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Map of Truth Commissions, exhibit at El Museo de la Memoria y los Derechos Humanos, Santiago, Chile. Designed and constructed by Árbol Color and the Human Rights Commission. Exhibit photographs from Amnesty International.

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Contents

Editorial Introduction: Making human rights visible as a visual and cultural practice

Dipti Desai

A chilly persistent wind blows on this damp rainy afternoon as I walk with three women from *Machsom Watch* (Human Rights Group) along the towering, stark grey, barbwire-capped wall to the entrance of the Khandani checkpoint. This checkpoint cuts through the West Bank, separating the Palestinian towns and East Jerusalem. Palestinian workers are heading home from Jerusalem talking and laughing as they cross several turnstiles, slowly disappearing from my view. I am here to watch the activities at the checkpoint, which is part of the mission of *Machsom Watch* ("Machsom" means checkpoint in Hebrew), an organization of Israeli women that is against the Israeli occupation of the territories and the systematic repression of the Palestinian nation. Currently, the women monitor over forty checkpoints across the West Bank in groups of two or three volunteers and record what they see. A report is written after each shift and disseminated through their website. The website features daily reports, photographs, and videos documenting the restricted movement of Palestinians. This restriction, as Ginsburg (2011) indicates, "impact[s] upon all aspects of the lives of Palestinians: access to medical care, work, employment, education, and more" (p. 22).

A significant part of human rights activities is making the invisible visible. Underscoring the articles in this special issue on human rights and art education is a question that Natascha Sadr Haghighian once put to artist Ashley Hunt (2006): "How do we erase the images that create invisibilities?" (p. 6). Each article in different ways addresses the visual practice of human rights, that is to say, the "way we are able, allowed, or made to see, and how we see this seeing and the unseeing therein" (Foster, 1988, p. ix).

In this special issue human rights is understood as both a visual and cultural practice (Pres, 1996) that is "embedded in local contexts and in the multiple realities of everyday life" (p. 290). Our ability to understand the complexity of the Israel-Palestinian situation for instance, depends on a view of culture as a practice, a view that moves away from a static notion of culture toward one that addresses the multiple realities that come into play in this situation. Here multiple interests, and assymetries of knowledge/power shape the ways human rights models are perceived, enacted, and provoke social change. As

the women of *Machsom Watch* indicate the government of Israel has used the women's presence at the checkpoints to indicate that the government is not abusing the Palestinians and in fact has allowed a human rights group to observe their actions, which speaks to their openness. This complicates the power of *Machsom Watch* to enact social change. Initially, the Palestinians saw them as allies, but now they are seen as powerless women and incapable of really making a change for them. Yet, as the women indicated to me, they need to be present and vigilantly watch the checkpoints, despite their compromised situation.

Several articles in this issue allude to the question of the role of human agency in defining and being defined by a set of human rights values (Pres, 1996), and of the role visual representation plays in this articulation of human rights. Human rights is defined broadly by the authors in this special issue: from art itself being viewed as a right, to the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which outlines the right to life, liberty, freedom, equality and justice, as well as to civic and political rights, and cultural, economic and social rights. As a visual and cultural practice each author examines what human rights means pedagogically and its implications for the field of art education.

James Rolling, Jr. in his essay "Arts practice as agency: The right to represent and reinterpret personal and social significance" argues that art practice is a fundamental human right. The right to make visible one's lived experience has been a vital component of human history and one that is also a highly contested terrain. Understood as a behavior that develops agency and self-determination, art practice is conceptualized by Rolling as mark making, making models, and making "special" aesthetic interventions that are a necessary part of living in a democratic society where exchange of competing ideas is integral to its structure. By arguing for the social significance of the arts, Rolling makes a case for art education pedagogy as a vital force for social transformation.

The graphic essay "The Fork" is a tale about the dehumanizing experience of prison life and the emotional texture of visibility. The author, Rachel Williams describes an incident in the Iowa prison where she works as an art teacher that reframes how we understand domesticity (in this case through a real fork) from a site of privilege and of confinement.

In our post-colonial era where mass migration has become a common phenomena, human rights has been redefined as Gail Benick discusses in "Digital Storytelling and the pedagogy of human rights" to encompass the right to maintain one's collective identities. By counteracting and contesting the images of themselves as invisible and/or visible only in a negative/stereotypic manner, immigrant students in Benick's digital storytelling course intervened and re-presented themselves and their lives in a manner that complicates our understanding of the immigrant experience in Canada.

In "Disrupting discourses digitally for LGBTQ rights," Mindi Rhoades argues for using digital media for community-based collective actions to disrupt, challenge, and change the anti-LGBTQ dominant discourses that circulate in our society today. She analyzes the hateful/negative discourses using the lenses of *artivism*, liberatory literacy performance and interventionist art, and provides examples of contemporary positive/celebratory discourse in virtual space that are not without its own challenges. She shows the complexities of the discourses on LGBTQ rights in terms of the ways in which positive discourses can be co-opted, negated and neutralized.

The topic of human rights through the lens of contemporary art is explored with hospitalized youth in Madrid in the article, "Contemporary art as a resource for learning about human rights: A case study of the use of the Placenta Methodology" by María Acaso, et al. Using the Placenta Methodology a team of artists and art educators designed five workshops based on articles from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights—covering freedom of opinion and expression, right to education, right to migration, and right to an adequate standard of living. The description of the art educational workshops provides a vivid example of how we can engage youth in understanding their rights, and also demonstrates how socially engaged art can, through critical reflection and dialogue, open spaces to envision social change.

Themina Kader in "Violations of human rights as revealed in Afghan children's artwork" shows the ways children's representations of their lives make visible the abuses incurred by Afghan women and children in the current Afghanistan War. She argues that artworks are credible tools that record the violations of human rights and therefore serve a pedagogical function that need to be used in art classes in the United States. These artworks are one way the images of invisibility regarding a war that we are implicated in, and the price paid by those directly affected by this war, are made visible.

In "Human rights, collective memory, and counter memory: Unpacking the meaning of Monument Avenue in Richmond, Virginia," Melanie L. Buffington and Erin Waldner argue for the inclusion of public pedagogy in art education. Using Monument Avenue as a pedagogical site, Buffington and Waldner examine the way racism functions in this society and how it can be examined and challenged through the use of contemporary art. They show how the many statues that line this avenue commemorate the confederacy and in doing so actively construct our collective memory about the past in the present. By focusing on the controversy regarding the addition of the Arthur Ash monument they discuss the ways this monument embodies a counter memory that complicates how we understand the past and present

In "El Museo de la Memoria y los Derechos Humanos: Pedagogic Reflections," Kathleen Keys shares a case study of a memorial museum, El Museo de la Memoria y los Derechos Humanos as a pedagogical site. In the Fall of 2005 in Santiago, Chile, Keys taught a course (titled "Visual Art and Human Rights") for a group of American students studying abroad. Drawing on this experience, Keys discusses how meaningful learning about human rights was experienced through their visit to the memorial museum that documents the brutal regime of Pinochet and its significant human rights abuses enacted upon ordinary Chileans.

Altogether the articles in this issue illustrate the different ways human rights work in art education is enacted as a visual and cultural practice. Drawing on a broader understanding of education that moves beyond schools to include public spaces, hospitals, museums, and children's artwork, they show us the need and relevance of public pedagogy as a site for social transformation and the ways the arts can reveal the invisible operations of power and privilege in our society. From a simple domestic object like the fork, to architectural spaces, to city planning we see the ways the regimes of the visible educate us in particular ways, actively rendering invisible those who live on the margins of our society. This collection of essays is one small gesture towards erasing the images of invisibility.

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Arts Practice as Agency: The Right to Represent and Reinterpret Personal and Social Significance

JAMES HAYWOOD ROLLING, JR.

ABSTRACT

In this article, the author reframes arts practice as agency, the right to represent and reinterpret personal and social significance in a way that contributes a positive self-valuation. A positive self-valuation in turn becomes a berth for the beneficial *habitus* of the individual. Bourdieu (1990/1999) describes habitus as the locus of the capacity to generate reasonable, common sense behaviors that are beneficial to others. Arts practices are *herein* theorized as a stock of reasonable, common sense behaviors—making marks, making models, and making "special" aesthetic interventions that signal a person, object, artifact, action, event or phenomenon as uniquely valuable, sacred or life-sustaining. These are behaviors that human agents commonly and continually employ in response to social needs, causes, and the imperative to signify. Given the social significance of arts practice, there is also great potential in a broader application of arts education pedagogy as a force for social transformation. Brent Wilson (2005) sketches out a fundamentally democratic and transactional pedagogical framework that socially responsive and responsible educators can make use of in the cultivation of social justice, the ethical imagination, and the transformation of the systems that ill-define us.

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITY

While it may seem to many that the arts are nice, but not entirely necessary (Eisner, 2002), making art is nevertheless universally practiced in some form by every nation, every people group, and every civilization. If the arts are not necessary, why are they practiced so ubiquitously? For the purposes of this article, I will redefine the practice of making art as the practice of rendering meaning from life experiences either through making marks, making models, or making special—the latter being a concept introduced by anthropologist Ellen Dissanayake (2003).

Rendering meaning artistically from life and thereby leaving behind the residuals of one's existence can be argued as a basic human right largely because all people, all cultures, and all civilizations at one point or another must assert the agency to represent to others that they matter, make a difference, or were simply here. To assert anything less is to accept meaninglessness. Perhaps the most crucial of all human rights is then the right to signify self, to signify experience, affinities, aspirations, beliefs, and ideas. Without the liberty to mark oneself as a person that matters, to model one's personal and social experience to others without censorship, and to make special one's place in the world without

assault, prohibition or diminishment by those who rule or dominate, human agency is curtailed. Agency is conceived here not as the "freedom to do whatever the subject wills but rather freedom to constitute oneself in an unexpected manner—to decode and recode one's identity" (Stinson, 2004, p. 57).

This right to visibly decode and recode personal and social significance was on display, for example, in the great Harlem Renaissance literary and visual reinterpretation designated as "the New Negro," wherein the ridiculed, stereotyped and degraded Negro body was reinterpreted as a document of strength and beauty, yet no less Black (Locke, 1925/1992). In addressing the theme of this special issue, I will present arts practice both as the manifestation of a fundamental human right to represent one's lived experience, and as a responsibility in the reclamation of interpretive and reinterpretive rights neglected.

ARTS PRACTICE AS SELF-DETERMINATION

The practice of interpreting and reinterpreting life meaning, or decoding and recoding the meaning of one's identity, is the art of self-determination. But it would be simplistic to assume acts of self-determination to be ostensibly self-serving. Self-determination is also an agency for social growth. Olivia Gude (2009) points out the role of self-determination in the development of democracy and vigorous community exchange:

> It is useful to remember that as educators we create citizens of a democratic society, not so much by filling students with ideas or facts about democracy, as by creating the conditions through which youth experience the pleasures, anxieties, and responsibilities of democratic life. (Gude, 2009, pp. 7-8)

Creating conditions for students and teachers as agents of non-hierarchical learning communities affording the self-determination of our contributions to democratic society also allows us to "perceive fully, consciously integrate our perceptions into complex constructions, and habitually act on the basis of our deepest awarenesses" (Gude, 2009, p. 8). There are countless historical incidents that can be cited where the residuals of an arts practice went beyond merely demanding the protection of human rights and being *about* something needed, and were instead that very thing that was needed. The Harlem Renaissance and the Black Arts movements were actually human rights movements. Picasso's Cubist monochromatic painting of *Guernica* innovated a new form for relating the trauma of war atrocities. The populism and protest in Woody Guthrie's "This Land is Your Land," like the defiant pride in James Brown's "Say It Loud—I'm Black and I'm Proud," was musically broadcast to inform United States citizens of beliefs rarely given public expression. The documentary photographs of

Lewis Wickes Hine were activist texts and catalysts for the transformation of workplace policies allowing the use and abuse of child labor in industry. Each of these works of art was an act of self-determination and a needed contribution to democratic life, whether embodying the triumph over trauma, extending the ethical imagination, or contributing toward the dismantling oppressive legacies simply because of their visual emergence. Each time an artistic act distills meaning from experience, it also enriches the exchange of ideas throughout the global commons.

To see the arts as a means of social interpretation and reinterpretation and as a catalyst for personal, interpersonal and social exchange and development, one must first see the arts as an "adaptive, dynamic, goal-seeking, self-preserving, and sometimes evolutionary" *system* for perpetuating the human species (Meadows, 2008, p. 12). I thus claim the arts to be much more than just a generator of activist manifestos, or a universal language for self-expression or a means of crafting meaningful objects with technical precision. In 1776, Richard Price wrote of "that principle of spontaneity or self-determination which constitutes us agents or which gives us a command over our actions, rendering them properly ours, and not effects of the operation of any foreign cause" or external oppressor (cited in Peach, 1979, p. 67). In this light, access to the arts practices are also an extension of this same inalienable right—a self-determinative means through which to aggregate, accommodate, and assimilate ways of thinking not our own and likewise disseminate our own meanings and resources to others.

Without the right to represent self as one sees fit, individuals become invisible. Through the arts, our social constructs, cultures, and civilizations bond and cohere on high moral ground, namely, the agreement to mutually benefit one another such that enduring social structures might be erected. Stuart Hall shares a useful insight regarding human identity construction and site selections for one's social representations:

> [W]e...occupy our identities very retrospectively: having produced them, we then know who we are. We say, "Oh, that's where I am in relation to this argument and for these reasons." So, it's exactly the reverse of what I think is the common sense way of understanding it, which is that we already know our "self" and then put it out there. Rather, having put it into play...we then discover what we are. I think that only then do we make an investment in it, saying, "Yes, I like that position, I am that sort of person, I'm willing to occupy that position." (as cited in Drew, 1998, p. 173)

Hall is suggesting the ubiquity of a site selection process in acts of self-determination. Along the spectrum from our youngest learners to adult learners, the site selection process in identity construction and accompanying acts of self-determination often presents itself in the form of play and risk-taking. We

first serendipitously select various sites for the construction of an identity in order to differentiate ourselves, locate our peer groups, and find like-minded communities. The early shape of identity can easily shift, and construction sites are typically discarded as easily as they are collected. These sites are also *contested*, primarily by those who have presumed the power throughout history to control the development and the destinies of young learners, people groups, or colonized nations (Rolling 2008a; 2009). Hence, the ability to think critically "is not intended merely to improve test scores" (Garoian, 1999, p. 49); it is a reasoning capacity that transgresses the status quo and its prescribed constraints, opening up space for new possibilities, social exchange, and mutually assured development. Arts practices are manifested as meaning-making systems functioning to delineate and influence the contours of our identities and, by extension, our multiple social worlds (Suominen, 2003). The art classroom actively facilitates the equipment of learners as agents in the representation and reinterpretation of meaning.

THE SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE OF MAKING MARKS, MAKING MODELS, AND MAKING SPECIAL

In this section, I pose three questions. Firstly, in what way is the act of making marks of social significance? Secondly, can arts practitioners make a meaningful contribution regarding matters pertaining to social justice, global economic development, and the continued viability of the human species in our varied sociobiological environments? And thirdly, do arts practices make possible a kind of social response that is "latent within the structure" of human social behavior (Meadows, 2008, p. 1) and that signals self-determined worth? There is something errant in contemporary valuation regarding the perceived irrelevancy of the arts versus the sciences when it comes to matters of social well-being. Historically, arts practices have been manifested as self-organizing behaviors through which humans construct systems of meaning utilizing medium-specific, language-specific, and/or critical methodologies, all with informational consequences (Rolling, 2008b). Self-organization is defined as the "ability of a system to structure itself, to create new structure, to learn, or diversify" (Meadows, 2008, p. 188). A system is defined as a "set of elements or parts that is coherently organized and interconnected in a pattern or structure" that becomes more than the sum of its parts and "produces a characteristic set of behaviors" classified as its "function" or "purpose" (Meadows, 2008, p. 188). These behaviors involve making marks, making models, and making "special" aesthetic interventions signaling worth.

Making Marks

The arts inform us more deeply of the human experience when *simple symbols* are brought together by the arts practitioner to work in concert as *complex symbols,* often in the development of a larger iconographic system. These complex symbols persist over large periods of time in their ability to inform human beings of diverse systems of cultural practice, behavior, linguistic and metaphorical meaning. For example, the ancient Egyptian ankh is a *simple symbol,* representing life. Ankhs could be found throughout the early Egyptian world, a shape often carved from precious stones like lapis lazuli. Yet when this simple symbol of life was situated by an artist or artisan in the hands of one of the Egyptian gods of the afterlife, whether through marks carved into a pillar that represented Osiris, or through marks painted on a wall that depicted an encounter with Anubis, it suddenly became a *complex symbol*—part of the iconography informing civilizations both past and present of a system of early Egyptian social practices and beliefs surrounding the ability for a prepared mummy to be granted the gift of eternal life after death.

Complex symbols are examples of mark-making behaviors applied to the construction of systems of meaning allowing a larger range of conveyances for representing personal and social significance.

Making Models

My second question asks, in what way can arts practitioners make a valuable contribution regarding matters such as the maintenance of potable water supplies, the proliferation and preparation of food stocks, the conservation and development of energy systems, transportation concepts, health and safety products, or enterprise and entrepreneurship ideas that might turn the tide of global poverty? Emily Pilloton (2009) has written a new book that details a hundred design products that empower people who are typically overlooked by commercial, for-profit designers. Pilloton holds a view of design as activism, as civics, as public health, and as a catalyst for asset development and social capital. There is a false dichotomy too often drawn between artists and designers. Craig A. Elimeliah (2006) points out that because "designers are artists and many artists are designers, the line between the two is complex and intriguing" (para. 4). Art educators, by expanding their tent poles to include design experiments and solutions in their instructional content and curriculum exercises, also serve to expand the relevance of arts practices in response to nagging social problems.

Design is a practice that involves making models. Both the arts and the sciences exercise the making of conceptual models (Gobert & Buckley, 2000; Matthews, 2007; Sullivan 2010), and it is very possible for a design to be derived as a hybrid of both arts-based and science-based inquiry. The one

hundred designs in Pilloton's (2009) book *Design Revolution* are also models of *social entrepreneurship,* defined as locating a problem in society—circumstances and behaviors that are stuck, ineffective, or not working to empower people—and addressing that problem by introducing some kind of reinterpretive transformation into the system that first produced the problem, all the while persuading others to support that transformation/reinterpretation (Boorstein, 2004). Social entrepreneurship designs flow from a critical-theoretic art-making paradigm that interrogates our situated and/or embodied social contexts in acts of appraisal, agitation, and activism (Pearse, 1983; Rolling, 2008b; Sullivan, 2010).

Making Special

My third question asks, do arts practices make possible a kind of social response that is "latent within the structure" of human social behavior (Meadows, 2008, p. 1), generating "special" aesthetic interventions that signal a person, object, artifact, action, event or phenomenon as uniquely valuable, sacred or life-sustaining? Dissanayake (2003) introduces the idea that the arts represent the evolutionary practice of "making special" all that is significant to the life and health of individuals, societies, and civilizations. Dissanayake redefines art as the vast sea of self-organizing and self-perpetuating behaviors through which humans have selected and made "special" certain ideas, actions, events, and/or materials to which they have a natural or selected affinity.

Once a given set of ideas, practices, and/or objects are selected as special, those who have chosen an adherence to the specialness of those totems as part of their constellation of personal identifiers also *ritualize* and reinterpret the act of making those totems special. Arts practices make possible the latent empathetic social response that attracts independent actors to self-organize around the very same totems. To "make special" is also to delineate identity, home, and community. "Making special" is thereby also indicative of self-determinative agency.

