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In This Issue

Welcome (and Farewell)

Welcome to this, our last issue of *arts-informed*—at least in this incarnation. The *Centre for Arts-informed Research* is temporarily suspending the newsletter until the publication of its replacement—a new online, peer-reviewed journal, slated for publication in early 2009. We plan to fold the newsletter into the online journal as a non-peer-reviewed section, so that scholars who draw on the arts can continue to publish their work in a supportive environment.

So our readers will have to wait awhile for the next edition, but it should be well worth it! Many thanks to all of you, for your continued support over the years.

The Centre for Arts-informed Research

The *Centre for Arts-informed Research* is located within the Department of Adult Education, Community Development and Counselling Psychology at OISE (University of Toronto). We are a community of faculty and graduate students committed to exploring and supporting ways of bridging the arts and social science research. Over the years the *Centre* has sponsored works-in-progress, discussions, gallery exhibits, performances, seminars and conferences. The *Centre* promotes scholartistry that forges innovative forms of academic discourse. We welcome new arts-informed researchers to our community. If what we are doing strikes a chord and you would like to be involved in some way, please contact Ardra Cole at acole@oise.utoronto.ca. Our website is another way to find out more about the *Centre*: http://www.utoronto.ca/CAIR.

Carl Leggo, Professor
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I AM

I am a boy
whose tongue
is stained
with wild blueberries.

I am a man
whose past
lingers like
a long evening tattoo.

I am from the east and the west.

I Am, said God.
Nothing more.
No predicate.
Revealed, concealed,
never congealed.
Like Madonna or Cher,
one simple name,
an iconic sign
with folds of identity.

Unlike my *I am*, followed
by an abecedarian
of modifiers all seeking
to spell my mystery.

But still

I am
not sure who
I am.

Even after exhausting
all the possibilities of *I am*,
I could still spill *I am not*
in an endless list,
an infinite deferral,
a fierce scribbling
of lines with no X.

I am. Am I?

YO-YO

I & *you*
the two most used
words in English

full of Buber's
tensile tension

in Spanish
I is *yo*
you is *tú*

I-you you-I I-I you-you yo-yo

yo-tú tú-yo yo-yo tú-tú I-I

I know you
you know me

the stranger within
the stranger without

all connected on a string
that knows the limits
of gravity, or at least
its seductive attraction

the constant challenge
of yo-yo tangles

common and idiosyncratic
DNA, in the mirror,
the conjunction AND

everything, all of us
entwined like vines

Jacqui Gingras, PhD, RD
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Wonderinging

something about autumn
the peculiar dead of things
the heaviness of it all
the wonder worn by rhythms
ringing of trees
takes us to a jutting edge
and there we stand
abreast of nature

then we hear her whispers
"It's who we are"
right there at our side, wondering
"what brought us here?"
lips wrap smiles, hearts spark
"It's who we are"

these differences
our queerness opaque
histories blank as stares
empty canvases
sheets of unblinking whiteness
gaze upon each other
speaking voluminous silences
guessing at desire
just fragments of our longing

languages of water
well known to us
seep through bones of our being
etch the salt of our breath
we taste the bitterness
the peculiar dead of things
"It's who we are"

no sense to know
know the words
words to songs
songs of science melodic
stings of betrayal injurious speech
words as blades marking what counts
marking our flesh

twisting our tongues
toning us down down down

into the roots of that autumn
alive with courage, irreverent
roots gritted black
loving that dirt
loving wildly that dirt
with all her heart
all while wondering why…
the peculiar dead of things

Home Favourite

caught up
carried away
your words
deeds
speak me undone
urge, press, lift me
incessant
all the right words
bleed your pen empty
leave me breathless

longing to run
limbs limber of time
unshackled
ready-set-go
laces flamenco
pull curious ones
eager around bends
what's written there?

catch me

no, race me
through hilly text before
my feet leaden in muddy thoughts
dirty pen, scratches, rips half letters
shreds wet vowels
gasp alphabets as air
weep for meaning
write truth in sprints
start at the finish

and you know what I mean

your heart kindly punctuates paragraphs of sorrow
your Okri whispers cool in my throat
urgent little rivulets spelling beauty
in the grime of muscled legs
thorn scratched arms wave me onward
caught up
cartographies of motion
swirl
spin
weave

contest worlds in words
race home skeptical
leave the ground
in your tremulous strides
imagine me this

Alison Pryer, PhD

These poems explore the Japanese Zen arts of flower arranging, and gardening. I lived in Kagoshima City on the southern island of Kyushu for three years. While there, I studied the traditional Buddhist art of flower arranging or ikebana. "this way" explores the practice of ikebana in a class of several students. The second poem, "temple garden," reflects on my experience of walking through an ancient temple garden in Kyoto.

this way

lapping water brims cool
on fired clay vases.
discarded leaves lie, lush as
hills, on newspaper plains,
the pink mouths of innocent
camellias seducing students
to the accompaniment
of a slow brush rasp-rasping
over tatami matting,
and the steady clip-clip
of secateurs tenderly beheading
virgin blossoms with
soft iron stealth.

sensei's practiced hands move
over my silent flowers
asking:
see how vulnerable
this tulip becomes
with its petals
all curled back?
this way.

temple garden

unafraid of splinters
barefoot on cold silk
boards polished by thousands
of human feet

we pause by the dripping grove
of whispering rock and
bamboo, savouring
a breath of spring

twisting plum
branches embrace and drink
from a stone
jar by the bleached door

Indrani Margolin, PhD Candidate,
OISE/UT

Call to the Goddess

Thousands of years ago in a far off land, women were respected and honoured.

Our bodies were not debased to the status of caged animal.
Our sexuality neither feared nor defiled, ripped nor raped from us.

Our curves in their multitudes were adorned as the feminine of creation itself.
Our innate sense of lioness protection over those we love and intuitive understanding of needs and wants guided and nourished.

It was known that the body - inseparable from the mind - living inside the Soul - is sacred from sensation to intuition;
from muscular perfection to the tidal wave of orgasm.

Womens' beauty was seen as within as well as without. Fertile soil of intellectual stimulation awaited the female mind to think; to ponder; to create.

The physical merely reflected the undulation from within. She was not set so high that she could not be reached but instead people knew to cherish and adorn her:

curvature

softness

tenderness

alluressness

wildness

brilliance

freedom

and surging power

that is

so essentially woman.

I invoke the Goddess within. I invite the invocation of all Goddesses without.

Together may we -
shed ourselves from lack;
break the bonds of oppression of the feminine;
and manifest the Great White Light awaiting to emerge.

Chronicle of a Missed Appointment

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***Julie deBelle**, English translation*

On February 6th, 2008, a deliberative theatre experiment was held at the *National Archives of Quebec*. Inspired by the possibilities of public deliberation and preoccupied with its blind spots[1], we used Forum Theatre as a communicational device to initiate discussion about the social tensions between the homeless and other dwellers of public space in downtown Montreal.

What follows is a critical commentary regarding this deliberative experiment. The experiment, conducted in collaboration with a social theatre company in Montreal, was the end result of many months of research involving twenty or so workshops. These daily workshops, led by two members of the company, paired five non-professional participants living on the streets with two professional actors. Through improvisation, we explored the dynamics of interaction between street persons and other key social actors[2]. This analysis will focus on three major points: the context surrounding the event; the play as a trigger for discussion; and the happening itself.

Context: From a public forum to a forum upon invitation

The President of the coalition we partnered with had previewed sections of the play during a preliminary event which focused on ensuring the play's validity, and on the question of whether to involve homeless actors. He admitted to a certain amount of uneasiness regarding the views expressed by the play: he feared that the experience might worsen tensions and deepen the gap between the homeless and others in the downtown area. His uneasiness, being a reflection of his fear of conflict, forced us to review our strategy. It was decided that we would focus on a list of invitees, rather than launch an open invitation, to achieve diverse civil representation. While we drew up this list, one of the Forum Theatre practitioners expressed a wish for a greater representation of peers from the street amidst the audience. To achieve this participation, we counted on a handful of homeless players and, to a lesser extent, on the community groups closely involved with these people.

The ultimate level of participation exceeded our expectations: 68 people showed up, when we were expecting only 50 or so. As anticipated, many civil areas were well represented: downtown residents, transient residents from bordering communities, police officers, some business people, research and community workers, a health care worker, municipal decision makers, and a politician at the provincial level—in other words, a full range of stakeholders concerned with cohabitation in downtown Montreal. Those missing from the evening: other homeless. There is no doubt that we had overestimated the solidity of the social network of our handful of participants.

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[1] The works on deliberative experiences demonstrate that these areas often reproduce the same power struggles behind social inequities which in turn tends to ostracize certain groups from the political life and deliberative space, these same groups being deprived of their epistemological authority. (For more information: Bohman, J., (1996), Public Deliberation Pluralism, Complexity, and Democracy, The MIT Press, p.253).

[2] Let's first name in the forefront the police officers, followed by the community workers, the shop owners and the drug dealers, the residents and the tourists, as well as peers.

A few words on the play Mains Tendues[3]

The forty-minute play is divided into nine scenes that illustrate aspects of the daily lives of the homeless: their displacement by police officers who use absurd city regulation[4] to legitimate their actions; begging as a source of uneasiness or irritation; the logistics of some non-profit organizations which sometime make their "users" feel exploited; pressure from business associations which cause tension between business dwellers and the homeless; typical squatting strategies; the brittleness of social bonds amongst the homeless; the drug dealing which surrounds them—to which they are vulnerable and closely associated; and their need for social networking with neighbourhood residents.

We confronted a recurrent dilemma in rewriting certain scenes: overly provocative content would have had the effect of ostracizing the people targeted by the scenes, but overly moderate discourse would not spur those same people to come up on stage, as they would not be sufficiently shaken in their assumptions about the homeless to feel compelled to respond. This deadlock was apparent during the forum that followed the play.

One must remember that Forum Theatre in Brazil (where it was most extensively developed) focused on power struggles between protagonists and antagonists. In spite of the fact that the abuse of power can be pointed out in North America, there is a prevailing "belief in an absent or inaccessible power center that cannot be attacked…. The construction of an invisible, inviolable enemy tempers our confrontational urges and the guilt instigated by our cultural indulgences" (Schutzman, 1994, p.140). According to Schutzman, this apolitical attitude has, as a corollary, a postmodern construction: the "death of the subject". In other words, the postmodern subject, shattered into multiple selves, substitutes for a unified humanitarian subject: "When Boal's [Forum Theatre] techniques… are placed within these constructed frameworks of invisible power dynamics and fragmented identity politics, they are somewhat incapacitated, and potentially read as dogmatic and shallow" (p. 140.)

Let us add that certain scenes lent themselves badly to the forum, insofar as the protagonist/antagonist dyad was not easily identifiable. For example, the squatter's scene demonstrates how he profits from the indeterminacy of certain places in order to set up camp. His monologue is interrupted by a bunch of tourists who are fascinated by this squatter. They take photos in a carnival-like fashion—hence the vagueness of this scene: the protagonist/antagonist dyad has been blurred. The question of sharing and occupying public space was not subjected to later deliberation, though the question is at the very heart of some of the social tensions examined in the play. In fact, this gap was mentioned by a city civil servant: "There was a great line in regards to space, the knowledge of space [in the squatter's scene], but the question of sharing public space is not emphasized in the play."

The performance: a cautionary tale

It is difficult to evaluate a tool such as Forum Theatre that has not, in this case, been consistently applied. What can be said about an experience that has not only omitted to act out the tool submitted for evaluation within our framework, but has also reproduced those blind spots found within typical arenas of deliberation? Educated people of social standing were given their right to speech, while the homeless were reduced to silence—reduced to the status of passive stand-ins, after having so courageously and generously exposed themselves on stage. This is partly because the Joker, who was the person responsible for conducting the audience discussion, did not take the opportunity offered by two homeless players who tried to reply to some of the comments discrediting the situations reflected in the play.

How could the Joker have had such trouble fulfilling his role? Why did he limit himself to common-place norms? Was he unable to demonstrate freedom of action and speech because he was also the director of an organization now face-to-face with potential investors? Was he, as was suggested by our community coalition

[3] This title invokes both the mediating nature of the procedure and the tensions passing through (hands) in this sector.

[4] I.e., a misuse of urban property, blocking pedestrian crosswalks, involvement in drug trafficking, etc.

partner, wearing two conflicting hats? We will attempt to clarify some of the resistance encountered on the part of the audience and felt by our Joker, and will shed some light on restrictions that might have disabled the latter.

In spite of constant attention on the part of the audience, not to mention some of the spontaneous reactions during the play which reflected a certain receptivity, the first interventions from the spectators foretold the rift to come: a mentality of "us, the good tax abiding citizens" versus "them, these homeless that seem to reject help offered by their community resources." On top of questioning the sound thinking behind public spending in terms of homelessness, many comments during the forum mirrored a perception that there is an absence of moral values amongst those people who refuse, for example, to sleep in shelters: "It's contradicting because these people [the homeless] claim to feel rejected, but there are some who try to help them and they reject this help. Sleeping on the sidewalk like a dog can't be fulfilling for them. I can't imagine that a person in such a situation could feel fulfilled" (Neighbourhood resident).

