beauty is less important than the interaction. “In addition to ‘determining’ and serving as a ‘backdrop, for human action’, things might authorize, allow, afford, encourage, permit, suggest, influence, block, render possible, forbid, and so on” (Latour, 2007, p. 72). Vader’s car is a “thing” which does exactly this. Objects as actors in the network form one of the tenants of actor network theory. To discount the object is to assume that one could have a social encounter without the object. The object formulates the In<SCRIPT>ion of the semiotic and discursive.

The video was now the object in question. It had been posted to our social networking site for all to see; however, I still felt obliged to ask Vader before showing his video to the entire class. He agreed, and we watched the video and discussed his reflection as a way of engaging the whole class in what was Vader’s internal dialogue made external. In a later reflection Vader further explored the concept of cars as art. An image relating to this video can be seen below.

I had time before class to select several images of art cars and videos of art car parades and insert them into a PowerPoint for discussion. These images included art cars and the contemporary work of Erwin Wurm. We discussed how the appropriation of the car as a form
allowed for multiple associations. As we worked through these ideas, it became clear to students that any material, be it pen, paper, paint, car, road cone, push broom, etc., could be used in the process of making-meaning from one’s surroundings. They became more visually aware of how objects can be appropriated and re-contextualized through an event. It was at this point that we discussed Wurm’s one-minute sculptures.

According to Dewey (1934), it is the whole experience, not simply the instruction of the teacher, that aids in the production of meaning. Producing meaning from any text involves an analysis of the complex social network in which the text exists. Networks of social meaning are not unlike a tapestry; in a tapestry the image is constructed from thousands of threads. To separate the threads is to deconstruct the image or the pattern. We cannot separate theory from practice, nor should we seek to exclude practical application of theory from its conceptual delivery. We should desire production that circulates between both extremes, two pure differences in kind; only then can we meet in the middle—in the in/between space. Such a space allows for the flow of theory grounded by practice that creates a new flow. This practice allows the educator to move into probabilistic inquiry.

Dewey’s philosophical inquiry in *Art as Experience* creates an opening through which we can see art as pedagogical practice. Written in 1934, this inquiry provides a method for encountering art on a pragmatic level. Like post-structuralism, pragmatism critiques the nature of metaphysics. Instead of arguing that there is a fundamental nature to reality that results in all individuals experiencing art in the same way, Dewey presented a new mode of thought in which reality was constructed through interaction. “Interactions are established between, as Dewey said, what is done and what is undergone, and it is by means of apprehending these connections and interactions that an organism increases in complexity” (Semetsky, 2008, p. 81).
Hey y’all, this is my first reflection, and I decided that I wanted to reflect on the installation project and how it is working out for me. At first I was so scared to death that it was going to be very difficult, especially since I do not like to draw, and I was scared about my sketches and how they would turn out and how the whole theme would come together as overall. But I am very thrilled now because everything seems to be coming into place, and I am really excited about our group installation project just because I think it is different, and it is creative at the same time, and we are kinda being useful in a way. We’ve actually come together, and we’ve combined both our ideas [into] one and then also thought of other new things to put in [it] as well. But, I think that is about it. I hope you like the view and everything. I am excited about this class because even though I was scared to death of art before, I am more open to it now. I am trying to get open to the drawing part, and I am hoping that I will be there soon, but who knows when that will come around but anyways have fun!

In student reflections, attention was paid to the process of art as pedagogy. The process of creating and working out their installations collaboratively not only aided them in the completion of their projects, it also helped them to think about process as a form of produsage. At the same time, the design of each of their installations was meant to engage the gallery viewer in the process of learning through both interaction and discourse. Throughout the creation of their installations, students researched how to construct the pieces they had envisioned. At the same time, they began the process of conceptualizing the artworks.
The installation project seems very interesting. The first day I really did not understand what we were going to be doing, but after a little clarification it becomes clear to me now. Basically, in an installation, you are changing the space by the way that the objects are placed in the space. This can be especially useful to teachers as we begin to design our classroom, and how we want things to be placed. I really enjoyed the videos to see different peoples’ perspective on an installation. The one I did not understand was the one where the gasoline tanks and the plastic boxes were used. To me that is just sticking objects in a room and calling it art, but that is just my opinion. It is going to be a fun project; it is just hard to understand stuff until you really get a grasp on things.

In this student’s remarks you can see the complex understanding and multiple applications for the process of installation, not only as an artistic practice for the gallery, but for the classroom as well. It is important to note that the student was comfortable enough to express her opinion about the installation by Jessica Stockholder. In her work, Stockholder utilizes commercial objects to produce what she terms as beautiful; however, she acknowledges, “some people think my work is not beautiful” (National Endowment for the Arts, 2005). I was able to take this reflection back to the class the next day, and we were able to engage in a discussion about art and the nature of beauty. The question: “Is beauty what makes something art or non-art?” arose. For
elementary educators with little art background, this was new territory. They ventured into it with some trepidation; and moreover, we stopped at the border for a while to contemplate.

In the next video reflection a student creates a narrative about her first day of class. She begins the story with the following words: “Here is a little story about my first day of class.” After this she presents the viewer with a series of cue cards. The viewer must read the dialogue in order to understand the story. Instead of typing this section out for you, I present you with the image that she produced.
Journal Entry 1

I have not been into art very much and can not draw to save my life so I was hoping it wouldn’t be too bad.

Journal Entry 1

As the class period progressed, I got less worried. I think the first day is just overwhelming with the syllabus and course work.
This student’s reflection displays the anxiety of the first day of class. The images that were chosen as representations of self were not ones that showed an image of the student or an image of objects as a representation of the student. Instead, the student reflection becomes picto-ideo-phonographic. The words printed on index cards are not only referential in their symbolic meaning, but they also display an understanding of word as image. Furthermore, the objects which surround the index cards, such as the brightly colored pushpins that sit in front of the cards, become part of the multilayered nature of the image. The hissing silence of the camcorder is made even more apparent by the lack of the spoken word. If one were to think of this as an association to cue cards, the viewer becomes the performer of this video. Each card is placed in front of the viewer for him or her to read. The reading of the cue card, either aloud or silently, allows for the performance of and with an/other.

Art as research: Art as pedagogy

Throughout the process of the summer session, we conducted individual and group research in order to create two major installations. While these artworks were collaborative, they
were first envisioned by the drawing of individual sketches. While we were conducting research for our installations in the library, a student came to me with the following image that she had found in a book. The image was a contemporary artwork by the artist Robert Pruitt. The work consisted of two vinyl records sitting side by side in two separate milk crates filled with dirt. The following dialogue occurred during the class.

Student: I really like this image and would like to use it as part of my research.

“I”: What do you like about the image, and how do you think that you could utilize it in your research?

Student: I like the dirty rustic quality that it has . . . also it is made from objects that I recognize, but I don't really understand the artwork.

“I”: What is the title of the piece?

Student: THA Ten Commandments

“I”: What connections do you see between these images and the artwork that your group plans on creating?

Student: Well, we are making wind chimes that produce sound, and records produce sound.

“I”: That is a good place to start. How do records produce sound?

Student: They produce sound through the grooves that are carved on the surface.

“I”: What connection does the carving have to the title?

Student: I guess...well, the Ten Commandments were carved in stone, and this is carved in vinyl.

“I”: So they sort of exhibit the qualities of stored data or recorded data?

Student: Yeah!

“I”: How does that relate to the wind chimes?

Student: Wind chimes record the movement of the wind.

“I”: By looking at this piece of artwork and discussing it, what changed? Not only in relation to the artwork you brought to discuss but also your conceptions of the piece you intend to produce?
Student: I never thought about the recording aspect of wind chimes before connecting it to this work of art.

“I”: How is the form of recording produced by the wind chimes different from the form of recording that takes place in the recording process of the record?

Student: The record can be replayed over and over again while the recording of the wind chimes is lost. (Sutherlin, 2009b)

Through this student’s research process and the dialogue that ensued, we were able to connect image, not only to the artwork that she had intended to produce, but also to the process of In<SCRIPT>ion. In regard to the assessment of student learning, this dialogue provided excellent support for student journaling, specifically video journaling, as a way of revisiting one’s thoughts. The dialogue, although in written form here, was an essential component of the research process and provided for a combination of research and pedagogy.
ELLA

The second student avatar from this first cycle that will be discussed is Ella. Ella, a student and a native Texan, chose an image of Cinderella to represent herself. Her husband was overseas on active duty in Iraq during time of this study. She was a very quiet student who rarely spoke out in the classroom discussions; but my interactions with her on a personal level altered my perceptions literacy in ways that allowed me to invert what I thought of as literacy practice. The following is the transcription of our first interview.

In Dialogue with Ella

“I”: What do you think of when you hear the term literacy?

Ella: What [is in] my mind when I hear the term literacy is a person’s knowledge about his world, as in how well he reads and writes or any kind of knowledge he has about anything. If a person is literate, he knows how to read and write, but it goes even further than that as to his knowledge of everything, a person’s body of knowledge.

“I”: What are some emerging forms of literacy that you see in today’s society?

Ella: I guess in today’s society, people are becoming more dependent upon maybe the Internet. The television has been around a while now, but [children are] even more so dependent upon that, and kids are spending more time on video games than [they] are [on], say reading or playing outside, and so with the children becoming more dependent on that, I think it becomes important, that it become literacy itself. . . .

“I”: Like the broad term literacy?