SYSTEMS THINKING AND THE RELEVANCE OF ARTS PRACTICES TO THE CAUSE OF SOCIAL JUSTICE

In their argument for a pedagogy of social justice art education, Desai and Chalmers (2007) point out that "the power of art to shape our understanding of the world in particular ways" means arts practices should never be assumed either apolitical or uncontested (p. 7). Sites of contention carved out by the arts have indeed been described as "a symbolic battleground" (Shohat & Sham, 1994, p. 183). On the field of contestation—the field of visuality—artists and students of the arts are cultural workers. Visuality has been defined as "how we see, how we are able, allowed, or made to see, and how we see this seeing and the unseeing therein" (Foster, 1988, p. ix). Yet if the arts are indeed relevant to social justice concerns and altruistic intent, what is it about certain systems of arts practice that cause them to be misperceived as less than so?

The answer to this question is informed by a basic understanding of systems theory. In systems theory, a *stock* is the "foundation of any system," the accumulated store of material, information, or "elements of the system that you can see, feel, count, or measure at any given time" (Meadows, 2008, pp. 17-18). The characteristics of a system's stock change over time through inflows and outflows, but those changes are slow enough to serve as a buffer to the system, preserving its behavior efficiently enough for its behavior to remain identifiable. Harold Pearse (1983; 1992) has developed a framework for identifying the prevailing art-making systems (i.e., systems of *production, communication,* or *reflection*) that currently work in opposition to one another.

An empirical-analytic art-making paradigm defines art as a *system of production*, a cause and effect intervention into a stock of empirical and manipulable elements, a commodity-oriented process "that has as its basic intent a cognitive interest in the control of objects in the world" (Pearse, 1983, p.159). Within this system, art practices behave to produce a stock of precious objects, requiring a mastery over the techniques necessary to shape them. Consequently, the perception of this art-making system is usually characterized by a parochial, "formalist and art historical view of the Western fine arts tradition...grounded in a specialized aesthetic perspective and high art cultural tradition that is somewhat at odds with the cultural experiences of the multicultural, multiclass public we art educators serve" (Bersson, 1986, p. 41). The artist in a *system of production* is seen as the discipline-based adherent to the technical conventions of their chosen arts specialization.

An interpretive-hermeneutic art-making paradigm defines art as a *system of communication*, the expression of situated knowledge about a person's relationship with his or her social world (Pearse, 1983, p. 160). Within this system, art practices behave to produce a stock of symbolic conveyances of "the ways in which we immediately experience an intimacy with the living world, attending to its myriad textures, sounds, flavors, and gestures" (Cancienne & Snowber, 2003, p. 238). Consequently, the perception of this art-making system is usually characterized by a narrow focus on the genius of the individual, and an "ahistorical/ asocial worldview in which individual development is seen as largely free and independent of social contexts, and its noninvolvement, in terms of practice, with the larger world of social and political activity" (Bersson, 1986, p. 42). The artist in a *system of communication* is seen as the psychologically

integrated, self-realized and solitary actor who voices and champions cultural and aesthetic awareness.

The prior two systems behave in a way that lends toward the general misconception of the arts as uninterested actor in the address of social needs and social justice causes. Here is where a socially responsible art education can be positioned as a change agent on the symbolic field of contest. A critical-theoretic art-making paradigm may be defined as a *system of reflection*, a relativist and liberatory activity rendering invisible assumptions, values, and norms newly visible "in order to transform" and critique unjust social relations and empower marginalized individuals and communities within the arts practitioner's social world (Pearse, 1983, p. 161). Arts practices under a critical-theoretic paradigm challenge "taken-for-granted theories and concepts that govern our disciplines and circumscribe our thinking" in order to reveal "the ongoing inequity and social injustice that shape our society" (Ladson-Billings, 2003, p. 11).

One can change a system's behavior either by changing the relationships between the elements or by changing an element so that it "*results in changing relationships or purpose*" (Meadows, 2008, p. 17, emphasis in original). Art-making systems are sub-systems within a larger system of global and multicultural social relationships. We can leverage the stock of any of the previously described art-making systems towards a greater social relevance and means by changing the relationships between systems to "a constant state of flux, a kind of perpetual pluralism" rather than unending competition (Pearse, 1992, p. 250). A postparadigmatic art education curriculum framework provides wider possibilities for connections across systems of art-making and for the "conceptual collage" and reorganization of arts pedagogy and artistic purpose in the postmodern era (Marshall, 2008; Rolling, 2010a).

In a postmodern and socially responsible approach to K-16 art education, art objects are allowed to speak for those who are invisible; expressive voice is expected to agitate for personal change and social justice; iconoclastic concepts may be codified as beautiful and relevant art and design products. Amalgamating the stock of these art-making systems to address social needs and problems also attracts the inflow of other socially responsive elements into the stock of art education practice, for example, welcoming teaching practices that empower people—i.e., the arts and design as activism, as catalyst, as civics, as public health, and as social capital (Pilloton, 2009).

HABITUS, EQUILIBRIUM, AND CULTURAL WORK

A socially responsive and responsible approach to the arts in education works to maintain the characteristics of healthy human agency, community altruism, and

the liberal imagination—a capacity expounded upon by Bourdieu (1990/1999) as the sociological model of human *habitus*:

> ...an infinite capacity for generating products—thoughts, perceptions, expressions, and actions—whose limits are set by the historically and socially situated conditions of its production...the *habitus* tends to generate all the "reasonable," "common-sense," behaviours (and only these) which are possible within the limits of...a particular field. (p. 445)

The idea of habitus as the locus of human agency and the human right to represent and reinterpret one's personal and social experience also validates self as the site of research, since self is also the site of cultural production and reproduction and a repository of researchable data on the results of this cultural work. For instance, the countercultural movement of the 1960s was the product of citizens returned again to the stock of possibilities that produce identity out of a repertoire of locally accessible stories, rather than the grand metanarrative of homogenous American "progress." Mark Currie (1998) writes that the self, especially in a postmodern dispensation, "inheres in the relations between a person and others" (p. 17). Participants in the 1960s countercultural movement sought the freedom to remove the social barriers to interact with other bodies as other selves, to interact with other temporal stations of self and multiple, often psychedelic self-images. This is indeed plausible if "personal identity is not...contained in the body," but rather constituted by a diaphanous array of difference (Currie, 1998, p. 17).

I speak now not of differences counterposed, but of differences imbricated. Currie's (1998) argument lends to a conception of habitus that is iterated in our learning "to self-narrate from the outside, from other stories, and particularly through the process of identification with other characters" (p. 17). A socially responsive and responsible approach to the arts in education leverages opportunities for the construction of sites of agency engendered through critical reflection and extreme responsiveness. Each pedagogical act is a locally situated and/or embodied cultural work order fulfilled—a transaction between self and society contributing to a complex system-wide behavior. Each transaction causes a ripple effect that alters personal habitus and its social contexts. Given the social significance of making marks, making models, and making special, there is also great potential in arts pedagogy as a force for the transformative reinterpretation of both habitus and society and, ultimately, for greater equity.

I do not suggest arts practice to be an apolitical force for equity in and of itself. That would be naïve. The arts practices must be socially grounded, functioning as part of a fundamentally democratic pedagogical framework, a "means by which spectators/students [of the arts] become critical thinkers and

participate in society as critical citizens" (Garoian, 1999, p. 43). Otherwise, works of art and visuality may easily, for example, become the excrescence of systems of propaganda geared to produce compliance, conformity, and/or inequity as was the case in the films made by Leni Riefenstahl for Adolph Hitler's 20th century Nazi regime, or is currently the case in the racist imagery and caricatures of President Barack Obama produced by some members of the reactionary Tea Party movement in the 21st century United States.

While it might be counter-argued that one person's propaganda is another person's act of self-determination, part and parcel with acts of propaganda is the effort to co-opt, delimit, curtail or outright abolish the self-determination of others. Propaganda distorts agency through the deliberate omission and/or obfuscation of any information that might contest it, thereby fabricating useful fictions and misinformation that work to maintain its primacy in social discourse (Rolling, 2010b). Propaganda seeks to quell or quash the democratic exchange of competing ideas.

Paradoxically, although arts practices that teach us to think empirically in a medium, think expressively in a language, or think iconoclastically within a context are often pitted against one another, they may nevertheless work in concert to provide stations of dynamic equilibrium, third spaces that germinate in the dialectic between two kinds of system dynamics—socially grounded systems of arts practice versus systems of forced compliance, expected conformity, or unyielding inequity within social contexts.

Arriving at equilibrium is a station in the ongoing process of identity formation that is achieved again and yet again, a dynamic balancing and re-balancing of past selves and post-selves "in an ongoing process of change that may continue over the course of the life-span" (Kroger, 1996, p. 147). The development of identity also develops stations of community, those both past and possible. Each station of equilibrium is a site in the development of a beneficial habitus, and becomes a site of personal and social stability. A pedagogical site where personal and social equilibrium has been achieved is unlike those wherein the subject has the "freedom to do whatever the subject wills" without a predetermined purpose, and unlike those wherein a subject is coded by a schooling or controlling system to carry out a designated purpose. Rather, equilibrium or a beneficial habitus is manifested as agency and the freedom to decode and recode one's identity in acts of self-selected purpose.

TRANSACTIONAL PEDAGOGY AS THE INCEPTION OF AGENCY

Charles R. Garoian (1999), in his consideration of the liminality of performance art and its manifestation as a transgressive pedagogy, defines the limen as "a threshold, a border, a neutral zone between ideas, cultures, or territories that one must cross to get from one side to the other" (p.40)—a contentious place where our prescriptions of persons and stories of social categories may be demarcated and held in tension, conflicting with one another to be named and un-named. I am attracted to Garoian's performance pedagogy because of its ready acceptance of contentiousness as an ingredient in pedagogy; the affordances of contentious liminality in educational settings are akin to the unscriptedness in human experience. One must first navigate contentiousness to arrive at equilibrium.

The trafficking of embodied contentions and messy minds, where habitus is understood to be both/and rather than either/or, are juxtaposed within a polemical space where "meaning is contested and struggled for in the interstices *in between* structures" (Conquergood, 1991, p.184). Located in human thought practices, the site of sociocultural contention is also then a "criti/politi/cal" identity, or in other words, a critical citizen and a social agent invested with the power to govern local sites of meaning (Rolling, 2007). Following Garoian's (1999) argument, when zones of contention become pedagogical strategy, educational enterprise takes a decidedly postmodern turn as spectators/students are taught how "cultural identity work functions politically to achieve agency within schooled culture" (p. 44).

Brent Wilson (2005) sketches out a fundamentally democratic and transactional pedagogical framework that socially responsive and responsible educators can make use of, describing three pedagogical sites, areas of contestation in the development of a beneficial overarching habitus. The first site is "the vast 'territory' containing many informal spaces outside of and beyond classrooms where kids...both construct their own visual cultural texts and consume the visual cultural texts made by others" (Wilson, 2005, p. 18). This is the pedagogical site in which the subject is freest to do whatever he or she wills in parsing and making sense of the ambiguous worlds in which they navigate. While what is constructed is often considered to be play, it is also cultural work that is worthy of study for its improvisatory, spontaneous, and self-initiated qualities (Ulbricht, 2005; Wilson, 1974; Wilson, 2005). Whether described as deriving from play or from increasingly sophisticated acts of improvisation, it is important to note that this first pedagogical site does not require a predetermined purpose to direct it.

Wilson (2005) describes the second pedagogical site as "conventional art classrooms in schools (or museums and community art classrooms) where teachers direct student artmaking" (p. 18). This is the pedagogical site in which the subject is most likely to be coded by "normative instructional strategies founded on Cartesian-based subject-object binaries, the rationalism of the Enlightenment project, and the positivism of modern art and science" (Garoian, 1999, p. 43). The coding of identities in modern popular and visual culture has long been "a means of identifying, classifying, and policing" the masses and ultimately became

central to "the development of scientific and pseudo-scientific practices in relation to mental illness, physiognomy, phrenology, and social Darwinist race theories" (Popple, 2005, p. 95).

Finally, Wilson's "third pedagogical site" is described as "a site where adults and kids collaborate in making connections and interpreting webs of relationships... among the images that kids make for themselves and the images that adults ask them to make" (2005, p. 18). Wilson makes the argument that in the third pedagogical site, students are equal partners and agents with teachers in making sense of ideas and their meanings across a plurality of thresholds of pedagogical interaction. This interaction across multiple pedagogical sites can have a profound governing influence on our thinking about how "children's images...art and art education, narrative, [and] popular visual culture" relate to the world (Wilson, 2005, p. 18).

Wilson thus outlines what he calls a "transactional pedagogy" that crosses the boundaries between these three pedagogical sites as constituted in the lives of multiple agents, transactions consisting of "teachers' values, students' values, texts, images, interpretations, and conflicting interpretations" in a network of *"visual cultural texts"* wherein any "text that members of learning communities deem sufficiently important to either interpret or create is given status" (2005, p. 19, emphasis in original). It is in the multiplicities of the third pedagogical site—a third space—that learners are afforded with repeated opportunities to develop the agency to decode and recode identity and ideas in transactions that are often unexpected.

Julia Marshall (2008) presents the ceramics work of Charles Krafft as one exemplar of an arts practice that juxtaposes, decontextualizes, and blends competing paradigms to work in fellowship with one another in pieces such as "Fragmentation Hand Grenade." Working within a third space, Krafft simultaneously produces precious forms through the beautiful craftwork and decorative styling of traditional Delft porcelains, communicates situated knowledge about weapons dealt by arms traders in Slovenia, and critiques "the banality and ordinariness of violence in American life" (Marshall, 2008, p. 41). Marshall's presentation of Krafft's postparadigmatic and transactional art practice also invites a similar reconceptualization of 21st century art education practice, one that accommodates learning outcomes by our students which simultaneously decorate, communicate, and critique. Such are the unexpected choices that yield agency in learners.

A transactional pedagogical framework thus becomes the locus of cultural work—inceptions that are productive in the generation of those reasonable, common sense behaviors with the greatest potential to reinterpret both personal habitus and society, and to aid the establishment of greater social/global equity. Learners need only to be given the opportunity.

CONCLUSION

When we argue to preserve a symphony orchestra on the verge of bankruptcy because of the beautiful pieces of music they produce, we obscure the fact that some music is intended solely for the communication and celebration of cultural significance, while other music is intended to expose and defy unjust forms of power. Yet all are manifestations of art-making systems. Further, each approach to artmaking practice is a human right. The significance of making marks, making models, and making special is in the generation of agency for a socially responsive and responsible living in a democratic society. Francis A. J. Ianni's (1968) anthropological reflections on the arts as agents for social change remain relevant as he long ago surmised that in the cultivation of social justice, altruistic intent and the liberal imagination, "we know that education is to be the major weapon and that we need only decide how we are going to use it" (p. 16). By reframing our arts practices as primary sites in the development of agency and a mutually beneficial habitus, they are poised and at the ready to be employed in support of our inalienable right to represent and reinterpret self and society.

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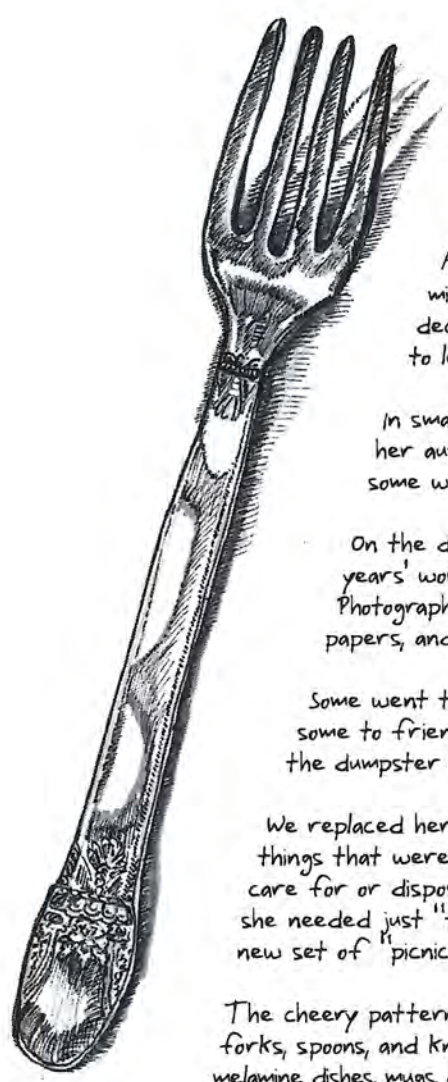


The Fork

Written and Illustrated by Rachel Marie-Crane Williams

As my Grandmother's body and mind became unfamiliar, we slowly decided that she needed to leave her home.

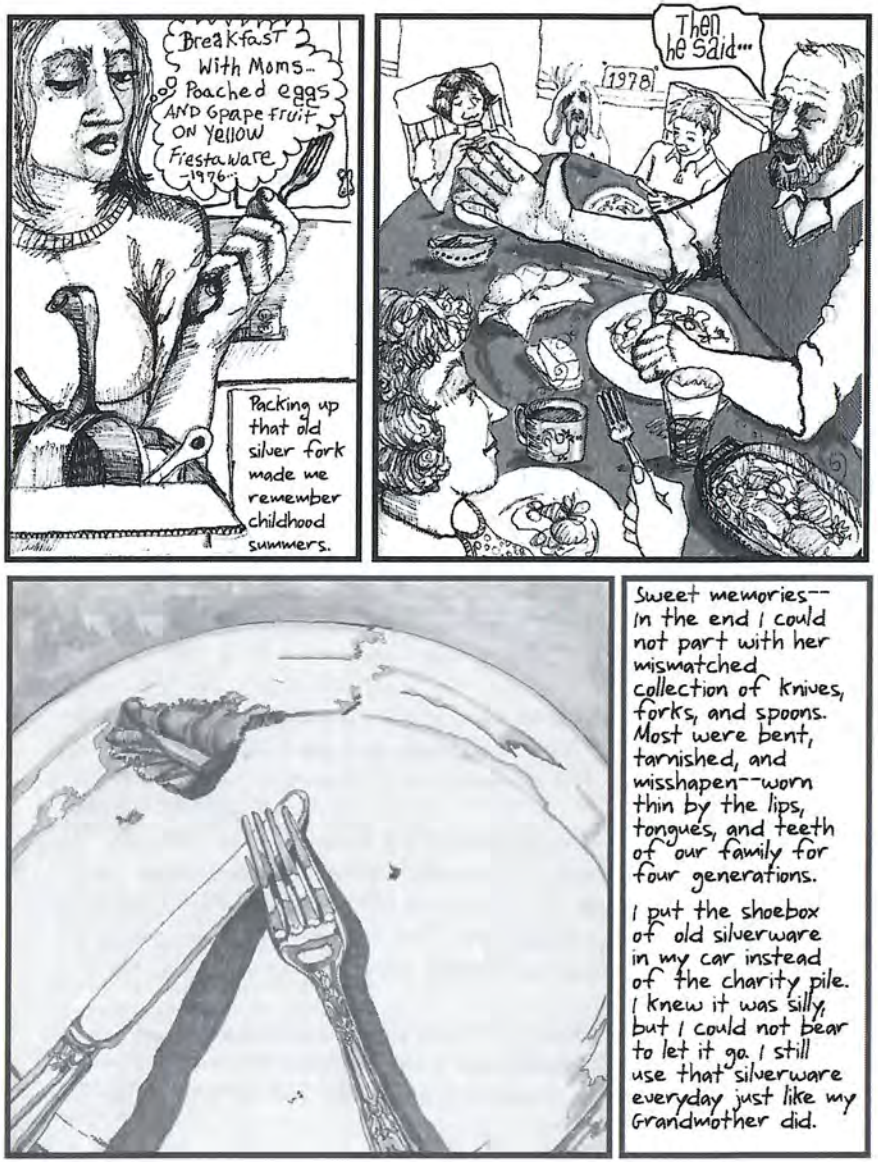
In small bits and pieces we took away her autonomy, privacy, mobility and, in some ways, her dignity.

