

Public Culture and Heritage: A Beijing Based Field School

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ABSTRACT

Cultural interpretation using emerging technology and transmedia narratives is transforming field-based education and ethnographic/folkloristic fieldwork. Public Culture and Heritage: A Beijing Based Field School (PCH) was conceived and implemented as a way to involve students and scholars in the transformative and participatory process described above, within an art education context.¹ PCH occurred in Summer 2011 and consisted of a two-week online orientation to fieldwork and transmedia cultural interpretation followed by a two-week residency in two Beijing districts, Jianguo and Song Zhuang. The field school concluded with a two-week online transmedia production experience. Student productions were posted to *Vine Online*.

In this article, based on practitioner research, we describe strategies for extending the traditional place-based model of the field school for the purpose of engaging learners across geographic, disciplinary, cultural, and technological domains. We also describe an approach that includes interaction within and across online and residential environments. Conclusions serving as recommendations for the field are provided.

Introduction

Cultural interpretation using emerging technology and transmedia narratives is transforming field-based education and fieldwork-based inquiry into the arts and culture. The rise of digital humanities as a broadly defined field of inquiry opens up possibilities for innovative research, while pervasive digital media affords flexible, mobile and modular opportunities for cultural documentation and interpretation (Coyne, 2010). Jenkins (2009) describes the “threshold”

¹ The Public Culture and Heritage: A Beijing Based Field School website can be accessed at <http://aaablogs.uoregon.edu/beijingfieldschool/>

of participation in contemporary culture as lowering and articulates the kinds of “literacies” that students, as well as teachers, parents, and citizens in general, need in order to engage fully in the possibilities adumbrated through multi-modal and multi-platform approaches (transmedia) to telling stories.

Strategies for extending the traditional place-based model of the field school for the purpose of engaging learners across geographic, disciplinary, cultural, and technological domains is the focus of this article. We describe our approach in leading the field school titled *Public Culture and Heritage: A Beijing Based Field School* (PCH) during the summer of 2010. This approach includes interaction within and across online and residential environments. We will examine in detail the ways in which ongoing changes in the global mediascape (Appadurai 1990) manifest in our field school. Conceptualizing and implementing the field school was informed by our familiarity with literature dealing with multicultural orientations to art education (for example Erickson & Young, 2002; Stuhr, 1994; Young, 2011), the art education of place (Blandy, 2011; Blandy & Fenn, 2012; Blandy & Hoffman, 1993; Graham, 2007), material culture studies (Bolin & Blandy, 2003, 2011), art education and technology (Sweeny, 2010), and art education in global/ international contexts (Arnold, Delacruz, Kuo & Parsons, 2010). Art educators and students engaged in the study of material culture within a multicultural and global/ international context should discover relevant applications of our approach to the development and implementation of immersive learning environments.

In this article we describe cultural research done within a field school context by participants rather than the process of doing research on a field school. Our method should be understood as based in practitioner research. This methodology provided us with the systematic means to examine and reflect upon our own practice in conceptualizing and implementing PCH, informing our plans for conceptualizing and implementing future field schools of this type in China.

Throughout PCH, students and scholars reflected on the field school experience itself. This reflection occurred in structured and unstructured ways during full group meetings, faculty meetings, student team meetings, as well as in informal meetings over dinner or in causal conversation. Materials as a source of reflection, as well as documentation of reflection, include field notebooks, photographs, video, generation of assignments, responses to assignments, and posts to the field school website, among others. For the purpose of this article we drew on these materials to evaluate and interpret the field school experience and outcomes. However, readers of this article should assume that our critical narrative traces cultural research *as* art education as distinct from cultural research *on* art education. Our goal is to understand how cultural research functions as a means for arts education, and what an immersive field school environment, augmented by emerging digital technologies for interpretation, offers in terms of this goal.