Ella: Mmmhumm. If we use maybe the Internet, or the television, or the video games in order to teach, it is important that we have knowledge about that in order to relate to our students. I have read articles that say if you want a child to learn algebra or calculus or something like that make that the prerequisite to learning moves in a video game. If you learn that 3X+2 and you can find out what X is, you learn how to punch in your video game then they would be ready. I wanna learn, I wanna learn. (Sutherlin, 2009c)

In reflecting upon Ella’s comments, it is of course apparent that she brings up the binary of indoor and outdoor play. At the same time it is interesting to note the parallel between indoor/inside and outdoor/outside. The indoor is paralleled with the mental processes and the virtual while the outdoor is paralleled with the physical body. Yet she makes us think about the
(re)play situation. How does the concept of (re)play allow us to think differently about literacy practice? (Re)play as a form of feedback loop allows us to both play and replay in recursive fashion. As in a game, chance and choice become factors that allow for agency and submission to circumstance.

Ella states that it is important that our interactions, virtual and physical, become part of literacy itself. We must put them into play and allow concepts of inside and outside to be volleyed around. It is through this interaction that we begin to get a better understanding of our world from a macroscopic and microscopic perspective. It was through some of our conversations that I began to formulate an understanding of inside and outside as both personal and political. The politically charged image can become a source of subversive power in the discourse of literacy. An individual can appropriate his/her “image” as other as way of performing his/her otherness. Newer modes of practice allow us to perform the avatar In<SCRIPT>ion in the course of everyday life. I can post to my Facebook wall while simultaneously taking a walk and listening to a book on tape. The avatar has become mobile.

“I”: Do you think that everything can be taught through games?

Ella: Well I think something has to be taught [by] direct instruction where I tell you this is what we are going to be doing, like that has to be the first step. But I also think a lot of the hands-on, cooperative learning, where you can actually do it yourself and work with other people to do it. I want to try to do more of that than just the direct instruction. But I also believe you have to have that initial, direct instruction in the classroom. (Sutherlin, 2009c)

These comments are important to understanding teaching practice in relation to what is called literacy in the broadest understanding of the term. Ella discusses both television and video; however, she does so in relation to direct instruction. If we think about direct instruction in the classroom, people generally think of it as a stand and deliver methodology in which the student has absolutely no agency or choice. The student becomes an empty vessel meant to be filled with knowledge. In complexity thinking the student decides the path and utilizes the teacher as a
resource. By drawing on the teacher’s knowledge and skills, direct instruction can be utilized as a means of furthering the goals of the student rather than meeting the objectives of the teacher. In relation to literacy practice, we generally set up a system of knowledge that is learned through objectives. However, if the teacher is not the center of the classroom network, but a participant, then the focus becomes direct instruction as it pertains to every member of the classroom. Students who have specialized knowledge can teach other students, who can teach other students in recursive fashion. In this way literacy is not about fixed knowledge; rather, becoming literate is about learning to learn. The teacher cannot dictate what is learned; s/he can only participate, understanding that what is learned may far exceed his or her expectations.

Further into our interview I asked the following question:

“I”: What importance do you place on visual literacy?

Ella: Visual literacy meaning . . . like images . . . well, I think that it is important that children have the skill to look beyond the surface of something. I think it would teach more skills than just that because it would teach them how to critically think beyond a lot of other things in real life.

Ella: The more knowledgeable you are about anything, the more feelings you get associated with something. If all you know is that an M says MMMMM, then when you see the McDonalds arches for the first time, it might not mean anything to you, but after you become more knowledgeable about, oh, McDonalds, where you get hamburgers, then you might not ever look at an M the same way again. (Sutherlin, 2009c)

Ella’s comments caused me to see signifier and signified in a new light. As she discussed the idea of visual literacy she made sure to include that literacy is not about a singularization of input, i.e. the eyes, as in visual literacy. Literacy should deal with all aspects of the world. As an example she cites/sites the commercial example of McDonald’s golden arches and its connection to the letter M. M in this image is picto-ideo-phonographic, text as image and image as text, a grapheme.
Furthermore, she makes the point that the more knowledgeable (I interpret knowledgeable in this situation as possessing contextual information) that you are about something, “the more feelings you get associated…” with it. Through this comment I was made even more aware that information is never separate from feelings or emotions. We think of data as cold and sterile, but this is not always the case. The more associations or signifieds that can be connected to a signifier through layering, the richer our understanding becomes of the world we inhabit. From the posthuman perspective the body as a transmutation of data is not about disconnection from emotion but about connecting experience to object as process. Instead of dealing solely with an interface, we are dealing with Ulmer’s concept of the interbody. We are stirred intellectually and emotionally. In furthering her conversation about concepts pertaining to the interbody, Ella was asked what importance she placed on critical thinking.

Ella: Very important. You have to be able to critically think about every aspect of your life. If you just take everything for what it appears, then you never really understand anything. Because nothing is exactly as it appears. (Sutherlin, 2009c)

Instead of arguing for a rejection of the current system, Ella’s comments allow for a space in which multiple interpretations are the means by which critical thinking and understanding of the world occurs. In her description of critical thinking, the educator does not take on the role of the white knight that single-handedly solves all problems, but the facilitator of an open dialogue. She makes the comment “nothing is exactly as it appears.” In thinking about this comment, two things come to mind. First, the concept of phantasy from Lacan’s writings becomes a way of understanding this comment. Things are rarely ever as they appear because we see them in the ways we want to see them or in the ways we have been taught to see them. Through their appearance “things” or “images” reaffirm our way of moving through the world. Deconstructing appearance allows for student and teacher dialogue as a means of producing a decentralized self-
organizing network in which students and teacher learn from one another. Ella was then asked about her experience with hypertext and what benefits she saw to the process of creating and engaging with hypertext.

Ella: I think they could be helpful for literacy. It helps you to organize your ideas and put them all together in a way where you can see it and you put it there so you are interacting with the text at the same time. So in a way, you are getting the hands-on with the visual, and it is organized, and I think organization is important in learning anything. (Sutherlin, 2009c)

In describing hypertext Ella has made a connection between the tactile and the visual. She discusses organization of the process and the ways in which organization is important to learning in any given situation. Organization through hypertext is not an organization that has a set format. Rather, hypertext allows for emergence and self-organization. The teacher does not dictate the organizational system; it is up to the students to organize information as part of the process of learning.

**Hypertextual Produsage**

Ella created her own hypertext that can be seen in the section below. This was a hypertext in which Ella chose an image of Cinderella to represent herself. Utilizing the traditional approach of the Feldman model, Ella describes her chosen images in the following section.

Description:

This is a picture of Cinderella. The picture uses mainly the color blue, in the dress and headband. She has yellow blonde hair and white petticoats. She is moving her skirt with her hands which are covered by long gloves. She is wearing a dark necklace.

Interpretation:

In this picture of Cinderella, there is the social idea of perfection. The image of Cinderella and the story of a poor girl becoming a princess are staples in today's society. Every young girl sees herself as Cinderella in the perfect world of the stories. Personally, Cinderella has always been an idea of perfection. The sweet and kind people in the world can rise above the forces trying to keep them down. Both in the culture of today's world and personally, the image of Cinderella portrays perfection and a rising above adversity.
Analysis:

In this picture of Cinderella, there is implied movement with the folds of the skirt, and an implied texture of lace in the petticoats. The dress contains an implied texture of smooth material. The color yellow in the hair provides contrast to the mainly blue hues of the rest of the picture. The lighter tones in her skin balance with the lighter tones of the petticoat at the bottom of the skirt. There is asymmetrical balance. There is a low contrast in the hues of the dress and high contrast between the rest of her body and the dress, as well as the petticoats and the dress. The colors used are very bright.

Judgment:

I think this picture is successful because the use of the color blue and the implied movement in the skirt create a pleasing effect to the eye. The implied texture in the piece is also pleasing. Culturally, the long full dress gives the impression of a princess. Because of the impact of Disney and specifically the Disney princess on society, people generally come to view images such as this image of Cinderella as how a princess should look. The long dress and the colors of the matching headband, work together effectively to create the image of a princess. (Sutherlin, 2009d)
After this first phase, Ella began to deconstruct her image. One can see through the questions that she poses that she problematizes the concept of the Disney princess, bringing to light some of the contradictions that embody not only the representation of Cinderella as a specific Disney image, but also the Disney interpretation of the story. Although she never answers these questions, their existence gives evidence of critical interpretation. She does not stop simply with the representation; she discusses multiple aspects of the story inherent within the representation; the image of Cinderella becomes a virtual embodiment of cultural truisms.

The first question that she asks is quite important for understanding a sense of identity because it pertains to occupation. Is it occupation that defines a person, and if so, does an undesirable occupation make one an undesirable person?

Is being a maid an undesirable profession in society? What about the people who make their living doing it? Cinderella portrays being a maid as something to escape. (Sutherlin, 2009d)
She states that, “Cinderella portrays being a maid as something to escape.” In the image that she has chosen, we are not presented with the before version of Cinderella, but the after. She has already been granted her wish by her Fairy Godmother and is now a princess rather than a chambermaid. It is the divide between the epic and the mundane, brought to life by the image of the princess as the ultimate fantasy. At this point “I” am speaking rather than Ella.

Her second question grows out of her understanding of cultural ideology. Her goal is to question the Self Image/Society's image of perfection:

> Do I have to look like this in order to live happily ever after?
> Does the idea that every girl should marry a prince put the idea of marrying for money into the heads of young girls? Or does it promote a belief that everyone has her own prince charming somewhere in the world? (Sutherlin, 2009d)

Ella’s deconstruction allowed her to dissect the unconscious forces that were at work in her perception of the world. As a means of discussing this further, four separate questions were answered by Ella. However, she acknowledges that having the answers to these questions rarely affects the way that she maneuvers through the world.