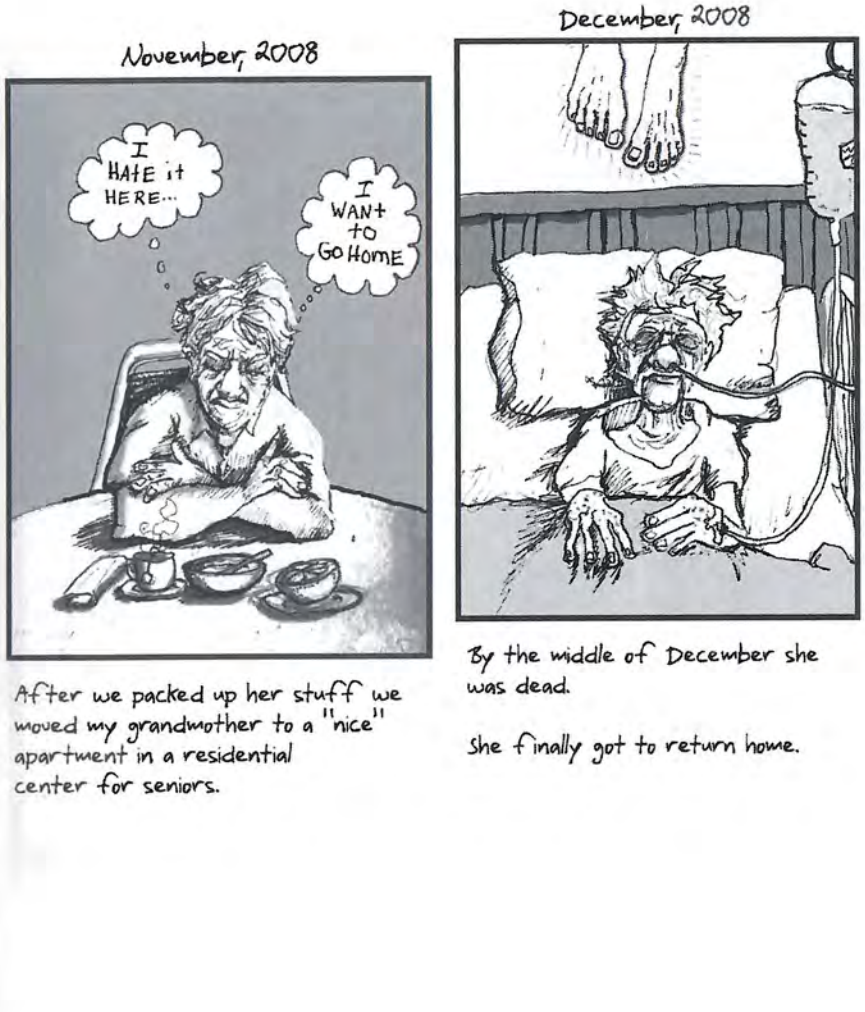
On the day she moved we packed up 94 years' worth of pictures, dishes, Photographs, pots and pans, clothes, books, papers, and furniture.

Some went to family members, some to friends, and what was left went into the dumpster or to charity.

We replaced her old familiar things with new things that weren't soiled and were easier to care for or dispose of in the future. We decided she needed just "the essentials," a microwave and a new set of "picnic ware" from the local K-Mart.

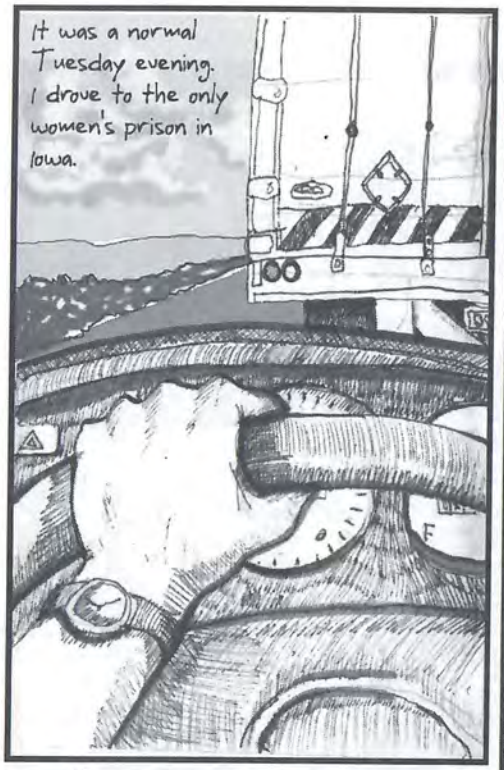
The cheery pattern on the plastic handles of the forks, spoons, and knives matched the rims on the melamine dishes, mugs, and bowls. The set came in one box.


Breakfast with Moms-- Poached eggs AND Grapefruit ON Yellow Fiestaware -1976...
Packing up that old silver fork made me remember childhood summers.
1978
Then he said...
Sweet memories-- In the end I could not part with her mismatched collection of knives, forks, and spoons. Most were bent, tarnished, and misshapen--worn thin by the lips, tongues, and teeth of our family for four generations.
I put the shoebox of old silverware in my car instead of the charity pile. I knew it was silly, but I could not bear to let it go. I still use that silverware everyday just like my Grandmother did.

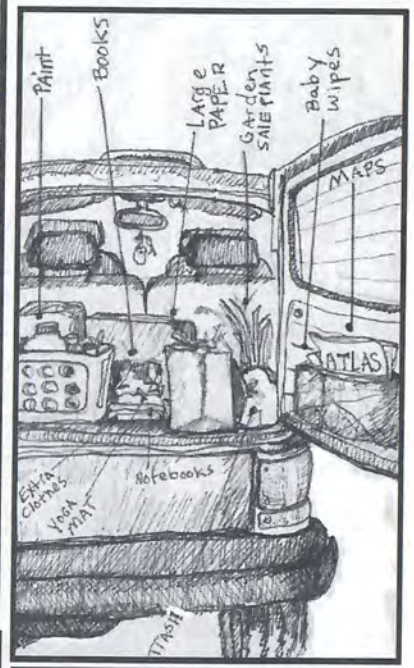

November, 2008
I HATE it HERE...
I WANT to GO HOME
After we packed up her stuff we moved my grandmother to a "nice" apartment in a residential center for seniors.
December, 2008
By the middle of December she was dead.
She finally got to return home.


Prostitution
VIOLENCE
REHAB
RELAPSE
POLICE
POLICE SERVED
TO
PROTECT
JUVENILE DETENTION CENTER
SHELTER
PUBERTY
FOSTER CARE
RAPE
REPORT CARD
TROUBLE AT SCHOOL
ABUSE
MANDATORY SENTENCING
#2572
Two years later I was on my way to prison...
Every week I teach art and creative writing to incarcerated women. The women like to participate in art classes because it relieves stress and gives them a chance to do something that feels positive and productive. The Prison administration likes to support the arts; participation reduces restlessness, violence and dissatisfaction. Teaching at the prison is rewarding; it reminds me that art can be meaningful and powerful. The art room is a safe space where women can focus their energy, stave off depression and sadness, socialize, and feel productive.


That night, I had a humbling experience in prison -- a place where people are deprived of all but the bare minimum needed to sustain their physical existence.
Deprivation
Living in prison teaches people to make use of every scrap. They savor any small bit of debris that might migrate through the fence like messages from the outside world, clippings from magazines, church bulletins, even the wrappers from candy and embroidery thread. These items are often re-purposed as decoration for greeting cards or in collages that leave the prison through letters or are displayed on cups or notebooks.
I've seen people soak the color off coated candies to make paint for their letters home.
People who are incarcerated may go for years without sitting on a cushioned chair, hearing live music, tasting fresh food, or seeing and touching their families.
SMALL THINGS OFTEN MEAN THE MOST... MEMENTOS FROM LIFE BEYOND THE RAZORWIRE... TOUCHSTONES OF CONNECTION AND SOLACE OFTEN INCLUDE PHOTOS AND LETTERS HOME...

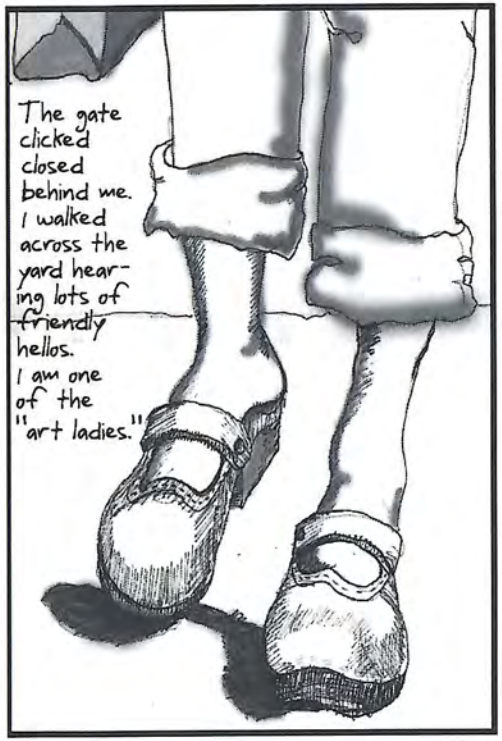


As usual, my car was filled with art supplies, trash, stale goldfish crackers odds and ends, dirty clothes, papers, garden dirt, running shoes, and books.



Little did I know, that earlier my open lunch box had spilled into the tote I use to ferry quarts of paint back and forth from the university to the prison. When I arrived at the prison I signed in and waited to be searched.

The CO smiled and casually glanced in my bag. We go through this ritual every week.



The gate clicked closed behind me. I walked across the yard hearing lots of friendly hellos. I am one of the "art ladies."

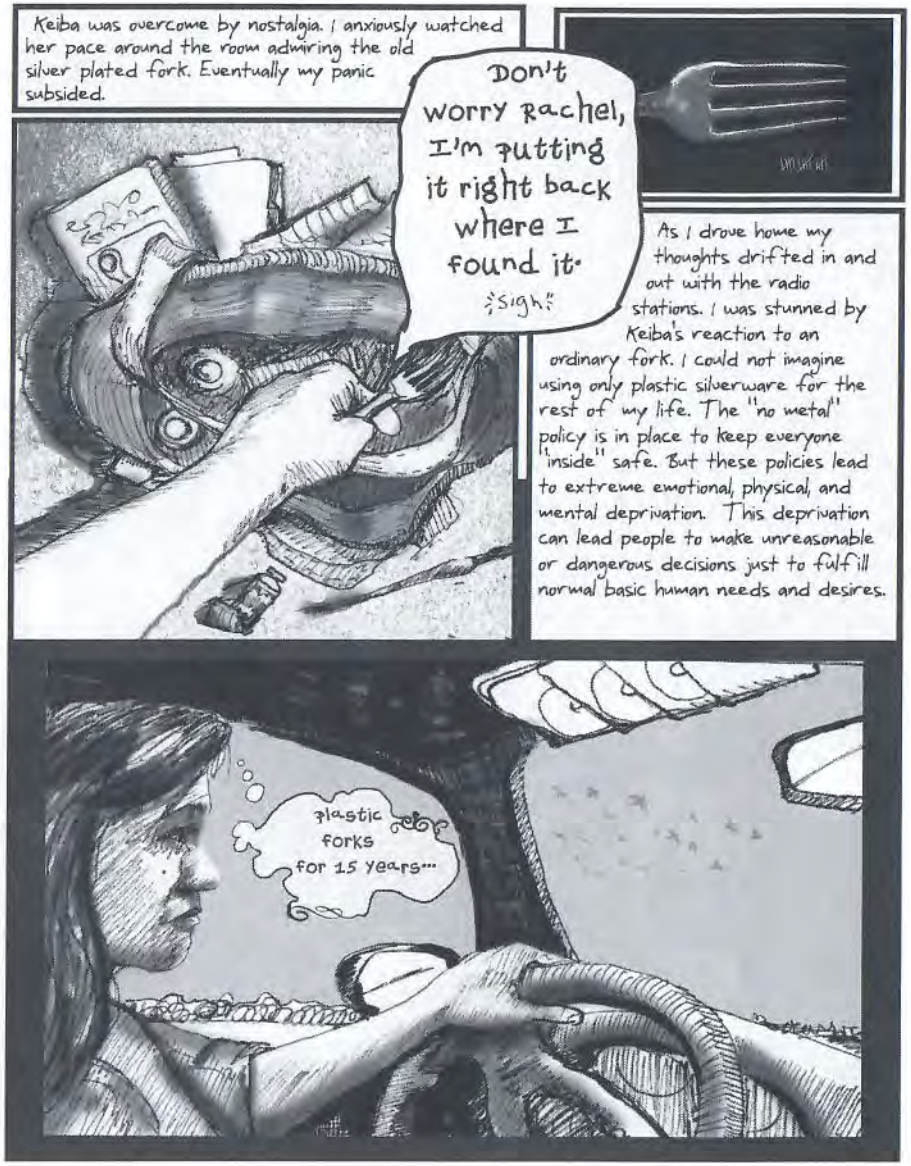
I arrived in Unit 4 and found that the CO had unlocked the old chapel-turned-studio. Keiba greeted me; she was eager to finish her painting.

She rummaged through my tote for paint and a good brush.

...that's how she found it


Oh My God!! a fork a real Fork!

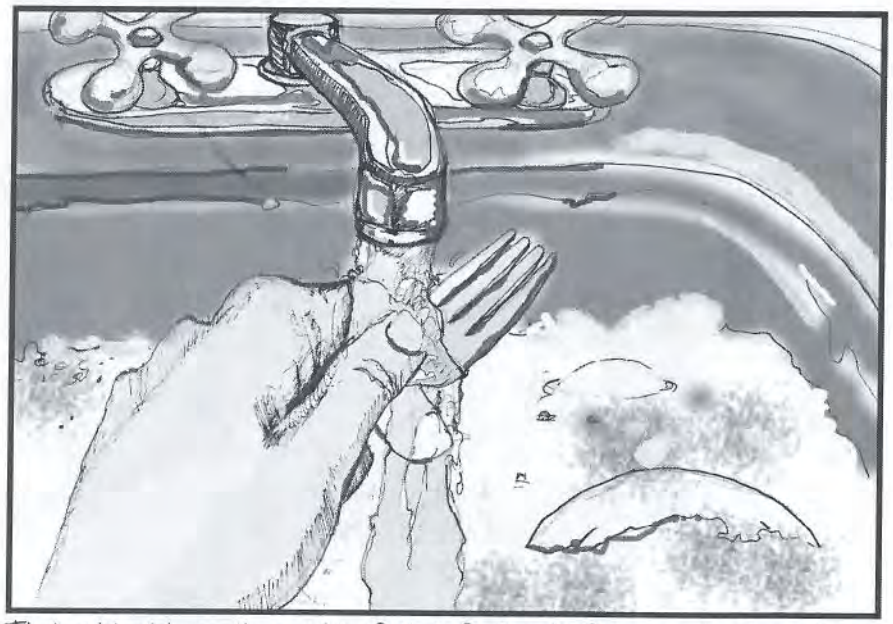

mmmm... So Cool and heavy reminds me of Home
DAMN It's been 15 years since I held a "real" fork... 15 years. I forgot how heavy they are...
Ms. Rita...you know you want to hold it...



The women at the prison constantly challenge me to re-frame my privilege and place in our culture. They remind me over and over what it means to be human. That night I witnessed a humble, tarnished old fork momentarily flood Keiba's spirit with torrents of strong memories. It wasn't the fork, but the aesthetics and materiality of the fork. The weight, design, and embellishment as well as the tarnish and wear made that fork powerful and meaningful. For both of us it is a link to memories of the domestic.

That "real" fork is so closely connected to eating meals, a central domestic ritual in our culture that often involves sensual pleasure, the company of our family and friends, and is a key component to many holiday celebrations. This connection is the reason I kept the fork and the reason that Keiba was so moved. While the fork as an object was imbued with something special that comes from age and use, it was also full of memories. I did not realize the impact that something so ubiquitous could have. In prison the women are never allowed to use metal silverware. They eat three meals each day with disposable utensils. Mealtime in prison is the fulfillment of a basic biological function. In most instances all of the "specialness" with which we perform the rituals of mealtime are removed. People do not eat in comfort. The food is often bland and low quality. They are not allowed to socialize, or really relax because the time they are given to eat is often so short. The no metal policy is so sensible and sound, but until that day I had never felt the weight of it. Aesthetic experiences are essential to our mental health. As Ellen Dissanayke* would say we need to "make special" moments and things within our life in order to mark them as touchstones for our memory and make us aware that we are part of something larger than ourselves.

*Dissanayake, E. (1995). Homoaestheticus: where art comes from and why. Seattle: University of Washington Press.



That night, at home, the weight of that familiar old fork in my hand and the comfort of the warm running water was bittersweet, making me feel both lucky and guilty.

*Special thanks to Sean Kelley, the women of ICIW, and the reviewers for the Journal of Cultural Research in Art Education.

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Digital Storytelling and the Pedagogy of Human Rights

Gail Benick

ABSTRACT

The increase in global migration has given rise to new concepts of citizenship and belonging. In the post-colonial era, the maintenance of a collective identity has been redefined as a human right. This paper considers the role of art educators in promoting the right to one's own culture as a site of minority resistance and empowerment. The inclusion of digital storytelling in art education offers an opportunity to intervene in the field of representation, to contest negative images and transform representational practices around race and ethnicity in a more positive direction

Migration, arguably *the* defining global issue of the 21st century, has increased in volume and political significance in the post-colonial era. Although mass migration, both voluntary and forced, is hardly a new feature of human history, there is a growing recognition that the current global dispersion of migrant populations has given rise to a new order of instability (Appadurai, 1996; Spiro, 2004). In many classic countries of immigration such as Canada, the United States and Australia, the shift from race-based policies to race-neutral policies of admission has contributed to high levels of racial, ethnic, linguistic and religious diversity among the populace of these nations. But the urban concentration of diverse peoples and cultures has undoubtedly led to a world brimming with tension, confusion and conflict. For the relocated subject, the migrant experience is often fraught with disruption, displacement and loss. Whether the migratory flow involves labor migrants, permanent settlers, exiles or refugees, a formidable longing for homelands may accompany individuals into the diasporic wilderness, encumbered by what Edward Said (2000) has called an "unhealable rift forced between a human being and a native place" (p.173). After settlement follows either secure legal status and gradual acceptance, or exclusion, socioeconomic marginalization and the formation of minorities whose presence is widely regarded as undesirable and divisive. In many countries of settlement today, the urge to return to old conventions and fundamental values is palpable, resulting in a trend toward heightened xenophobia and intolerance of difference.

New concepts of citizenship and belonging have emerged to accommodate mass migration and major demographic shifts, but with a distinctive twist.

Neither citizenship nor belonging is now anchored in a single nation state. Until the late twentieth century, citizenship and loyalty to the state were still considered to form an inseparable bond. Only recently have we witnessed the acceptance of dual or multiple citizenship on a global scale in which belonging is decoupled from the national collectivity and is no longer territory-based (Faist & Kivisto, 2007). Under such circumstances, the universal right to one's own culture within and without national borders has emerged as a pressing dimension of human rights discourse. The Sri Lankan writer Shyam Selvadurai (2004) described the impact on transnational migrants this way:

> Dual identity is a burden forced on them by the fact that their bodies, or their skins to be precise, do not represent the nation-state they are in, thus compelling them to wear their difference on their sleeve and carry it around on their back. (p. 2)

This paper considers the role of art educators in promoting the right to one's own culture as a site of minority resistance and empowerment. As the institution of national citizenship disaggregates and new modalities of membership evolve (Benhabib, 2007), human rights concerns assume particular importance for art educators. Pedagogical approaches in art education must challenge the way visual representations signify the other (Desai, 2000) and enable students to recast those who have been termed foreigners and aliens in a more complex and historically accurate framework (Desai, Hamlin, & Mattson, 2010).