Field Schools, Fieldwork, and Cultural Interpretation

PCH was conceived and implemented through the Arts and Administration Program (AAD) and International Programs at the University of Oregon (UO) as a way to involve students and scholars in the transformative and participatory process described above. PCH occurred in Summer 2011 and consisted of a two-week online orientation to fieldwork and transmedia cultural interpretation followed by a two-week residency in two Beijing districts, Jianguo and Song Zhuang. The field school concluded with a two-week online transmedia production experience. Student productions were posted to *Vine Online*. This blog is associated with *ChinaVine*, a research venture with participant scholars from the United States (US) and the People's Republic of China (PRC). Four undergraduate students and three graduate students comprised the student body of the PCH field school. Of this group three students were Chinese Nationals with a fourth being a second generation Chinese-American, while the other two students were not of Chinese descent. In addition to us as

co-directors of PCH, Professors Lihui Yang and Deming An of Beijing Normal University served as onsite scholars. Willie Smyth, a US based folklorist, participated as a fieldwork mentor.

Historically, field schools have served as practical training opportunities for disciplines grounded in fieldwork. As Walker and Saitta (2002) explain with regards to archaeological field schools, "They are something of a rite of passage, the first experience of what for many is the defining activity of the discipline: fieldwork" (p. 199). While field schools are associated with other disciplines such as geography, geology, and historic preservation, our research on field schools found the most useful information for pedagogy and planning in archaeology.

Perry (2004) recognizes the field school as a place in which knowledge is constructed within a community operating within a specific cultural context. Perry believes that field schools are particularly well situated to promote "authentic learning" within a research community where instruction can be both intense and personal. For Perry, authentic learning "occurs when individuals, both students and professional archeologists, form communities to address real archeological questions, and to negotiate knowledge construction through meaningful social interactions" (p. 239). As a consequence she finds field schools "provide essential components to...intellectual and professional growth that cannot be fully achieved in the formal classroom setting alone" (p. 239). Equally important in this model is the interpretation and communication of knowledge generated in the field school.

Mytum (2012) amplifies Perry's (2004) observations on reflective learning by describing a circular process moving from concrete experience to reflective observation, to abstract conceptualization to active experimentation. Mytum also recommends that assessment guidelines for students be explicit, and that the field school environment balances planning and stability with the flexibility often required by the logistical uncertainties of context. In this regard, Clark

(2012) is particularly helpful in articulating that directors of field schools must consider issues of safety, preparing for the unexpected, facilitating/mediating interpersonal relationships, establishing rules of conduct in the field, and promoting flexibility.

The field school model is traditionally place-based and the fieldwork or training occurs *in situ*, but alternatives or extensions to this norm exist and often commingle with digital technologies for communication and publication. The Cultural Heritage Infomatics Initiative (2011) at Michigan State University offers an annual field school that provides students experience building “applications and digital user experiences that serve the domain of cultural heritage—skills such as programming, media design, project management, user centered design, digital storytelling, etc.” One of the exciting pedagogical aspects of the CHI field school is that participants engage in “building as a way of knowing,” a process that merges data analysis, programming, tool creation, and interpretive strategies in a collaborative environment. While this environment is anchored on the MSU campus, it also transcends place via the digital infrastructure that enables groups to work on materials linked to other sites and generate tools or experiences that engage users across networks of interest and communication, geographies and affiliations. Another example is the Barbuda Field School run by the City University of New York system, which in the past few years has explored use of interactive technology and video documentation about the student experience as means for enriching learning opportunities. In this model, students traverse the traditional archaeological field school terrain of skill building and facilitated training while simultaneously using digital media to track their experience and communicate their reflections and analyses (Kendall, 2011).²

Towards the goal of developing a field school that drew on both standard models of place-based experience and emerging opportunities presented by digital technologies, we imagined PCH as collaborative environment in which all participants learned about arts and culture through digital documentation and production. As

detailed below, we built a hybrid structure with both online and onsite components, designed to extend the richness of a field school via platforms such as WordPress, Facebook, Vimeo and other digital publishing or communication tools (including Chinese equivalents). Thus, in our reimagining of the field school model we sought to embed the use of digital media tools and platforms into the learning experience as a means to encourage participation across multiple modes of social practice.