One of the dimensions qualified as "moral faculties" by Rawls (1993. p. 385), refers to the capability of making rational choices. What we can conclude from this resident's remark, as with other comments, is that there is a perception of homelessness as an irrational choice—a perception which evacuates all other systemic constraints or life contingencies that limit the choices presented to social beings with few resources. However, we are not attempting here to confine the status of a homeless person to that of a passive victim—quite the contrary. In fact, a careful reading of works on the matter shows that a good many strategies used by the homeless to avoid places such as shelters (perceived by the homeless as social control devices) lead to a domestication of public spaces. Zeneidi-Henry (2002) notes that people living on the street who deliberately attempt to hide their marginalization often risk drowning in a kind of isolation—a social non-existence that renders them invisible—which in turn threatens their mental health. Rowe and Wolch (1989) state that those homeless who live in "camps" are less marginalized and more empowered than those living in rooms on skid row. Although the authors agree that this manner of occupying space is looked upon disapprovingly, therefore stigmatizing those who put it into practice, they conclude that this tactic "may be valuable in assisting the formation of social networks, itself essential to solving one of their most critical problems: the inability to organize" (Rowe & Wolch, 1989, p.25, as cited in Ruddick, 1996, p. 45).

The notion of *habitus*, developed by Bourdieu, can help us understand the difficulty for individuals rooted in the norm to regard homelessness differently. *Habitus* is the result of collective perceptions integrated and reproduced via family, school, and the media, among other things. These perceptions condition the ways of doing and acting of individuals belonging to a given social class. As a result, *habitus* is the constitution of an integrated and reproduced collective form of being that acts as borders to the possibilities of a given social field: "L'*habitus* conceptualisé par Bourdieu permet de concevoir en effet la production sociale de l'individualité en regard de structures sociales… L'*habitus* tend à pérenniser la position objectivée de l'agent dans l'espace social." (Couturier, 2002).

This ingrained *habitus* was, we contend, a serious obstacle for viewing homelessness in a way separate from the usual normative assumptions. According to the Joker, the concrete constraints during the discussion period were many. We will focus on three of them: the lack of homeless people in the audience, the Joker's social position in that particular area of the city, and the follow-up to this procedure.

Taken aback by the absence of homeless peers in the audience, our Joker felt confronted by the *us* and *them* rift mentioned earlier. According to him, this gap might have been lessened had there been first-hand testimonies to echo the reality described on stage. These testimonies would have countered the normative comments raised by those who belong to the *us* category, by lending more credibility to some of the situations acted out on stage—not to mention adding greater texture to scenes which seemed somewhat simplistic. The normative views displayed a wide range of trends: invalidating the content of the play by denying any form of social tension or police operation; well-meaning comments filled with pity toward the homeless seen as victims; feelings of insecurity initiated by drug trafficking and aggressive drug use often associated with street people; and, finally, a heavy desire to erase any homelessness, rather than discuss the uneasiness brought about by social tension connected to it.

Furthermore, a year earlier, our Joker had taken on the job of coordinator with the same neighbourhood coalition involved in setting up this event. He admitted that he felt compromised by his role as a coordinator of a

committee where pleasing at all cost is the trend[5]. His comment confirms one thing: the Joker was undoubtedly still linked to the community partners. This fact had the effect of considerably reducing autonomous action within his role as Joker. We had not foreseen this constraint, which seriously affected the work of our practitioner.

The continuation of this procedure by the theatrical company involved a series of sectorial interventions, followed by a review which included every sector within the framework of a theatrical public forum. Confronted with the resistance mentioned earlier, and to honor the project's follow-up, the Joker avoided crossing the normative positions expressed by the audience, and instead chose to postpone specific discussion—a discussion which was essential to the research. In so doing, and perhaps subconsciously, he sacrificed the goals underlying the project.

In conclusion, the event on February 6th served as a practice run for our Joker, making way for future improvement. Unfortunately, the experience did not allow us to evaluate the medium itself, defying the very purpose of our project.

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[5] This tendency of wanting to please both sides seems to be, unfortunately, very common within consulting committees and more than often leads to social stagnation.

Knowing as a Whole: Action Research, Inquiry, and Presentational Knowing

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Action research theorists often stress the need to recognise that we know the world in non-intellectual ways, as well as through discursive means. How we understand, and respond to, ourselves, our contexts, and (human and more-than-human[i]) others comes from tacit and explicit knowing in our bodies, hearts, senses, and hands, in addition to the ideas, assumptions, and theories that live in our heads. In this article, I explore a holistic action research process which realises different ways of knowing.

John Heron (1992, 1999) proposes there is an "extended epistemology" of four interwoven ways of knowing, which reaches beyond conventional intellectual positivism to embrace the pre-verbal, manifest, and tacit knowings we might associate with artists and crafts people—and our own guts, hearts, and bodies. Heron writes about these ways of/to knowing as a cycle, in which each successive way of knowing builds on previous iterations of knowing:

> *Experiential knowing*—imaging and feeling the presence of some energy, entity, person, place, process or thing—is the ground of *presentational knowing*. Presentational knowing—an intuitive grasp of the significance of patterns as expressed in graphic, plastic, moving, musical and verbal art-forms—is the ground of *propositional knowing*. And propositional knowing—expressed in statements that something is the case—is the ground of *practical knowing*—knowing how to exercise a skill. (1992, p. 122, italics added)

Here, I build on the ideas of an epistemology of presentational knowing—deepened through my encounters with holistic science, and my previous experience as a designer and as an action researcher—to embed presentational knowing more thoroughly within action research theory and practice. Whilst "many ways of knowing" is considered to be of key importance for action research (Reason & Bradbury, 2001), and there are many examples where researchers have used presentational knowing within particular projects (for example, Reason & Bradbury, 2001, p. 171, p. 363; Taylor, 2004), I have increasingly realised that the relationship between presentational knowing, action research, and inquiry remains largely uncharted[ii].

I have cultivated the landscape of presentational knowing in action research and inquiry through encountering artworks, books, discussions, exhibitions, performances, and my own image-making. My inquiry involves imagining how a comprehensive arts-informed inquiry might appear, with presentational knowing more tightly woven in as a skilful, accomplished, central part of the whole of inquiry: a fundamental way of receiving, and making sense of being part of, the world, rather than an added extra, the icing on the cake.

Sitting at the point where the worlds of art and research meet, some of my ongoing inquiry looks like the world of action research reaching into the world of art, and some of it looks like the world of art reaching into the world of action research. The overlap does not have clearly defined boundaries, and my sense of what is inside or outside these boundaries is more intuitive and sensed, than it is categorical and definitive. Here, presentational knowing meets with an inquiry process that is driven by a sense of the importance of artful engagement.

Rooting action inquiry

At the *Centre for Action Research in Professional Practice* (*CARPP*), we emphasise rooting first-person inquiry practice as a foundational component of wider work in the world. Judi Marshall calls this "living life as inquiry" (Marshall, 1999). In the preface to the Handbook of Action Research, Reason and Bradbury say that:

> first-person action research/practice skills and methods address the ability of the researcher to foster an inquiring approach to his or her own life, to act with awareness and to choose carefully and to assess effects

in the outside world while acting. First-person inquiry brings inquiry into more and more of our moments of action—not as outside researchers but in the whole range of everyday activities. (2001, pp. xxiv-xxvi)[iii]

I see first-person research/practice as a personal inquiry into this being human (which may well resonate with others' experiences). This is the main area of concern for this article[iv].

In addition, Reason and Bradbury describe the broader practices of second-person research/practice as a communal inquiry into "issues of mutual concern;" and third-person inquiry as a cultural inquiry (the ongoing quest to find better, more just, and more generative forms for living).

Rooting visual inquiry

My educational heritage gave me a mainstream, male-biased classical Eurocentric perspective on art. Germaine Greer suggests that "Western art is in large measure neurotic, for the concept of personality it demonstrates is in many ways anti-social, even psychotic" (Greer, 1979, p. 327). It seems to me that a non-classical-European stance based on ways of receiving and responding to the world may offer a more useful viewpoint for arts-informed work that reaches into one's relationship with the world. Along these lines, Mitchell and Little observe that "[i]n recreating the forms of the world through painting, Chinese artists claimed to capture the inner essence of what they painted. This called for understanding: of the world, of oneself and of the means and techniques through which the artist mediated [her] experience" (Mitchell & Little, 1999, no page number). Contemporary Zen artist, Kazuaki Tanahashi, likewise asks, "Which is more artistic: to make an imaginative work of art, or to live an imaginative life?" (Tanahashi, 1998, p.121).

Similarly, Jungian psychologist James Hillman says "we become artists only when we enjoy the practicing as much as the performing" (1995, p. 59), whilst thinkers like Eric Fromm write about "the art of being" and "the art of living" (1993, p. 1, p. 11) and Joseph Beuys' social sculpture claims "everyone an artist" (Sacks, 2000). Philosopher Michel Foucault notes that

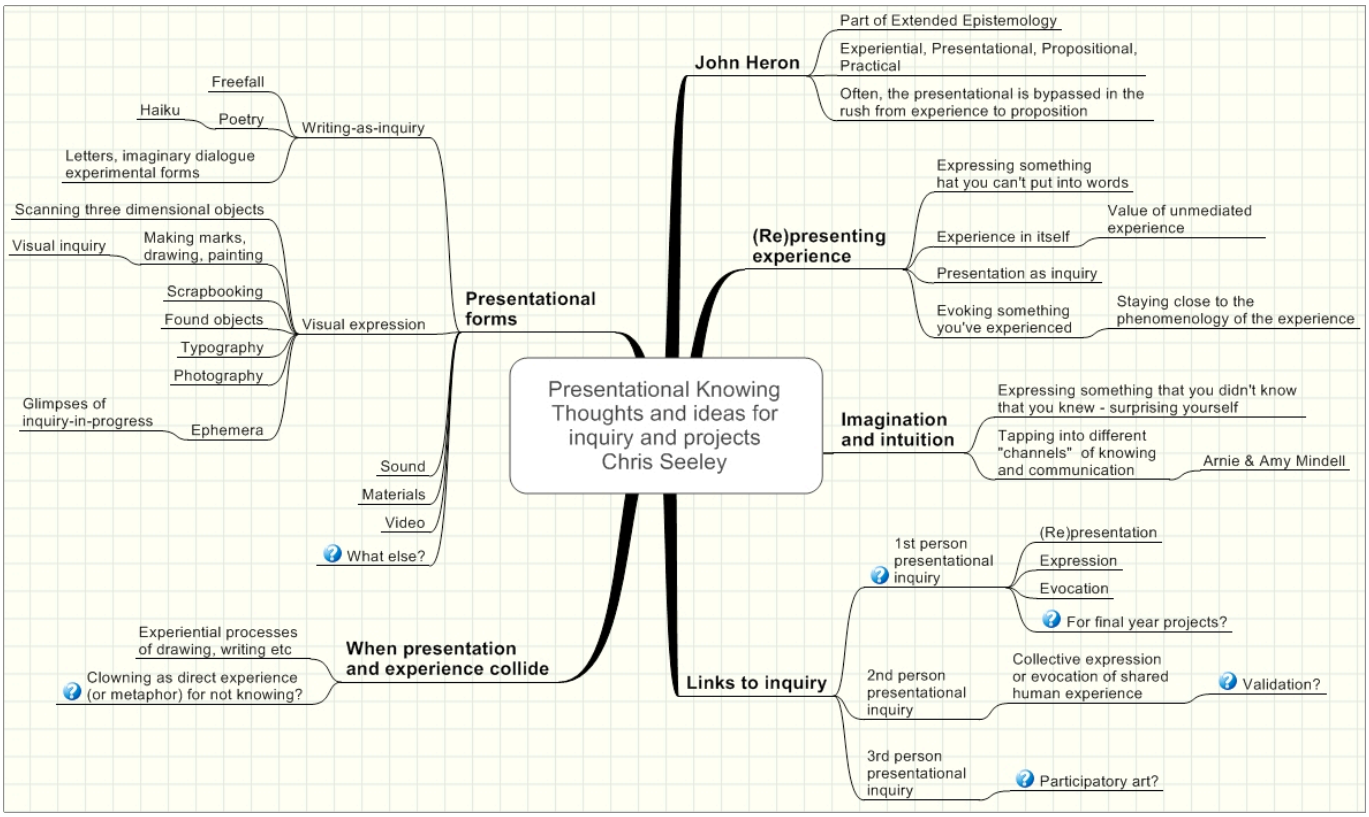
> in our society, art has become something which is related only to objects and not to individuals, or to life. That art is something that is specialised or is done by experts who are artists. But couldn't everyone's life become a work of art? Why should the lamp or the house become an art object, but not our life? (as cited in Rabinow, 1984, p. 350)

Foucault goes on to comment on this almost as an imperative, saying that "we have to create ourselves as a work of art."