Sixty years ago, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights proclaimed a wide spectrum of human rights that every human being has without discrimination. They include the right to freedom of expression and freedom from torture or ill-treatment. The right to education, adequate housing and other economic, social and cultural rights are guaranteed in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, as well as in other legally binding international and regional human rights treaties. Nearly every country in the world is party to a legally binding treaty that guarantees these rights, which include the cultural rights of minorities and Indigenous Peoples. Fostered by massive decolonization in the post-war period and through the works of such international organizations as the United Nations, UNESCO and the Council of Europe, the right to one's own culture has gained increasing legitimacy (Soysal, 1999). Collective identity has been redefined as a human right and identities have become important organizational and symbolic tools for creating new group solidarities. Yet, despite the enormous growth in rights-consciousness, the so called rights revolution has been slow to deliver on its promise in this area. The right of groups to maintain traditions and cultural practices remains a contested arena in many nations, including in Canada where the shift from assimilationist to more multicultural models of integration dates back to the 1970s.

In the Canadian context, the duty to protect culture and accommodate racial and ethno-cultural diversity was formally adopted by the federal government with the declaration of an official policy on multiculturalism in 1971. The right to cultural preservation was later enshrined in the Multiculturalism Act in 1988 and entrenched in Section 27 of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. To be sure, the trend toward acceptance of cultural diversity is reflected in other countries, but Canada can be considered unique in the extent to which the duty to accommodate cultural diversity has been legalized, constitutionalized and absorbed into the national narrative (Kymlicka, 2003). Still, fissures seem to be emerging in the Canadian mosaic as evidenced in the proposed law to ban niqabs for those seeking public services in the Province of Quebec and the recent backlash against Tamil asylum seekers. As in Europe, public discourse in Canada reflects growing concern for the lack of newcomer integration, particularly in the post 9/11 period. Arrival cities—those immigrant neighborhoods located on the outskirts of major urban centers which have long served as gateway communities—are increasingly viewed with caution as potential parallel societies marked by anger, isolation and cultural separateness (Saunders, 2010).

At the same time, criticism of multiculturalism is emerging from many quarters with calls to strike the term from the national vocabulary and pleas to reframe the problem from one of accommodating cultural differences to accepting differences of identity. The nation state, according to Appiah (2010), cannot be asked to treat all cultural differences the same. Homophobia and honor killings may be cultural traditions, but liberal democracies are not obliged to accommodate these beliefs and practices. The nation state can, however, foster a civic culture which recognizes that identity groups are entitled to equal respect regardless of gender, sexuality, race, religion or national origin. In this regard, teachers as cultural workers are engaged in an essentially political practice (Freire, 2005) and have a pivotal role to play in the guarantee of fundamental human rights.

What tools do art educators have to develop a pedagogy of human rights? An approach that is gaining widespread favor across the educational spectrum is digital storytelling which combines the ancient art of telling stories with digital content, including images, sound and video to create multimedia productions. The popularity of digital storytelling coincides with the rise of a new ecosystem of information sharing. Social media now provide the means to make, distribute and consume content faster and cheaper than ever before, a phenomenon that has been described as an unprecedented jump in expressive capability (Shirky, 2008). The result is the mass amateurization of authorship and the frequent evocation of the personal voice. In learning environments, digitally rendered stories, culled from a range of sources, including letters, interviews, family

photo albums, artifacts and memory, allow students to reflect on their cultural identity and lay claim to habits, likes, beliefs, fears and desires which may differ substantially from the mainstream. Digital storytelling, then, can be an effective mechanism for preserving a culture of one's own, an opportunity not only to collect invisible histories but to authenticate them.

These twin intentions—to retrieve untold stories and legitimize them—informed the decision to introduce digital storytelling into a course titled Intercultural Communication delivered jointly by Sheridan College and the University of Toronto at Mississauga located in the Greater Toronto Area. Like other universities and colleges in this region, a high degree of diversity exists in the student population. In 2005, an Intercultural Communication course survey provided the following data: 27 percent of the 127 respondents resided in bilingual households. A total of 30 different languages were represented in the group, including Urdu, Polish, Korean, Arabic, Italian, Serbian, Swahili, Tamil and French. Three out of four students were able to carry on a conversation in two or more languages. 19 lived in unilingual households in which only Chinese was spoken. In 2010, 53 percent of the 94 respondents to the course survey were born outside of Canada.

For the course director, Professor Gail Benick, the demographics of the classroom provided a cogent reason to focus the digital storytelling exercise on migration and settlement. The goal of the project was to enhance student understanding of immigration by allowing learners to define, order and convey the immigrant experience from their own cultural perspectives. Students were asked to write a short personal narrative of 400 words on one particular incident related to their immigration to Canada or that of their family. From the outset, it was understood that the finished multimedia productions would be screened by peers and possibly showcased for larger audiences. The move from the private to the public sphere demanded that students carefully assess their choice of story to ensure that family confidences were not betrayed or family members put at risk. The written text then became the basis for their movies.

The criteria for the assignment adhered closely to the Seven Principles for Digital Storytelling developed by the Center for Digital Storytelling in Berkeley, California. According to the Center's executive director Joe Lambert (2002), an effective digital story includes the following elements: 1. A point of view which defines the specific realization that the author is trying to communicate within the story and is expressed from the first-person perspective; 2. A dramatic question which drives the action of the story and sustains the creative tension; 3. Emotional content which explores the author's inner feelings; 4. The storyteller's voice which is recorded in a voiceover; 5. A powerful soundtrack which establishes the mood of the movie and changes the way the viewer perceives the visual information; 6. An economical structure built on a small number of images and video, as well as a relatively short text; 7. Attention to pacing or the rhythm of the story and the occasional change of pace. The Center for Digital Storytelling's model with its infusion of a strong emotional component and personal tone, supported the goal of the digital storytelling assignment in Intercultural Communication. This approach enabled students to undertake the conceptual work of constructing new understandings of their immigrant identities and places of belonging. Similarly, the technical criteria for the assignment, developed by Professor Elizabeth Littlejohn (2010), were consistent with the above Seven Principles, as seen in the following instructions to students:

> For this assignment, the narrative is told from the first person point of view, with your voice providing the voiceover. It should be one to two minutes in duration, and use Flash animation, with images either hand drawn or found through archival research or family photos. The use of clip art is discouraged. A consistent voice is maintained through the narrative with a clear delineation of who the narrator is as situated in the story. Is the narrator the protagonist relating events that occurred to her/him directly, the re-teller of the story or a first person witness?

By encouraging hand drawn images and photos found in family archives rather than the use of clip art, Littlejohn privileged student-generated depictions of self and culture over stereotypical representations. The exceptions were the acceptable use of such symbols as flags, as well as maps, which were informational in nature. To achieve compositional economy, students were limited to eight to ten different images, thus forcing them to pay close attention to the placement of visual elements in each screen and the sequencing of images over time. As Lambert (2002) stated, "storytelling with images means consciously economizing language in relationship to the narrative that is provided by the juxtaposition of images" (p. 57). Compelling students to consider carefully the relationship between the two tracks of meaning, the visual and the auditory, is one benefit of digital, as opposed to traditional methods, of storytelling.

The final digital stories that resulted from this assignment depicted, to a large extent, social difference, dissonance and self-discovery, themes that emerged early in the writing stage of the project. As one student stated in her assessment of the written assignment: "It was very personal to me to write this story. It brought back some deep feelings and hurt. It made me realize that being here was not easy and was hard to deal with when I was young." Drawing mainly on childhood memories, some students revisited incidents they had previously tried to forget. "I really had to contemplate to release the feelings I had locked away for several years," another student wrote. For others, remembering itself played a transformative role. "My memory of coming to Canada is still very clear. I

sometimes also reflect back to the experience I had, and now I look at myself, I have come a long way."

The digital story assignments clustered around three distinct storylines. Memories of school were the most common source of story content, particularly school experiences that were perceived to be extraordinary in some way or to elicit a powerful emotional response rather than more everyday aspects of going to school. Students were more likely to remember events that were angering or humiliating, such as the first day in a new school. These stories implicitly posed questions about vulnerability and acceptance. For example, one student wrote in her story:

> I will never forget entering a predominantly white (Caucasian) elementary school and being the only Black girl in my class. Though it wasn't the only time I felt different from everyone else, I remember thinking after that experience that I wanted it to be the last time I cared.

The social markers of race and class surfaced in many of the school narratives as students began to interrogate the condition of being outsiders. In one movie a Chinese student represented his experience of otherness by showing twenty pairs of little blue eyes staring at him on his first day in Grade 1. His feeling of isolation abated only when his mother gave him a lucky jade necklace which enabled him to return to the classroom the next day with his head held high. Other digital stories addressed the embarrassment and shame associated with not being able to speak English or what was perceived as inappropriate dress. Anxiety, rooted in perceptions of social difference and inequity, emanated from a student's depiction of her first day at school:

> I walk over to the empty chair in the corner and survey the small room of white faces, straight hair and crisp, clean clothes. I compare our differences as the classroom floods with chatter and mumble. I sit. I sigh. I hope that the hardest part of the day one is over. While Mrs. Lazarus finishes the class attendance, I daze off into my internal world; the world where no one is different and everyone is the same, the world where teachers don't pronounce my name wrong and then say it's unique, the world where adults don't ask me where I am from and children don't ask to touch my hair, the world where I have so many questions but no answers. On the board the teacher wrote the assignment for students to discuss in groups: WHAT DID YOU DO THIS SUMMER? They all start talking at once about vacations, camping, barbeques and parties. I think about how I can make moving for the fifth time sound as fun as going camping and having barbeques. "Well…" I finally mutter: "…to be honest I didn't really…" "How come your hair's like that?" the blond girl interrupts.

The often told lunch box story also foregrounded the experience of cultural estrangement. In this set of stories, students were grappling with fears of cultural slippage and loss as they navigated the dominant world of public education. In their movies, students typically visualized traditional, homemade foods—pasta made by nonna/grandmother or stir-fried noodles cooked by mom—which were then packed into shiny lunch boxes in contrast to the western lunch staple of peanut butter and jam sandwiches carried in brown bags. One student lamented that she "envied whatever was in those wrinkly brown paper bags." Caught between home and school cultures, the immigrant children in these stories resolved the dilemma by throwing their uneaten lunches into school garbage cans. One student narrated the experience in this way:

> A semester into Grade 4, Mom realized where my lunches were ending up. She told me about the less fortunate children around the world who were starving to death. I didn't listen. One day, she packed me a peanut butter sandwich. I ate my lunch that day at school. I cringed at the bland taste and the dry texture of the sandwich. At that moment I thought of Mom's home cooked meals and all the lunches I threw away…. I realized that as much as I tried to conceal my Chinese background, there are just some things that I could not hide, even if it was as simple as my eating habits.

The sensory description of the bland and dry peanut butter sandwich reflected the student's awakening agency in negotiating her dual identities. She no longer felt that she had to hide her Chinese background and could eat her mother's food at school.

Stories focusing on names frequently raised the possibility of cultural erasure and have in the past signalled pressure to assimilate into the settlement society. In this set of stories, students struggled with the unusual sound of their names in a new environment, but were able to resolve the cultural differences reflected in their names by the end of the stories. For example, in a movie titled "My Name is Ruvani" the student began by bemoaning her odd name. She wishes for a Canadian name like Sarah, Rebecca or Nicole so that she can buy a bookmark with her name on it at the Hallmark shop. However, the student came to accept her name when she learned that Ruvani, a traditional Sri Lankan name meaning beautiful, had been passed down from generation to generation in her family. In another story, a student pondered the change in the pronunciation of her name. In Hong Kong "Ng" sounded like a grunt, but in Canada the surname "Ng" was pronounced as Nung Eng, Ang or Ong. The learner had no explanation for the change in pronunciation. "I don't know why my name sounds different when we immigrated; maybe the ocean we flew over altered it somehow." She concluded by inserting herself into the discourse on cultural loss and displacement, not as a victim but as an exuberant performer: "What I do know is that the written

character in Chinese looks like a person playing a keyboard and waving at the audience."

Although the creation of multimedia productions about migration can present challenges to the student's ability to retrieve site specific content, the advantage of the visual narrative over the written essay can be found in the very need to collect photos and other artifacts which serve to anchor students more firmly in their kinship networks and communities of belonging. One student wrote in his assessment: "I used a photo that I found in a picture album in my crawl space, which in turn led to me asking my grandparents about their immigration experience." Many other students reported that the assignment necessitated phone calls home and the search for archival evidence that could be included in their movies. A student commented that she enjoyed completing an assignment that she could put a bit of herself into rather than an essay based project. Yet another stated that he liked being able to combine narrative, images and sound to complete an assignment. He noted that a feeling of pride in his life and family was reflected in his movie. In this case, easy distribution of his digital story to family in Canada and his country of origin was no doubt a project advantage.

For art educators, digital storytelling offers an opportunity to intervene in the field of representation by providing tools for students to lay claim to a culture of one's own. Expanding that space of authority holds great potential for a pedagogy of human rights, including in its reach not only the storytellers, but also the audience. The presumed objectivity of experts and official records is corrected by the personal voice of immigrants themselves. As one student wrote after viewing the work of his peers, "These movies show that immigration and settlement into Canada are a unique and subjective experience for everyone. Some are uplifting and some are more pessimistic, but they are all completely subjective." Another student stated that "while statistics give numbers, these stories take every one of the numbers and give the history and reasoning behind it." In other words, alternate versions of immigration began to emerge during the in-class screening process. A student commented that "the movies had great impact on my perception of the traditional 'immigrant story.' I was honestly surprised at how varied these stories were and how each film found a way to surprise my preconceived notions of personal immigration experiences." Students started to contest negative images of immigrants, noting that "having to view these movies today... allowed me to put away the stereotypes" and "these videos definitely helped break the misconceptions and prejudice people often have in their minds, built and promoted by the media." The feedback from most learners was reflected in a single sentence of one viewer: "I have a deep empathy for anyone who starts over." A second classmate noted that "I have never moved outside Toronto and cannot relate to this struggle, but I see that it must be very scary." A third viewer acknowledged that "many people who immigrate to Canada feel extremely alienated from Canadian culture, especially if it is at school." By positioning students at the intersection of the affective and cognitive domains of learning, art educators can assist learners to question assumptions made about immigrants, generate new interpretations of migration and bridge the social gap. Through technology and art's protective lens, the grief experienced by people out of place is transmuted and can feel liberating in the moment of telling painful truths.

As a hybrid approach, digital stories empower students to create in a new medium combining still and moving images, narrative, timing, music, recorded voices and other sounds at a time when digital filmmaking is emerging as an artform. Visual artists, such as Shirin Neshat, are incorporating elements of digital storytelling into their work to examine historical events that have largely been forgotten, as well as gender and cultural difference. In an interview conducted in 2010 regarding her first feature length film, "Women Without Men," Neshat stated:

> I have come to the conclusion that art can be a very powerful tool to communicate and frame some of the most significant issues we face in the world. I'm therefore more than ever committed to making art that functions beyond an aesthetic exercise; art that is also socially responsible without being didactic. I can't say that my film has offered any answers but I can easily say that my film "Women Without Men" spoke both to Iranians and to the Westerners about an aspect of our history that has been largely forgotten and should be revisited as it marks a criminal pattern in the American foreign policy. But most importantly I suppose the film tried to establish that, it is possible to tell a story that is at once philosophical, emotional and lyrical but also deeply political. (Valencia, para. 24)

Digital storytelling can be applied to a wide range of socially relevant issues in the art classroom to examine discriminatory practices and unjust treatment affecting the lives of students. In this way, digital storytelling connects the visual arts to other fields of knowledge in the humanities and social sciences, thus drawing attention to the permeable boundaries of art education. The future development of a pedagogy of human rights requires a sustained focus on transdisciplinarity in research and practice.

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Disrupting Discourses Digitally for LGBTQ Rights

MINDI RHOADES

ABSTRACT

Current dominant discourses maintain an anti-LGBTQ bias that contributes to and reinforces the continued denial of full, equal LGBTQ rights. Educational environments can exacerbate this denial, to the point of implicitly sanctioning harassment and physical human rights abuses. While digital media can infinitely reproduce and replicate these discriminatory discourses, they also offer virtual spaces and possibilities for collective, community, arts-based actions/responses to disrupt, and change, them (Desai & Chalmers, 2007). Sandoval and Latorre's (2008) artivism, Blackburn's (2002) liberatory literacy performances, and Richardson's (2010) interventionist art provide a useful framework for considering, engaging, and challenging contemporary LGBTQ discourses. Their work provides a context for examining hateful/negative, positive/celebratory, and more complicated, conflicted examples of LGBTQ cultural discourses circulating currently. Liberatory discourse attempts are necessary, but these can encounter complex, shifting factors able to co-opt, negate, or neutralize their messages. Art education can help students use new technologies and media to identify such complexities, recognize possibilities, and work for equity.

TENSIONS AND POSSIBILITIES

This moment in America (re)presents multiple, often conflicting, messages around sexual identities and social justice. In fall of 2010, American media focused attention on a tragic series of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ[1]) youth suicides. Badash (2010) reports up to 11 anti-gay, hate-related teen suicides in September 2010 alone. At least three of them endured documented relentless bullying at school about being gay *despite repeated student and parent complaints* (Dotinga & Mundell, 2010). An 18-year-old Rutgers student, unknowingly had his sexual encounter with another male streamed online live (Friedman, 2010). A Black gay youth activist "could not bear the burden of living as a gay man of color in a world grown cold and hateful to those of us who live and love differently than the so-called 'social mainstream'" (Barker, 2010). Meanwhile, openly gay Ellen DeGeneres' television show maintains a top-25 rating, with 12 *Daytime Emmys* in its 7-year run (Seidman, 2010). *Don't Ask, Don't Tell,* the 17-year old United States' military policy banning homosexuals

1 For the purposes of this paper, I use "LGBTQ," "gay," and "homosexual" as interchangeable, deferring to source material or speakers' word choices whe n appropriate, without interrogating the problems inherent in the terms and their use as labels.

and bisexuals was repealed by the House, Senate, and President Obama, and now awaits its official end (Stolberg, 2010). Progress is uneven.

Popular discourses exemplify dissonances, too. McCullough (2010), of *Christian Newswire,* insists Ellen DeGeneres caused *American Idol's* significant ratings decline because activist homosexuals drive audience members away. Darren Franich (2010) of popwatch counters that last season's biggest television hits included *Glee*, "a whirling candy-colored hurricane of homosexuality;" *Modern Family,* featuring married gay adoptive dads; and *Dancing With The Stars,* a festival of "wearing sequins, dancing, and wearing sequins" (para. 5). Meanwhile, regular scandals involving high-profile, outspoken homophobic ministers occur, with men like George Rekers, Ted Haggard, Bishop Eddie Long, Paul Crouch, and John Geoghan caught or reported engaging in the homosexual activities and lifestyle they condemn (Gane-McCalla, 2010). They embody our current contradictory cultural messages and impulses, demonstrating the difficulty of maintaining LGBTQ inequities.

Such dissonance reveals a disparity wherein LGBTQ people lack full rights while culture capitalizes on, appropriates, and vicariously enjoys their work, creativity, and talent. It directly conflicts with the United Nation's *Universal Declaration of Human Rights'* (1948) unequivocal assertion of the "equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family," with "equal protection against any discrimination," and entitlement to equal freedoms. This includes LGBTQ people. While internationally ratified, the declaration is not legally-binding. Many countries—like the United States, Italy, and France—continue denying LGBTQ people full equal rights. Others—like Sudan, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, and Iran—maintain the death penalty as punishment for homosexuality. And in between, many countries, like Egypt, still criminalize and punish, to varying degrees, being LGBTQ (Ottoson, 2010). Recognizing full human rights for LGBTQ people "remains a deeply political and contentious struggle" (Mihr & Schmitz, 2007, p. 973). In the United States, current socio-cultural turmoil fuels a "toxic environment" of increasing mental, emotional, political, and physical assaults against LGBTQ people and other marginalized populations (Rich, 2010). Such intolerance and hostility prevents full protection against discrimination.