Unconscious/Conscious Constructions of Self

I posed several questions to students during the construction of their hypertexts. These questions were a modification of the self-evaluation of a critical constructivist teacher proposed by Kincheloe (2005). Ella chose to answer the questions in written form. Students were not required to answer the questions but were asked to keep them in mind as they worked.

How does the process of meaning-making relate to my development as an educator?

The process of meaning-making relates to my development as an educator because it affects the things that I will choose to present to the children in my care. If I decide that an image portrays an idea of community and teamwork, I am likely to put that image into my classroom. In this way, my meaning-making is imposed on the children in my care. As an educator, I need to be able to look at things from different perspectives and be able to teach my students to do the same. (Sutherlin, 2009d)
Do I often simply surrender to my perceptions of the world, to my perceptions of my environment, to my social or cultural context?

I must admit that I do often simply surrender to my previously held perceptions of things. I have a view of what is right and what is expected of me that is imposed on me by others in the society. I go by that and by the expectations of my family, etc. Sometimes, however, I make it a point to challenge the things that I had previously taken for granted. When I do this, I often find that I create a new perception of something, either by uncovering a different characteristic of the thing or by looking at it in a new way. Most of these changed perceptions, however, generally do not change my behaviors.

Is there any way that I can affect my psychological disposition, or is it beyond the limits of my control? (Sutherlin, 2009d)

A person’s psychological disposition is constantly affected by the environment and by a person’s current state of mind. I think that it is not beyond the limits of my control to affect my psychological disposition. By changing what I am exposed to, learning more things, and purposely changing the way I think about things, I may affect my psychological disposition.

What forces work to shape my constructions of the world?

My perspective of the world has been shaped over the years by a variety of factors. My parent’s views and beliefs top the list of forces that shape my constructions of the world. Especially as a child, I took everything my parents said as absolute truth. Also as a child, television and movie influences shaped my constructions of the world. For instance, I believe that everyone is good somewhere inside them, and good should triumph over evil. School and education has shaped my constructions of the world by introducing me to ideas and concepts that I might not have considered before. Brought together, you have my trusting, yet paranoid, perspective of the world, held together by a strong hope that good will hold the upper hand. (Sutherlin, 2009d)

Ella’s constructed understanding of the world can be seen in the mash-up-video that she completed for class. She appropriated images from popular films as a way of answering the question: What is a hero? This was a question that I had posed earlier in class. It was not meant to be part of an assignment; however, she appropriated it for the creation of her artwork. Her definition is specific to her own interpretation of the word hero. The video begins with very traditional notions of heroes: Indiana Jones, Agent J from Men in Black, The Avengers, and even some unlikely heroes such as Shrek. Utilizing popular culture imagery, she showed how the media has shaped the concept of the hero. The second half of the mash-up contains images of her
family. She is part of some of the images, and some of the images are of other members of her family. These “images” are different from the images of heroes portrayed at the beginning of the mash-up because they are all still images. We are privy to a single intimate moment that is made public through its introduction into the mash-up. The video ends with the phrase *My Family . . . My Heroes.*
In the gap or ‘time-lag’ opened up by re-territorializing of the national narrative in the present, it sometimes possible to glimpse the performance of national identity as repetition of difference. This is the ungrounding potential that “underwrites” national identity, and it is this which pedagogical time must perpetually work to re-territorialize. This process of de-and reterritorialization of national identity is perhaps easiest to consider in terms of a series of recognitions, or perhaps appropriations, of previously marginal minorities into the mainstream.

David Martin-Jones

The term nation, the title of this section, is derived from the French and Latin *natio*, which means birth. Nation includes within its meaning the idea of the birth of a body of knowledge, a body of beliefs, a learning body, or a meaning/making body. These bodies do not come into being fully formed (Whitehead, 1979) they are performed through the process of becoming. It is an incarnation, the birth of the physical and the virtual (Irwin, 1998). Embodied meaning becomes born—borne—born(e) through fragments. These fragments are discrete yet intertwined and come in the form of images, objects, written reflections, memories, and perceptions of the event(s). There is an entanglement that occurs that allows for a body to perform. This performing body keeps the fragments in motion. Without motion, the fragments fall apart; they become traces without a (con)text, without a connection.

The Formation of a New Monism

In the following section there is an inevitable return analogous to the return one experiences when tracing a Möbius strip. This return is not the familiar definition of what pedagogical practice should be. According to traditional models of education practice, educators seek measurable and concise educational outcomes. Instead, this is a pedagogy of endless development without reference to outcome, but “[p]edagogy, like painting, sculpture, or music,
can be magical in its artful manipulation of inner ways of knowing into mutually transforming relation with outer event, selves, objects, and ideas” (Ellsworth, 2005, p. 7). This type of pedagogical practice seeks to formulate a learning self in relation to events as a way of being that is at once a birth of the individual and the individual’s place within the community. It is an understanding of all experience as communal and individual at once—n-1 (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987).

The concept of “nation” is a shared experience that aids in the definition of self and discipline. In the process of engaging with “nation,” acknowledgement of the collective is not about complete acceptance of the current system, but rather a subversive movement through space and time that gives agency to the individual in question. The outside is always defined by the inside and vice versa; time allows the individual or groups of individuals to start a grass roots movement as a way of producing change. In terms of educational practice, these grass roots movements require a new conception of curriculum that acknowledges the transformative and creative as aspects of art creation/viewing/participation in all its forms, as a potent political, social, emotional, and economic force.

Forms of nontraditional appropriative art and meaning/making such as collage, montage, mash-up, installation, and hypermedia give flesh to curriculum; they are incarnations born(e) through performance. They grow from the realm of the semiotic through the slippage of signifier and signified and reach in an attempt to touch the realm of the Real. What does it mean to reach the real? Lethem (2008) describes the Real in relation to the children’s story *The Velveteen Rabbit*. In the following dialogue an interaction between the Rabbit and the old Skin Horse takes place:

‘Real isn’t how you are made . . . It’s a thing that happens to you when a child loves you for a long time, not just to play with, but REALLY loves you, then you become Real.’ The
Rabbit is fearful recognizing that consumer goods don’t become “real” without being actively reworked: ‘Does it hurt?’ Reassuring him, the Skin Horse says: ‘It doesn’t happen all at once . . . You become. It takes a long time . . . Generally, by the time you are Real, most of your hair has been loved off, and your eyes drop out and you get loose in the joints and very shabby’ (p. 36).

For the child and the Rabbit the tattered threads and worn fur are signifiers of “real” love. We destroy that which we love; we devour it as a means of “knowing” it better. Our much-loved books become bent and broken-spined and our favorite pillowy upholstered chair flattened out. The creator of the toy, book, and chair may see this love as nothing more than vandalism, the destruction of a consumer product. From the perspective of (re)mix, the appropriation of images, objects, and ideas is a mode of admiration. Touch is the physical and conceptual manifestation of admiration and its manifestation leaves an In<SCRIPT>ion of the interaction as a representation. This is a representation that can be reformed through the (re)mix as a visual (in the loosest sense of the word) event.

Visual Event as Pedagogical Experience

Visual events require the element of touch as a form of interaction. Although instances of touch are described as pre-discursive, art educator Springgay (2006) disputes this claim, stating that “tactile epistemologies penetrate our bodies; they are inside the visible, unfolding, but never becoming an object” (p. 146). Her assertion echoes the philosophy of Merleau-Ponty (1964) with regard to touch as both touching and being touched. The tactile visual event is not only the experience of one but also the intentional interpenetration of the one within many. Ellsworth (2005) states that artists are already engaging in “inventing ‘processual paths’, ‘communicative instruments,’ urban ‘critical vehicles,’ theatrical performances, provocative interactive encounters, architectural spaces, and mediated cityscapes—with pedagogical intent” (p.6). Emphasis in these experiences is placed neither on the cognitive nor the representational aspects
of the events: “movement, sensation, intensity, rhythm, passage, and self augmenting change” are the elements of importance. It is the body as agent through the body’s knowledge of itself. In this sense touch becomes a metaphor for the student/teacher relationship. Teaching and learning are not directional modes of communication; they are entanglements in which meaning is made. Learning becomes the invisible made visible through the visual and tactile event(s) of creation, interpretation, reflection, and performance—bodies of pedagogy.

These bodies of pedagogy are (h)activated through engagement in dialogue. Mason (2008b) states that it is the pirates and bootleggers who are free from cultural authority because they constitute the true DIY. Instead of falling prey to the system, they have created a system-less system, a nomadic realm that operates in today’s society with virtual content in a virtual world, a chain of metonymic signifiers. To (h)activate culture one must activate the dead metaphors that constitute the cultural schema, the relationships that constitute a culture. The metaphor is the constitution of knowledge and therefore, once dead, must be reactivated through the programming of a new code. This code is one that allows the chain of metonymy to activate. If we return to the Hackers Code of Ethics, we are reminded that to hack deals with invention rather than destruction. To hack is to reconfigure or (re)incarnate rather than to destroy.