Whilst I have experimented with bringing unconventional forms of knowing to my working practice through improvised clowning, storytelling, haiku, spontaneous writing, drawing, body sculpture, photography, and poetry, I am most deeply interested in these practices forming parts of an overall art of living. By this, I mean learning to bring a quality of attention to living that sees the extraordinary in the ordinary; that re-embeds the sacred into the profane. I believe this has as much to do with my developing the relationship I have with myself, as it has to do with my actions in the world. And, of course, such life affirming-energy flickers and glimmers in and out of view.

Deepening the inquiry

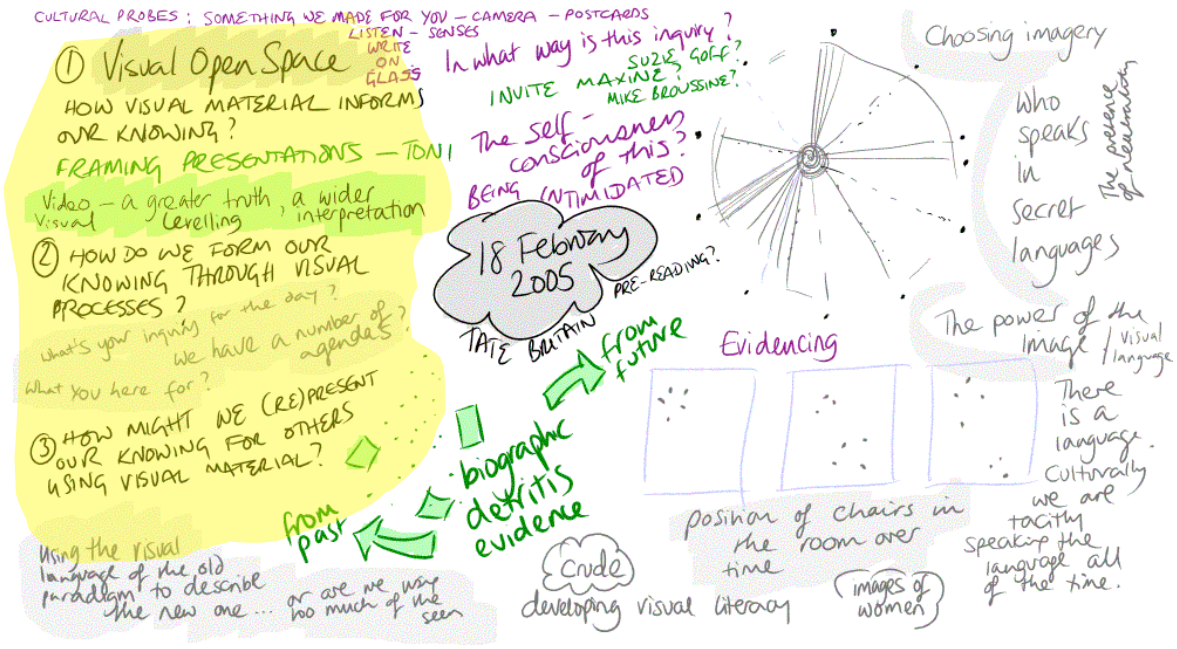
A number of workshops that I put together for postgraduate students at various institutions provided an outlet for my interest in representational knowledge and action inquiry. These workshops offered me an opportunity to refine my ideas about the relationship between formal inquiry and the arts. For the first of these workshops, at the University of Bath in 2004, I prepared a mindmap to structure my thoughts.



At the top of the mindmap, you can see that I place John Heron's extended epistemology (1992, 1999) as a foundational theory for my explorations of presentational knowing in action inquiry. At this initial stage, I was particularly interested in constructing presentational knowing as (re)presenting experience. I remember saying the word *representation* with its different emphases: representing, as in offering a faithful or evocative representation of an experience; re-presenting, as in presenting an experience again for others to understand; and re-present-ing, as in becoming present (to the experience) for a second time.

I also made conceptual and practical links to first-, second-, and third- person inquiry, so that the group I was working with at this workshop could relate what I was saying to their own project work. This included naming and offering a variety of presentational forms I had experimented with—I did not want to offer some kind of definitive and exclusive list. Instead, my intention was that the participants would acknowledge and develop the presentational forms most accessible to them. Finally, I mentioned how the process of presentational knowing is also experiential knowing, and that these two ways of knowing can blend together. You can see (bottom right quadrant of the mindmap) that I was beginning to make the links between presentational knowing and the three domains of inquiry more specific, although there are many question marks dotted around this section. During the session, I could sense my rushed enthusiasm, and I began to realise that this was a more comprehensive inquiry than I had anticipated.

Later, on April 15, 2005, I co-hosted (with a participatory artist and an eco-design lecturer) an open workshop on visual inquiry at *CARPP*. This was born out of a desire to develop a deeper understanding of the relationship between visual and verbal/written modes of inquiry, and was attended by both *CARPP* students and others from outside the University of Bath. I met with my co-hosts in the crowded café at Tate Britain, to plan the session. The content of the workshop was laid out in images and notes compiled at the café using a tablet PC (enabling electronic marks to be drawn straight onto the screen)[v]:



Looking down the left hand side of this planning drawing, you can see that the first-, second-, and third- person themes manifest this time in three questions (highlighted and marked 1, 2, 3).

Through conversation and shared sense-making with my colleagues, I was able to take the issues I had attempted to tackle previously, and simplify them:

- How does visual material inform our knowing?
- How do we (together) form our knowing through visual processes?
- How might we (re)present our knowing for others using visual material (in order to influence and invite change)?

These questions then opened out into the following list, which formed part of the invitation to the workshop:

- What is presentational knowing?
- How can we use it?
- What skills and resources are needed, and how do we develop them?
- What skills do we all already have, and how can they be enabled / encouraged?
- What assumptions do we bring to this exploration?
- How might we learn from, or use, existing artefacts and images in our inquiries?
- How, and where, might the use of visual forms aid our inquiry practice?
- How can we create, and use, made / visual forms to describe our work?
- How is that useful / different from the written, spoken word?
- How can presentational knowing give us different data on a session?
- How is that data different? What are the qualities?
- How are the activities and outcomes different?

We wanted to design the process of the day to be congruent with the content (for example, one exercise was an experiment in visual open space[vi], using pictures rather than discussion). Here is the visual agenda I drew for the workshop (see how much more stylised and controlled it is, than the visual notes last shown):

A month after the event, I received the following unsolicited feedback from one of the participants. Note that presentational knowing is associated with being adventurous and playful:

Re: Visual Inquiry Email list

File Edit View Tools Message Help

Reply All | Forward | Print | Delete | Previous | Next | Addresses

From: Alan George
Date: 16 May 2005 17:07
To: Chris Seeley
Subject: Re: Visual Inquiry Email list

Chris

Nearly a month ago you sent this and I went to France on holiday and tempus fugit ...

However
Every now and again it has crossed my mind that I shd have replied; so now with an idle moment I do so, despite the fact that we have all moved on since then.

I thought the event was amongst the better that I have been to at Bath. You caught the enthusiasm of the group. The first drawing activity was a delight. I still have mine and have photographed it for inclusion in the 'Context of my inquiry' section of my thesis.

Below it I have written:

A portrait of me drawn by eighteen people in nine minutes at the CARPP workshop

on Visual Inquiry on 15 April 2005. Each person had 30 seconds in rotation

to contribute to drawings of each other.

Perhaps this picture stands for my experience of CARPP in its offering me a climate and space to explore areas of inquiry and aesthetic experience and to do so in a community which values this type of knowing. I plan to use this simple game from time to time with groups with which I work. It is a powerful activity in that it gives each individual not just a picture but a connection with all the interpretative eyes and hands that snatched the image out of the air.

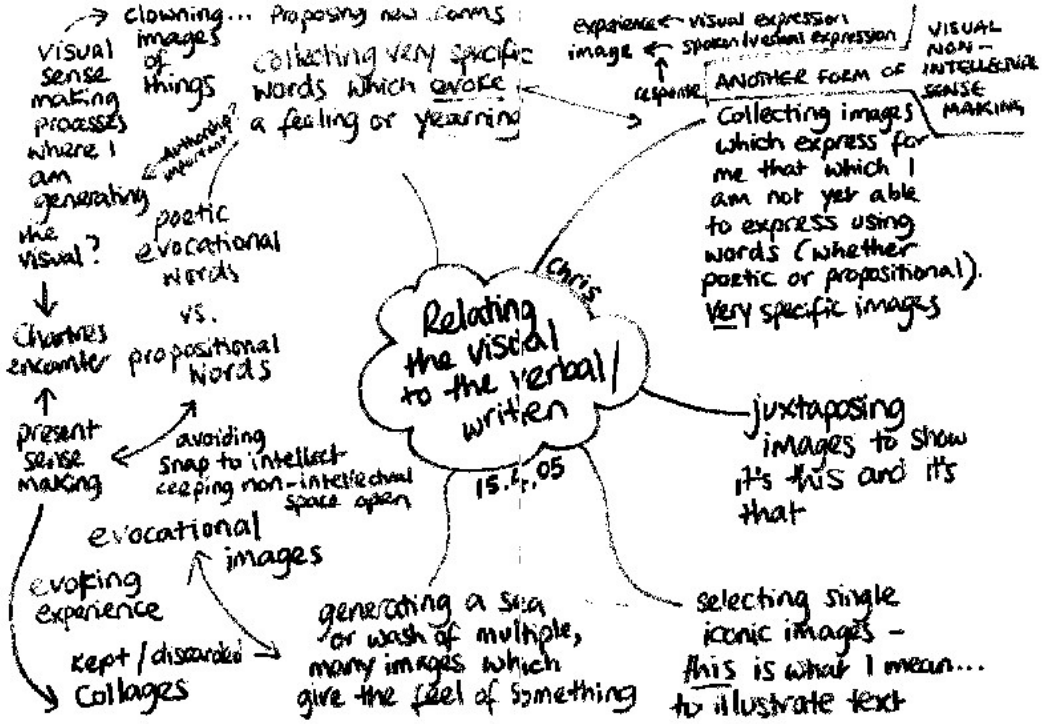
When you introduced the Open Space session I was interested to hear how you did it, as I have been in the same situation. You made it sound very sensible and accessible – it can sound a bit whacky.

One overall benefit I've taken from the day is the exhortation to find 'other than words' ways of communicating in thesis writing and also in collaborative inquiry. Of course there has to be propositional stuff, but I am being more adventurous in letting pictures, poetry, word games and playful juxtaposition have some space too.

Hope you are thriving

A year later, more feedback arrived in my inbox after I had asked anyone who had been at the workshop to share their reflections on the event. The responses were mixed. One respondent stated that "the day had no positive effect on me at that time or since;" and another noted they were "still not entirely sure whether presentational work IS the work, or whether it's a different sort of stimulus for the [real inquiry] work." Words and propositional knowing seem to have primacy according to this feedback, and the attainment of knowledge through means other than words alone comes across as a (useful) added extra. What I think this feedback misses, from my understanding, is the view of visual or presentational practice as an activity or process which is valuable in its own right, and not subordinate or instrumental to the "real" work of writing.

During the workshop, we made space for the participants to reflect privately on their learning for the day. Here is the mindmap I drew as my reflection:



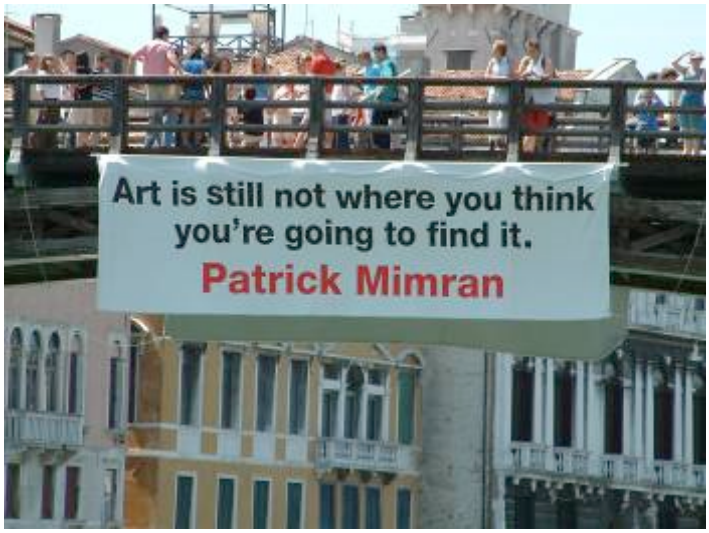
Picking through this dense mindmap, I see that I was mainly concerned with what I came to know as different aspects of presentational knowing in the realm of first-person inquiry:

- Collecting specific images (from others' artwork, photographs and drawings as well as my own) which express for me that which I am not yet able to express using words;
- Juxtaposing images to show ambiguous and paradoxical ideas—"it's this and it's that;"
- Selecting single, iconic images to illustrate text—"this is what I mean;"
- Generating a sea, or a wash, of multiple images, which gives the feel of something (I called these "evocational images");
- Visual sense-making processes, where I am generating the visual material (using the visual to make sense in the present);
- Making sense of experience through making visual expressions;
- Enhancing and responding to linguistic expression through the addition of images.