Facing constant discrimination and marginalization can damage LGBTQ people in various ways, including destroying self-esteem, and precipitating self-defeat and self-destructive thoughts and behaviors. Unfortunately, schools often amplify such socio-cultural forces and discourses (Desai & Chalmers, 2007). As a result, many art educators advocate more equitable pedagogies, practices, and educational discourses around contemporary, relevant social justice issues that engage students in examining, addressing, and countering social injustices

(Ballengee-Morris & Stuhr, 2001; Bastos, 2010; Darts, 2004; Desai & Chalmers, 2007; Garber, 2004). To do this, art education can synthesize and adapt social justice youth development models (Ginwright & Cammerota, 2002; Sandoval & Latorre, 2008), critical liberatory literacy concepts (Blackburn, 2002; Lankshear 1997), and interventionist art strategies (Richardson, 2010). Arts can enable activist responses. The prevalence, relative accessibility, and manipulability of digital media, in particular, provide prime reasons for its draw and growing popularity.

Digital media affords virtual spaces for community-based, arts-based efforts for change (Desai & Chalmers, 2007). Student-artists recognize combining "art, activism, and community" can produce "a political act," (Sandoval & Latorre, 2008, p. 101), and digital media can facilitate it. LGBTQ activists are using digital media technology to disrupt, displace, and replace dominant homophobic discourses with newer, more equitable ones. Sandoval & Latorre's (2008) *artivism*, Blackburn's (2002) liberatory literacy performances, and Richardson's (2010) ideas around interventionist art provide frameworks for analyzing digital LGBTQ discourses ranging from homophobic and socially restrictive, to accepting and just, to those that are more complicated. After briefly defining these frameworks, I will apply them to a number of cases of contemporary digital LBGTQ discourses. Under consideration will be examples that perpetuate discrimination and oppression; attempts to challenge, disrupt, and change them; and the complications liberatory discourse attempts can encounter.

DOMINANT SOCIO-CULTURAL DISCOURSES AND ART EDUCATION POSSIBILITIES

We all participate in social justice inequities inscribed in dominant cultural discourses. Sometimes these seemingly insignificant inequities contribute to severe consequences, like LGBTQ youth suicides. Whether the recent spate of suicides was average or an anomaly (Savage, 2010b; Savin-Williams in Levy, 2010), it captured a suddenly more sympathetic public's attention, forced the recognition of contributing socio-cultural beliefs, and initiated public discussions of possible solutions through personal and collective change (Ginwright & Cammerota, 2002). LGBTQ discourses can shift during moments like these, when public cultural producers—artists, educators, writers, activists, celebrities, politicians—contest and counter the status quo, eventually displacing discriminatory discourses with more equitable ones.

Hateful and Negative Discourses

Regardless of the relative pop culture success of LGBTQ characters, performers, artists, aesthetic sensibilities, and themes, dominant cultural discourse in the U.S. deems heterosexuality the norm and other sexual identities abnormal, deviant, sinful, and somehow dangerously communicable. Hatred and homophobia infest school cultures when "fag" is the choice male insult. They slither through our cultural subconscious when people hollowly claim calling something dislikable "gay" is meaningless. They percolate in pop culture's attempts to profit by pandering to and perpetuating common stereotypes at minorities' expense. Dominant cultural discourses continue to dehumanize, deny rights to, and foster discrimination and violence against LGBTQ people.

American news and social interaction has become increasingly digital (Pew Research Council, 2008). This has benefits and drawbacks for LGBTQ populations. While the Internet facilitates connections among LGBTQ persons, it also provides a new forum for fostering and inflaming anti-LGBTQ sentiment. The anonymity of interactions online can encourage extremist views, comments, and behaviors.

Religious figures and organizations are particularly egregious in promoting discrimination against LGBTQ people. Recently, this discrimination has focused on the continued denial of gay marriage rights, a symbol of LGBTQ equality. In November, 2009, over 150 Christian clergy released the *Manhattan Declaration: A Call of Christian Conscience*, decrying gay marriage rights, and legislation qualifying sexual orientation and gender identity as protected categories for federal hate crimes and the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (Chusid, 2009). Contemporary churches and leaders have taken more direct, specific anti-gay actions. Notably, the Mormon Church, based in and operating from Utah, and representing less than 2% of Californians, effectively "hijacked" California's gay marriage campaign, defeating Proposition 8, which would have legalized gay marriage statewide. Fred Karger of *Californians Against Hate* notes Mormons raised "a staggering amount of money and an even more staggering percentage of the overall campaign receipts," raising "an estimated 77% of total donations" for defeating it (Garcia, 2008). In addition to their flood of cash, the Mormon leadership used digital media and means to produce and distribute almost 30 commercials, establish a web site, urging financial donations and weekly volunteering. The Church used younger members to deploy new media technologies to communicate their message, and organize events, and recruit volunteers (Garcia, 2008). Primarily as a result of the successful campaign tactics of this fringe religious minority, centered outside California and representing very few Californians, gay Californians are denied marriage rights.

As Rich (2010) asserts, America's radical right has an increasingly unfocused anger "likely to claim minorities like gays ... as collateral damage" (para. 6). For example, Byron Williams, abstractly angry at Congress and left-wing pro-homosexual agendas, targeted vaguely LGBTQ-related organizations like the ACLU and the Tides Foundation, an obscure AIDS education/prevention nonprofit, mentioned repeatedly by right-wing talk radio host Glenn Beck. Dana Milbank of the *Washington Post* concedes, "it's not fair to blame Beck for violence committed by his fans," but he should "stop encouraging extremists" (para. 10). The hateful message of these anti-LGBTQ discourses is clear: LGBTQ people do not have the same rights, and are not fully equal to heterosexuals. While digital media facilitate these discourses, their consequences do not remain digital.

In fact, LGBTQ people nationwide are as, or more, susceptible "to hate violence now as they were a decade ago" (Elegon, 2010). A recent incident in the Bronx involved at least 9 assailants kidnapping three victims—a 30-year-old gay man, popular in the neighborhood, and two younger men who apparently had sexual relations with him. They were beaten, stripped, burned with cigarettes, cut with a box cutter, and the gay man was sodomized with a wooden plunger handle (Wilson & Baker, 2010). In Chelsea, a gay enclave, six men verbally harassed a group of gay men, and hit them with a metal garbage can. And in Greenwich Village, at the Stonewall Inn, a landmark of the gay right's movement, two men gay-bashed a patron in the bathroom (Lohr, 2010). These examples clearly illustrate a lack of safe places for LGBTQ individuals.

Within the compulsory U.S. educational system, LGBTQ youth often have few options to avoid overt school-based versions of this homophobia: bullying and hate crimes. Administrators, teachers, and counselors have been remiss in the ways they address the harassment of LGBTQ students, often exacerbating problems rather than relieving them. Many prefer blaming LGBTQ victims for bringing violence upon themselves, accepting bullying as a rite of passage, and believing it might just disappear; many *do nothing*, even when students and parents complain (Jones, 2010). Teachers can face many obstacles and threats in supporting LGBTQ youth or issues, including harassment, exclusion, and administrative sanctions (Smith, 2010). Without clear advocates or a climate of acceptance, LGBTQ youth who can "pass" as straight often will, to retain heterosexual rights and privileges, despite their inner turmoil and dissatisfaction (Blackburn, 2002). Those who can't often confront increasingly hostile educational environments where homophobic/heterosexist discourses ceaselessly reify themselves, spewing constant negative messages about LGBTQ people.

Anti-LGBTQ discourses manifest in school in multiple ways. A 30-second YouTube video shows an October 2010 football game between two Cleveland high schools in which a large group of students taunted the opposing team,

chanting "Powder Blue Faggots! Powder Blue Faggots!" Reportedly opposing team fans retorted, "Halloween Homos!" The principal of the school relayed displeasure, but declined disciplinary action because she "didn't see what good would come from suspending about 300 students" (Sams, 2010). According to Jan Cline, executive director of the LGBT Center of Greater Cleveland, such widespread participation, digital distribution, and administrative inaction "tells people it's OK to say anti-gay slurs because those people are not worth very much," and this contributes to LGBTQ youth suicides (joemygod.blogspot.com). Digital technology also allowed a Rutgers University student to secretly stream his roommate's same-sex encounter live online; the publicly outed roommate committed suicide, jumping from the George Washington bridge (Friedman, 2010). Even for documented infractions, negative consequences remain elusive, legal ramifications unclear, but the causes and targets are familiar.

Continuing to deny LGBTQ people full rights or equal protections fosters a culture that condones the discrimination, hate, and violence LGBTQ people encounter. Increasingly online pundit Dan Savage (2010a) argues the same-sex marriage rights debate demonstrates how religions/religious leaders promote hateful discourses dedicated to devaluing, dehumanizing, and scapegoating LGBTQ people, denying their full equal rights, often politely couching them as about religion/tradition or nature/morality. These discourses of inequity and hate are indefensible.

Positive Media Discourses

Dominant discourses and media scramble to control, contain, and define the terms of LGBTQ equality. LGBTQ activists/supporters are using technology to challenge, and change, these terms. While the Internet is not yet universally accessible, it enables much more democratic access to the means of cultural consumption, organization, production, and distribution (Padovani, Musiani, & Pavan, 2010). Digital media offer means for establishing and maintaining LGBTQ-positive presences/discourses and communication. During the recent suicides, mainstream media highlighted the existence of pro-LGBTQ organizations, many with strong online presences. For example, the Trevor Project is a national crisis intervention and suicide prevention organization with a 24-hour toll free "lifeline" for LGBTQ youth that offers educational materials/resources and in-school workshops. Other online-accessible examples include Parents Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG), the Human Rights Campaign (HRC), the Safe Schools Coalition, and The Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network (GLSEN).

PFLAG and GLSEN collaboratively launched "Claim Your Rights," a "historical effort to empower students and their allies to report incidences of bullying, harassment, or discrimination to the Office for Civil Rights at the U.S. Education Department" ("Claim your rights," 2010). Jody Huckaby, PFLAG National Executive Director, asserts:

> When students and teachers, parents and allies make reports of bullying, harassment, or discrimination directly to the Education Department, they are building a record that will confirm what we know through research and personal narratives alike: bullying and harassment is widespread, pervasive, destructive, and must be addressed. ("Claim your rights," 2010)

Data collected from these reports could finally prompt formal pressure for school change.

While these well-organized, professional efforts represent LGBTQ-rights progress, perseverance, and plans, digital technology and media can provide/create newer spaces for challenging and changing dominant discriminatory discourses. During the suicide crisis, digital media catalyzed grassroots activism, and react-ivism, too. Brittany McMillam, a Canadian high school student, proposed in her blog that October 20, 2010 be *Wear Purple Spirit Day* to honor the LGBTQ youth who committed suicide and to show support to other LGBTQ youth facing homophobia, harassment, and abuse (Wackrow, 2010). Her idea went viral, spawning a national cultural phenomenon. The Human Rights Campaign, MTV, the Gay and Lesbian Alliance against Defamation (GLAAD) joined and promoted the cause. Celebrities appeared on television and in person wearing purple, and students nationwide participated too.

Dominant homophobic discourses reacted with vengeance. Conservative bloggers criticized news outlets like CNN for providing coverage and promoting the gay agenda (Balan, 2010). Pundits debated the actual severity and significance of gay youth suicides (Easterbrook, 2010). And an Arkansas School Board member commented on Facebook:

> The only way im wearin [sic] [purple] is if they all commit suicide... It pisses me off...that we make special purple fag day for them. I like that fags can't procreate. I also enjoy the fact that they often give each other AIDS and die. (as cited in Broverman, 2010)

Technology provided a broader, and he believed safe, audience for his bigotry. But public expression of such dominant discourses was suddenly no longer acceptable. The evidence was digitally indelible; he resigned promptly from the board.

Additional online collective advocacy efforts appropriate commercial formats. The Ad Council, with GLSEN, created a public service announcement featuring out African American comedian Wanda Sykes confronting a white male teenager using "That's gay!" She interrupts an all-male trio's laughter with,

"Don't say that something is gay when you mean that something is dumb or stupid." She, illustratively, calls a pepper shaker "so sixteen-year-old boy with a cheesy moustache!" She concludes, "When you say *that's so gay,* do you realize what you say? Knock it off!" (GLSEN & The Ad Council, 2010). The *Give a Damn Campaign* (Lauper, 2011) aims to mobilize primarily straight allies to learn more about LGBTQ issues, support LGBTQ people, and get involved in the fight for LGBTQ rights and acceptance. The website includes resources and encourages visitors to join the campaign, tell and post their own stories, and access educational/activist resources on LGBTQ issues. The *Give a Damn Campaign* has enlisted many celebrities – LGBTQ and straight – to talk about LGBTQ issues they "give a damn" about and why, including Cyndi Lauper, Whoopi Goldberg, Jason Mraz, Anna Paquin, Judith Light, Cher, Elton John, and Clay Aiken. While some of these public service announcement videos have appeared in mainstream media venues, they find a larger audience, and a longer life, online.

FCKH8 is another recent digitally-based effort to counteract homophobic discourses. FCKH8 challenges Californians to reverse the defeat of Proposition 8. The FCKH8 campaign is distinctly aggressive, deliberately deploying traditionally-censored language and imagery. Their commercial on FCKH8.com presents a diverse array of people insisting we "Fuck Hate" en masse. In it a mom tells people to "Quit fucking with my gay son's rights." An adolescent girl says, "Don't fuck with my queer daddies!" A boy declares, "Don't fuck with my two moms!" Adults comment, "If you're against gay marriage, then don't marry someone with the same fucking junk in their undies as you!" "Don't fuck with our families!" Everyone then implores, "Fuck Hate!" Luke Montgomery, the campaign's creator responded to criticisms that their use of "foul language," particularly by children, damages their goals:

> Prop 8 was school bullies all grown up at the ballot box trying to hurt us and our families… On the F-word being offensive… I think it's a very mild response to the brutal attacks on our rights at the ballot box... We are using an impolite word in response to people who are taking away our rights to visit our spouses in the hospital, to adopting our children, and having healthcare benefits. I hope that puts a YouTube video and T-shirt into perspective. (Montgomery, 2010)

Digital media enables the FCKH8 campaigners to disrupt the demure, polite, distanced discourse required of LGBTQ activists in many mainstream media outlets. Here, diverse participants voice palpable fury, presenting a complicated, personalized picture of people impacted by the denial of full LGBTQ rights.

it gets better

A current prominent disruptive digital discourse is the *it gets better project.* Advice columnist/political pundit Dan Savage names and disrupts LGBTQ-oppressive discourses. Savage offers re-statements and re-performances of discriminatory discourses, exposing their fear and hatred, and advocating more inclusive and equitable options (Butler, 1990, 1997; Blackburn, 2002). Savage's multimedia presence and resources position him, as a cultural producer, to publically criticize bigoted, discriminatory forces.

He is especially concerned with hypocritical Christians' hate, and its harmful consequences for LGBTQ people. After Savage spoke on National Public Radio (NPR), a reader/listener wrote in to his column "Savage Love" complaining that he maligned and misrepresented Christians as anti-gay. The reader described herself as "someone who loves the Lord and does not support gay marriage," but feels "heartbroken" about the recent gay youth suicides, and offended that Savage intimated "faithful Christians…would somehow encourage their children to mock, hurt, or intimidate another person" (2010a). Savage counters:

> children of people who see gay people as sinful or damaged or disordered and unworthy of full civil equality—even if those people strive to express their bigotry in the politest possible way…learn to see gay people as sinful, damaged, disordered, and unworthy. (para. 8)

He continues that when "faithful Christians" spout "dehumanizing bigotries" and lies, it gives "straight children a license to verbally abuse, humiliate, and condemn the gay children they encounter at school…to feel justified in physically attacking [them]" (para. 10). He explains this abuse needs no explicit encouragement, "the encouragement—along with your hatred and fear—is implicit…and we can see the fruits of it" (para. 10). Savage insists the combination of continual harassment, the accumulation of attempts to withhold LGBTQ full civil rights, and messages telling LGBTQ people "they're not valued, that their lives are not worth living…fill your straight children with hate" and "fill your gay children with suicidal despair" (para. 11). The injustices perpetuated by this homophobia and hatred harm LGBTQ people, but they harm straight people, too.

The suicide of Billy Lucas, a bullied teen in Greensburg, Indiana, moved Savage to action. He confesses, "I wish I could have talked to this kid for five minutes…I wish I could have told him that, however bad things were, however isolated and alone he was, it gets better" (2010b, para. 13). Savage notes:

> But gay adults aren't allowed to talk to these kids. Schools and churches don't bring us in to talk to teenagers who are being bullied. Many of these kids have homophobic parents who believe that they can prevent their gay children from growing up to be gay—or from ever coming

> out—by depriving them of information, resources, and positive role models. (2010b, para. 15)

So Savage wondered, "Why are we waiting for permission to talk to these kids? We have the ability to talk directly to them right now. We don't have to wait for permission to let them know that *it gets better.*" He created a YouTube channel, www.itgetsbetter.com, to host videos of people telling LGBTQ youth *it gets better*. He states:

> Today we have the power to give these kids hope. We have the tools to reach out to them and tell our stories and let them know that it *does* get better… many LGBT youth can't picture what their lives might be like as openly gay adults. They can't imagine a future for themselves. So let's show them what our lives are like, let's show them what the future may hold in store for them. (2010b, para. 20)

He posted a simple video, sitting with his husband Terry, talking about wonderful people, things, and experiences in their lives, including a middle-of-the-night stroll with his young son in Paris. Savage encouraged other LGBTQ adults to submit videos telling youth it gets better. Echoing Harvey Milk's famous comments, Savage insists we have to give them hope.

Within a few days of Savage establishing the website and posting his video, submissions poured in. LGBTQ celebrities posted their stories and encouragement. Tim Gunn, from *Project Runway,* immediately shared his coming out struggles, failed suicide attempt, and how happy he is now. Politicians including Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, President Obama, and the Democratic National Committee contributed. At a local level, Fort Worth town councilman Joel Burns, outed himself at a public meeting, through tears, sharing his story of suffering, silence, and attempted suicide. He praised his family's change to acceptance. He implored LGBTQ youth, "Please stick around to make those happy memories for yourself" (Burns, 2010).

Religious leaders and congregations, youth groups, student groups, and employee groups have posted positive videos. Many videos are in sign language, some subtitled.

Many of these videos speak directly to youth. A mother tells them if their parents aren't accepting, they have to find themselves a new family. Not to worry about detractors because their only responsibility is to "be who you are and to make the world more beautiful." Many contributors provide their names and personal contact information for LGBTQ youth in need of support. Several videos speak directly to parents of LGBTQ youth. One youth tells parents, "Even if your religion doesn't agree with it or your own thoughts or you don't know, remember, it's your kid, and you love them, right? It gets better for you, too." Several LGBTQ choruses posted performances of inspirational songs, sung by people of all ages, genders, sexual identities, ethnicities, colors, shapes, and sizes. In one, as a gay choir sings, a congregation floods in joining them. The Chicago Gay Men's Chorus sings "It Gets Better" in rounds, with the text "This is what our voices are for" scrolling by at the end. Several confront bullies harassing LGBTQ people. One man addresses bullies' lack of self-confidence and the consequence their hate will have in their lives when he says, "Your life is probably going to get pretty miserable and shitty from here on in, and you deserve it, and fuck you!" Postings still stream in. Savage has instigated a space where marginalized voices contradict mainstream ones, where LGBTQ people represent themselves, telling their own stories and showing alternative possibilities for LGBTQ youth who primarily see isolation and despair. These and other LGBTQ discourses using *artivism*, liberatory literacy performances, and interventionist art often have more complicated aspects, as the following section will discuss.

ANALYSIS

Community-based, collaborative, digital discourses demonstrate the potential of combining *artivism* with liberatory identity performances and interventionist strategies to produce possibilities, hopes, and images of LGBTQ equality. Art education concerned with contemporary visual culture, media, and socio-cultural inequities can provide venues for critical engagement and interaction with such socio-cultural issues/discourses. Combining concepts from *artivism* (Sandoval & Latorre, 2008), liberatory literacy performances (Blackburn, 2002), and interventionist art practices (Richardson, 2010) provides art education pedagogical potential. Collectively, these concepts can contribute to framing critical, arts-based engagement with dominant discriminatory discourses.