In both the spring and summer semesters in which this research took place, students took part in this dynamic practice of (re)incarnation or hacking. Each tracing of the hermeneutic circle provided for a new reflection and a newly invented and incarnated vision of self and community. These visions were being in the form of a singular/plural (Nancy, 2000). As the teacher during this process, I was not a bystander, but an active participant engaging in a dialogic production of ideas and objects with students. While the physical In<SCRIPT>ion of self in a literal sense may not be present in the form of traditional representation, the reader is presented with a more
complex “image” of teaching practice through a singular/plural incarnation of self. Student work, comments, and reflections form an avatar of my practice. Student avatars were performed during the spring and summer months of 2009.

*Mash-ups*

Mash-ups allow one to (re)mix songs, video, text, etc., as a means of altering the intended meaning or use of a particular software, piece of music, video, etc. The cutup method described by William Burroughs, exquisite corpse poetry, and musical sampling are but a few common examples of this practice. Some are software based in which two or more interfaces are mashed together to create a new interbody, a body that collides and absorbs into to other bodies. Others are based in the realm of video and/or music. In relation to “image” / “i” / “nation,” mash-ups enable the intermingling of discourses, and serve as a form of heuretic invention.

The myths created through the emblematic structure of television and cinema are deconstructed through critical analysis of sound, image, and duration. As students engage with the cultural myths inherent to film, they can remix those images and sounds to create a new narrative that is at once collective and individual. There is a pleasure in looking because in that looking we see ourselves in all our constructedness. The unconscious formulates a way of seeing and interacting with the world through the collective experience of the cinematic myth. Given the perceived original purpose of the film clips, common associations exist in the mash-up, and at the same time, new associations are made through the perception of the remixed (con)text. Mash-ups enable poetic montage. In this study, students engaged with the concept of nation as a means of (re)imagining what nation could be rather than relying solely upon what they were told it “is.” Concepts were presented through a wide range of juxtapositions devised by students. Clips chosen for the mash-ups were generated through in-class dialogue and individual student
interpretation of that dialogue. The clips utilized were combined and recombined to re-contextualize both image and text. These activities enabled students to look more closely at concepts they had previously taken for granted.

One student during the spring semester decided to remix her own experience with the experiences that she found in the form of photographs on the Internet. This student had traveled extensively all over the world. We talked together about how her interaction with the people she photographed aided in her understanding of cultural (con)text. Through our discussions about her experiences, she came up with a mash-up she titled *The Other Side of the Door*. The title itself implies the possibility of either an open or closed position. At the same time, it references a cultural other. The door, according to the student, is always open for interaction. When the video was complete, we discussed the nature of photography as an entire class. Questions about the ethics of photography arose, and we were able to discuss the surveillance and capture aspects of taking a photograph. The way we talk about photographs signifies the aggressive nature of the act of photography. We take a photograph as if it were being stolen from the individual represented. Representation was discussed as an intimate exchange that could be reciprocal or one-sided. As we looked at the many photographs in the mash-up and the music playing along with them, it became apparent that this video was about an attempt at honest representation. It was not about an attempt at otherization that reduced culture to surface appearance; rather, it was an honest attempt by the student to share with viewers her experiences through a mythopoetic construction.

*Sight/site (Un)Scene/seen*

A fragment of the experience will be displayed in the following paragraphs. My reason for conveying this information is because of the significance I believe it has to the study and to an understanding of art, research, and teaching. Site/sight aids me in determining my positionality;
conversely, a site has its own positionality. A site produces a (con)text or a network of texts that influence interpretations. During the course of this research, the School of Art at Stephen F. Austin State University brought in artist Mel Chin to jury the Texas National Show at the Cole Arts Center, our downtown gallery. Chin was in Nacogdoches for approximately two and a half days. In one weekend, the School of Art had the opening for the Texas National, the premier of Chin’s film 9:11/9:11, and a public lecture by Chin.

The film 9:11/9:11 premiered on Sunday afternoon to a group of individuals sitting in folding chairs in what is now the Cole Arts Center in Nacogdoches, TX. This location also housed the Texas National Show during the film premiere. The Cole Art Center was once the old Opera House in Nacogdoches. In that incarnation it was the location where the Marx Brothers—Groucho, Harpo, and Gummo—got their start in the comedic side of show business. This fact may seem abrupt and out of place, but it is significant later in the narrative of this section because it deals with the concept of potentiality.

The film 9:11/9:11, it deals with simultaneous potentiality and the non-linearity of time. In this story two narratives unfold simultaneously. One is the September 11th of 1973 that took place in Santiago, Chile. The other is the September 11th of 2001 that took place in New York City. The animation is derived stylistically, according to Chin, from Goya’s Disasters of War Series.

The day unfolds—shocked Americans watch as two United Airlines Boeing 767 jetliners, hijacked with all of their passengers and crew still aboard, were crashed into the World Trade Center. These attacks on the Twin Towers in New York City interrupted the perceived “security” of the American people. Twenty-eight years prior, a Chilean military coup with the help of the United States Central Intelligence Agency, overthrew President Salvador Allende, the first democratically elected Marxist. This action resulted in a military dictatorship that left more than
three thousand dead. The stories unfold/refold; the observer is presented with an experience, “an event” (rather than events) that allows one to empathize with the people of Chile/United States. Through the mythopoetic construction of film, an affective bond is formed between the people of Chili and the viewer. The film provides an understanding of the actions taken by the United States which allows for an (un)becoming of self as American. In becoming (un)American, one is to be perceived as anti-patriotic, but the intertwining of these stories—the layering of these images—the film as collage is what enables potency (Gaudelius & Garoian, 2008).

Students and I attended the lecture given by Mel Chin. During his public lecture, Chin began by discussing his more traditional work, describing his intentions for each of the artworks that he had created. Many of the works discussed were three-dimensional and were as much about what they were not as what they were. From the replicated columns of the White House, whose exact measurements were derived by disguising a yardstick as a walking cane, to the first aid kit concealed within the housing of a 9mm handgun, the unseen or that which was absent from immediate visualization is equally important to the understanding of his artwork. To work in/between the known and the unknown is to work within a space of complexity.

While giving his lecture, he told the story of one piece that he spent two years researching prior to execution. The piece was called The Cult of The Hand. This was a work that derived its construction from research in Greek and Chinese culture. While the work was on display, Chin was present when a guard took it upon himself to give tours of the museum in which the work was hanging. During this tour, the guard described the work The Cult of The Hand to the tour group. To begin his description he said, “This is the headdress of an African King.” Upon hearing this, Mel said nothing; he proceeded to listen to the tour, and after the tour was over, he called Vincent, the guard/tour guide to thank him and also to apologize. “Thank you,” he said, “It is so
rare to work a lifetime and make a piece that is able to provoke someone’s user imagination and have his voice come forward.” “I’m sorry… *The Cult of The Hand* is out of Africa…[and] my myopic focusing [on] Greek and Chinese origins [have] betrayed possibly the greatest civilization that could have informed me more.”

As he stated later in his lecture, art is about opening up possibilities, about seeing what can occur. Art is about expansion, rather than contraction. Chin’s narrative illustrates how, as artists and educators, all too often we focus in on a particular scopic regime with such intensity that we leave out equally valid interpretations. What one chooses to focus on, to draw attention to, to explore, etc., says as much about the artist/researcher/teacher as it does about the objects being interpreted.

Derrida makes this clear through his description of the presence/absence of intentionality. In “Signature Event Context,” Derrida takes aim at the teleology of memory and how it negotiates the themes of intentionality, communication, and context. The teleology of memory or the goal-directed activity of memory seeks out the intention of the author as conveyed to a specific receiver. In this process the purpose is to resurrect the original presence of the author and his or her intentions. However, Derrida states that it is impossible to resurrect the original intent of the author, and to do so would negate a plethora of other possible meanings (Derrida, 1976).

The concept of the bricoleur carried over into the second half of Chin’s lecture as he discussed the Fundred Dollar Bill project. The Fundred Dollar Bill project is an attempt to give voice to those who go unheard. In the aftermath of hurricane Katrina, Chin was invited to New Orleans to see how art could help the devastated city in some way. Those involved with the invitation knew of the success that he had with the project Revival Field. In Revival Field, plants called hyperaccumulators draw metals up from the soil in a process called green remediation.
Individuals were trying out this same process with plants in New Orleans in order to decrease the amount of lead in the soil. Yet, as Chin later stated in his lecture, there is no plant that will draw up lead.

He said that after seeing the devastation, he left the area, feeling overwhelmed. What could he do as an artist to help? He later came back and started Operation: Paydirt. Operation: Paydirt and the Fundred Dollar Bill project are meant to give individuals a collective voice. The project works by having individuals create a Fundred Dollar Bill. This Dollar Bill can look anyway that its creator likes. Once the Fundred Dollar Bill has been created, it is kept until the armored truck (which runs on vegetable oil) comes by to pick it up. When all Fundred’s have been collected, they are to be taken to Congress to be exchanged for real dollars to remove the lead from the soil. As a bricoleur, Mel Chin is taking the tools at his disposal and creating change. Art can de-center power structures, or it can reinforce those same structures. Power through art, in this instance, is an inversion of a system that was set up to control. Involvement with art allows people to work through systems of power as a disruptive mechanism that shifts the focus of the dominant structure.

At the end of his talk I went up to Mr. Chin and stammeringly stated, “I have not said much to you this weekend because I was and am somewhat star-struck. I have admired your work for some time. The way that you work in liminal spaces and cross boundaries is impressive to me.”

As he shook my hand, he said, “Well now we are working together.”