Conclusion: Different but equal….

A research process that follows multiple ways of knowing enables what Maura McIntyre calls a "full-bodied engagement:" a kind of deep engagement that draws the researcher into multiple pathways to knowing (2004, p. 259). Such a comprehensivist[vii] approach gives rise to an "epistemological equity," whereby inner and outer worlds are brought together within the same sphere of knowing (p. 260). As such, my inquiries can be viewed as a call for epistemological equity with a special emphasis on, and intention as, a foundation for presentational knowing as a way of becoming more in tune with the other human and more-than-human worlds.

In short, taking presentational knowing seriously, and inquiring thoroughly in more full-bodied ways, brings what eco-art historian Hildegard Kurt calls "aesthetic competence into the cognitive process—which makes it different from science but at the same time its equal" (Kurt, 2004, p. 240).



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[1] This phrase comes from ecologist and sleight-of-hand magician David Abrams, author of *The spell of the sensuous* (1997).

[2] A notable exception is the pioneering work of the team at the *Centre for Arts-informed Research* (*CAIR*) at the *Ontario Institute for Studies in Education* (*University of Toronto*), which is of key inspirational importance to my work in this field.

[3] Presentational knowing can be especially important both during and after third person inquiries in order to invite and acknowledge the great diversity that is likely in large scale interventions. McIntyre and Cole of *CAIR* refer to "acknowledging diversity in knowledge construction through diverse forms of communication" as "epistemological equity" (McIntyre, 2004, p. 259).

[4] I explore second- and third-person inquiry in more detail in my PhD thesis: http://www.bath.ac.uk/carpp/publications/doc_theses_links/c_seeley.html

[5] I thought this piece of technology would be great for shared, visually-biased, transparent note taking and sense making during client meetings. And I would have been right, had it not have been for the time consuming interest and fascination clients had for the technology-as-toy, which then turned into a distraction.

[6] Open space technology is a simple (often large scale) participatory process for opening conversational space into and around a subject. It was created in the 1980s by organisational consultant Harrison Owen. See http://www.openspaceworld.org/.

[7] Buckminster Fuller said people are designed to be *comprehensivist*, by which he meant that people are naturally inclined to work with whole systems. I take this to signify an ability to synthesize knowing from many, varying, different domains, and oppose it to both a *specialist* (who knows a lot about a little) and a *generalist* (who knows a little about a lot).

Research at the Edge: An Ode to Arts-informed Research

Carly Stasko, *MA Student*
OISE/UT
Paintings by ***Catherine Stasko****

At the edge of two worlds
between the land and water
between the static and dynamic,
the known and unknown,
the lived and the yet to be lived…
With every moment we connect the divide,
making change our home,
and wonder our magic.
(Carly Stasko, 2000)

At the Edge of Two Worlds
by Catherine Stasko ©

Fear and courageous vulnerability

Artist-researcher Lorri Neilsen attributes the researcher's fear of the unknown to the assumption that "knowledge is and must be proof, proposition [and] muscle for prediction and control" (Neilsen, 2007, p. 97). This assumption is inextricably linked to the Western conception of a separate, autonomous individual. Rather than recognize and value the ways in which we as researchers participate in, relate to, and often co-create the subjective realities we study, quantitative research often demands personal detachment and analytic objectivity (Gablik, 1991, p. 178; Levin, 2001; Macy, 1991). Though in many cases quantitative knowledge is valid and useful, there is tendency to omit the personal, emotional, embodied, and spiritual aspects of knowledge and experience (Dobson, 2007, p. 10). There seems to be a discomfort and uncertainty associated with such qualities, whereas quantitative knowledge offers a sense of "impregnable strength, certainty and control [such that] knowledge can then be used as an

instrument of power and domination"(Gablik, 1991, p. 178). When quantitative scholarship acts like a bully, denying the collective and dismissing and devaluing research methods that are more "sensitive" and "feeling", this aggression hides a deeper and very vulnerable soft spot – the fear of the uncertain, the uncomfortable, the uncontrollable and the unknowable. It is this very fear that limits our relationship to knowing, for it is when we are blinded by fear that we most desperately grasp at whichever "truths" will offer us security and intellectual comfort (Rushkoff, 1999; Klein, 2007). I've come to value a new type of bravery that I describe as *courageous vulnerability*, in which we as researchers embrace our place in the unknown and seek out connections, relationships and understandings that are subjective, tentative, fluid and sometimes even playful.

Play is the way

Wonder, an exciting alternative to fear, allows for a "response to the novelty of experience (although not to the totally unexpected, which tends to arouse anxiety)" (Cobb, 1977, p. 28). Edith Cobb argues that when "maintained as an attitude, or point of view, in later life, wonder permits a response of the nervous system to the universe that incites the mind to organize novelty of pattern and form out of incoming information" (Ibid, p. 27). The expansive nature of sustained wonder allows for play, fluidity, liminality and imagination (Hirshfield, 1997).

Wonder allows for what Zwicky (1992) refers to as an ethical position of awe. It is from this humble, inspired and authentic location that we can play at the edges of the known and the unknown. Play enables us to "rearrange our capacities and our very identity so that they can be pursued in unforeseen ways" (Nachmanovitch, 1990, p. 19). Reinterpreting reality and begetting novelty in turn sustains our dynamic fluidity.

Open your eyes
and demystify
All the worlds that reside
In your brain where they hide.

Never-mind if they are silly,
Bizarre or insane,
For you will find you are willing
to explore just the same.

Remember my friends,
The goal is to flow,
Not to measure, to name,
To own or to know.

So question your fears,
Leave them all at the door.
Embrace the unknown,
And prepare to explore!

(Carly Stasko, 2002)

Opening **by Catherine Stasko ©**

In recent years there has been an encouraging growth in scholarship that seeks to explore "an intermediate space [that] we can't quite define yet, a borderland between passion and intellect, analysis and subjectivity, ethnography and autobiography, art and life" (Behar, 1996, p.174). Arts-informed inquiry can be understood as a means of transcending borders, of building and discovering possible forms of connection and relatedness. These bridges of meaning allow "scholartists" (Neilsen, 2001) to do more than "know" about experiences - they "take us there" through the imagination, drawing on embodied knowledge and lived experiences as tools for understanding (Neilsen, 2007, p.96). Rather than being guided by a desire to *know* in a static sense, the playful and creative spirit of arts-informed inquiry can engage researchers in the process of *flow* – a dynamic and transcendent process of creative inquiry (Csikszentmihalyi, 1996). Quantitative research, in an effort to grasp at what is essentially fluid, risks mistaking the container (knowledge) for the contents (understanding). A desire to make knowledge static so that it can be measured undermines the wisdom and insights that can come out of movement, change and transformation. Messy fluidity, confusion, play, and possibility are prerequisites for learning and innovation, even when—and sometimes especially—it makes us as researchers and/or educators uncomfortable (Boler, 1999).

The holistic approach of arts-informed research nurtures a strong commitment to accessibility and social justice. Scholartists can initiate positive change by bringing forth new forms of compassionate inquiry, and challenging restrictive and reductive assumptions about learning, community, knowledge, diversity, equity and socio-cultural possibilities. This approach to inquiry is not about authority or *power* through knowledge but about *empowerment* through understanding – and most of all through interconnection. In this sense, understanding is fluid and flowing – it is a process that is always contingent and dynamic. This way of engaging the unknown is guided by humility and an openness to ambiguity and multiple interpretations. As Ardra Cole and Gary Knowles (2007) suggest, "[t]he knowledge advanced in arts-informed research is generative rather than propositional and based on assumptions that reflect the multidimensional, complex, dynamic, intersubjective, and contextual nature of human experience" (p. 67). This allows the audience to insert their own stories into the research text as a means of connecting with and "experiencing" rather than simply "reading" it (Mairs, 1994). By embracing, rather than encasing, the unknown, we are able to explore new fields of possibility and interconnection.

Relating to research

My evolving relationship with arts-informed inquiry is not without its lover's quarrels. Often the work makes me uncomfortable and unsure. Just when I think I'm in control, my unchecked assumptions are revealed or

my prohibitive desire for certainty is undermined. I struggle in this process because the work matters to me. I reveal my vulnerabilities courageously because I am committed to the journey and I accept that it will change me. I surrender my sacred truths, but not without resistance, because I know that they can separate me from the world and divide me from myself. I muster up bravery to trust in the process, conscious that the ground beneath me is always shifting and moving.

I am an Imagitator (a job-title I made up for myself) – one who agitates imagination. I play and create as much as I can without extrinsic motivations and pressures to make a "useful product". I do this in order to defend and reclaim a space of possibility for whatever meanings, stories and questions may emerge. I write poems, daydream and visualize. I try to notice and challenge the metaphors and stories I use, create and sometimes inherit. I have debates with myself and deliberate over conclusions. I don't want to conclude, I want to instigate – I want to interrupt and to invite – to agitate. I want to help invent an epistemology of empathy, a valiant vulnerability, and a fearless fluidity. I also want to dance with the questions and draw them out. I want to listen to the heartbeat of my research with no rush to "arrive." Most of all, I don't want to do it alone, so I plant these words on the page, like seeds, in the hopes of future cross-pollination, hybridization, and perhaps even mutation.

With love, light and laughter
Carly Stasko

The Path **by Catherine Stasko ©**

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* I am thankful for the creative relationship I have with my mother. I have grown up surrounded by colour and creativity. During my undergraduate studies my mother began to paint "At the Edge of Two Worlds" at the same time that I was completing a paper for an independent study course about Semiotics and metaphors of the unknown. I found that the image of me picking up stones on the edge of Galiano Island resonated with the ideas in my paper. I was inspired to write a corresponding poem, which she later incorporated into an art card. Since then we often work together blending poetry with painting. Sometimes the poem comes first and the painting follows and sometimes it's the other way around. I am grateful for the ways in which our creative projects can inform and inspire each other.

Collaging Complexity: Reframing knowledge in HIV/AIDS Education and Research

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Process breaks on the sun's horizon. Knowledge(s) unfold and bloom like crocuses on an April morning. In a climate where knowledge may be paraded around like political placards, I dare to ask, how do we really "know" what we know? In the following piece, I will guide you through my creative research process, what Pinar (1985/1994) calls a "returning home." For Pinar, the act of returning home is a psychological journey in the discovery of self. How do we come to know oneself? How do we come to know the world around us? How do we come to know our research, and our positionality within our work? I envision my own process of knowing, as a fluid, dynamic and shifting act of creation, intersected by complex perceptions of my multiple selves: researcher, educator, activist, artist, and woman.

In the context of my research on HIV/AIDS education, I explore multiple ways of knowing, as an experimental platform for multiple ways of being, or rather, multiple ways of becoming. As I journey, I ponder how these processes lead to new languages and new ways of being and knowing in the context of HIV/AIDS curriculum. What if there could be multiple ways of knowing, thereby leading to multiple ways of being, or rather, multiple ways of becoming? How can we use an arts-informed methodology to create new spaces for emerging, differential, and counter-hegemonic narratives on HIV/AIDS?

Before I begin, I must present you with some context: my research explores new models of arts-informed HIV/AIDS curricula for, and by, youth. More specifically, I am interested in exploring the use of collage for re-mapping, and re-framing what it is to "know" in light of HIV/AIDS education. Conventional HIV/AIDS education, premised on positivist, neoliberal notions of the individual, presumes that knowledge acquisition incites behaviour change—as if knowledge exists independently from social, political, and historical contexts. While the cries of modernist thought may privilege the disembodied, objective and rational, I question its limitations. How do we come to know, if it is not through personal, embodied experiences? If this were a story, how would personal and political narratives govern our actions? Youth, after all, are not "at risk" by definition, but rather, are "at risk-in-context" (Dowsett et. al, 1998). As Walsh and Mitchell (2004) note, it is a

> necessity to situate youth at the centre of cultural production – as the producers of messages related to HIV and AIDS, and to provoke them to define their own responses and needs. Youth culture already exists as a potentially rich artistic space for arts activism in relation to body and sexuality. Youth culture is the core of adolescent "society", and the types of images and messages that exist in that terrain will define, supplant and inform the way their social network functions. (p.193)

And so, in answering their call, I turn to collage as a possible tool for embarking on this journey. In expanding possible ways of knowing, what messages on the body and sexuality are unveiled? And, in the context of my journey, what are *my* messages? For, while I may be an educator, activist, and woman, I am also a youth. I am also implicated.

- How does one write with certainty, when one is certainly uncertain? Virginia, dear, dare to lend a hand, an eye, an ear?

- But my era knows nothing of HIV.

- Ah yes, but, Virginia, had the pandemic struck earlier, your social location as a full time writer would not have predestined your unassailability. We are all vulnerable. We are all implicated. Even you.