Artivism

Digital *artivism* is the convergence of activism and digital artistic production by people "who see an organic relationship between [them]" (Sandoval & Latorre, 2008, p. 81). *Artivists* are "committed to transforming themselves and the world," fully cognizant of "digital media's liberatory potential as well as its persisting exclusions" (p. 83). We see evidence of *artivism* in the presence and responses of pro-LGBTQ *artivistic* digital media use (Sandoval & Latorre, 2008). The online *We Give a Damn Campaign* combines mainstream commercial media and the personal video to present digital stories of marginalized perspectives to promote cultural change. Dan Savage's *it gets better project* demonstrates how the simple act of sharing personal coming out stories, positive memories, and experiences can be an artistic and a political act. In less than two weeks, Savage prompted thousands of people to become *artivists*, creating and compiling an exponentially

increasing resource. Savage recognized digital technology's power for connecting and building community across previous chasms, the "unprecedented means" for representation outside more policed and controlled environments as well as officially sanctioned communication channels, disrupting dominant discourses and establishing "sites of healing" and "counterhegemonic alliances with other[s]" (Sandoval & Latorre, 2008, p. 90). He opened a space to create change.

FCKH8.com uses digital, arts-based means to sell an ostensibly equal rights agenda. Here, LGBTQ equality involves gay marriage rights and defeating Prop 8. But does their work really constitute *artivism*? Proponents of gay rights, including marriage, often argue that gaining full LGBTQ rights necessitates "integrat[ing] into current normative frameworks" and aligning with "broader human rights" efforts to counteract deeply ingrained, religiously-based biases (Padovani, Musiani, & Pavan, 2010, p. 361). Other scholars/activists insist gay marriage distracts from true issues of equality, reinscribing a foundational patriarchal institution and its discriminatory practices and extending rights to a new select few willing to adopt a heterosexist marriage paradigm (queerkidssaynomarriage, 2009). The LGBTQ community faces longstanding debates over internally marginalizing/sacrificing multiple minority populations—transgender, women, queer, racial and ethnic minorities, the poor/working class, the flamboyant or butch, etc. (McFarland, 2004). Online, queer activists argue efforts should focus on economic, racial, gender, ability, citizenship, educational, and political equality instead of fighting to adopt an inequitable institutionalized norm (queerkidssaynomarriage, 2009). FCKH8 ignores these larger problems of marriage inequality in their effort to gain equal rights for some gay people.

FCKH8 appropriates traditional design and marketing media tactics to demand gay marriage rights. They promote their line of t-shirts and merchandise as a way to support, and fund, this struggle. These efforts converge at a convoluted intersection of activism, media, politics, and profit. While components of their campaign are activist-based, the capitalist component is undeniable. In fact, a drawback to primarily online *artivism* is digital media's tendency to facilitate an increasingly rapid co-optation and transformation of activist movements:

> into institutionalized organizations that simplify complex issues to sound bites, slogans, and campaigns as a means to rapidly raise awareness; then, self-preservation, maintaining "market share," and economic growth traditionally become an organization's driving force. (Mihr & Schmitz, 2007, p. 986)

In the case of FCKH8.com, collective political action commingles messily with capitalist tactics. Does selling t-shirts achieve human rights? Given the financial power of (religious) organizations, as exhibited in the Mormon Church's role

defeating Proposition 8, can human rights efforts, even *artivist* ones, compete without capitalism's tools? How can art education prepare students to encounter and engage these multiple discourses?

Liberatory Literacy Performances

The previous examples are also liberatory literacy performances (Blackburn, 2002). In particular, Facebook and YouTube provide online spaces "to work for social change," allowing people to "perform" multiple literacies and identities in ways that can destabilize discriminatory discourses against LGBTQ people and provide alternative representations (Blackburn, 2002, p. 314). Brittany McMillan used the internet to name and critique the inequity, oppression, and harassment LGBTQ youth endure, to imagine alternatives for them, and to devise a simple, direct, visible way to counter negative dominant discourses (Wackrow, 2010). The *it gets better project* provides a place for people to perform and present LGBTQ identities, lives, and stories that contradict mainstream images and messages. These videos present alternatives to the belief (and attempts to ensure) that LGBTQ people are sad, evil, unhappy sinners doomed to horrible lives (or suicide). Sharing these new stories creates "alternative Discourses" with space for constructing alternative identities (Lankshear, 1997, p. 73). As liberatory literacy performances, these *artivist* acts create possibilities for imagining and facilitating different identities, and thus precipitating possibilities for change (Blackburn, 2002). In digitally disrupting default social norms, we can admit their construction, inherent discrimination, and limitations, and work to re-vision/re-create them more equitably.

These literacy performance examples present more complicated discourses, too. Social media and public-response sites provide opportunities for anti-LGBTQ messages. Many online news sites allow public responses to columns, and many readers contribute homophobic remarks (Palmer, 2010). Further, when looking at these discourses one should ask whether positive and celebratory literacy performances are enough. The *it gets better project* provides space for LGBTQ-positive discourses: images, stories, and messages of hope. But when President Obama delivers a scripted message supporting LGBTQ youth, does it outweigh simultaneously insisting the Justice Department defend the *Defense of Marriage Act* and proclaiming himself to be anti-gay marriage (Hogarth, 2009)? Does having LGBTQ adults and advocates post positive digital stories destabilize such discourses? Does it position LGBTQ youth as solely victims, denying their agency (Blackburn, 2002)? Inspired by Savage, the Gay-Straight Alliance network created the *Make it Better Project* for youth to post their own video literacy performances about how they are making their own lives better now, offering other youth advice and support for doing the same. Art education can

support learning the multimedia skills youth need for meaningful participation and self-representation within such discourses.

Interventionist Art

These examples also demonstrate digital "interventionist work[s]" (Richardson, 2010). LGBTQ youth, adults, and their allies are working to construct "intellectual," " sometimes literal," and I would add, virtual spaces for "proposing alternative perspectives," examples, and possibilities (Richardson, 2010, p. 19). Websites can provide *interventionist* discourses with counter-mainstream information and representations. The prominent spate of suicides has prompted a national and international dialogue outside of the LGBTQ community about the harmful results of accepting bullying as a given part of our culture. The unexpected publicity and public sympathy around these suicides signified a cultural shift about LGBTQ youth with a public awareness of their existence and the challenging, oppressive, and physically unsafe circumstances many face routinely, prompting a larger-scale, and perhaps a longer-lasting version of Richardson's "social reorganization" (p. 21). The responses included many collaborative *artivist* interventionist efforts among individuals, social forces, organizations, and groups brought into relation as a result of these tragedies (Richardson, 2010). As one example, after Canadian high school student Brittany McMillam proposed *Wear Purple Spirit Day*, LGBTQ organizations like GLAAD, HRC, and MTV adopted and promoted her idea, ensuring a much wider audience. PFLAG and GLSEN jointly developed the "Claim Your Rights" campaign. The *Make It Better Project* lists over 80 endorsing organizations.

Like the live staged intervention "events" Richardson (2010) describes, these events and campaigns "evade easy identification as either art or everyday practice," and "function as a form of critical inquiry" with pedagogical and transformational potential (p. 19). The *it gets better project* exemplifies the hybridity of artistic work, social exchange, and activism, establishing sites where "dialogue and production...function and occur simultaneously...arriving at form and meaning not within traditional artistic structures but within the more fluid, quotidian, and habitual forms of daily life" (p. 20). The video submissions deviate from the still-homophobic norm; many present unheard, ignored, and marginalized discourses, reframing the public dialogue around LGBTQ people, issues, and rights. These efforts are "socially invasive tactics...used to establish an alternate site for thinking, [and being,] not isolated from but layered onto or coalescing within an existing social space" (p. 27). In short, pro-LGBTQ, or at least pro-tolerance or pro-acceptance perspectives are puncturing, disrupting, questioning, and displacing the previous widespread, intolerant, discriminatory, homophobic norms in the places they exist.

But such interventionist works can also complicate LGBTQ-rights discourses. Instead of intervening, more polished digital media visibility can depict a "professionalization of activists groups and movements [that] may discourage, or marginalize, grassroots involvement in human rights causes" (Mihr & Schmitz, 2007, p. 986). Interventions can disregard the importance of prolonged personal and collective direct action, substituting a one-time occurrence or detached action for sustained change efforts. Art educators can encourage students to create, enact, and evaluate the impact of interventionist work.

Implications for Art Education and Social Justice

Like many art educators, I believe we have an imperative to educate for equity, social justice aims, and a society "where the rights and privileges of democracy are available to all" (Garber, 2004, p. 16; see also Ballengee-Morris & Stuhr, 2001; Bastos, 2010; Darts, 2004; Desai & Chalmers, 2007; Richardson, 2010; Sandoval & Latorre, 2008). Community *artivists*, like Judy Baca in Los Angeles, combine technology, arts, and social justice activism "to provide ways... creativity can be channeled, augmented, and empowered" toward these aims (Sandoval & Latorre, 2008, p. 84). *Artivist* interventions are community-based acts, liberatory literacy performances (Blackburn, 2002) of "social critique, collaborative learning, public pedagogy, and research" (Richardson, 2010, p. 30). They can expose dominant discriminatory discourses that "strip" people "of their individual agencies," defining them instead by the "fears, anxieties, and desires" of others, "policing and criminaliz[ing]" and "relegat[ing] minority communities – both children and adults – to the social margins" (Sandoval & Latorre, 2008, p. 85-86; see also Lankshear, 1997). *Artivist* interventions provide glimpses of possible progress.

I echo Richardson's (2010) belief that art educators can teach, understand, and produce interventionist practices "as a type of art informed tactical research" (p. 20). An art education that recognizes, examines, teaches, and deploys *artivist*, liberatory, performative, interventionist approaches promotes becoming active community-based researchers, critical consumers and producers of knowledge and culture, and agents of change (Richardson, 2010; see also Ballengee-Morris & Stuhr, 2001; Bastos, 2010; Darts, 2004; Desai & Chalmers, 2007; Garber, 2004). Students find ways their concerns, voices, community resources, and collaborations can construct "a more equitable society through the engagement of critically conscious citizens" (Ginwright & Cammerota, 2002, p. 36). Technology provides tools marginalized populations can access to "challenge, respond to, and negotiate the use and misuse of power" (p. 36). Although digital technology can both "enable and constrain democracy" (Padovani, Musiani, & Pavan, 2010, p. 359), through opportunity, skills, and access, adults can mentor

youth in developing tools and strategies for recognizing and addressing power inequities and promoting systemic change for social justice

To do this, Ginwright and Cammerota (2002) encourage devising and performing collective action that questions and disrupts dominant discourses and hegemonic relations, reminiscent of Richardson's (2010) interventionist art strategies. They also recommend using new technologies to challenge societal conventions and contradictions, working to find what Podkalicka and Thomas (2010) term the "difficult balance between the more consolidated human rights tradition and digital complexity" (p. 370). Youth *artivists* can learn to deploy multiple media simultaneously, suturing media and messages with music, words, images, sounds, and performances to rupture the status quo, to motivate and produce political actions, and to create change (Blackburn, 2002; Ginwright & Cammerota, 2002; Richardson, 2010; Sandoval & Latorre, 2008). Art educators can help them.

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Contemporary art as a resource for learning about human rights: a case study of the use of the *Placenta Methodology* with hospitalized adolescents

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ABSTRACT

The *Placenta Methodology* is a critical art education system developed at the Complutense University in Madrid (Spain). This article explores how the Placenta Methodology (Acaso, 2009) can be used to develop educational projects. In this case the authors used this methodology to work with hospitalized teenagers on the topic of human rights, using contemporary art as a medium. In the workshops they aimed to promote a critical perspective to show that art is connected to real life, and to encourage the participants to question the importance of technical training in being a contemporary artist. By placing this kind of art education project in a new environment (in this case the hospital), the authors wanted to promote the role of art education as an intellectual force instead of merely teaching handicrafts.

INTRODUCTION

Since 2003, the Complutense University in Madrid and the University of Salamanca (specifically the Research Group at the Pedagogical Museum of Children's Art and the Department of Social Psychology of the University of Salamanca) have been conducting research into the possibilities of improving the situation of hospitalized children and teenagers through contemporary art and creativity. The *Proyecto curArte* (Ullán & Belver, 2007) is a multidisciplinary project that designs and implements artistic activities intended to address the specific needs of hospitalized children, and to understand health and wellbeing through art.

Bearing in mind the Convention on the Rights of the Child, we feel that it is necessary to afford hospitalized children the same level of normalcy as experienced by other children and teenagers outside the hospital, as it is their right to play a full role in cultural and artistic life (article 31.2). In addition, everyone under 18 years of age is entitled in this Convention to quality education regardless of the context they may be in (article 28.1). For this reason, the activities we propose can be understood as an educational program that enriches the time they spend in hospital, especially in summer when teenagers are often alone in hospital (the sub-project *curArte en Verano*, *curArte* takes place in the summer).

When implementing the autumn/winter programs (2009/10) we realized by accident that the teenagers taking part in those activities were completely unaware of their rights, both the general rights through their status as human beings and their specific rights as hospitalized teenagers. They knew absolutely nothing about the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989). In fact, they were not even aware of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). This led us to think that the content on which we would work in this, our third edition of *curArte en Verano*, should deal with this subject. As the starting point, we decided to work on the UDHR, leaving the Convention on the Rights of the Child for subsequent editions of the program. Bearing in mind the characteristics and interests of the teenagers we had worked with in previous versions of the project, we decided to schedule five workshops around Articles 13, 19, 25 and 26. These articles deal with aspects relating to immigration, the right to education, freedom of expression, social wellbeing and health.

Once we had chosen which articles we wanted to work on, we faced the problem of choosing the most appropriate ways to present them. We opted for contemporary art as a suitable tool (Antúnez, Ávila, & Zapatero, 2008) for reflecting on the UDHR for the following reasons:

1. **It develops a critical spirit**: one of the characteristics of contemporary art is the critical spirit it attempts to inject into social reality in order to change it (Burgess, 2003). We can find countless examples of this, from the work of consecrated artists such as Damien Hirst or Shirin Neshat, to the work of collectives of artivists such as The Yes Men (www.theyesmen.org) or the Yomango movement (www.yomango.net), where artistic language is used to analyze and denounce the unfair situations arising in both our immediate setting and remote corners of the planet (Atkinson & Dash, 2005).
2. **It connects with real life:** through contemporary art works, we can connect the articles of the UDHR to specific cases in real life. Contemporary art places its focus on those every day phenomena to which we habitually pay no attention and which, through systematic repetition, we have accepted as normal without considering their true meaning (Tallant, 2006). Contemporary art can act as a vaccine to prevent alienation in the light of the petty injustices of our everyday lives.
3. **Technical ability is not strictly necessary:** artists today use simple techniques and strategies, within anyone's abilities. In order to carry out a good project, it is no longer necessary to master complex techniques so technical virtuosity is no longer synonymous with artistic creation (Balestrini, 2010). New technologies have brought the visual idiom within the reach of anyone considering the use of images to convey ideas and, through the Internet, we can endow ourselves with legitimacy.

Based on these three intersecting axes, we designed educational actions that were divided into five workshops with the above-mentioned goal of helping the participants to learn about the UDHR.

ART EDUCATION AS A RIGHT

The links between human rights issues and *curArte en Verano* are (unfortunately) born out of our everyday reality. News stories on television and in the newspapers fill our breakfasts every day with terrible news of abandonment affecting children in multiple countries around the world. Mass media all too often uncover situations of injustice affecting childhood, showing that while the Convention on the Rights of the Child was approved 20 years ago, these acknowledged rights are often not respected.

The Convention, which extends its protection to all minors in its first article, has the greater good of the child as its main driver and comprises a variety of civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights. As of today, it enjoys a great worldwide consensus as it has been signed by each and every one of the countries belonging to the United Nations except for United States and Somalia. Nonetheless, it is paradoxical that, despite its overwhelming support, these rights are being systematically ignored by many of the signatory countries. As we are told by Silvana Calvo from the Study Department of "Manos Unidas" (Hands Together): "There have been advances, but there is still a lot to be done; the rights of minors are still being violated. There are children who have to work, are still illiterate, are sexually exploited, suffer displacement" (Lladó, 2009). This situation, in breach of acknowledged children's rights, arises in many cases through such circumstances as marginality, poverty, wars, and social customs that are not appropriate for children.

When children and teenagers become hospital patients, their lives undergo a radical change and, in many cases, this experience leaves an indelible mark on their personalities. Traumatic situations in childhood are well known to have a decisive influence on us. Shortcomings and unfair or regrettable situations affecting us as children, whether at the affective, physical or mental level, may in the long term lead to major traumas that are often difficult to overcome, potentially affecting not only quality of life but even becoming a danger for the survival of the individual. Everything that can be done to make a minor's stay in hospital more bearable will be positive for the recovery of their health and for avoiding future problems (White, 2009). Art education understood as a process for generating knowledge and analyzing such subjects as visual culture, identity

and desire, becomes a powerful instrument for inclusion, and for connecting to the asphyxiating reality and everyday life taking place outside the hospital.

AN EDUCATIONAL PROJECT ABOUT UDHR

A team of artists and professionals in art education leading this project (Clara Megías, Eva Morales, Jesús Morate and Raquel Sacristán) designed 5 workshops lasting 2 hours each that took place between July and August 2010 at the Adolescent Psychiatry Unit of the Gregorio Marañón Hospital in Madrid. This is a short-stay hospitalization unit located within the Psychiatry Department of the hospital and its aim is to study and stabilize acute psychiatric conditions that would require full-time hospitalization for a term of one to three weeks.

Name of the workshops	Number of participants	Ages
Tormenta (Storm)	11	13-17
Edupunk?	11	12-16
¡Aquí no hay playa! (There's no beach here!)	13	12-16
Área de salud (Health Area)	4	14-16
Rotolando	10	13-16

The first workshop, entitled Tormenta (Storm) was based on Article 19 of the UDHR which states:

> Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.

Therefore, this session revolved around freedom of expression and its various manifestations. In this workshop, two art installations were created with the aim to change the atmosphere in the hospital through the use of contemporary art. The purpose of one of the installations was, first of all, to help teenagers reflect

Fig. 1 and 2
Photos of the process for producing the clouds installation as part of the Tormenta workshop

on the role of newspapers in the creation of public opinion and, as a result, on the construction of reality; secondly, to help younger children think about the flexible, mutable and intangible quality of the world of ideas.

The second workshop was called Edupunk? in reference to the term coined by Jim Croom (Piscitelli, 2010) and was built around Article 26:

> Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit. Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace. Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children.

Using the above statement as a starting point, the structure of the workshop was organized around the concept of the hidden agenda in secondary schools. All the participants attend secondary schools and we wanted them to question the current educational system in both its public and private sectors. The use of contemporary art techniques in this workshop comprised the creation of an artist's notebook in a traditional handwriting exercise book, where they make notes and drawings on the subjects discussed in the course of the session. For example, there were discussions on whether or not it was a good idea to apply inflexible timetables as a way to organize the learning time in the school, or the convenience of the traditional exam-based assessment system. Finally, the participants drew up a list of tips for future teachers so as to build a better educational system together.

Fig. 3 and 4
Photos of notebooks created in the Edupunk? Workshop

The third workshop focused on what we do during the school holidays and was entitled ¡Aquí no hay playa! (There's no beach here!) This workshop took article 25 of the UDHR as its reference:

> Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services.

The workshop was organized as a way to reflect on urban space as opposed to beach spaces. Starting from the reconstruction of a large-scale map of the city of Madrid, participants were encouraged to discuss the theme of life in the city and the elements needed to survive in it. As our model, we took artistic projects carried out by local collectives from Madrid, such as Todopor la Praxis (Everything for Praxis, www.todoporlapraxis.es) or Estaesuna Plaza (This is a Square www.estaesunaplaza.blogspot.com).