I return by way of potentiality to a Marx-ism mentioned previously. Marxism in its political formation is of course the theoretical construct of Karl Marx. A Marx-ism is also a story that will reveal its relevance later. It has a past/present/future that fold one onto/into the other in a
method similar to that of a taffy puller who combines molecules of sugar in such a way that they have the ability to be stretched in all directions. While social transformation is one of the major thrusts of this section, this transformation is not derived from the Marxism of Karl, but from the Marxism of Groucho, Harpo, and Gummo Marx. In 1912 they, along with Lou Levy, were known as The Four Nightingales. The Marx brothers were performing at the old Opera House (known then as the Pantages Theatre). Groucho Marx described the experience thusly:

We were playing a small town in Texas, a farming town. The farmers came in and tied up their horses beside the Pantages Theatre. We were doing a singing act. A mule runs away, and the whole audience left to catch the mule. Then they came back. By this time we were so angry we started making sarcastic remarks. Like, “Nacogdoches is full of roaches” and “The jackass is the finest flower of Texass.” Instead of getting mad, the audience laughs. This is the first time we ever did comedy like that. (Gardner, 2009, p. 17)

The Marx Brothers understood the unexpected or a-signifying rupture long after this performance as the place/time where their careers as comedians began. As entertainers at that time and place, they were expected (and they expected) to sing in the manner advertised on the marquee or playbill for those who had come to see the evening’s entertainment. The unexpectedness of the performers’ comments created a reaction the Marx brothers never could have imagined. Their sarcastic commentary disrupted the automatic response of the listless audience and enabled the observers to see themselves from an outsider’s point of view and to find humor in their own actions.

Harpo Marx created a rupture in a much more “muted” way. As one of the Marx Brothers he never spoke. His silence caused the audience to wait for his communication. His was a presence that exists within absence, a power that can cause the a-signifying rupture. The artist and musician John Cage understood the power of possibility that arises from indeterminacy and silence. In his work 4’33,’ he sat at the piano and played nothing. He allowed the cacophony of ambient noise to create the work, to create the experience. Each time the piece is performed, it is
different, and each member of the audience creates the experience of the piece through a series of choices (Garoian & Gaudelius, 2008).

Art as pedagogy/Pedagogy as art

Returning to the idea of art as pedagogy once again, I would like to describe how I have come to view the process of installation in relation to educational inquiry. Experience follows Bergson’s diagram of ‘image’. Experience becomes both ontological and psychological as a way of connecting memory and perception. Each circle on Bergson’s (2004) Cone of Experience is articulated as AB and gets wider as it encompasses the general experience of the collective. In the classroom environment, the students and teacher embody the collective. Created meaning is derived from the learner’s experiences and perceptions in relation to the experiences of others in the class. Through dialogue new meaning is created from experiences and perceptions that are both uniquely the student’s and experiences and perceptions that are appropriated through contact with an/other. Through the process of layering experience and perception on top of the other or enfolding one within the other, new meaning is formed.

In an installation one can revisit the environment on multiple occasions as a way of enacting a feedback loop; however, the student and teacher must become willing to follow the loop beyond the turn, to flip the script, so to speak. The student and teacher must go beyond what s/he thinks s/he knows to the point at which the inside becomes the outside and vice versa.

The inside (personal)

Experience and perception of experience are two of the most prominent features in installation art. Instead of existing as a painting or three-dimensional object, installations are site or environment. They are usually temporary, emphasizing the nature of time. Installation art deals with the hybridness of experience through “aural, spatial, visual, and environmental planes of
perception and interpretation” (Suderberg, 2000, p. 2). The body plays an important role in both construction of and interaction with an installation. An individual must physically utilize his or her body in the construction of the artwork; it literally requires art/work to complete. It combines the conceptual with the mundane. The once intensive and intellectual idea becomes a repetitive movement of the physical body—hammering, painting, sewing, weaving, gluing, digging, wrapping, hanging, scraping, tying, molding, etc., all purposeful actions of the human body. At the same time, sensations are present that resist the control of the human body, for instance the temperature, wind, ambient noise, and smells, etc. These factors make installation a sensory experience that defies control not only in the experience of its creation, but also in the experience of its viewing. The construction of the classroom environment, much like that of the installation, is a space that has uncontrollable variables. The teacher can only conduct the classroom through the introduction of ideas and media. He or she cannot control those materials’ reception anymore than the student can control the way the information is presented.

Installation art invites the viewer into a private space in a public setting. It allows the viewer to interact with interiority of experience through exterior means. While viewing installation art, the viewer must deal with his or her inability to control personal experience. This recognition may involve a continual return to that experience as a means of exerting control. From this perspective, the self extends towards individual agency that acknowledges both the concepts of community and shared experience. In this “[p]rivate discourse made public, public discourse becomes a new kind of sustenance in an ecosystem of hunter-gathers of moments suspended in a culture found on a world where information moves only because someone invented and shared it” (Miller, 2008, p. 17). It is these cultural properties that make installation art an effective pedagogical device. The conducted classroom produces a shared common
experience that is modular, allowing openings for individual agency. This individual agency does not separate the student or teacher from the network of education, but instead allows for self-realization as part of the classroom community. Student and teacher are placed in a dialogic relationship, rather than in one that is hierarchical (Newman, 1996).

In relation to pre-service elementary educators, installation art is produced by the flow between the identities of student and teacher. The creation of a work of art becomes a way of teaching oneself new processes and engaging in those processes in a way that positions the pre-service teacher as both student and teacher. The creation of the installation was itself a learning process that when completed, became an experiential artwork that allowed the viewer to engage with the concepts inherent to color theory. The artwork itself was a form of pedagogy that required the viewers to think beyond their preconceptions of art, color theory, and the metaphorical and metonymic aspects of color. Because of its modular and environmental aspect, the experience could be revisited over and over as a means of (re)mixing the work through both virtual and physical means. The educational possibilities of such an experience are endless.

In this study, students engaged in a recursive practice of installation production. Students began with class dialogue that culminated in an individual sketch and research. Once their individual sketches and research were complete, students broke up into groups of three to four in order to collaboratively dialogue about which installation or combination of installations they wanted to create. Once a decision was made, students worked together to produce a sketch of that installation. Next, students completed a second research session in the library, creating a series of notes and citations relating to the piece. They then executed these works in both the gallery and outdoor settings.
We began our classroom explorations by looking at and discussing the concept of installation art. Dialogue about the deconstruction of the frame was one of the first hurdles that we had to jump in order to gain an understanding of art as more than a painting or drawing. In the deconstruction of the frame, we discussed the concepts of traditionalism, modernism, and postmodernism. To define these three categories, we utilized Anderson and Milbrandt’s (2004) definitions. They define traditionalism as the belief that tradition should serve as a means of social control and that social control was/is necessary to the functioning of society. Examples of artwork looked at and discussed included the works that employed the device of perspective; these included works by Da Vinci, Raphael, Campin, and others. Modernism was defined as the desire to break from social control through the denial of traditional methods of representation. The discussion centered on the works of Pollock, Rothko, Motherwell, and others. The discussion concluded with postmodernism. Postmodernism, according to Anderson and Milbrandt, deals with whether or not it is possible or even desirable to break from tradition. Artwork discussed in order to gain a better understanding of the installation included the works of Damien Hirst, Kara Walker, Tim Hawkinson, Ann Hamilton, and others. Through these discussions we created a feedback loop in which the mode of practice was not a segregating of movements, but a performance of the complex relationships between the three. While the installations discussed were in museum settings, students made a very impressive cognitive leap, as can be seen in their reflections, between installation as a mode of contemporary art practice and installation as a mode of environmental and (con)textual alteration. Students began to see how they could utilize the practice of installation as a means of altering the space of their own classrooms. It became apparent through their artwork and their interaction with materials that they saw installation not only as an adornment of the classroom, but also as an effective apparatus for teaching and
learning. They concluded that installation was a way of making learning exploratory and participatory, allowing new understandings to come about through re-visitation.

Student Installation One:

- Cones of primary in color affixed to the gallery wall
- Protruding like colorful spikes
- The visual form an asterisk: *
- Information omitted
- Information provided
- Color inversion
- A space to walk between

In the construction of this installation, two students worked collaboratively. The installation consisted of two asterisks made from party hats. One set was adhered to the wall while the other hung precariously close to the floor. The floor itself was shiny, producing a secondary reflection on its surface, a repetition of the image on the wall. One would never have suspected at first sight that this piece was made from party hats because the students transformed the original purpose of the hats through their use and interaction.

The missing or omitted portion of this piece is only present when there is interaction with the artwork. The viewer aids in the production of the piece through his or her presence in the installation. The students who created the artwork chose to utilize the concept of complements in the production of the work. Complementary colors were painted on the inside of the inverted asterisk as a way of physically representing the complement of the primary colors that were present on the exteriors. From a metonymic perspective this work was meant to deal with the complementary interaction between viewer and artwork. The viewer complements the artwork.

Student Voice:

Hey y'all, this is my first reflection of the second week of school, and I wanted to talk about my installation project and how I was very impressed with how it turned out and everything. We started off with just one idea about party hats, and then ended up turning into putting two different ideas together as one. And so we started putting the installation
together on Monday, and we changed it even more than we thought we were going to because we spread out the party hats further along when they were on the ground, the reflection, and then also . . . uh . . . we made it a participatory type of art . . . uh . . . because people would be able to walk through it, and they got to experience in a way the art. Also I really liked how if you backed up from the art piece or color wheel installation . . . and um . . . if you backed all the way up, you saw the reflection on the ground for both of them and also on the wall for the one that’s on the wall. It had the shadows. I wasn’t expecting to see that at all.