In his work on autobiography and the architecture of self, Pinar (1985) challenges curriculum theorists to ask ourselves, "What do we make of what we have been made?" In the context of this paper, I ask: What do we make of what we have been made, as we continue to make? What do I make of my process of making, both in the context of my upcoming research on youth voices and HIV/AIDS, and in my journey to "return home," through collage? As my fingers rhythmically click at keys, and my eyes adjust to the dimming light of the setting sun, I weave together fragments of this meta-process, as I continually reflect on what it means to make art, make research, and make self. As Irwin and colleagues (2001) remind me, "As I create, I am created."

Like our selves, our research is always in the process of becoming. This meta-process, much like collage, is never linear, nor singular. It demands, as Leggo (2004) expresses, that I learn "to live attentively/ to linger in the moment, longing/ for the (in)sufficiency of language, not knowing the possible spaces" (p. 22). While my form differs from Leggo's, our processes share many commonalities. Poetry, like collage, generates meaning by creating, and linking fragmented narratives. In this process, meaning emerges in the spaces between words and imagery. I collage as a way to self-reflexively research my positionality, and to process the complex and often contradictory ways language and images shape our experiences of sexuality, body, and self. We are not fixed entities; rather, we are always in the process of becoming.

- Unfolding.
- Yes.
- Not static…
- but dynamic.

- Not singular
- but multiple.

- Fragmented.
- Fractured.

- Real.

As researchers, practitioners, and change-makers, we do not exist in isolation from the circulating personal and political discourses that inform our work and our daily lives. If I am to create work that does not just sit on the shelf, I must attend to how the very discourses I am trying to counter continue to inform my own work. How might my work perpetuate the same inequities I critique? Following the advice of boundary-pushers who have come before (e.g., Neilson 1998; Gablik 1991), we must make our invisible processes visible if we are to be accountable and committed to change. The academy is well steeped in its history of positivism. We *must* resist. We must speak from the heart, acknowledging the complex ways our selves, experiences and knowledges are shaped and constructed. We must let go of certainty.

- Ah! But Virginia, I am back to my original dilemma. What now?

- All you need now is to stand at the window
and let your rhythmical sense open and shut,
open,
and shut,
boldly and freely,
until one things melts in another,
until the taxis are dancing with the daffodils, until a whole has been made from all these separate fragments[1].

- What? I'm trying to write an article. It's due tomorrow.

[1] Virginia Woolf (1932), p. 22 (Emphasis mine)

In his work on Creative Solidarity, Gaztambide-Fernandez (in press) explores the responsibility of curriculum theorists in creating social change. He draws on Heubner for support: "[Wo/]Man and [her/]his language […] form a paradoxical relationship. [S/]He is inevitably caught up in it, yet as creator, [S/]he can seek to transcend its confines, but in doing so, [S/]he builds new snares which are equally confining" (p. 252). Realizing that all language "is the creative effort of the people," it becomes the task of curriculum theorists/practitioners to unravel the snares of both HIV/AIDS and arts curriculum models, and generate a new language (ibid). As a researcher and educator, "how can one re-create without re-circulating domination?" (Minh-ha, 1990, p. 329).

- I am talking nonsense, I know.

What I mean is summon all your courage, exert your vigilance, invoke all the gifts that Nature has been induced to bestow. Then let your rhythmical sense wind itself in and out among men and women, omnibuses, sparrows – strung them together in one harmonious whole[2].

- Virigina, our work shares many commonalities. But what about this harmonious bit?

While I am skeptical that any tool is free from "re-circulating domination," when approached critically, collage may be used as an aesthetic and pedagogical means of shifting ways of thinking about "knowing" with regards to reflexive inquiry and HIV/AIDS education. By critical, I intend Burns's (2004) definition:

> To take a critical approach to the making of art as research is to be aware of the contexts in which the work is situated, to acknowledge the fact that other contexts and perspectives exist, to take into account how they relate to one another and to identify the implications and consequences of those relationships – lingering, linking and layering. (p. 219)

Alongside Gaztambide-Fernandez's notion of Creative Solidarity, as "solidarity in a constant flux of invention and reinvention," collage may be viewed as a way of prioritizing difference and fragmentation as a means of collectively working through difference, both within communities and ourselves (p. 21).

- And why the caveat, Virginia?
How do you know that what you speak of is nonsense? I would suggest that you trust your intuition on the fragmented nature of things.

By simultaneously honouring multiple voices, and refusing to make whole what is fragmented, collage speaks to the myriad ways in which youth conceive of sexuality. Since youth HIV risk does not exist in isolation from social meanings (De Oliveira 2000; Dowsett et al., 1988; Treichler 1988), it must be addressed with respect to the everyday lived experiences of youth. As Treichler (1988) notes, "AIDS is a nexus where multiple meanings, stories, and discourses intersect and overlap, reinforce and subvert one another" (p. 32). Arts-informed research as a methodology demands that there is a clear correlation between the form, research content, and inquiry process reflected in the text (Cole & Knowles, 2008). If my aim is to re-frame and re-map the way in which we perceive HIV/AIDS narratives, as multi-vocal, non linear, differential, and fragmented, I desire to use a multi-vocal, non-linear, differential and fragmented form. Collage does the trick.

- Ah, good. Collage.

[2] Quote continued: Virginia Woolf (1932), p. 22 (Emphasis mine)

- Hold on, V. I'm not done with you yet.
I believe modernist notions of a rational and singular truth have taught you to doubt your poetic knowledge as legitimate. You flavour your advice with fragmented, sensory, and multiple truths, but are weary of claiming the legitimacy of knowledge, as anything more than a supplementary spice. But, Virginia, I can taste it.

My collage materials are also significant in this process of inquiry and representation. If my aim is to unpack the way in which public discourses circulate, via found materials, to form a metaphorical disease of signification (Sontag, 1989), and more specifically, *my/our* disease of signification, why not use the same materials which informed these narratives and discourses to create discourses of resistance? By filling these previously loaded images with new meaning, what Sandoval (2000) calls "meta-ideologizing", collage through found materials becomes a technological form of resistance and ideological weaponry, in the generation of new ethical and political standards for democratic social change.

These narratives and ideologies, constructed in part by our engagement (or non-engagement) with popular culture, are put or tried on during daily conversations and behaviours. They influence the ways in which we perceive ourselves as active agents in the world, and in relationships with others and with our selves. However, these narratives and ideologies are never "put on" as whole entities; rather, they become fragmented as we piece them together with personal experiences, and other juxtaposing narratives or ideologies.

This fragmentation can be a metaphor for both the way in which we perceive ourselves in the world, and in relation to HIV/AIDS, but also as a representation of the collage process in general. As part of our research process, we link ideas, concepts, and personal experiences. In collage, this becomes a physical process as materials are physically selected, sorted, re-arranged, read, and re-read according to their intellectual, sensory, aesthetic and emotional resonances and contexts. Through the process of linking and layering images, collage allows us to insert meaning (often via personal narratives) in the spaces between images and found objects. These gaps in between images and found materials become "in between spaces" to pause and reflect, and perhaps, if fortune befalls us - *snip snip snip* – we may transform this "in between space" into a new image, a new vision, and new conceptualization.

- What does it taste like?
- Vision. Inspiration

Through experimentation, I have learned that the process of art making is a key component to visual inquiry. All knowledge, whether personal, political, or theoretical, is constructed and "put on" through conscious and unconscious processes. (When I collage, I try to capture this (un)intentionality by affixing images with tape). Within collage, Butler Kisber (2007) notes, "The researcher works intuitively and in a non-linear way, choosing disparate, visual fragments and arranging them in ways that suggest unconscious, metaphorical associations and connections" (p. 269). This process honours the serendipitous nature of stumbling across an image, while simultaneously recognizing that our eyes, minds and hearts are guided to particular images and materials for particular reasons. This process of sorting, selecting, and later affixing and collaging found materials is a process of meaning-making in itself.

- Ah Yes.
That perhaps is your task –
to find the relation between things
that seem incompatible
yet have a mysterious affinity,
to absorb every experience so that your poem is a whole,
not a
fragment;

to rethink human life into poetry[3].

- Wait a minute.

Incompatible relationships, maybe. Poetry, maybe.
But my work will never be "not a fragment" and nor will yours. If taxis dance with daffodils, merging fragmentation into a harmonious whole, then your poem is never "not a fragment" but a fragmented whole (or a holistic and harmonious fragment?).

Investigating my role as researcher prompts me to ask, how do we know? How do we tell? How do we see ourselves in the images we select? Collage allows me to question my preoccupation with certain images or materials, as well as my insecurities about what it means to create art. This form of visual inquiry represents my ways of seeing, being and attending to the world (Thomas 2007); moreover, collage encourages me to resist falling back upon conventional ways of seeing and knowing, as based on a search for certainty or singularity of essence, meaning or reality – ways of knowing conveyed by conventional HIV/AIDS education. Collage not only allows for, but encourages a multiplicity of experiences. As I play with found materials, fingering the stickiness of glue, and the jagged edges of crumpled maps, I am temporally transported between my past experiences, present musings and future dreams.

- So, what do you think your task is?
You call on me for help, and dismiss my advice.

- Making fragments of fragments,
until fragments become whole,
among other fragments.

- What I said.

- Not quite.

See, to separate whole
from fragment
is to suggest that one can reach a state of wholeness.
A state of completion.
I am whole because I am fragmented.

- I like that. You should use it for your article.

The combined acts of creation and subversion hold immeasurable threat and possibility to the dominant order. As Neilson (1998) reminds us, the nature of arts-informed methodological forms are political, particularly for women: "Because male, public discourse has traditionally been valued more highly in academia, women who choose to speak, and speak intimately, have learned to be self-conscious about their desire to be authors of their own words and their own lives" (pp. 9-10). In challenging the status quo of accepted academic rationalist language, we begin to loosen our grasp on certainty and awaken ourselves to possibilities of regaining what has always been ours: the intimate and blossoming knowledge(s) of the self. And so, we speak. We create.

[3] Quote continued: Virginia Woolf (1932), p. 22 (Emphasis mine; addition: Ah yes).

- Not much has changed since 1941.
- A lot has changed.
- Different diseases... but the underlying social inequalities remain the same.
- Ah. Virginia, you are catching on. Perhaps we have more in common than I thought. Your writing is guided by fellow poets. My work is guided by fellow academics, health professionals, artists… I have reason to doubt my multiple truths as well.

I refuse to create my body (of work) as whole, where the draw towards the wholeness of a work eclipses the fragments of the work. What would it mean if we were to work, not towards holistic completion, but holistic fragmentation? Collaged fragmentation as resistance allows me to work through the ineffable space between contradictions... It is whole *because* it is fragmented. *I* am whole *because* I am fragmented. Collage allows me to re-frame my experience, and my body in response and in subversion to my experiences as an outwardly political, perpetually Questioning woman. This is my act of resistance.

- But you resist.
-Yes, I resist.

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The Appointment

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The following piece of creative non-fiction emerged from a reflexive inquiry process about my place as researcher in my MA thesis-in-progress. The story describes a transformative moment in my dynamic personal relationship with food, environmental ethics aside. As a narrative, arts-informed researcher, I value stories as a powerful way to make meaning of experience. As an expressive writer, I tell stories in a way that leaves space for you, the reader, to enter and to make your own meaning.

The Appointment

When I was eighteen years old, an ultrasound technician misdiagnosed me with *Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome*. I was working, at the time, at *Scaramouche*—a fine French restaurant boasting the best view of downtown Toronto—when a staff meal of undercooked chicken poisoned me. For twelve hours, I sat on the toilet and moaned, while fingernails scraped at my stomach lining. When the toilet-water turned bright, liquid green, I called Mom. Mom took me to *Mount Sinai* emergency. A nurse stuck an IV in my arm, and a resident ordered an ultrasound.

The ultrasound technician wiped the cold, gooey gel off my belly, pulled my paper gown back down, helped me into the wheelchair, handed Mom my file and sent us back to emergency. Mom wheeled me down an empty white corridor and stopped halfway to read the file.

"What does it say?" I asked. Mom's eyes got bigger, redder and wetter. "What does it say, Mom?"

"Um . . ." Mom bit her lower lip. "It says they found cysts on your ovaries. Possible *PCOS*."

"What does that mean?"

"I don't know."

Mom closed the file, stuck it under her arm, gripped the wheelchair tightly and rolled me toward the double glass doors into emergency. Three hours later, a different resident pulled back the green curtain, said the ultrasound was normal, unhooked my IV and told me to go home, rest and drink water.

"What about the cysts?" Mom asked.

"Oh. It's fairly common. You'll want to see a gynecologist." Mom and I nodded.

* * *

A few months later, I saw a gynecologist. I lay on my back, feet in stirrups, and stared at the star sticker stuck on the ceiling. The doctor asked about my periods, birth control, sexual activity, touched my breasts and belly, and told me to sit up.

"*PCOS—Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome*—just means it may be harder for you to get pregnant. Don't worry though. There are things we can do when you want to have a baby. For now, stay on birth control."