Given the pedagogical characteristics of field schools as described above, PCH focused on comparative cultural practices and boundaries associated with community identity in Jiangua and Song Zhuang. This fieldwork was part of the ongoing fieldwork associated with *ChinaVine*. *ChinaVines*'s mission is to educate English-speaking / reading children, youth, and adults about the cultural heritage of China.³ This mission is advanced through an interactive website, chinavine.org, along with social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Vimeo, Sina Todou, etc.) in the US and the PRC.

² Ethnographers and folklorists have long used various forms of technology to support collecting data in the field as well as analyzing, interpreting, and communicating data. Surveying the use of technology in ethnographic and folkloristic fieldwork falls outside of the scope of this article. Readers interested in this relationship can refer to Fenn (2012); Holloway & Kononeko (2005); and Sikarski (2011). Additionally, it is important to point out that annual professional meetings associated with ethnographic disciplines routinely include sessions and workshops exploring the use of technology in fieldwork. For example Fenn regularly facilitates workshops with Andrew Kolovos at the American Folklore Society meetings. These workshops focus on digital audio recording and digital archiving. Furthermore, a recent workshop hosted by the folklore department at the University of Wisconsin, Madison paired folklorists with the programming team of an interactive “situated documentary” platform for mobile devices known as Augmented Reality Interactive Storytelling (ARIS). A white paper detailing best practices around folklore fieldwork, cultural tourism, and mobile technologies arose from this workshop and can be found at <http://www.afsnet.org/resource/resmgr/Best_Practices_Reports/ARIS_Final_Report.pdf>.

³ For more information on ChinaVine see Congdon & Blandy (2010a, 2010b).

Since its inception, graduate and undergraduate students in the PRC and the US have participated as research assistants to the scholars associated with *ChinaVine*. PCH represented an initial effort to directly connect undergraduate and graduate student participation, credit hours, and knowledge acquisition with the ongoing fieldwork of *ChinaVine* scholars. PCH provided students with the tools and experiences necessary to independently generate transmedia content for posting on *ChinaVine's* website and various social media sites in the US and the PRC.

The PCH Field School Course of Study

Online Orientation

The PCH field school was structured around three distinct yet interrelated units. The first was a two-week orientation facilitated online via a field school interactive course site built in WordPress <<http://aaablogs.uoregon.edu/beijingfieldschool/>>. This orientation introduced participants to pertinent aspects of China's cultural heritage, the locations to be visited, the *ChinaVine* project, concepts and theories related to cultural interpretation, folkloristic fieldwork methods, and practical exercises in digital documentation and fieldwork.

To assist students in understanding, appreciating, and maintaining a critical perspective to the PRC they read *China in the 21st Century: What Everyone Needs to Know* (Wasserstrom, 2010) and posed questions to the course site for discussion. Issues discussed by students and faculty included historical and contemporary Confucianism and its impact on Chinese culture, the Cultural Revolution, Mao's influence in the present day, the intersection of national and cultural policies, the influence of religion and the adoption of Capitalism in the PRC, cultural misunderstandings associated with both the US and the PRC, how museums construct cultural conceptions, local/global conceptions of the PRC Olympics, and public access to cultural resources in the PRC.

To orient students to *ChinaVine* and the interpretive process they were asked to read "Re-configuring Museums" by Welsh (2005). This article presents a model for understanding and creating cultural interpretation. After reviewing *ChinaVine.org* and reading the article by Welsh, students were asked to respond online to questions associated with the ways in which *ChinaVine* integrates materiality, engagement, and representation into the interpretation of China's cultural heritage. Students were oriented to conceptions of culture by posing questions for discussion to the course site associated with readings on public culture and tourism (Baron, 2010), context (Hufford, 1995), and art (Pocius, 1995).

Students were oriented to fieldwork by being asked to reflect upon their own cultural backgrounds. Because much of our work in the PRC would pair oral narratives with images, students were asked to describe how their families represented themselves through stories and photographs. To expand students' appreciation of what constitutes material culture they were asked to describe distinctive family foods and to post a recipe to the course site. To prepare students to create media associated with their upcoming residency they were asked to read *Visual Storytelling: The Digital Video Documentary* (Kalow, 2011) as a basis for describing a story they found that could be the subject of a video documentary.