Student Installation Two:

White orbs on the wall
Projected color
Information omitted
Information provided
Color inversion
A space to walk between

White balloons were mounted to the gallery wall in a grid pattern. An overhead projector sat opposite the white balloons. Projected from the overhead projector was a transparency, which matched up with the grid pattern of the balloons, projecting colors on their surface and producing a three dimensional sculpture from both the balloons and light. Like the work described above, the installation contained an in/between space. This was the space between the projector and the surface of the balloons. An unintended side effect occurred when the viewer entered this space. On the surface of their clothing was projected the color pattern and on the wall interrupting the previous pattern was the shadow of the viewer/participant in/of the work. This integrated the viewer into the artwork in a very literal way. The piece adjusted to each individual viewer/participant.

Student Installation Three:

Trees inside
Constructed shadows
Color inversion
Information omitted
Information provided
A space to walk between
Two trees stood in the corner of the gallery, their tops constructed from trash bags. One top was white while the other was black. In the student’s description of the installation, she discussed the POET(ic) metaphor of not being able to see the forest for the trees. She described how individuals tend to view the world in terms of black and white, instead of seeing the complexity of reality. The shadows that the trees cast were multicolored displaying the variety of viewpoints that aid in the construction of reality. The use of color in this artwork dealt with the metaphoric and symbolic aspects of color.

As a class, students had planned out their work based on the constructed nature of the gallery. The location provided was a site that coincided with the institutional conception of art, the gallery. Because this was the first completed piece of the course and because it occurred only a week and a half into the course itself, the exploration of color remained somewhat instructional with regard to the execution and exploratory aspects of the work.

_The outside (The social and environmental)_

The second set of installations was created at the Pineywoods Native Plant Center. Before beginning this installation, students read and discussed two articles: “Teaching Art in the Context of Everyday Life” by Krug (2002) and “Open Spaces, Open Minds: Art in Partnership with the Earth” by Keifer-Boyd (2002). Krug’s article deals with the ecological issues of dominion, stewardship, and union, while Keifer-Boyd (2002) discusses the nature of eco-feminism (giving voice to that which cannot speak for itself is a becoming-minority) and its application by public school teachers in Texas to produce environmental installations.

According to Krug (2002), dominion refers to man’s power over nature, stewardship to man’s care of nature, and union to man’s unity or harmony with nature. Many students were
drawn to the stewardship of the environment described by Krug. However, as can be seen in student reflections, the initial ideas of students circled around the concept of dominion.

Student Voice:

I realized as I got my ideas for our ecological art project that all my ideas were from a “dominion” philosophy because they all involved me doing something with the natural elements to the natural environment solely for its aesthetic value, not as a part of the ecological system or as an aid to the system. I changed as I read this [*Teaching Art in the Context of Everyday Life* by Don Krug] because I don’t want to be just “taken” from our environment or just please only the humans, when a project can also benefit animals or insects.

Because both this study and the activities cited in the article by Keifer-Boyd took place in Texas, students felt a deeper connection to both the installation site and also to the installation art they created. In response to this article, Mia reflected: “Art of place—work not put in place—it is that place[,] “[E]cofeminism” is—art in partnership with the earth—caretaking and nurturing.”

The physical site became a way of understanding the production of an environmental artwork that was not a foreign object placed in a specific location, but rather an integrated part of the location that required human and environmental interaction. One student completed an individual sketch that speaks to this relationship and a presencing of the intertwined existence of man and nature.
Student Voice:

My installation is two outlines of people’s bodies. The concept behind the piece is since there is an absence of human life in the environment. Putting the outlines of the bodies in a way symbolize the human presence of life. One piece of art I found interested and similar to the one I sketched is the Study for Floating Island to Travel Around Manhattan Island by Joseph E. Seagram. The piece of art was a boat made out of wood but it was placed on land. Which I can see that the artist has a similar concept of trying to incorporate wanting to go boating even though they live in a city that is all land and no water.

Student Installation One:

The same group that completed the color installation utilizing party hats also created a self-sustaining installation for small animals. In the Pineywoods Native Plant Center, all fallen trees are left in situ as a way of giving them new life. In this case students seized the opportunity to utilize a pre-existing animal habitat and provide a sustainable environment while aesthetically enhancing the site. The students did research on the herbaceous native plants that could serve as a food source for the animals living in the area. The image of the student work can be seen below.

Student Voice:

The reason for our choice of location is to create sustainability as Mel Chin did from the reading- as research. Upon observation, this area is a relevant location for the sake of creating a green area where there are more brown areas than green. We are also capable
of hanging a bird feeder and placing a bird nest for the birds- as a habitat, within this location. The dark area- hollow area- is for the rabbits to shelter.

The materials that we decided to use to build bird nests and feeders are for the sake of the attraction of birds and because they we are using some natural elements, so that rabbits and any other wildlife that may find comfort.

The concept behind the work is to create an area of sustainability[,] which is to place relevant sources upon a founded habitat. More so, the concept behind our ideas is to create more greenery[,] which will attract rabbits when they need shelter. The birds will go to the bird nests or feeders to eat.

As mentioned above, we are trying to create sustainability within our location as we are not creating a habitat but building or redefining what already exists as we intend to place sod, seeds, nests and feeders within the location. We are building upon the foundation of Mel Chin's idea of sustainability that he created with the “Revival Field” as we place green sod to make the area more of an attraction.

Student Installation Two:

In the second installation students took the concept of the “blemish” and tried to beautify it while creating a sustainable habitat for butterflies. The students who created this piece did research into the nutritional requirements of butterflies. They discovered that they could create a butterfly puddling station by mixing sand and salt together. The sand and salt mixture enables the butterfly to access the nutrients.
Student Voice:

This is a photo of the tree wart we plan to use as the base of our project. We chose this location because of the wart, which looks rather like a face. Thinking that a vine growing from it would look like hair we thought about what types of vines would benefit the environment or local animals. We researched the plants we could use to attract hummingbirds and selected a trumpet vine, but then changed our minds because it spreads so that it is also nick-named “hellvine.” Another Texas native vine that is similar is Bignonia capreolata, also known as crossvine. It also attracts hummingbirds, but is less invasive.

Student Voice:

This is a sketch of our idea for our tree-wart planter. The concept behind the work is to create a planter for cross vine to grow from and attract hummingbirds. An artist that has created a habitat for birds to perch was Lynne Hull, who created a structure that resembled a windmill with branches for birds to roost in as well as a platform in the top quarter of the stand that serves as a nest. She created this in Lubbock, Texas, which has few trees to serve as natural perches and nesting habitat. We plan to use clay to fill in behind the wart to create a bowl in which to plant the cross vine.

Student Installation Three:

The third environmental installation was a modular installation of what the students called wind puppets. Made from pvc and copper pipe, twine, pinecones, peanut butter, and birdseed,
these wind puppets closely resemble wind chimes. These elements were not only moved by the wind but by the animals that ate the birdseed from the pinecones. The (wo)man made object becomes the mode of interaction between (wo)man and nature. The wind changes the work, the weather decays the work, and slowly the birdseed and peanut butter disappear. The environmental installation is an augmentation to an existing structure. It is not a parasitic relationship, but one of transformation in which the environment is altered and changed. Likewise, the environment alters and changes the work. In students’ research process, they made connections to needs they saw in the environment. Instead of creating a monolithic artwork separate from its surroundings, students practiced an integration of life and art.

Each of these installations embodies what Miller (2008) calls the “hypertextual imagination” that binds us all together, and although these processual paths are invisible to the naked eye, they are visioned and (re)visioned. These invisible networks are equated with John Cage’s *Imaginary Landscape* in which chance operations and occurrences determine the structure. The gesture of the human body becomes the generative activity or syntax, but once movement and sound emanate from the body, they transform into data, streams of code that form a feedback loop between the self and an/other. The creation of a work of art, the surrogate for self, enters the space that is not only a place but also a (s)p(l)ace, a semiotic signifier that performs slippages in the data stream. The @ symbol, first utilized by Ray Tomlinson in 1972, provided data with the ability to be both place and place holder. The place is constantly in motion. The flow or motion is all about the mix, i.e., the drop of wine in the ocean becoming the newly formed wine/ocean (Miller, 2008; Irwin, 2004).

Semiounauts, according to Bourriaud (2005), must navigate this see/sea of signs. Their interaction produces paths in the form of a script that is projected onto culture. The installation
serves this same function through the setting up of a script for interaction. In drawing a parallel to the effective/affective teacher, s/he must produce a script that allows for students to project their own scripts in recursive fashion. Learning becomes processual rather than deterministic. Links are created that can be mixed and (re)mixed over and over as a form of re-presentation. The installation forms a map that is connectable in all dimensions; its means of interaction and interpretation are endless. These links allow for a deeper understanding of the processes involved through multiple readings. The viewer is given the opportunity to flip the script, to perform a feedback loop. Representation is only a step in the process of re-presentation.
The third avatar to be discussed is Mia. Mia is a nontraditional student, the mother of a recent high school graduate, and an active member of her local church. She was one of the first to put up images of her family on the Ning networking site, merging her personal life with her academic life. Mia did this of her own accord. Mia even posted her son’s graduation announcement to the site. I found her to be an open-minded student who was willing to engage completely with the ideas and concepts discussed in the course. Her insights throughout the course were invaluable to my understanding of this project. Her willingness to share her private life with the class gave us a deeper understanding of one an/other.