* * *

Five years and two doctors later, I still didn't understand *Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome*. My boyfriend at the time, trying to be helpful, typed *PCOS* into *Google*. He read out loud: "symptoms include acne, obesity, male patterned baldness, male patterned hair growth, infertility, type two diabetes . . ." My face swelled and my throat lumped. I closed my eyes and saw myself as a pock-marked, fat, bald, bearded lady with a hairy chest living alone in

a one room apartment with no children and no lover. "Don't worry," my boyfriend whispered as he hugged me, "I'll still love you." Our relationship ended four months later.

* * *

Another OBGYN tried to explain *PCOS* to me. "It's not black and white. There's a large gray zone. If you have three or more symptoms, it's diagnosed. You've got three: cysts, irregular periods and unpredictable weight swings. They think it's caused by a hormone imbalance."

"What causes the hormone imbalance?" I asked the doctor.

"Hormones are complicated," the doctor answered.

* * *

Now, on January 11th at 1:00 pm, 2007, I sit in an endocrinologist's office. Alone in the waiting room, I flip through health magazines with pictures of beautiful women and their toddlers and ads for pills and health clubs and articles by cancer survivors. Dr. Sherman opens her door and calls me in. I gather my coat, hat, mitts, scarf and backpack and shuffle into her office.

"Have a seat, Eden." Dr. Sherman motions to the chair in front of her paper-covered desk. Overstuffed manila files cover every flat surface.

"Tell me about your life," Dr. Sherman says.

"Um, – what do you mean?"

"I mean tell me about your life. You're a student?"

"I finished my undergrad in Political Science at *UBC* in 2004. After that I worked as a research assistant. Then I moved back to Toronto in 2005 to work for an NGO. Now I teach at *George Brown College*." Dr. Sherman draws squiggles on the paper in front of her.

"What about your family?"

"They're good. I have four older brothers – one full, two halves and a step. My parents got divorced when I was two. I don't remember them together, so it wasn't very traumatic."

Dr. Sherman looks down and scribbles. "Who did you live with?"

"Joint custody, week by week. We'd pack a suitcase on Sunday nights with my Girl Guide uniform, ballet and school stuff. I had different clothes at each house. It worked out okay."

"Were you a happy child?"

"Yah, but I was precocious and spoiled. You know, I was the only girl after four boys and the only granddaughter after nine grandsons." Dr. Sherman keeps writing.

"I was a rebellious teenager, though."

Dr. Sherman looks up. "Tell me."

"Well, my mom and I didn't get along, so I moved in with my dad. I could get away with more living with him. I went to raves and did drugs–"

"What kind of drugs?"

"Oh, you know, pot, hash, mushrooms, acid, E, crystal, coke. You know."

"Right."

"I was kind of depressed in high school, I guess. I was bulimic too."

"Tell me about that."

"Well, there's not much to tell. I used to come home from school, smoke pot, watch TV and eat. I'd eat like a whole big bag of sour cream and onion chips and a tuna melt and a bowl of ice cream, throw it up and do it again. It was disgusting."

"When did you stop?"

"In first year university I was really depressed. I was taking laxatives and puking and working out two hours a day. I felt really sick. I knew it would ruin my life, so I decided to go to India."

"So you went to India and it stopped?"

"Well, it changed me. I went by myself, so I realized not to fear being alone. And I saw starving children and everything, which put things into perspective. And I started doing yoga and meditating and stuff. So things got a bit better. When I came back and moved out to Vancouver I still threw up now and then, but a lot less often." I pick at my nails. Dr. Sherman scribbles.

"Let's step into the exam room, Eden. Take off everything except your underwear and wrap yourself in this." Dr. Sherman hands me a thin blue and white checkered sheet and turns away as I undress. I keep my underwear and bunchy, mismatched socks on.

"Step on the scale, please."

"Um, is it okay if I don't look? I haven't weighed myself in three years. I don't like to know my weight."

Dr. Sherman peers at me over her glasses. "Okay. Stand with your back to the scale, then." I hear the metal piece slide across the scale. The pointer clicks as it tips up and down until Dr. Sherman finds the equilibrium. I lengthen my neck as she measures my height.

"So," Dr. Sherman motions for me to step down and sit on the exam bed, "are your parents happy now?"

"Well," I think for a moment. Dr. Sherman pokes at my throat.

"My stepfather just left my mom for another woman."

Dr. Sherman looks in my ears.

"It's okay though, 'cause he sexually abused me anyway." She turns the light from my eye and looks at me.

"I suspected as much."

"Really? How could you tell?"

"Well, if A equals B, and B equals C, then ..."

"Hmm. I didn't realize it was so obvious."

"Okay. Get dressed and come back to my office."

With my hands slightly shaking, I step into my jeans, fumble with my bra, pull on my shirt and squish into my shoes, stepping on their backs. I comb my hair with my fingers, pull in a breath, open the door and sit down across from Dr. Sherman.

"Okay Eden. I think you have a mild case of *PCOS*. You can treat yourself with diet and exercise."

"Really? That's good news, right?"

"Yup. I want to go over some things with you."

Dr. Sherman clears papers off her desk and drops a pile of photocopied, type-written papers facing me. She poises her pen and starts talking fast.

"When you eat your blood sugar spikes, insulin shoots up to digest the sugars, then your blood sugar drops." Dr. Sherman sketches an X and Y axis upside-down with the numbers 1 to 6 along the bottom. "When you don't eat for 4, or 5 or 6 hours," she points to the numbers, "your blood sugar drops and your insulin plummets." Dr. Sherman draws a spike and slides her pen down the graph. "That's when you feel tired."

"Oh. I thought I was tired because I don't get enough sleep."

"No. You're tired because you're not feeding yourself properly. Your insulin spikes when you eat, you absorb the sugars, you throw up, your insulin drops and you're hungry again. This is why bulimia doesn't actually make you lose weight. Your body gets insulin resistant, a precursor of type two diabetes. When you can't digest sugars efficiently, you gain weight. This affects your hormones because insulin is a hormone and hormones are interrelated. So your insulin levels affect your estrogen levels and progesterone levels."

My head hurts. I focus hard. "You mean my bulimia caused this hormone imbalance?"

"It's possible." Dr. Sherman says. "So, when you regulate your insulin, your sex hormones will regulate themselves. To do that, you want to eat small amounts constantly. You should never really get to the point of hunger. Hunger signals your body to go into starvation mode and save calories rather than spend them. It's like your body doesn't trust you to feed it, so it converts calories into fat for later. If you eat balanced snacks or small meals within every four hours, your body will expel what it doesn't use."

"So, you're telling me to eat more?"

"To eat more frequently, yes." Dr. Sherman bends over her bottom desk drawer, pulls out a form and starts scribbling again.

"I want to take some blood. And I want you to see a nutritionist. You'll need supplements and a balanced diet."

"Okay. Thank you, Dr. Sherman."

"You're welcome, Eden. Take care of yourself."

I walk along cold, windy Eglinton Avenue, past the 1970s square apartment buildings. I check the time. 2:30. Dr. Sherman spent a full hour with me. I should eat. I haven't eaten since 8 a.m..

I stop at a salad bar and get a whole grain veggie wrap with hummus. I eat half and save the other half for later.

I continue walking. The busses whiz past me. I wrap my scarf around my face. I look at a skinny girl in a white bra and panties on a *Calvin Klein* billboard. She must be hungry. I pass *Harvey's*, *MacDonald's* and *Licks* without thinking about onion rings. I visualize my fat, crying, self-hating, guilty, ashamed self climbing into a wood coffin. I hammer nails into the lid. I feel light.

I also feel like an idiot. I thought I was losing weight by puking and starving myself. Actually, I made my body gain weight. I made myself less fertile and more prone to obesity and diabetes. I've had it all wrong. Food isn't my enemy. Food is energy.

I'm lucky. It only took me twenty-five years to figure out.

* Eden Wassermann is a pseudonym.

The Challenge

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Why have I chosen written words, static, restrictive, structured, as a way to enter research about adult experiential learning through canoe trip stories? Stories, after all, are embodied things, things with texture and smell and song. Stories, after all, affect my physical being. They are multi-layered, complex experiences larger than their limited form. So speak to a new mother about birthing a baby and imagine squeezing a story out the tip of your pen.

So why do I write? I taste unspeakable words that will not form, though I worry them with my tongue, as though playing with a sweet. These words will not flow because they are caught between my teeth, stuck to the roof of my mouth and drip from the edges of my lips.

So why do I write? I hear in my ears an organic song, complex and simple. The music of these stories cannot be sung. My throat constricts and my soul, bursting from within, can only resonate through my skin as goose bumps of knowing… knowing that the stories ring true in my mind's ear.

So how can I write? My flattened fingertips ache from the frantic pace of etching out expression on cool lined pages, channeled through these three digits smeared in blue. Inside, my soul wants to burst and dance and run, to lift heavy loads, to hear the crack in my shoulder and to feel raindrops slice my skin. How can I write when the only remnant of my physicality runs through cramped hand and out this humble pen?

So why do I write? My nose can identify with remarkable precision that unique mix of summer moss, hot pine needles, canvas pack and sun block. And those scents drag me back to days with my family, weeks on the water, times when the worries of the world rested in the patterns of clouds. This paper holds no such smell.

So why do I write? I close my eyes. I see before me a landscape of forest, rock and river opening its gaping yawp only to close and swallow me whole, down its gullet and, yawning again, I am in its openness. This undulating passage is full of beauty and power, tranquility and danger with countless blues, skies at sunset and trees turning colours. Close your eyes and imagine. These places are there yet we are in different places, reading the same page.

So why do I write? Why, from all the expansive, exciting, extraordinary artistic approaches, do I choose this one that carves meaning out of pen and paper?

I write because I always have. I make up words and mix them together in ways that play with each other – a wordchemist of sorts. I think play is a vital part of being. We play from the age of dot and only under the stern glares over half-moon glasses (yes, I am thinking of you, Mz. Pogatcher), do we learn that knowing and playing belong in separate drawers. So I write for fun, to open both drawers at once and, like a spoiled teenage girl looking for her favourite T-shirt, I throw things out from their drawers and jumble them together on this floor, on this page. Shift them around, pull them apart and splice them together.

By no means am I a Wordsmith with a capital "Whhu".
I do not pretend that what I do here
on these beleaguered but faithful pages
is bound for fame.
Instead, here is my playground.

A space, a time and a place of play.
I slow my brain down,
create a writing ritual
– a writual –
and allow my thoughts
out to play.

I find in slowing my thoughts, feelings, sensory experiences, memories, I can, as if in some movie technique, slow the world around me and spend time with a suspended subject – let's say, a cup of tea. I can imagine it hot and steaming, the colour of stained oak, in my favourite brown ceramic mug – the one that fits my hand just so with thumb above the handle, three fingers through and pinkie below. I remember my first cup of tea, the long history of tea drinking in my family. I think about what the ritual of tea making means. I think of times of celebration and devastation, all involving tea. I dream of tea times to still be had with friends and family and, most frequently, with pen-in-hand, curled up on my poofy chair, contemplating from all angles a thing, a memory, a feeling.

And so I write. I write to squeeze out from the tip of my pen the deep, sweet and bitter juices of what I see, hear, smell, remember, feel, think, taste. It reaches slowly and contemplatively across the phyllo-sized layers of an experience, slowly piercing each, absorbing each out line-by-line, layer-by-layer through these humble, limited words.

My late, great music teacher, Mr. Wyshniowsky, used to say that the loudest sound in music is no sound at all. Between subject and these words is that pause, that fat, tangible silence. I desire to make the leap a bit shorter by writing through and up to, but never fully reaching that edge. I write to bring myself and perhaps others close to that juicy, powerful, silencing gap. That is where I find my inner voice and knowing. In the end, however, I have to leap the space between words and subject with the fear and excitement of understanding.

Over 25 years of canoeing and a lifetime of camping, I have witnessed countless star-studded, rain-soaked, paddle-wielding stories. These stories are an intrinsic part of the canoe trip experience. As the stars pierce the night sky, our voices rise up with the smoke in quiet reverence, in bawdy irreverence, in laughter and in quiet contemplation. It is around the warmth and glow of the fire, bellies full of the world's best _____(fill in the blank with whatever we had just eaten for dinner), that paddlers gather to sip wine, share a smoke and nibble on some chocolate. Moving around to avoid the smoke, we swat mosquitoes and talk. We tell stories that have shaped us individually and shaped us collectively. Each of these stories carries a strand to which I tie lines of my own stories, enriching those that spoke before and inspiring those that share after. We retell each other's stories as an act of (re)creating history. Our nomadic community is drawn together around the campfire and drawn out in words, in experiences and collective knowing. Our stories weave a fabric of understanding and trust in each other.

About a year ago, I recognized I am more a listener than a tale-teller. With great trepidation I set out to discover my own canoe trip stories to place myself within the context of my research. This decision helped me understand the emotional impact and vulnerability that my participants might experience. I also began to understand what presumptions and limitations I carry with me and will need to be conscious of when conducting my research. Recently a new aspect to my research approach emerged as a result of my story-telling.