Fig. 5 and 6
Photos of the production and transformation of the map of Madrid during the ¡Aquí no hay playa! Workshop.

Área de Salud (Health Area) was the title of the fourth workshop that referred to other aspects of Article 25. For this workshop, the participants planned a mobile rest-area to be installed on the street, close to the hospital. This was an intervention in a public space designed by the urban artist Raquel Sacristán. We transplanted aromatic plants into face-masks intended for hospital use,

Fig. 7 and 8
Photos of the preparation of the installation and the final result of the Area de Salud workshop

momentarily turning them into hanging plant pots. These plants were placed outside, above a hammock, to create a space in which passers-by could relax and escape from the hustle and bustle of the city.

Rotolando: Using Placenta Methodology in a Workshop About Migration

Rotolando was the fifth workshop making up the *curArte en Verano* program and was designed by a collective of artists called Núbol (www.nubol.net), a usual collaborator of the curArte project. Rotolando took its name from a popular song by the Italian group Negrita. Rotolando means "rolling along" and refers to travel by road. The song speaks of a journey to the south and the magical sensation of discovering new territories. This workshop is based in the Article 13:

> Everyone has the right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each state.
>
> Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country.

We have chosen to describe Rotolando, the last workshop of the program, in greater depth in order to illustrate our methodology. Rotolando and the other five workshops have adopted the Placenta Methodology developed by María Acaso (2009) in her book *La educación artística no son manualidades* (*Art Education does not mean handicrafts*). The aim of this methodology is the creation of artistic/educational projects in which participants develop a critical view on the world surrounding them, as well as zero tolerance towards behavior that violates human rights. The Placenta Methodology attempts to serve as an alternative to Goal-Based Pedagogy.

Bases of Placenta Methodology. Placenta Methodology is based on four ideas extracted from Elizabeth Ellsworth's *Teaching Positions* (1997). To paraphrase:

- The educational curriculum is a system of representations, it is not reality.
- Education is a communication process where what is taught is not learned, due to a third participant, namely the unconscious that modifies the process.
- Learning is not just a matter of welcoming every kind of knowledge, it also means rejecting certain kinds of knowledge that is already a part of us. Learning involves being ignorant in an active way.
- Education is a performative practice, a practice that is never completed and that should change reality somehow.

Following these ideas, Placenta is not a recipe. Placenta is a proposal for rebuilding an educational system closer to the needs of our society. It believes: students need to develop their own knowledge; there is not one universal truth; educational practice has to be focused on the learning process and not on final marks; the educator should promote passion for learning; the political dimension

of the educational process has to be explicit by using micronarratives and by deconstructing metanarratives; conflict is an essential part of the learning process, and education is not a way to solve problems but to ask questions; the educator has to pay attention to the hidden and absent curriculum, making it visible. Placenta is a proposal for encouraging reflective art education professionals to develop perfomative and unfinished learning processes.

Educational practice needs planning. Traditionally, this planning is organized in a unit of work designed with the main goal of acquiring certain skills. With Placenta Methodology, Acaso rethinks that process according to the principles mentioned above, trying to help inexperienced art educators to design and plan their first educational program by suggesting six steps to follow:

1. Manifesto: the execution of a Teaching Manifesto, that is to say, an explicit reflection communicated on the basis of a political-educational positioning of the educator.
2. Mapping: an analysis of the time-based, geographical and human layers covering the project that Acaso referred to in her text as *Mapeo educativo* (Educational mapping, Framing or Mapping).
3. Ready, Steady, Go!: teaching work is recommended in open and not necessarily assessable guidelines as general goals and immediate goals.
4. Fluid Contents: the educator has to look for, select, produce and organize the information that will be used in the educational action.
5. ProceSOS (SOS Processes), which is in turn divided into four sub-steps: Trigger, Discussion, Workgroup and Sharing.
6. Boomerang: to complete the experience, the sixth and last step of the Placenta, Boomerang, was implemented: this is a two-way system for thinking about what has happened during the educational action. In order to carry out this reflection, the qualitative data collection techniques we used were the preparation of field notes and the recording of interviews with participants and educators. After each session, this material was meticulously reviewed to be able to detect the achievements and difficulties found and so improve the workshops.

Bases of the Placenta Methodology (Acaso, 2009)

PAE (Postmodern Art Education)

Efland, A., Freedman, K., Stuhr, P. (1995): *Postmodern art education an approach to curriculum.* Reston: NAEA

CAP (Critical Art Pedagogy)

Cary, R. (1998): *Critical art pedagogy: foundations for postmodern art education.* NY: Garland

AEVC (Art Education based in Visual Culture)

Freedman, K. (2003): *Teaching visual culture: curriculum, aesthetics, and the social life of art.* NY: Teacher's College Press

AERP (Art Education based in Regenerative Pedagogies)

Ellsworth, E. (1997): *Teaching positions: difference, pedagogy, and the power of address.* NY: Teacher's College Press

Steps	Description	Types
1. Manifesto	think about if you want to reproduce how you have been taught	• Personal manifesto (conscious and subconscious) • Manifesto for the students (syllabus) • Manifesto for people we don't know (web) • Recommendation: video manifesto
2. Mapping	exploring the different contexts of the project	Temporal map: • calendar • Geographic map • MACRO • Map A. Urban / rural • Map B. Size of city (big, medium...) • Map C. Neighborhood / • Map D. Immediate surroundings (museum, hospital, school) • MICRO Immediate surroundings • Human map: me and them
3. Ready, steady, go!	think about the open aims that you want to achieve with your students.	**Generic level aims:** related to the hyperdevelopment of visual language. Students have to develop a critical vision of the visual world that surrounds them **Middle level aims** • Be suspicious of metanarratives • Understand and be able to build micronarratives • See the difference between reality and representation **Immediate level aims:** related to the specific contents of the project we are developing

4. Fluid Contents	choosing critical visual content.	Metanarratives: visual culture, advertising, entertainment. Micronarraives: contemporary art, anti-advertising, etc.
5. ProcesSOS	establishing the group dynamic for the class.	PARTS 1. The spark: little performance activity that lets students know they are in an alternative learning atmosphere 2. Critical debate: a two way conversation based on a visual presentation with the content chosen in chapter 4 3. Practical activity: students carry out a mini project 4. Sharing: sharing the findings with the class
6. Boomerang	checking the experience from everyone's point of view.	• Self-boomerang • In depth interview • Visual portfolio • Blog

Rotolando workshop step by step

Manifesto. The following is the text written by the Núbol collective to explain their positioning as artists and educators:

> Núbol collective is named after the brain-cloud metaphor taken from the work of Juan Zamora (www.juanzamora.com), in which clouds represent the inevitable free nature of the world of ideas. Núbol works with the idea that education and contemporary art have a common objective: the need of questioning everything that is assumed without thinking. For that reason, they think that contemporary art practice should be incorporated to any educational context. They believe in a transversal, multidisciplinary art like the world in which we live. Núbol means cloud/brain in Catalan: ideas live in the brain, just like clouds in the sky. Neither can be touched. They escape physical limits. They are free, ethereal, transmutable, ephemeral. They can combine with others or simply disappear.

Mapping. The workshop was developed in the Adolescent Psychiatry Unit of the Gregorio Marañón Hospital of Madrid. The objective of this hospital unit is the study and stabilization of teenagers with psychiatric disorders that need full time hospitalization during an approximate period of three weeks.

While teenagers hospitalized in this Unit have specific needs due to their individual problems, in general the behavior observed during the workshops was no different from the usual behavior of a group of teenagers outside the hospital.

Fig. 9 and 10
Photographs taken for the execution of step number two in the Placenta Mapping (city area, hospital unit and room within the Unit)

However, regardless of these similarities, an educator that works in this context has to bear in mind the following factors:

- Some of the patients present a low level of concentration because of medical treatments that inhibit their capacity for prolonged concentration
- Some of the participants have behavior problems
- Often the use of scissors or other cutting tools is forbidden
- Themes related with food are not possible because a lot of the patients have eating disorders

Ready, Steady, Go! From the general goals of *curArte en verano* project, Núbol selected the following ones:

- Understanding art as a way to reflect on the world and analyze problems
- Discovering that art can be useful to understand ourselves better
- Approaching an artistic genre that combines action and art as a performing act

The immediate goals, based on the Article 13 of the UDHR, were:

1. Everyone has the right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each state.
2. Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country.

Fluid Contents. As for the Conten(idos) [Content(ed)], Núbol selected visual representations taken from the mass media, specifically the images appearing on the Google search engine in response to the words traveler or immigrant, taken from the web page for the Spanish TV program *Españoles por el mundo* (Spaniards in the world).

ProceSOS. The Trigger consists in a strategy that attempts to capture the attention of the participants, it must be surprising and unexpected, it may be a question, an action, a game or an object breaking with the dynamic the participants expect of a teaching action. In order to start this session, Núbol

decided to take a real plant root to the hospital and ask participants "do you have roots?" Next, they placed a large sheet of paper on the floor of the room and asked the adolescents to draw the outline of their feet on the paper in white chalk. Once the silhouettes of the feet were drawn like islands, in order to show that we all have common roots the sheet of paper was placed on a table and the teenagers began to place "bridges" to link the feet together looking for points in common (shared roots) regarding their places of origin (many of the patients in the unit come from abroad) or other cultural aspects. As one of the participants put it "We are all connected by something, even if we don't want to be."

Fig. 11 and 12
Photographs taken for the execution of step number two in the Placenta Mapping (city area, hospital unit and room within the Unit)

Later, in the part called Discussion, Núbol read out the aforementioned Article 13 to analyze its meaning. All together they wondered: Are we free to travel unrestricted around the world? Are we entitled to leave our country in total freedom? Do people living in rich countries have the same rights as those living in developing countries? During this discussion, the images taken from the mass media referring to the concepts of traveler and immigrant were projected and the debate continued with the formulation of such questions as: How do travelers appear in the media? What differences exist between the representation of immigrants and travelers?

Fig. 13 and 14
Final phase in the realization of the Sharing

The Discussion concluded with the following phrase: plants have roots, people have feet to fly. The workshop continued with the Groupwork session in which the participants, working in groups, designed and manufactured wings to be placed on their feet in tribute to Article 13, which speaks of freedom of movement. To conclude, during the Sharing phase, each group explained the sensations they had felt with wings on their feet.

Boomerang. Is contemporary art an effective resource for learning about human rights in contexts of social exclusion? The answer to this initial question on which we have based our teaching experience cannot but be affirmative. Specifically, contemporary art has, in our opinion, been useful to boost these three aspects:

1. **Contemporary art develops a critical spirit.** The experiences proposed by the Núbol collective usually start from a reflection on the ideological discourses of those visual products generated by power groups. These discourses, known as meta-narratives (Acaso, 2006), use stereotypes in order to stigmatize or extol the group referred to. In the case of the Rotolando workshop, the discussion phase analyzed visual representations of travelers versus immigrants, taken from the mass media. Through visual deconstruction of these images, the Núbol collective tried to make visible the latent message contained in this kind of visual representation, thus denouncing the visual injustices arising every day in the media: Do immigration policies respect article 13 of the UDHR? Does everyone have the right to leave any country? Or is this right only the privilege of a few?

2. **Contemporary art connects with real life.** The Núbol collective tries to take these issues into the terrain of everyday life. Through the creation of the *Mapa de las raíces* (Root Map) on rolls of paper, participants work on Article 13 starting from an analysis of their own reality. The production of this map was used to let the participants represent visually their shared cultural origins, connecting their personal experience with that of the rest of the people involved in the action, thus illustrating the group's inter-cultural nature.

3. **In contemporary art, manual ability is not strictly necessary.** In the Rotolando workshop, the artistic genre used was performance. This is a universal genre, originating in the human need to create symbolic rituals as a way to cope with the problems of daily life. In the case of the Rotolando workshop, performance was used as a tool to represent symbolically such aspects of Article 13 as belonging to a particular place or culture and the right to travel freely around the planet. In addition, all the material used to carry out the actions proposed in the workshop can be found in any classroom: chalk, rolls of paper, scissors and colored pencils. These materials were

used differently from handicraft materials, without requiring any great manual dexterity.

FINAL THOUGHTS

With these examples, we the team of researchers of the *curArte project* have tried to show that contemporary art is a suitable tool for working on the UDHR with teenagers in hospital, as its characteristics are accessible, connect to our present reality and allow for critical reflection. We also believe that working on aspects related to this Declaration in a hospital context is a way to enrich adolescents' stay in hospital. For us, reflecting on human rights through art education is a vehicle for mainstreaming the life of hospitalized children and teenagers and must be understood as a right. Apart from that, working on the UDHR in the hospital using contemporary art has been useful for reflecting upon some issues related with teenagers' everyday life outside the hospital. With these five workshops the participants have thought carefully about the Spanish education system and the urban environment.

The Placenta is a suitable methodology that helps art educators to design educational projects, stressing the importance of self-reflection. This methodology understands art education to be a process that generates knowledge about our world. It allows an analysis of subjects such as visual culture, identity and desire that becomes a powerful instrument for creating high quality art education projects. From the *curArte project* we want to express the need to devise a personal research method adapted to each educator and each context by encouraging professionals in the area of Art Education to create their own method as a step towards high-quality Art Education responding to the needs of contemporary society.

But this methodology needs to be adapted to every context. Reality for the hospitalized patient is reduced to a minimum performance context compared with usual contexts of active socialization. The lack of chances for social interaction deeply affects their concept of quality of life. This is a research project in which a bad experience could turn into a good or a better experience. The point is to use the Placenta methodology on art work activities so that patients can set up ways of socializing in a hospital context. The role of the educator is to provide tools in order to change the perception of the hospital setting, reformulating existing systems and introducing new devices, to generate positive and enriching experiences. This figure shows the dynamics which restricted the hospital setting. Using the Placenta Methodology could develop new creative spaces and opportunities for teenagers in a restricted hospitalized context.

The Placenta applied in the context of adolescent patients follows this schedule:

1. Manifesto	The teacher's role is as an *agent provocatuer* able to break these restricted contexts through Art Education.
2. Mapping	We work in a specific context where acting within hospital routines is quite difficult because of the place itself and people working there. On top of which illness, isolation and family separation are hard situations to deal with and they tend to lead the adolescent to an introverted form of behavior which quickly becomes the norm for the group. But this introverted behavior could be changed if we consider the adolescent as an "active" person with possibilities for action and creation.
3. Ready, Steady, Go!	Our workshops try to create new dynamics of Art Education in this restrictive setting in order to change the participant's perception of their surroundings, their situation and themselves.
4. Fluid Contents Metanarratives and Micronarratives (in contemporary art)	It is a good idea to use these narratives but we have to be careful with some elements in this setting (such as food, the body and drugs) due to possible problematic issues that participants might have (eating disorders, drug addictions, etc.) Always check with healthcare professionals about the specific cases of each participant before commencing a series of workshops.
5. ProceSOS	Contemporary art is the ideal platform for working in this setting precisely because manual ability is not necessary, and often the participants are not able or allowed to use scissors and other cutting tools.
6. Boomerang	As the workshops take place in a "non-formal" setting (unlike a school or University) it is not necessary to evaluate the outcomes in a traditional way. The assessment is done by everyone and focuses on the activities, the educators and the process, not the role of each participant. Furthermore this assessment is of great value for future projects because there is such a lack of documentation of these new dynamics of art education in this setting.

Contemporary art is a useful tool to work with hospitalized teenagers on the issue of human rights. We believe that the future of art education in health contexts depends on the use of new methodologies. Restricting artistic expression to handicrafts will only help patients connect to their immediate surroundings. However, the use of intellectual art education like the Placenta Methodology (based in emergent trends of the art education field) adapted to the particularities of this setting, is one of the best ways to connect the hospital setting with museums, galleries, cultural institutions, etc., that is to say, with the real outside world. This research project about human rights with hospitalized teenagers is only the first

step to giving an important place to contemporary art as an educational resource in a hospital setting. Contemporary art connects us with the UDHR because, in fact, art is a human right in itself.

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Violation of Human Rights As Revealed in Afghan Children's Artworks

Themina Kader

ABSTRACT

Throughout recorded history the arts and literature have played a life-saving role in circumstances wherein human rights were threatened. During the first decade of the second millennium September 11, 2001 and Hurricane Katrina 2005 became symbolic chapters in American history. Both adults and children, who suffered emotional and physical trauma found release in graphic imagery and creative writing. And while print and electronic media has brought war in Afghanistan nearer to home, we in America remain largely ignorant of how victims of human rights abuses in Afghanistan have found solace. This article discusses two interrelated variables from a socio-historical, political, ethnographic, gendered, and religious stand points: first, violation of human rights as evinced by children's artworks; and second, what role, if any, art educators have played in the current debate on human rights in Afghanistan.

INTRODUCTION

The main goal of this article is to examine two interlinked and interdependent variables that speak, first, to the efficacy of art works as credible tools for recording violations of human rights and, second, to the role art educators have or have not played in raising the consciousness of students they teach regarding the war in Afghanistan. Artists have always been chroniclers of events whether those events are a result of natural catastrophes or instigated by human machinations. Although not many Americans had heard of Afghanistan before October 7, 2001 when the invasion began, it seems logical to ask why artworks depicting events in Afghanistan (Wintour et al., 2001) shouldn't have any relevance for art education.

International human rights have been enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948, and for over half a century successive UN declarations on human rights, including women's rights, have been accepted and have become part of the constitutions of most countries, including Afghanistan. In spite of that a plethora of articles and interviews collected on all electronic and digital formats have documented human rights violations in the aftermath of conflicts as they occur and affect the most disenfranchised sections of a population—women and children in every war-torn country, including Afghanistan (Ishay, 2007).

The Chinese invasion of Tibet in 1950, the rise to power of the Ayatollahs in Iran in 1979, and the September 11, 2001 attack on the USA are just a few examples among innumerable instances of rationales or pretexts used for invading a country based on ideological, financial, corporate, and security differences between the invader and the invaded. While both China's intransigence on the issue of Tibet and Iran's theocracy under the Ayatollahs remain politically intractable for the USA, "Operation Enduring freedom" came to be perceived "as a springboard for U.S. strategic ambitions" (Conetta, 2002, p.44). The prevailing internal instabilities caused by "civil war, a shattered civil society and weak, non-responsive governance" (Conetta, 2002, p. 44) have been exacerbated by the varying national interests of outside powers. As a result, "Operation Enduring Freedom" presents itself as a case in point for how launching a war that would end Taliban rule and weaken Al Qaeda—which it did—became a moot point when Afghan civilians became casualties of war led by US forces.

The Rise of Taliban

In order to affirm the value of non-verbal cues that art works convey in the cases highlighted in this writing, it is essential to preface this article with a brief history of the tumultuous situation in Afghanistan from 1933 to the present. The rise of the Taliban in 1994 came through a succession of power struggles spearheaded by Mohammad Daoud Khan who abolished the monarchy of King Mohammad Zahir Shah in 1973 (Rashid, 2000). The overthrow and murder of Daoud in April 1978 by the Communist People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) brought about Soviet rule of Afghanistan for the next ten years (Rasanayagam, 2003). The Mujahideen, or "holy warriors" waged a war against the Soviets, helped financially by the USA, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia, culminating in the pullout of Soviet troops in 1989 (Kalman, 2003, p. 11). In April 1992 when the Mujahideen declared the Islamic State of Afghanistan they curtailed reforms initiated by the PDPA with regards to women's rights in the name of an Islamic ideology based on "notions of honor and shame underpinning cultural norms and practices [that] emphasize female modesty and purity" (Amnesty International Report, 1999, p. 1). The Mujahideen treated women's bodies "as the spoils of war" (Amnesty International Report, 1999, p. 3), meaning as "rewards for their wartime victories" (Abirafeh, 2009, p.15). This was the prelude to the rise in 1994 of the Taliban whose atrocities matched if not exceeded those of the Mujahideen. Finally, in response to the bombing of the World Trade Center in New York City on September 11, 2001 the United States launched a successful invasion of Afghanistan to rout the Taliban government (Rasanayagam, 2003, pp. 83-94). The ouster of the Taliban, it was envisaged, would give the women of Afghanistan a voice and the opportunity to resurrect a

commitment to the education of children who for most of their young lives had been deprived of this basic human right.