In Dialogue with Mia

An event that stands out in my mind with regard to Mia involves a walk around the Piney Woods Native Plant Center that occurred at the end of class one day. Mia had wanted to go out into the undeveloped portion of the Plant Center in order to find a location that she felt would be fitting for her environmental artwork. As we walked down the trails that crossed and crisscrossed along the forest floor, Mia told me the story of how she had grown up in California and moved to Texas with her husband. She discussed the differences that she saw between living in California and living in Texas. She talked about why she felt education had been and continued to be important to the development of her identity.

In our conversation the topic of religion came up. While discussing her religion, Mia shared how she felt about how many people take the complexities of religion and reduce them reduce them from multiple colors to black and white. She believed that her age and life experience had made her more capable of understanding the nuances of her religion. From my
perspective this was an experience that taught me about my own preconceptions. The complex view that Mia had of the world was exciting.

As we walked and talked, it was interesting to see how our understandings of one another enabled a richer understanding of education. The model of teaching and learning most commonly experienced by students today is not one in which we teachers walk alongside our students; rather, it is a model in which we stand as authority figures. Technological advances are shifting this model of education, and we can no longer think of the educational experience as hierarchical. Technology requires us to learn a new language. As educators this may not be a comfortable transition. Although Mia was not familiar with a technological approach to education, she was open to the possibilities.

*Video Reflections: Duration as Avatar*

It took some time for Mia to get accustomed to a technological approach to education. She experienced some stops and starts in the beginning, but ultimately she negotiated her technical glitches. In her first entry she states the following:

This is actually like the third remake of my first entry. Um . . . I have been having computer issues and so this is like another remake but um . . . about the class I have enjoyed thinking of art as a way to help students not just . . . I mean I have always thought of art as important for art’s sake, for kids to have the opportunity to create and discover. But umm . . . like the way that this class is helping me to see that art can be a part of the learning process as well as something done for creativity’s sake.
Her reflections in the very first week of class excited me about the possibilities for the course. This was a student who was open to learning about learning as opposed to someone who was strictly focused on the process of teaching. Each of her recordings followed her creative process and were reflective of her learning throughout the course. The recordings served a dual function of process/product. In her second entry Mia stated the following:

This . . . um . . . is a collection of things that my husband brought back from Burkina Faso . . . West Africa. In class we talked about how art can be [an] expression of culture or how often we can learn things about other cultures through their art and the things that they depict and then the next day we were talking about how art, besides being an expression of creativity, can be used as a learning tool and a way for kids to explore and also as examples of different things and different types of social contexts and things and um . . . I really think that art gives us a way, especially [for] people who are visual thinkers, to make more sense of the content of what we are discussing, and also as one of the writers we read about, they said that, you know, through art we can have our emotions stirred to the point that we want to become socially active. There are things that we can see that will like push our buttons to do something about a situation whether it is a situation of some kind of injustice or need, Art and photography and things that show these things visually are a good way to stimulate not only our . . . only our own thoughts about these situations but the thoughts of our kids. I really am looking forward to using art as a tool to enhance learning, as well as a tool to express creatively.

Well, This is “Mia,” video journal entry number five of week 2. Today in class, we were talking about how pictures in the classroom often times depict the happy kids that we are taught childhood is supposed to be like but that for a lot of our children that is not really a reality. So we debated whether we should have pictures of sad things or things or anything like that up. Another option that a teacher that teaches next door to me uses is that at the beginning
of the year each year, she takes a picture of the kids. She does not tell them how to pose or what kind of expression you have. She tells them that this is going to be on the wall because you are part of this classroom. Then, they choose whatever expression they want. A lot of our kids don’t choose to smile, but they do like having their picture up on the wall and that also gives them a chance to feel like this is my classroom and this is a part of me and I can be who I am in here and um there is an author, Dr. Ruby Payne, and she goes around and talks about the culture of poverty. And because we have so many children in poverty that go to our school, we have done a lot of studies with her. Just having their own pictures, whether they are smiling or not, helps them realize that I am me and it is ok if I don’t feel happy about stuff, but this is my classroom and I am a part of this.

As a comment to this video I posed the following question:

You also addressed some of the ideas covered by Garoian when he discussed the absence and/or presence of student bodies in the classroom. The idea of taking photos without requiring a smile is an interesting concept. The question then becomes: Will children smile because of the cultural construct of photography, or will they be themselves? There is a whole visual language surrounding photography. This language includes the expectation of the smile. Do you find that children feel compelled to smile in these photos?

Mia responded with the following:

In our experiences with allowing the students to choose their expression, we don't get a lot of smiles from our children who don't have a whole lot of things to smile about in their lives. But what we also don't get is that “fake” smile with angry eyes—the expression that says “I am doing what you asked, but I feel like a liar.” We do get a more open, honest, almost questioning look from them, but they also usually ask if they can keep the picture when we take a new one to display. Children of poverty also don't have many pictures of themselves. Interestingly, often in the second picture we take of them, we do get some smiles—natural smiles, without asking, possibly because by then they are pretty comfortable with us.

During class this week one of the things we were talking about was [the] context of art. How different images can mean different things based on their context in which you see them. [An image is shown of a young child smiling]. This is a picture of one of my students that I had the first summer after returning to teaching from a private preschool to see if I wanted to work in a public school or not. Anyway just looking at this picture, oh, you think happy little boy. When you put it in the context of other surroundings, your mood changes [the student pans out with the camera and the viewer discovers this is not a photo sitting
on an end table or hanging on a wall; it is a photo on a tombstone]. So this just one example of how the context of what you are looking at can change your emotion[s] in different ways.

The camera was held as steady as possible in order to keep the face of the child in frame. As I watched, I thought at first that the student had focused on the image of the child to avoid filming herself as in many other student videos. To my surprise, the camera began to pan out, and I immediately had an emotional response to what I saw on the screen. What at first appeared to be a banal image became a surprisingly affective representation. A sense of sadness and direct contradiction washed over me. This affective dimension was heightened when I heard the above words spoken with the imagery. Both the affective and effective dimensions of the imagery were potent in the construction of meaning, not only for the student, but also for the viewer.

What was learned from this experience? How do I process the contradictory information I am presented with, and is contradiction appropriate for the classroom situation? Assessing learning of affective domains is an important aspect of the teaching and learning process. Assessment in this instance is best accomplished by self and peer dialogue rather than by use of a check off list based on an outside imposition of objectives. The journey must be allowed to emerge from the process and ultimately become the process object of dialogue. As art educator Springgay (2006) states:

As art educators we need to be engaged in a constant search for the shifting body of knowledge that should comprise art education curriculum. Second, we need to ask how we can document the growth attained through that curriculum via meaningful assessment tools that support the ever-changing curriculum and the unsettled body as a liminal site. (p. 149)

The learning that took place in this course and with this student is a form of learning that defies traditional forms of assessment practice. When we think of assessment as educators all too often we relate it to instructor directed objectives that place what was learned above the process of
learning to learn. When one learns to learn, the impact of education is much more far reaching. In the realm of public school education, too often we “stand above” rather than “sit beside” students. While the “sit beside” model has often been seen as an observation standpoint, I would argue that this is a viewpoint that still places a hierarchical division between student and teacher. If we (re)envision the “sitting beside” as a participatory practice, as any observation ultimately is, then we are freed from the role of essentialized objectivity that confounds both researcher and teacher.

Art education and education in general that engages students in a process of social interaction in relation to creation and assessment produces meaningful and integrated connections. As Mia stated in a journal entry for class,

The approach [integrated learning] encourages the student to get his learning from and take his learning into his community—it is like the Never Ending Story because each lesson will connect, and the community connections will likely lead to other learning.
ENDTRODUCTION

We live in a time in which the human body is circumscribed by a dense locale of technological sophistry: a place where the line dividing the organic and inorganic elements that form the core processes of human life is blurring. Unravel the distortions of the present day. Sampling is like sending a fax to yourself from the sonic debris of a possible future; the cultural permutations of tomorrow, heard today, beyond the corporeal limits of the imagination.

Paul Miller, a.k.a DJ Spooky

This dissertation functions as a feedback loop, a never-ending stream of information interpreted, invented, sampled, and (re)mixed in order to serve the function of a dialogue. Enterduction/Conduction/Endtroduction follows the paper version of this document, but the electronic version could just as easily take the formation of Conduction/Endtroduction/Enterduction or any other combination one could imagine. As I have worked on this dissertation, I have constantly looped between the roles of artist/researcher/teacher. In this looping I have built upon the layers of the text like a snowball gathering new snow while rolling down a hill. With each turn/return its solid form is a little more complex than its previous incarnation, but its massive structure must eventually melt, evaporate, and fall back to the surface in the form of liquid or frozen precipitation. Reincarnation, like my metaphorical snowball, is not the result of a practice that happens all at once, but bit by bit. The complexity of this document and the principles, theories, and ideas discussed herein are the product of becoming, a process still in process. To think that one can embrace these theories and constructs as ready made answers to the problems of American schooling would be naïve on my part and on the part of the reader. This portion of the document is just as much the beginning as the end. This document is a theory constructed from practice rather than a theory applied to practice. If there is an outcome to this
As art educators de-territorialize/re-territorialize literacy and art education with their students, there must be no boundary they are unwilling to cross in relation to disciplinary knowledge. To cross the boundary is to make the inside the outside and, likewise, the outside the inside. Like the Möbius strip, there is a never-ending flow from the personal to the social and from the social to the personal. The search for meaning is the search for the whole. Invention is the process of making meaning that involves the creation of the w/hole, an understanding that there are many truths that are not discovered by a singular mode of thinking. It is within the full-bodied presence and complete absence signified by the w/hole that a space opens up for the creation of new meaning in relation to life and reality. The process of “image”/ “i” / “nation” fragments the ideal world of imagination to allow entry points for the real. What I have tried to do is propose the use of the imagination within cycles of the real, understanding fully that the process is always transformed and that the nature of that transformation will always depend upon the situation. The In<SCRIPT>ion of “image” is a recursive process that gathers layers of meaning through movement as a Line of Flight. Willingness to relinquish control of the outcome places the educator in a position in which s/he becomes a participant in the process of becoming. When I began this study, I thought that I would be making a case for the emphasis of only the visual in the current educational system as a means of creating a critical visual literacy. My new understanding incorporates incarnations of the body and In<SCRIPT>ions of self.