Smoothed to a light pewter-silk colour, I have kept this arced stick collected from a particular beach campsite in Temagami. It has sat these past 18 years on my bookshelf with those books that have moved and shaped me. It is only a little piece of wood but throwing it away never occurred to me.

I carefully lowered the aluminum Grumman canoe, stern first, and the home-made yolk cushions rocked forward onto my shoulders. The added weight dropped into my hips and thighs as I took a couple small, tentative test steps on the pine-needled, glacier-scraped shield rock. Then with a grinmace I followed my friend down the portage.

The body of this aluminum whale resounded empty metallic with each heavy puff. Summer branches racked their nails, screeching along its body as I wove through the trees, watching Tania's runners and mosquito-bitten calves recede down the path. At sixteen I had not yet grown to my full height but was still the tallest of the three women on this trip, so this second canoe was clearly mine to shoulder. Having inherited Grandby's thick ankles and broad frame, I was strong enough.

Although the canoe burnt into my shoulders, a result of stretched summer skin, muscle fatigue and, of course, bug bites, soon that quiet Zen-like state washed over me as I turned within. Curly wisps escaped my long ponytail and tickled my nose. The path appeared and disappeared with each lumbering step. Warm northern earth filled my nostrils.

As the path cleared, Tania moved further on ahead and I was alone in my massive metal hat. The tell-tale soft descent had begun; the shift in landscape and a slightly fresher breeze were a relief to anyone wielding a bug-filled, summer-heated canoe. The put-in was near. At the narrowing I risked tipping the stern up a bit to see my direction. Ahead the portage shimmied and dipped down through two upward-sweeping shield rocks that formed a graceful 'V'. No sooner had I set foot, stork-like, on the skinny path of earth but an ear-ringing 'DONG' resounded as though I had been hit over the head with a mallet. At 5'7" it was clear I was not tall enough to pass. Wedged in the portage, I stood one foot forward, one foot back. I dared not lift the canoe alone for fear of damaging it or myself.

Contemplating my predicament, I found the whole thing perfectly hilarious to be wedged into the landscape. In typical teenaged style, I started to giggle and called out for help, teetering to remain on my feet. A few moments later Dad appeared around the path to help. But his face read like thunder.

Ours was a difficult relationship. We have similar personalities which meant that we got under each other's skin easily. I knew exactly how to provoke, wheedle and anger Dad, which often resulted in dart-throwing glances and grey-eyed staring contests before I backed down. He was always right.

Predictably furious at my carelessness and apparent lack of concern, his frustration boiled over and his anger scoured the giggles off my face. Pushing me aside in his brusque business-like way, he easily lifted the canoe from its halting place and stormed off to the end of the portage. Where the weight of the Grumman had previously seared my skin, now hot indignity, injustice and anger rose. I surged after him. We faced off at the water's edge,

> *"How was that my fault, Dad? Why should you get angry with me when I wasn't tall enough to pass through? I don't deserve to be yelled at!"*

Water lapped my tread-bare runners. Birds fluttered through the cedars. Silently he turned on his heel and retreated down the portage. Weight lifted from my shoulders.

This was the very first time in my life I remember directly challenging my dad. I really faced up to him, petrified though I was. It was my first tentative step on my own long, inner portage to becoming a strong woman.

When I hold this small piece of driftwood, faint memories of pine needles, camp smoke and sparkling water return with the taste of fresh blueberried pancakes. With them return this moment that shaped me and changed me forever.

Experiences of place are not fixed; they are multi-dimensional and enter the mind, body and heart through waters imbibed, dirt under nails, smells pressed into memories and images inextricably linked to imagination. Yet the telling and re-telling of experiences of place are shaped with each new experience and moulded by situation, emotion and audience. Reflecting through the meditative act of paddling brings me (in)to Place. I paddle in Place, a liminal space opened by this contemplative activity, by physical and/or emotional engagement/discomfort and by quiet wondering/wanderment.

Recognizing the ways in which I have connected stories and experiences with objects and artifacts, I decided to explore this intersection further. During the 2008 *Power of Place* juried art exhibition at OISE, I had an opportunity to try an alternative approach to understanding what and how adults learn about place through experience, narrative and artifact. My submission was one that drew viewers into the phenomenon of experiencing learning about place on canoe trips. I projected images of my learnings of Place onto my personal canvas, my grandfather's canoe wanigan from his trips in the 1950s and 1960s. The wanigan contained artifacts of canoe trips and invited viewers in to gently engage with the work, unpacking Place (as I continue to do in my life and research). As each item, each layer was removed, so the recorded sounds and voices grew richer with the viewers' own understandings and experiences. As it was unpacked, the canvas of experience moved and shifted.

The feedback of the viewers showed that this form did indeed create a space of understanding Place through each individual's experiences held not just in the mind, but in the body, senses, soul and emotion, remembered and inextricably linked to their places of learning. This was the strength of reaching beyond static academese. That

> the human senses, intercepted by the written word, are no longer gripped and fascinated by the expressive shapes and sounds of particular places. The spirits fall silent. Gradually, the felt primacy of place is forgotten, superseded by a new, abstract notion of "space" as a homogeneous and placeless void. (Abram, 1997, p.184)

Memories of experiences and of places of learning were drawn out and encouraged by providing the viewers alternative ways to tell their stories and identify their experiential learning beyond words. In my future research will continue to listen to learn how recreational canoeists arrive at their understanding of place from their transformative canoe trip experiences at the intersection of artifact and story.

> *How can I bring to life what is mine alone, learned within the essence of self? My shoulder cracks as my arm rises counter to hips, my bruised knees brace against the gunwales, my fist, calloused to fit the paddle's handle, gently punches the moist cool spring air as the frayed, rounded tip of the paddle silently re-enters the water. My lower arm's muscles pull deliberately towards me and the blade takes on more inky water. Pushing and pulling, my shoulders roll as they have a thousand times before and the gentle rhythm of the canoe moves through my hips – a memory from the womb. The droplets of water, thousands before and thousands forever more, melt into my mind and into body's memory. Locked within, no words set them free.*

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Abram, D. (1997). *The spell of the sensuous: Perception and language in a more-than-human world.* New York: Vintage.

From Installation to Performance to the World Wide Web: Our Research on Caregiving and Alzheimer's Disease Continues

Maura McIntyre and Ardra Cole, Centre for Arts-informed Research
OISE/UT

In 2003-2004, with funding from the *Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada* (*SSHRC*), we exhibited *The Alzheimer's Project* – a seven-piece arts-informed research project about caregiving and Alzheimer's disease – in three Canadian cities: Victoria, British Columbia; Sudbury, Ontario; and Halifax, Nova Scotia. In each place we displayed the project for ten days in a prominent public venue and invited family caregivers to view the work and talk with us about their experiences of Alzheimer's disease and caregiving. We had group and individual conversations and many people contributed written responses and artifacts related to their experiences. Members of the general public responded to the exhibit through written comments and audio-tape recorded stories.

From a thematic analysis of the material we gathered at each site (written comments, audio-taped recordings and transcripts, and artifacts of care and caregiving) we created a 45-minute spoken word performance in three acts. In the winter and spring of 2006 we returned to each of the three research locations and performed *The Love Stories about Care and Caregiving* to audiences of family caregivers, health professionals, high school students, academics and members of the general public. In time for our return to Victoria, our story about the project, *Living and Dying with Dignity: The Alzheimer's Project,* was hot off the press. After our Halifax performances in July (2006) we worked for two long days with filmmaker Ann Bromley and the technical crew at Mount St. Vincent University in Halifax to produce a video and DVD of the *Love Stories*. In the fall (2006) we began work with playwright Martin Julien and a group of professional actors on the production of an audio CD version of *The Love Stories*. Both of these projects are intended for wide distribution of the research to diverse audiences.

With continued *SSHRC* funding, we began the next phase of research. In *Putting Care on the Map: Portraits of Care and Caregiving across Canada* we have continued our focus on creative and imaginative caregiving in a two-level study in which we ask:

- What does care look like?
- How do people from geographically or culturally diverse communities and underserved populations respond to the demands of caregiving for someone with Alzheimer's disease?
- What is the relationship between and among geography, culture and care?
- How is this relationship expressed on both a national and individual level?

Beginning in the fall (2006) we travelled to outlying areas of our earlier research communities – Sudbury, Halifax and Victoria – for a more in-depth exploration of underserved populations. On the ground, with intensive door-to-door outreach, we conducted in-depth interviews and invited family caregivers to photograph "what care looks like" using a disposable camera. We also invited them to contribute a symbol of care to *Gray Matters* – the growing collage of poems, stories and artifacts about caregiving that began with *The Alzheimer's Project*.

In addition, to expand our investigation of creative care across the country we have developed an interactive website to gather data, provide information, and communicate research results. Through the website we are literally mapping care across the country with an open invitation to family caregivers to help put care on the map. The website has a public education aspect (all project materials are mounted on the site) and two data gathering components (an on-line survey and an open invitation for family caregivers to contribute to *Gray Matters*).

Putting Care on the Map will culminate, in the spring of 2008, with a national public exhibit and a featured display at an academic conference. Visitors to the exhibit will be invited to engage with the "Portraits of Care" by listening to audio-taped stories of caregiving experience, reading poetic and narrative accounts of creative and imaginative care, and viewing collected artifacts that speak of the caregiving experience. As in all of our work, in *Putting Care on the Map*, we pay tribute to family caregivers and to the worthiness of care and caregiving in general.

In February, 2007 we launched our book, *Living and Dying with Dignity*, the *Love Stories* video and *Putting Care on the Map* website (http://www.oise.utoronto.ca/research/mappingcare/home.shtml) in a "Celebration of Care" at the *Ontario Institute for Studies in Education.*

The Arts and Social Work Research Initiative

Faculty of Social Work, University of Toronto

The Arts and Social Work Research Initiative (Faculty of Social Work, University of Toronto) was launched on November 14, 2006. *ASWRI* creates a space to share projects and foster scholarly and community programs. Faculty members, students, community partners, alumni and multi-disciplinary associates draw from the arts to expand knowledge at the societal and interpersonal levels and to encourage dialogue and social change.

Faculty founders*:*
Adrienne Chambon
Izumi Sakamoto
Ernie Lightman

CAIR Events 2007-2008

The Centre for Arts-informed Research Seminar Series

Thursdays, 12-1:30 p.m., Room 7-162 at OISE/UT

In a series of informal lunch-hour presentations, arts-informed researchers share works of scholartistry and provide a glimpse into the triumphs and tribulations of engaging in research without precedents. The series offers inspiration to novice and experienced arts-informed researchers alike.

Seminars take place on a near-weekly basis. Please check *CAIR*'s most recent seminar schedule to see whether a presentation has been scheduled for a given week.

The Centre for Arts-informed Research Works-in-Progress Series

Thursdays, 4:30 - 6 p.m., Room 7-162 at OISE/UT

CAIR's Works-in-Progress evening series provides students with a place to share their works-in-progress and offers an opportunity to receive constructive audience feedback in a supportive group setting.

Works-in-progress presentations take place on a near-weekly basis. Please check *CAIR*'s most recent schedule to see whether a presentation has been scheduled for a given week.

Member Updates

Nancy Halifax, Ph.D., Visiting Scholar, *Centre for Arts-Informed Research*, OISE/UT, presented an exhibition of photographs, ***A Day In The Life – URGENT***, January 29- February 23 2007 at OISE/UT. The exhibition was co-sponsored by the *Centre for Women's Studies in Education* and the *Centre for Arts-informed Research*, OISE/UT.

The images in the exhibit were selected from a vast number shot over a period of eight months, in a community-based photography project where cameras were given to women and men who were experiencing insecure housing and homelessness, social exclusion and poverty. The exhibition revealed photography as, and in, ethically transformative relationships where there is an opportunity to begin to promote empathic identification between the viewer and the one who is viewed.

Using digital and analogue 35mm single lens reflex and "point-and-shoot" cameras the focus was on urban environments, where participants worked with natural light and whatever other circumstances the setting offered. Eloquent black and white photographic montages were printed on canvas and left un-stretched: the medium is in part the message. The montages are large (30 x 40) and do not encompass the lasting archival quality that photographic fine art prints have. These prints reflect the transient nature of the lives of the artists that make them

and the material-canvas-reflects the notion of the tents and the tent cities that have appeared and disappeared across the urban landscape.

Kathleen Vaughan's doctoral thesis ***Finding Home: Knowledge, Collage and the Local Environments***, comprises an illustrated text and visual art installation. Her art installation was exhibited in November 2006 at the *Gladstone Hotel* in Toronto. A virtual tour of the *Gladstone* installation is available on Kathleen's website: www.akaredhanded.com.

In *Finding Home,* Vaughn explores personal, cultural and educational meanings of home, investigating how a person can create a feeling of being at home in the world. She takes a personal vantage point, basing her work in her own neighbourhood around Bathurst and St. Clair in Toronto, observed through a walk with her dog, Auggie. The text is a guided walk that brings together cultural, urban and art theory, history and geography, education, and ideas about collage as a method of research and art-making. Also representing the route of the walk, the visual work includes large scale drawings on paper, textile maps and sculptures, and archival and contemporary photographs—with the text creating a version of collage.