Residency

Jiangou is a pilgrimage destination situated near an important temple and has a nascent tourist industry. Song Zhuang is a cluster of villages that have become the home of several thousand contemporary artists. *ChinaVine's* partnership with the Beijing Folk Literature and Art Association permitted access to Jiangou. Professors Yang and An had done previous fieldwork in the village as well. Entry to Song Zhuang was possible because of our previous fieldwork there over the last several years in association with the artist He Xue-sheng.

During the two-week residency, participants, working in two teams, experienced, documented, and began to interpret Jiangou

and Song Zhuang. Each fieldwork team consisted of students from the US and the PRC and was led by a graduate student. Through folkloristic methods students investigated and documented the cultural development of these two districts. In Jianguo fieldwork included hiking to the temple complex on Miaofeng Mountain, observing a fertility offering at the temple, observing restoration efforts, and conducting an in-depth interview with the temple director and a scholar associated with the restoration of the temple complex. Students also conducted interviews with elderly villagers who could remember the pilgrimage traditions prior to the Cultural Revolution. Villagers also talked with students about their memories of the Japanese occupation of the area during World War II. At a “Red Tourism” site associated with the 90th anniversary of the Communist Party students were able to visit a local museum and observe a local performance of revolutionary songs. Villagers talked with students about how difficult life was in the early years of the PRC. Students were also able to interview villagers associated with the cultivating and preparation of food and drink from the locally grown roses.

In Song Zhuang students interviewed local government officials about their plans for the area as a commercial arts district. In addition, students interviewed five artists and one art critic living in the area about their work as well as their impressions of how Song Zhuang is changing from an area of farming villages to an internationally known artist enclave. One of the artists interviewed combined his discussion about his art with a demonstration of the preparation of traditional homemade noodles.

During the residency students were required to organize their audio-visual digital documentation, participate in language training, and engage in unstructured activities. This latter requirement was associated with our accommodations in one of Beijing’s traditional hutong neighborhoods and gave students the opportunity to compare arts and culture aspects of our field sites with those found in and around the urban milieu of a hutong. Throughout the residency component of the field school, we encouraged the use of a variety

of media and devices for documentation, including equipment we brought specifically for the field school and the students’ personal devices. Our approach here revealed the ways in which ubiquitous technologies such as smart phones, digital cameras, and micro video camcorders might fit with the pedagogical goals of the PCH field school. We were particularly interested in the dynamics of comfort and familiarity surrounding digital technologies. Students navigated these dynamics by learning to use technology we brought while also employing their own cameras and phones as fieldwork documentation tools. Beyond the hardware aspect of digital technologies, students also used social media software platforms such as the course site (built in WordPress) or their personal Facebook or Twitter accounts as outlets for documentation and reflection.

The final assignment during the residency was the creation of “treatments” for the web posts each team would compose using the fieldwork materials gathered. For these treatments they identified key photographs and video segments, drafted scripts for editing / assembling materials, and specified important names, concepts, terms, dates, locations, and other details that would be featured. Treatments integrated ideas from relevant readings on interpretation and cultural representation, and also included the division of tasks among team members and a tentative timeline/workflow. Each team presented their treatments to the whole group so as to elicit feedback, refine their approaches, and settle on at least two treatments for final production (one for each fieldwork site).

Post-residency

The final unit of the field school moved back into the online environment, as teams collaborated virtually to build and finalize the posts they were each ultimately responsible for. These posts comprised cultural interpretations from Jianguo and Song Zhuang and were published via both the course site and on *ChinaVine’s* blog: *Vine Online* <<http://aaablogs.uoregon.edu/vineonline/>>. Publication was accompanied by prompts posted on *ChinaVine’s* other social

networking sites within the US and the PRC. Interpretation was to include text and an image gallery and/or an edited video. Posts were to interpret at least one of the following: artist, heritage, and/or place.

Following are one abridged interpretation each from Jianguo and Song Zhong, composed by students in the field school. The first is primarily heritage focused with the second having an artist focus. Our purpose here is to suggest what students accomplished through their fieldwork and some of the socio-cultural issues interpreted by the students. Readers are encouraged to visit *Vine Online* and/or the field school website for the unabridged transmedia rich versions.