The body’s actions, whether they are physical or digital, become the means by which one performs the meaning/making process. My proposal for education is not one that relies solely on
the imagination of the educator for it to be successful; nor is my proposal a theoretical catchall for every situation. The human imagination must be utilized as a means of (re)envisioning the capabilities of the human body and what it can do both virtually and physically. Cultural signs are the mix utilized for the (re)mix.

Movement refers to the concept of In<SCRIPT>ion in relation to the virtual and physical. Input enters through the ears, skin, nose, mouth, and eyes and is translated into an In<SCRIPT>ion of interpreted data, yet, as with the computer, that data can be re-interpreted over and over through the introduction of new (con)texts. The emphasis that has long been placed on the all Seeing Eye as a metaphor of power cannot be the art educator’s only method of détournement within the cultural system. Digital media provides new metaphors of power that are not based solely on the concept of an unseen authority. Through the application of these metaphors, an individual becomes capable of understanding the eye as an integrated circuit of the human body. The input of sight has an output of action and internal storage. However, the input/output consists of interpreted information that becomes a way of both moving through and negotiating in the world. Much like the practice of contemporary installation art, the private is made public in a way that allows the viewer to have a hybrid experience with the media.

In rethinking this study anew, the introduction of food as a mode of interbody could be integrated. Sight, sound, smell, touch, and taste combine in order to form the experiences of both cooking and eating. Cooking is a personal activity in which those cooking work to create from appropriated materials a recipe or experimentation meant to be consumed by others. The ingredients appropriated come from a global network of ingredients shipped in import and export fashion from country-to-country and city-to-city. Food is a text or narrative that changes based on those creating and those consuming.
Cooking and eating are forms of communication. Cooking becomes a form of communication in which those doing the communicating pay careful attention to their actions and the subtleties of taste. The elegant meal to be shared with a group is as potent as the most refined essay or article. It is the ephemeral nature of the product of cooking, the meal, that has kept it from reaching equality with the painting, drawing, novel, etc. Eating is a social practice of interaction in which the mouths of those eating are filled with food in much the same way that words fill the mouth.

Mind and matter are not in opposition. Movement in the physical/virtual realm is a movement that is combined down to the most infinitesimal and microscopic level. In relation to the practice of education, several principles emerge as being important inventions in relation to my own teaching practice.
In<SCRIPT>ion

The best art provokes and the best teaching provokes—provokes thought, interaction, dialogue, and interpretation. We do not create art in a vacuum, and we cannot teach in a vacuum. Context is key to students’ understandings of the world. Students in today’s culture have been inundated by appropriated texts. In essence, all texts are appropriated to some degree. Culture is a mix, not a spontaneous flow from the genius of a singular unconscious, but a continuous flow from the collective unconscious. Students today have been born backwards into a culture that does little to aid their contextual understanding or (con)textual understanding (Letham, 2008). Contexts are themselves interpretable texts or (con)texts. Through dialogue about art and through the use of the hypertextual imagination, students become capable of identifying the cultural script.

Flip the Script

The script is open, capable of détournement; open-source/open-mind contributes to the idealistic nature of the democratic spirit. Take the familiar; make it unfamiliar; appropriate it.

Today when we can eat Tex-Mex with chopsticks while listening to reggae and watching a YouTube rebroadcast of the Berlin Wall’s fall—i.e., when damn near everything presents itself as familiar—it’s not a surprise that some of today’s most ambitious art is going about trying to make the familiar strange. (Lethem, 2008, p. 32)

Do the thing that scares you. Run head on into the lion’s den. The more you embrace the strange, the more complex and rich your life will become. Try a little of everything (within reason).

Sample.

(H)Activation

Bodies become code that transform into bodies—physical, theoretical, conceptual, interpretative, and subjective. (H)activation is the belief in the Hacker Code of Ethics. Activation refers to the provocation listed as the first principle discovered; it is the method one utilizes to plug in to the cultural flow. Like flipping the script, (h)activation is a short-circuiting of the flow.
It is the belief that information should flow freely, that one should use a hands-on approach to teaching and learning. The hierarchy of student and teacher dictated by degree produces a one-way flow of information. To (h)activate is to share in the construction of curriculum. The (h)activist teacher provides the script, and in turn, the (h)activist student reprograms the script through his own interests, needs, and understandings of the world.

Sample

Take images, clips, ideas, understandings, traditions, cultures, connotations, and denotations; try them out. Wear them for a while like a new skin. Sampling is a part of the (re)mix; it is through the act of sampling that the (re)mix takes place. Through meaningful and thoughtful appropriation we gain an understanding of the w/hole, the understanding that it is the unknowable gap that makes the unknown “real.” Thoughtful teaching allows us to gain multiple perspectives through engagement with the process of sampling. Multiculturalism is no longer about studying the other as something separate from the self. It is a method of (re)mixing cultures and subcultures as a way of becoming self. Each individual is already multicultural, a mix of chosen and biological affiliations that make up identity. Although it may seem that only the chosen or appropriated affiliations can be (re)mixed, biological affiliations are also up for (re)definition down to the microscopic level. An individual can be affiliated with a group because of race, creed, nationality, ethnicity, etc., and still take part in the redefinition of what it means to be part of those collective groups through the process of (re)mix. Those who are not part of the collective group can appropriate as a means of difference rather than as a means of producing the Same (Deleuze, 1994).

(Re)Mix

Why call it (re)mix? We are already in the mix. No part can be separated from the w/hole
without taking part of the w/hole with it. The (re)mix becomes a way of manipulating and reconfiguring the things of the world. It is the Stoic concept of immanence or everything all at once. The information stream moves so fast that one must extract and reconfigure. The mix becomes (re)mix through human interaction. The spaces between concepts, images, and written and verbal components are filled in through movement.

Avatar

The avatar is aligned with the self-X properties described in the section titled Digital Exhaust. The avatar allows one to cross borders, filling the space between as becoming-flock, individuals moving in formation or directed like a swarm. There is a w/holeness formed through interaction with an/other. Student and teacher become one as collective while at the same time forming their own reality in relation to the world at large. This does not mean that influence does not occur. Individuals are always changed through the interaction. The practice of observation alone according to Schrödinger changes that which is observed. Yet in the practice of teaching and learning, the touch that occurs is reciprocal.

The self is a variable, X. It changes with growth and decay, explanation and contradiction of experience. Within this notion, no self comes into being fully formed; it is dependent on context. In the classroom situation, this allows for exploration and invention. The individual is not relegated to the one but has the voice of many. In referring back to the Biggie Smalls/Walt Whitman quote, “So what if I contradict myself— I am large, I contain multitudes.” We are all part of the multiplex consciousness that permeates our very being (Miller, 2004). Student avatars or incarnations of self allow students to play out the role of an/other. This allows the individual to learn more about him or herself and gain a more complex understanding of the cultural information s/he comes in touch and is touched by.
The process of becoming asks us not to settle and not to become complacent about what something “is.” To focus on what something “is” gives power to an authority that limits the possibilities of what something can become. Critical analysis of all labels and accompanying “images” and images is what will enable growth in education. It is not enough for us to only ask for such critical thinking from our students, we must also ask it from ourselves. We must evaluate our own knowledge base and practice as a way of ensuring that the modes of representation that we send out into the world do not become static. We must consume the text as a measure of transforming the text. Below is a manifesto on representation that was democratically constructed by students during the spring semester of 2009. This manifesto was created utilizing a wiki:

As a collective identity of the teachers and scholars, we are the ones who hold the power to shape the collective conscience of education. It is incumbent upon us to work towards [the] sharing of that power with our students. Education has its own (self) representational identity. (Self) is used because the self is both present and absent within the construction of a collective identity. The individual voice is democratically blended into the construction of the collective. With that in mind, (self) is present and absent and has a presence of absence.

Representation in any sense of the word has long been perceived as a fixed entity. If we think of interpretation as giving new life to a representation . . . as building upon that interpretation, and in essence elaborating on that image in a never ending process of becoming or expanding, we can produce change, not change for the sake of change, but change which enables us and our students to understand that we are not limited by the representations of (self). Representations may be perceived as a fixed entity, but that isn't necessarily so. The interpretation of an image may be as wide or as narrow as the experiences and associations of any given individual. Through our own criticisms, interpretations, and opinions, we visualize representations that may not be the same or mean the same thing as what someone else would think. As individuals, our identity very much influences how we view the world and the art and objects in it.

If you have done the work it takes to create your own path through this dissertation, I hope that you have come to understand both the effective and affective properties of the text. This is a work that must be read and (re)read in order to engage the hypertextual imagination. It is my hope that as you have consumed the text, you have also produced the text.
BLEND the **BOUNDARIES**

MIND

&

MATTER

IT IS ALREADY IN THE MIX.
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