Recent Arts-Informed Theses at OISE/UT

Bowman, Victoria (M.A., 2006). ***Is Home Care in Crisis? A Reader's Theater About Issues in Home Care***

Bowman's reader's theatre script, *Is Home Care in Crisis*, represents a secondary analysis of data from a research project entitled *A National Snapshot of Home Support from the Consumer Perspective*. This research draws from two academic disciplines: critical disability studies and arts-informed research. Bowman's analysis aims to make the findings of *A National Snapshot* interesting and accessible to the general public, in order to support the lobbying work that the *Council of Canadians with Disabilities* is already engaged in around disability supports at the provincial, territorial and national levels. Bowman first presents her reader's theatre piece, followed by an academic narrative that makes sense of her work according to elements of arts-informed and disability research.

Lichtlbau, Dorothy (Ph.D., 2007). ***Dialectical Play and Dramatic Discourse: Eve, A Counter Myth***

Lichtblau's drama inquiry is a reconstruction of the ancient myth of Adam and Eve, merged with a story about a woman in the not-too-distant future. *Eve, A Counter Myth* is a full-length, multi-media theatrical work. Despite its serious intent and themes, it is a comedy written in modern colloquial language. The play links past with present, and legend with contemporary trends. An artistic project, *Eve* also is a qualitative creative inquiry that aims to contribute to discourse about what it means to be human. Lichtblau situates her inquiry in an investigation of the myth of *Adam and Eve* in part because this text exemplifies how stories evolve over time due to myriad variables, including the intentions of the storytellers, and cultural influences. She also explores how telling this patriarchal allegory about the feminine archetype from an alternate point of view might shift consciousness about gender, authority, nature, and morality.

Luciani, Teresa C. (Ph.D., 2006). ***On Women's Domestic Work and Knowledge: Growing Up in an Italian Kitchen***

This is an arts-informed thesis where recipes, images and text are scattered and shattered all over the kitchen floor and (re)assembled to tell stories about women's ways of teaching and learning in the kitchen. Through fiction, autoethnography and photographs, Luciani locates the kitchen as a place where identities, social roles and expectations are conveyed and contested. Abstract concepts are fleshed out in small, ordinary acts and experiences––the fragments—that make up a life lived. In this manner, scratching the surface of mundane domestic chores exposes the depth and complexity of domestic knowledge; celebrates and values how and what women teach and learn in the kitchen; shows how knowledge not only resides in the mind of an individual but also in the body, the senses, and in relationship with others. In this sense, education becomes relational, contextual, embodied.

Plett, Lynette Sarah (Ph.D., 2006). ***Thinking Back Through Our Mothers: A Sampler Quilt of Kleine Gemeinde Mennonite Women and Country Homemakers***

Thinking Back Through Our Mothers is an autoethnographic and historical account of the lives of Mennonite farm women. Plett writes about her childhood on a farm in a Mennonite community in Manitoba and uncovers the everyday lives of her mother and grandmothers – *Kleine Gemeinde* Mennonites in Manitoba and Kansas – by delving into their diaries. She compares their lives with the lives of other prairie farm women by examining letters to *The Country Homemakers*. *Thinking Back* takes an arts-informed approach and is written in the form of a Sampler quilt. There are twelve *blocks* or chapters to this thesis. The blocks are thematically organized into four *rows*. Each row (made up of three chapters) begins with an autoethnographic account of the theme for that row. The second chapter in each row is a historical narrative of Plett's *Kleine Gemeinde* mother and grandmothers. The third chapter in each row includes a script based on the letters farm women wrote to *The Country Homemakers*. Images of a quilt which accompanies this thesis, *Uncovering Ordinary Women/Everyday Knowledges*, are pieced into the text.

Rykov, Maria Helena (Ph.D., 2006). ***Music at a Time Like This: Music Therapy Cancer Support Groups***

Music at a Time Like This chronicles a music therapy support group for adult cancer patients that voices experience from the patients' perspectives. Participants talked about feeling lonely and isolated as cancer patients. They experienced the music therapy support group as profound, nonverbal connection to themselves, to each other, and connection to something larger – the music – that was beyond themselves. The experience of improvised music-making in music therapy support groups was particularly empowering and provided feelings of control during a time of loss-of-control inflicted by the disease and its experience as illness. Music therapy research is, by definition, arts-based. The representation of this is, furthermore, arts-informed because the findings are portrayed in a literary form that is intended to be accessible to a wide readership beyond the academy and the music profession. Nonverbal and auditory elements are incorporated to portray the participants' experiences directly and to heighten the reader's phenomenological engagement. These include a melodic-poetic transcription – a song – based on the compression and synthesis of the research findings.

Books of Interest

Wild Fire: Art as Activism, **Deborah Barndt (Editor), Sumach Press, 2006.**

The dynamic essays in this collection speak to activists, artists, educators, students and community workers who share a passion for art, politics and social change. The questions of why and for whom art is made and the way it can be used to promote discussion and transformation are addressed. Through exploration of a range of artistic projects – from mural painting, photography, zine-making, alternative publishing to street theatre, puppetry and protest singing – *Wild Fire* inspires critical and artistic forms of social commentary and action. Contributors discuss experiences across the globe, taking the reader on journeys to Nicaragua, East Asia, Bosnia, Canada and Chile.

***Handbook of the Arts in Qualitative Research: Perspectives, Methodologies, Examples, and Issues*. J. Gary Knowles and Ardra L. Cole (Eds.), SAGE Publications, Inc., November 2007.**

The bringing together of the arts and qualitative inquiry is changing the face of social science research. The increasing shift toward arts-based research has raised complex questions, such as how to evaluate its quality and even whether distinctions exist between what is art and what is research. In the ***Handbook of the Arts in Qualitative Research***, editors J. Gary Knowles and Ardra L. Cole bring together the top scholars in qualitative methods to provide a comprehensive overview of where arts-based research has come, and where it is going. Through various categories of art and art-based research - namely epistemological, historical, methodological, thematic - this defining work will address all the significant issues of conceiving and conducting arts-based or arts-informed research in the social sciences and humanities, as well as the challenges of composing final representations of the research.

***Seeing Red - A Pedagogy of Parallax: An Epistolary Bildungsroman on Artful Scholarly Inquiry*, Pauline Sameshima, Cambria Press, 2007.**

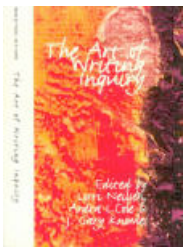
Seeing Red is based on Sameshima's doctoral thesis, winner of the 2007 *Arts Based Educational Research Outstanding Dissertation Award*. The book is written in the form of an epistolary bildungsroman – a didactic novel of personal developmental journeying. The work is a fiction (letters from a graduate student to the professor she is in love with) embedded in developmental understanding of living the life of a teacher researcher. Sameshima shares the possibilities of how artful research informs processes of scholarly inquiry and honours the reader's multi-perspective as integral to the research project's transformative potential.

***Curriculum and the Cultural Body*, Stephanie Springgay and Debra Freedman (Editors), Peter Lang, 2007.**

Curriculum and the Cultural Body extends the discussion of body knowledge by attending to the unspoken questions and practices in education that silence, conceal and limit bodies. The collection of essays exemplifies a new genre of interdisciplinary writing. Drawing on such diverse discourses as curriculum studies, cultural studies, film studies, media and technology studies, feminist theory, queer theory, phenomenology, a/r/tography and art education, the authors in this edited book explore the multiplicities and complexities of the body in learning and knowing. Each engages with questions that relate the practices of culture to a re-conceptualization of the body in and as curriculum.

Arts Informed Inquiry Series

Backalong Books and The Centre for Arts-informed Research



The Art of Writing Inquiry
Lorri Neilsen, Ardra L. Cole, &
http://www.backalongbooks.com/tawi.html
J. Gary Knowles (Eds.)
Publication: November 2007.
ISBN 1-894132-06-8**.** List Price CDN $34.95

A rich collection of arts-informed writing as inquiry and inquiry into writing: essays on teaching and learning, excerpts and examples of writing inquiry, exhortations, strategies for writing and inquiring, powerful poetry and plays to perform-all at the leading edge of contemporary scholartistry.

Provoked by Art: Theorizing Arts-informed Inquiry
Edited by Ardra L. Cole, Lorri Neilsen, J. Gary Knowles, & Teresa Luciani
ISBN: 1-894132-08-4. List price: CDN$28.95

In this collection authors draw on illustrative examples of arts-informed research to foreground theoretical elements and issues associated with new genres of social science inquiry. Through languages and genres of fiction, poetry, drama, and visual arts the works in this volume show the potential of arts-informed research to bring together the academy and diverse knowledge communities.

Scholartist Series

Backalong Books and the Centre for Arts-informed Research

Living and Dying with Dignity: The Alzheimer's Project
by Maura McIntyre and Ardra Cole

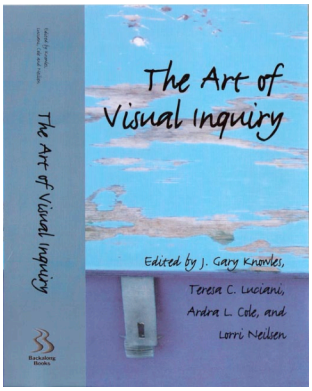
The *Alzheimer's Project* is comprised of several three-dimensional multimedia representations based on predominant themes emerging from the authors' research. Data informing their work are from multiple sources: personal writing, journal entries, caregiving notes, photographs, personal documents, library and internet research, and a series of structured conversations about the authors' experiences. The six themes represented in the installations, subsumed under the overarching theme of dignity, are: caregiving and contexts of care; dependence; education; mother-daughter relationships; memory; and, identity.

RESPECT: A Reader's Theatre About People Who Care for People in Nursing Homes
by Maura McIntyre

Of earth and flesh and bones and breath:
Landscapes of embodiment and moments of re-enactment
by Suzanne M. Thomas
ISBN 1-894132-14-9. List price CDN$34.95

Thomas has woven poetry, art, citations, and ruminations into a creative text that explores and performs, with insight and care, how to conceptualize and theorize the intersections of complex issues around place, memory, poetics, embodied knowing, pedagogy, ecology, philosophy, aesthetics, artful knowing and writing. The book celebrates the possibilities of human being and becoming when the heart is integrally connected to the earth.

The Art of Visual Inquiry
Edited by J. Gary Knowles, Ardra L. Cole, Lorri Neilsen, & Teresa Luciani
ISBN 1-894132-10-6 List price: CDN$28.95



The authors portray, imagine and theorize about research that infuses visual arts processes and representational forms with qualitative inquiry. Chapters reflect a range of two- and three- dimensional visual art forms including photography, painting, installation art, collage and film.

Contributors:. Nancy Viva Davis Halifax; Allan Neilsen; Nicholas Paley; Suzanne Thomas; Pauline Sameshima; Annina Suominen; Alexandra Cutcher; Kathleen Vaughan; Lynette S. Plett; Rachel Nash and W. F. Garrett-Petts; Alex F. de Cosson, Rita L. Irwin, Sylvia Kind, and Stephanie Springgay; Kathy (Aikatherine) Mantas; Robyn Gibson and Marianne Hulsbosch; Kelly Akerman; Lois Kunkel; Sharons L. Sbrocchi and Teresa C. Luciani; Jennifer Sumsion; Adrienne Chambon; Leah Burns; Lynn Butler-Kisber; Claudia Mitchell, Shannon Walsh and Sandra Weber; Carl Bagley; Maura McIntyre and Ardra L. Cole; Pauline Sameshima, Sharon L. Sbrocchi and J. Gary Knowles.

Creating Scholartistry: Imagining the Arts-informed Thesis or Dissertation
Edited by J. Gary Knowles, Ardra L. Cole, Lorri Neilsen and Sara Promislow
ISBN 1-894132-16-5 List price CDN $34.95

Authors offer insights into the art and craft of creating arts-informed theses and dissertations. Issues associated with imagining, developing and completing non-traditional social science research are addressed as well as the barriers, complexities and rewards of guiding and facilitating such exciting work.

Contributors: Lynn Butler-Kisber; Alexandra Cutcher; Bronwyn Davies & Suzanne Gannon; Liz DeFreitas; Patrick Diamond & Christine Van Halen-Faber; Lynn Fels, Kadi Purru & Warren Linds; Alma Fleet; Anastasia Kamanos Gamelin; Noel Gough & Warren Sellers; Peter Gouzouasis & Karen Lee; Andre Grace & Kris Wells; Nancy Halifax-Davis; Rita Irwin, Stephanie Springgay & Alex deCosson; J. Gary Knowles; Lois Kunkel; Carl Leggo &

Kevin Kirkland; Morna McDermott; Solveiga Miezitis & Kathy Mantas; Renee Norman; Antoinette Oberg & Laura Cranmer; Sara Promislow & Ardra Cole; Carole Roy; Sharon Sbrocchi; Karen Schaller; Suzanne Thomas; Pat Thomson & Jane Baskwill.

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