Jianguo: Cultural Tourism

The following is excerpted from (<http://aaablogs.uoregon.edu/beijingfieldschool/2011/08/12/jianguo-cultural-tourism/>)



Figure 1. Jianguo Village.

The temple above Jian Guo, a village outside of Beijing, is a location of significance for Buddhism, Taoism and Confucianism. Until 1986, when a road up the mountain was built and the restoration of the temple began, the only way from the village to the temple was by pilgrim trail on foot... The village of Jian Gou has links to the temple, red tourism and roses cultivated in the area... Mr. Wu, the owner of the restaurant we visited for lunch and interviewed, told us that currently sixty percent of the village grows roses...



Figure 2: Jianguo Restaurant.

The fieldwork team's lunch included a fried type of pancake made with roses from the village inside of it. The team was also served fish, vegetables, stewed chicken and rose tea grown in the area... After lunch, Mr. Wu, the owner and cook at the restaurant, led the team to a bedroom to conduct the interview... The bedroom contained a prominently placed poster of Chairman Mao positioned over the television set... The room we interviewed Mr. Wu in also had a kang in it, which is a bed

historically used because it can be heated from beneath in the winter. Sounds from cooking in the kitchen while lunch was made for the employees, employees cleaning up the dining area and a radio could also be heard...Mr. Wu seemed interested in portraying this interest in his place of business to visitors to his website.



Figure 3. Mr. Wu.

While we documented the kitchen and the adjacent room where food was prepared to be served, Mr. Wu videotaped our group moving through the space.

Song Zhuang: Zhang Jianhua

The following is excerpted from <http://aaablogs.uoregon.edu/beijingfieldschool/2011/08/16/zhang-jianhua/>

Zhang Jianhua is a contemporary sculptor known for being controversial. The subject of his work often involves poverty, exploitation, and death...Before attending the Central Academy

of Fine Arts, Zhang grew up in a small village in the Henan province of China...In his life time, he has worked as a farmer, a miner, and an artist assistant before attending university and starting his own artist career. The main body of his sculptural work reflects his own life and depicts many individuals he has come in contact with.

His first series, the *Zhuangtang Village*, focused on rural Chinese peasants. Using his own hometown as a model, featuring actual villagers in his work, Zhang depicts the hardships facing farmers today. Zhang's second series, *Coal-the black Gold* is about the strife of coal miners in China. To prepare for this series, Zhang visited coal mines in Henan and Shanxi provinces, working and living with miners, even experiencing a mining accident where some of his friends were injured and killed. After exploring farmers and miners, Zhang turned to another social problem, prostitution...Here Zhang created a complete environment with an illegal taxi in front of a store front where prostitutes are waiting inside.



Figure 4. Prostitute Series by Zhang Jianhua.

Further back, there are a series of rooms graphically depicting what the customers are paying for.

His current series, *City Monument*, Zhang focuses on urban development and modern philosophy and religion.



Figure 5: Zhang Jianhua with City Monument.



Figure 6: City Monument / Ai Weiwei by Zhang Jianhua. Hundreds of small figure sculptures are placed within a decaying urban landscape featuring prominent Beijing architecture such as the Bird's Nest and CCTV building.

Reflecting On and Interpreting the Field School Experience

Fieldwork teams successfully produced two transmedia interpretations each of Jianguo and Song Zhuang. Postings included interpretive text as well as photographic and/or video documentation/ interpretation. Consistent with assignment guidelines, posts focused on individual artists, cultural heritage, geographic area or a combination of these. Posts were informed by the online orientation to the field school that explored China's cultural heritage, fieldwork techniques, and interpretation through a variety of media. An important component of this field school was introducing students to the fluid experience of ethnographic fieldwork rife with last minute alterations to plans. Adding extensive technology into the mix increased the need for flexibility, as technical issues (some large, some small) became sudden realities in the field. For example, a particular issue that emerged with the video component of fieldwork was the wide variety of file formats we generated. As students prepared to edit and organize video in the field, file compatibility problems with an editing platform (Final Cut Pro) presented a

bottleneck that ultimately required us to procure transcoding software. Faculty and student participants worked together to navigate such fluidity and generated solutions and strategies that can enrich future field schools associated with *ChinaVine*.

Student evaluations conducted anonymously after the end of the field school by the UO International Affairs office confirms much of what we hoped students would gain from the experience. Comments by participants acknowledged the value of the culturally immersive field school environment as important to professional experience and producing cultural interpretation. In this regard appreciation was expressed for the opportunity to get to know the artists as a part of the interpretive process. Several students commented on the challenges associated with working in the field. They noted the fluidity of the fieldwork experience and the necessity of sometimes building experiences as you go. For one student the most valuable experience associated with the field school was the essay that was written about their own cultural heritage and how that was a point of comparison with what was experienced during the residency. However, this same student questioned the need for pre-residency readings and would have preferred to go to the PRC without pre-conceptions.

Another source of information about the student's experiences was an article written about the field school for a UO blog (Gerdes, 2011). For this article several students were interviewed. Comments were consistent with what emerged in the formal evaluations. It was particularly noteworthy that in this article a student commented on a more nuanced understanding of the cultural influences Chinese artists are bringing to bear upon their work. This included the work of calligraphers that were being influenced by both traditional Chinese calligraphy and American-style painting. One student commented on differences she believe exists between how artists in the west consider "tradition" as compared to the artists she interviewed in the PRC who routinely combined traditional and non-traditional approaches. A Chinese National student commented on how her experience

in Jianguo is assisting her in considering generational differences associated with Mao and the Chinese Communist Party. In this regard she finds it interesting that celebrating history is contributing to the economic development in rural and poor areas of the PRC.

Conclusion

Our purpose in this article was to describe an approach to an existing educational model, the field school, that extends learning and engagement through pre- and post- online experiences using WordPress and other social media tools or digital communications technologies. Integral to this purpose was illustrating how digital technology can be used in collaborative, team-based production of transmedia cultural documentation and interpretation in such a way as to encourage exploration of both content and methods. Student and instructor participation, our evaluation of student work, and post-field school evaluations and interviews support the following conclusions. These conclusions are such that they can also serve as recommendations to others in the field of Art Education directing or considering the field school as a model for engaging with material culture in a cross cultural global or international context.

A mix of emerging and established technologies in a field school context can extend the engagement factor beyond the traditional time frame of a "course" or other academic unit. Combining online tools with face-to-face work and travel permits students and faculty alike to participate in a range of ways that will likely move beyond the official "end" of the field school and locate learning across multiple places and times. In the case of PCH this extension of the learning space manifested in several students expressing interest in continuing to work on producing content for *ChinaVine* that would draw on materials gathered during the field school but do not yet appear in the posts teams created to satisfy course requirements. Continuing to contribute to the *ChinaVine* project beyond the credit-bearing timeframe of the field school speaks to a commitment born out of the intersection of experience, value, and learning embodied in PCH.

Developing a flexible format regarding technology and teaching gives students room to feel comfortable using existing skills as well as exploring new opportunities. Instead of setting out to teach specific technologies. In the case of PCH we built the field school and its assignments in a manner that encouraged students to utilize tools for documenting, communicating, interpreting, and publishing that were both familiar and unfamiliar. As such, peer learning emerged as an important component of engagement throughout the field school.

Engagement can be both transnational and localized in the model we propose. Students gathered online prior to our two-week residency, becoming familiar with relevant materials and each other before gathering face-to-face in Beijing. After dispersing, they came together once more online in order to construct final postings. These postings, as nodes of entry into China's cultural heritage for other learners not affiliated with the field school, continue to extend the cultural engagement beyond the confines of the field school through the use of the interactivity built into the *ChinaVine* project.

The field school model permits learning as an individual and within the context of an interdisciplinary team. As one PCH student observed in a post field school interview:

It was extremely satisfying to see all of our different majors coming together to create something, kind of like a puzzle. I don't think it would have worked nearly as well if we were all the same major. I learned how to work as a team and really liked having a defined role in the group (where I could) give help pertaining to my unique knowledge. (Gerdes, 2011)

Significant to this student's observation, and at the heart of what we intended to accomplish with PCH and articulate in this article, is that experiencing, learning about, and interpreting the arts and culture is a multidisciplinary, multivocal, multimodal, and multi-platform endeavor that may be best realized in an immersive environment that a field school can provide. In noting that our field school model necessarily unfolded across a set of complex and multisensory

environments in Beijing, and that the field work and media content produced by participants attempts to represent constellations of people, practices, and experiences, we recognize the possibility of tensions around concepts such as multimodal or multivocal. Through critical reflection and discussion with participating students, we sought to navigate these tensions by acknowledging the constraints of technological and cultural systems we worked with while offering approaches to balanced and thoughtful interpretation. For example, the material posted online by students draws on text and images (still or moving) to represent cultural environments and practices rich in sensual stimuli. As powerful as the web is for distributing knowledge and media, there are not tools to articulate smells or tactile aspects of experience. Furthermore, we had students work within existing publication templates drawn from the *ChinaVine* project that determine length of text and number of images. Rather than ignore such tensions we were able to discuss with the students ways in which the privileging of visual media (text/images) on the web present us with opportunities for critical reflection on research and interpretation. Other potential tensions between the model we promote here and the actual experience in the field—language barriers, relatively short period of residency, or the various positionalities of students, faculty, Chinese partners, and artists or culture bearers—similarly provided us with teachable moments toward which we could turn ethnographic sensitivity to polyphony (Bahktin 1981) and social practice (Bourdieu 1977) in order to guide critical discussion with students about both content and context of field work.

Our articulation of the PCH field school experience supports what was referenced earlier in this article about archeological field schools. PCH participants were involved in the construction, interpretation, and transmedia communication of knowledge associated with fieldwork experiences in the specific cultural contexts of Jianguo and

Song Zhuang. It is our conviction that students' awareness that their transmedia interpretations would be posted to *ChinaVine* supports Perry's (2004) position on the authentic learning that is associated with field schools. While, testing Mytum's (2012) circular process of reflective learning falls outside of our purpose, our communications with, and observations of, students as they engaged in preparing transmedia interpretations for *ChinaVine* suggest that a circular process moving from concrete experience (in the villages) to reflective observation (review of field notes and digital documentation), to abstract conceptualization (preparation of treatments) to active experimentation (preparing interpretive materials for posting) was involved. Further study is warranted as is looking at the possible relationship between reflective learning and arts-based learning. As the co-directors of PCH, we can attest to the vigilance, flexibility, facilitative skills needed on our part to navigate and negotiate interaction within and across online and residential environments within a multicultural context.

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“How Will You Do This?” Infusing Multiculturalism Throughout Art Teacher Education Programs

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ABSTRACT

The argument that teacher education is unresponsive to critical approaches to multiculturalism is not new (Vavrus, 2011). Some art education programs continually marginalize multiculturalism in social foundation courses (Knight, 2006). Or, if multiculturalism is included in normative courses like methods, it is situated as a “theme” within the curriculum. This marginalization of multiculturalism is not conducive to teaching preservice students how to respond to diversity or to construct a culturally responsive pedagogy. The following article details an action research project in which the author describes, analyzes and assesses strategies used to infuse multiculturalism throughout an art education secondary methods course. This research helps to reframe the initial debate that questions the quality of multicultural competency and visibility in preservice teacher education.

“How Will You Do This?”

During my dissertation defense, I passionately declared that I would create multicultural art education experiences in which students questioned power structures, identified personal biases, promoted equity, and learned empathy. I hoped that my teaching and students’ learning these lessons would inform their future art teaching. As I concluded my novice proclamation, a committee member asked, “How will you do this?” I did not have an answer, and I willingly shared this fact. Fortunately, my “I don’t know yet” did not result in my failing the defense exam. The committee member’s question was not proposed to contest my goals; its purpose was to make me cognizant of how I would have to plan a way to accomplish those goals. Art teacher education programs that thoroughly integrate multicultural goals into normative art education curricula are scarce (Knight, 2006). The committee member knew this and wanted to prepare me, as she was once in my position, asserting similar goals.

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