WHAT ROLE HAVE ART EDUCATORS PLAYED IN SUPPORT OF HUMAN RIGHTS?

A tragedy at home is much easier to grapple with. There is a surfeit of literature on the Internet and on bookshelves across the country that will relive for posterity the tragedies of 9/11 and Hurricane Katrina. Mitch Frank's book (2002) *A nation challenged: A visual history of 9/11 and its aftermath* is a compilation of photographs published by New York Times/Callaway. Robin Goodman (2002) and Alex Woolf (2004) have written children's books on the subject. Goodman's book. *The day our world changed: Children's art of 9/11* records a juried exhibition of 83 images executed by artists ages five to 18. Five years after Hurricane Katrina, Aperture published Richard Misrach's book *Destroy this memory*—a coffee-table-size book full of mostly horrific pictures of the hurricane. Douglas Brinkley, a historian at Tulane University and a resident of New Orleans, wrote an account titled *The great deluge: Hurricane Katrina, New Orleans, and the Mississippi Gulf Coast* that, according to Michiko Kakutani "gives the reader a richly detailed timeline of disaster" (2006, p. 2). Returning military personnel give interviews on YouTube, films are made[1] and poems are written, recited, and dramatized (Abuelo, 2002; Hill, 2008). Generosity finds an outlet in tax-deductible donations. Art teachers and students engage in making picture cards, gifts for their counterparts, and send letters of comfort to the victims. Many art educators have shared in the grief of students who have lost family in 9/11 or Katrina and teachers themselves may be bereaved. Yes, art educators have played a role in upholding human rights, because they feel outraged when injustices are visited upon people they can relate with. It galvanizes them into action. I had hoped to find instances of similar commitment in the case of Afghanistan.

After a prolonged and thorough search of sources for images made by American children and assiduously examining traditional sources on such search engines as ERIC, Education Research Complete, MasterFile Premier in libraries and Online, it became clear to me that Afghanistan had not been documented on either the front or back burner of any American art-making stove. There were no articles written by art educators in America on the subject of the war in Afghanistan, nor was there any artwork remotely connected to Afghanistan made by American children. Geographically, the closest country to the USA where teachers have engaged in doing something was Canada under the patronage of the Canadian Red Cross. *Art for Afghanistan: Helping the widows and wounded of Afghanistan*[2] is a kit designed for

1 See for instance, http://www.sna gfilms.com/films/title/katrinas_children/

2 www.croixrouge.ca/cmslib/general/ewhl_art_for_afghanistan.pdf

upper elementary students and comes complete with lesson plans and a variety of fund raising activities for art teachers and their students.

Was this glaring absence of any involvement in activities that reflect American art educators' role in portraying human right violations in Afghanistan an aberration? I asked myself if this seeming educational and creative inertia was a norm that happened when violation of human rights or any other disaster knocked on doors thousand of miles away. To find an answer, I felt compelled to pursue an art-based research at the grass-root level that would emphasize the personal and experiential qualities of the victims of the Afghan war. That led me to the Revolutionary Association of the Women of Afghanistan (RAWA) whose work with Afghan children has produced a gallery of images that are a testament to the trials and tribulations Afghan women and children have suffered under Taliban rule.

History of RAWA

In the history of women's struggles for human rights in Afghanistan, a name that is immortalized is Meena, a woman who gave her life so that the lives of other Afghan women would be better. Meena and her cohort of dedicated women founded RAWA in 1977. At the outset their activities were confined to providing basic social needs such as schools, hospitals, craft centers and training in various fields. After the overthrow of the Soviet Union from Afghanistan in 1989, RAWA's activities turned more political. Today, as in 1977, RAWA's work is carried out clandestinely mainly from Pakistan where close to 5 million refugees have found a modicum of hope and succor. This secrecy is essential because of the constant threat of death by the Taliban and their fundamentalist supporters. Still, RAWA's activities are amply documented online and in articles written by concerned citizens in various countries including the USA. Its online gallery of photographs has on view some of the most horrendous images not only of atrocities perpetrated by the Taliban but also of the so-called collateral damage caused by the on-going war. These photographs taken with all available technology represent one perspective of the war in Afghanistan. The children's artworks, produced without the aid of any technology or basic supply of art materials found so readily in most schools in the US, tell another story just as moving (Schober & Siebenhofer, 2003).

Out of a compendium of 33 children's images found on the RAWA website[3] under the title "Paintings by Children of RAWA Schools and Orphanages" I have selected five as credible evidence of egregious violations of human rights in Afghanistan. I apply ethnographic principles that encompass the pedagogy of pluralism and cultural diversity, gender issues and power, religion and how it can

3 http://www.rawa.org/kid-pic.htm

be subverted to bring about a false sense of clarity to the actions of the Taliban vis-à-vis the women of Afghanistan.

Physicality. George Szekely (2006) extols the joys of seeing children make art at home and how that impacts art they make in school. The Afghan children who made these pictures did not have a "regular" school to go to and many had no homes either. Schools run by RAWA in Quetta, a city on the western edge of Pakistan, facilitated and encouraged children to make art. This afforded children a much-needed solace, and restored a measure of order to their lives. The therapeutic effects of the arts and literature are recognized widely as contributing to the process of healing from traumatic situations brought about by not just war, but all manner of social ills such as abusive parents, and drugs-related tragedies. Whereas storytelling and keeping a diary by older children can be very beneficial, according to Lev-Wiesel and Liraz (2007), younger children find it hard to find words to describe the traumatic event itself. They note that, "Looking at one's own drawings might enable the drawer to become a spectator to his or her negative experiences. This might facilitate the later verbalization of their experience" (p. 72). This is true of children in Afghanistan as confirmed by Zoya, a woman who was a child when the Soviets invaded Afghanistan, and found comfort in drawing in her darkest moments. Zoya, now a member of RAWA, believes that sharing stories through images is one way of finding meaning in one's life (Zoya, Follain, & Cristofari, 2002).

Compositionally, out of the five images I discuss, only Figures 1, 3, and 5 have base lines. In all the images no foreground or background details obscure the protagonists. Three of the five pictures depict a Talib with his victim(s) (Figures 1-3). Judged by the prescribed standards of art making in American art rooms, none of the pictures display a so-called mastery of medium. If the works seem drab and poorly executed to eyes used to saturated Crayola colors on brightly colored construction papers we might ask whether these children had any 35-minutes long art lessons once a week as "school art" to invoke Szekely (2006). Yet there is no mistaking the message each picture imparts.

Gender and Power. What is that message? In every picture, there is a male figure who directly or covertly dominates the scene. Adam Galinski and Li Huang (2011), in a paper titled "How can you become more powerful by literally standing tall," postulate the theory that "across species, body posture is often the primary representation of power. .power is expressed and inferred through expansive postures" (Galinski & Huang, 2011, p. 1). In Figure 1, the child artist has written in the Pashto language "Stop Walking? Where are you going?" The striding Talib with his whip and rifle on the ready fits the profile of power. His posture also suggests fury at the woman who has dared to come out of her home unaccompanied by a male. Her back to the viewer, she has had to stop in her

Fig. 1

tracks submissive and resigned to her fate. In fact, she has flouted a cardinal rule of Afghan culture that deems "women's honor is the cornerstone on which the politics of women's rights rests" (Abirafeh, 2009, p. 15). Although she wears the *burqa*, her feet in high-heeled shoes are visible and she is carrying a purse, both of which could be construed as proof of foreign influence. As far back as 1978, during the Soviet occupation sweeping social changes such as the enforcement of "mandatory literacy programs for women and the abolition of bride price were viewed as direct attacks on Afghan culture" (Abirafeh, 2009, p.14). It is also germane to this discussion to note that Taliban authority extended not only to women, but also to men who sought to support women. It behooves Westerners to remember that the Taliban's seemingly irrational edicts against women, for instance, the ban against being seen alone in public, and the requirement of being veiled from head to toe pre-dated Taliban rule; so that the re-enactment of these rules, from the Taliban's point of view, was simply business as it should be.

In Figure 2 a young boy sees his books go up in flames. His arms are tied. He can do nothing. His helplessness in the face of the snickering Talib makes the entire picture even more depressing. Not only was education a taboo for girls, it seems that the Taliban could not countenance education for boys either.

Religion. Since the tragic events of September 11, 2001, Islam has been condemned almost universally for its ideologies that purportedly promote violence against non-Muslims and also its own followers. It is beyond the scope of this paper to delve into the veracity or falsehood of that perception. What is pertinent, however, is to discuss how the Taliban have conflated Islam with

Fig. 2

a discriminatory agenda emanating from their tribal traditions and beliefs to perpetuate their nefarious practices on their own kith and kin. Of all the crimes the Taliban have committed against human rights, perhaps the most outrageous one is to deny secular education to the children and women of Afghanistan. Islam has been accused of a multitude of prohibitions against women and children (al-Farüqi, 1994, p. 35), but education is not and has never been proscribed. In fact Muhammad, the prophet of Islam, categorically urged all Muslims, regardless of gender, to "pursue knowledge throughout life, even if it should lead the seeker to China" (al-Farüqi, 1994, p. 37). Thus the callous action of burning books in Figure 2 is odious to say the least and contrary to that which is held sacred in Islam. The display of such inhumanity, as represented in these images, forces us to ask: How do the Taliban treat their own mothers, wives, and sisters? Time will tell.[4]

Figure 3 is another example of the denigration of religion. Akin to Figure 1, a Talib has stopped a woman and her child. The boy recognizes the danger his mother is in. It is unclear what her crime is, but in his right hand the Talib carries the symbol of his authority and power, a whip. Is he going to hit the woman? His left hand has the tasbeeh. A tasbeeh is an artifact with 99 beads divided into three sections of 33 each. It is used for repeating some of the 99 attributes of Allah. Its purpose is to seek solace and calm in times of need. In the hands of this Talib, the tasbeeh becomes a mockery. Is he seeking divine help for the

4 As reported by the Minister of Education, Kabul, Afghanistan in the BBC's World News, on January 13, 2011, the Taliban may consider allowing some schools for girls to be re-opened.

Fig. 3

nefarious act he is about to commit? Or is he justifying what he intends to do in the name of Islam? In Afghanistan, the Taliban have succeeded in obfuscating the true message of Islam in order to perpetuate a patriarchal society that allows no consideration or concessions (Abirafeh, 2009).

Ethnographic/Economic. It is a well-known fact that the first non-combatant victims of war are primarily children and women (Gangi, 2009). Surrounded by the unrecognizable detritus of a place that is no more our eyes are drawn to the woman in Figure 4. She holds center-stage and is forcing us to look inside that bag with her. There isn't much she could have found in that desolation. Ethnographers

Fig. 4

in years to come will be hard pressed to write about the materiality of this location (Lubar & Kingery, 1993; Menzel, 1994). That the woman isn't wearing a *chador* (a traditional outer garment) doesn't absolve the perpetrators, Taliban or not, for the war that has reduced her to such abject poverty.

In Figure 5, the child who produced this picture depicts a Talib, pointing his gun at a tree that bears not fruits but everything that the Taliban as a group find distasteful. How would a 13 year-old student in our schools read this image? The Taliban consider television and other electronic media offensive alien cultural icons that must be destroyed because of their corruptive influence. Granted that many Americans also believe that the television and other media influence and affect children adversely (Comstock & Scharrer, 2007). We have parental control devices to counter these effects, so one might ask why the Taliban can't exercise that same right to control what Afghans can or cannot watch. But what is abhorrent about the

Fig. 5

Taliban's tactics is that they claim to draw upon Islam and its teachings as the prime justification for their mandates. Neither the Qur'an nor the Hadith of the Prophet Muhammad categorically prohibits music or any form of play and entertainment (Michon, 2007).

By the rubrics used by a large number of art teachers to assess children's art, the above images may be construed as naïve, superficial, and lacking in aesthetic sensibilities; they may be read as facile. On the contrary, I believe, the children who made these images have demonstrated a thought process that enables them to create an embedded meaning. The images are undoctored; no technology was used to touch-up or improve their so-called aesthetic qualities. Yet their message is powerful. As pictorial narratives they truthfully disseminate the experiences of children and women in Afghanistan. I argue that imposing the ubiquitous listing of elements and principles of art such as line, shape, color, value, balance, proportion, rhythm, movement to mention a few, would have rendered meaningless the children's work. There are other elements and principles of meaning at work here.

CONCLUSION

The main focus of this article is on the five images that document the tragedy of Afghanistan and the tyranny of the Taliban. Under Taliban rule any semblance of rationality and standards of human decency are lost in a hunger for power, control, and its concomitant vices. My reading of the children's works was not to provide answers, but to sensitize the reader to the complexities that shroud the entire concept of human rights and to ask whether art educators, as a collective body, have the wherewithal to support it. We are in a conundrum. We are torn between what we want to do and what we can do. Is that because injustices in Afghanistan are beyond our orbit? Thoughts spiral round and round in our heads as we self-talk to rationalize our noncommittal attitude. "It's a different world, with no resemblance to our culture," we intone; "and these Taliban people in Afghanistan are so weird with their long beards and turbans." "What if a parent of a child objects to my talking about Afghanistan in class?" Omnipresent blogs, websites representing national and international TV channels, newspapers and magazines, YouTube videos, commentaries on Facebook pages, and succinct and cutting remarks on Twitter are brimming over with daily broadcasts of news about Afghanistan. The horror of war is there to see and read about whatever our medium of news retrieval. Yet amidst all that cacophony art educators in the USA have remained silent.

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Human Rights, Collective Memory,[1] and Counter Memory: Unpacking the Meaning of Monument Avenue in Richmond, Virginia

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ABSTRACT

This article addresses human rights issues of the built environment via the presence of monuments in public places. Because of their prominence, monuments and public art can offer teachers and students many opportunities for interdisciplinary study that directly relates to the history of their location. Through an exploration of the ideas of collective memory and counter memory, this article explores the specific example of Monument Avenue in Richmond, Virginia. Further, the authors investigate differences in the ways monuments may be understood at the time they were erected versus how they are understood in the present. Finally, the article addresses the practices of contemporary artists who work with monuments and how teachers and students might study monuments in art classes.

ERIN COMES TO RICHMOND

For two years, Robert E. Lee's sixty-foot likeness confronted me on my way to and from my job. Approaching from several blocks away, I observed the monument in all conditions of weather and light. On the sixth floor of the Lee Medical Building where I worked, I could cross the hall to peer out a window at a height even with Lee's head. In the evening as I left the building, I often passed patients waiting for a ride home. I wondered if the patients were looking at the monument of Lee across the street or at the sky beyond. Having moved to Richmond from the Northeast, the prevalence of monuments commemorating leaders who fought against the abolition of slavery made me think I had stepped into a world where racism is openly glorified. Occasionally, I saw children playing in the grass around or climbing on the monuments and often I saw tourists posing in front of the monuments for photographs. Although the monuments seem like historical remnants of a different era in history, they are a prominent aspect of the landscape of this era and someone still mows the lawn surrounding each one.

On my second day of work, I sat on the stairs of the Lee Monument to eat lunch. As cars circled the lawn around me, I felt uneasy. Utilizing this piece of public space seemed to mean something different than utilizing any other piece of public space. I worried I would be perceived as complicit in the message of the monument and decided never to sit there again.

MELANIE COMES TO RICHMOND

One January day, I noticed people in Civil War uniforms, flying the Confederate flag, with tents pitched around the base of Robert E. Lee's statue. I wondered why people camped around the base of a statue in winter. Later that day I learned it was a state holiday—Lee/Jackson Day. On this day, people re-enact Civil War scenes at the monuments in Richmond in deference to their heroes.

I wondered why people today are proud of men who fought to keep humans as slaves, to treat people as possessions, and to deny others the rights that they enjoyed? Before I encountered the re-enactors, I thought the monuments on Monument Avenue were an odd relic of the past. However, seeing the re-enactors with the Confederate flag venerating the monuments, and thus the belief system of the men the monuments represent, I came to see the continued power of the monuments today as the most prominent public sculpture in Richmond.

INTRODUCTION

We, the authors, conceive of human rights broadly and believe human rights include the right to live in an environment that represents and respects the views of many. Thus, we are relating the theme of this special issue on human rights to the public sculpture that we see in our town by exploring the history of Monument Avenue in Richmond, Virginia. By studying the Lost Cause era in which the monuments on Monument Ave were created, how monuments function in general, the people they represent, and the narrative that they normalize, we learned a great deal about our city. The article concludes by building on the work of other art educators (Bae, 2009; Russell, 2004; Stephens, 2006; Whitehead, 2004) with ideas for how teachers can address public art and monuments, even ones related to difficult topics. Because we believe that all humans have the right to grow up and live in a physical environment that is free from hatred and physical representations of the domination of one group over another, commemorative monuments represent a human rights issue directly related to art education.

THE LOST CAUSE

The term "Lost Cause" relates to the myths that Confederates developed after the Civil War and spread throughout the entire country.[2] This fictitious "history" was

1 In this article, we use the terms "collective memory" and "public memory" interchangeably.

2 We both attended high school and college in the northeastern portion of the United States and learned a version of Civil War history that is markedly different from the Lost Cause. We recognize that the version we learned is also incomplete and paints the position of the north in a positive light. For instance, we learned lovely stories about the transcendental poets and their

written into Virginia history textbooks (Dean, 2009) and continues to circulate today. These myths include the ideas that the Civil War was primarily about states' rights not slavery, that slaves were reasonably happy with their situation, and that the South's secession was a heroic act against northern aggression (Gallagher, 1995; McPherson, 2007; Nolan, 2000). The Lost Cause manifested itself through bestowing "heroic" status on the soldiers and generals who fought for the confederate cause and through nostalgia for the era before the Civil War.

Savage (1997), a historian whose work since the 1970s has focused on public monuments and their often racialized nature, calls Richmond the center of the cult of Lost Cause, with Robert E. Lee as the key figure of that cult. Savage argues that Lee was chosen as a central figure for "sculptural configuration of Southern white heroism" (p. 130) in part because Lee represented the ideals of the Southern gentleman and gave Southerners a hero to celebrate. Leib (2006), a geographer whose work explores political geography as well as race and ethnicity in the American South, describes the era considered to be the height of the Lost Cause collective memory as a time concurrent with the erection of the monuments on Monument Avenue, and, simultaneously the era that Jim Crow laws went into effect.

MONUMENT AVENUE

Monument Avenue is a prestigious thoroughfare with large estate-like homes in the heart of Richmond that features six large commemorative statues; they are the most prominent public sculptures in town. In a few miles along this renowned street, five Civil War era Confederate leaders are memorialized with large-scale bronze and stone sculptures. These sculptures embody what Russell (2004) describes as "hero-on-a-horse" public art in that they are idealized portrayals. Moving from East to West, the statues represent J.E.B. Stuart, Robert E. Lee, Jefferson Davis, Stonewall Jackson, and Matthew Maury. At the western end of this street is a contemporary bronze and stone monument to Arthur Ashe. Born in Richmond but forbidden to play tennis on local public tennis courts because of his skin color, Ashe was an internationally known tennis star and humanitarian. Aside from being a historical spectacle, Monument Avenue is a prestigious residential address for Richmonders. Events such as house tours, a 10k footrace, and holiday parades occur on Monument Avenue, demonstrating that civic pride centered around Monument Avenue remains strong.

The dedication of the Lee Monument in May 1890 marked the beginning of the construction of Monument Avenue. The Avenue's width and grassy median were planned to create a magnificent surrounding for the Lee Monument, emulating grand boulevards in the United States and Europe (Driggs, Wilson, & Winthrop, 2001).

abolitionist views, but did not learn about the number of northerners who promoted slavery and were pro-confederacy because it allowed them to purchase cheap cotton for their factories and maximize their profits. Thus, the version that we learned romanticized the northern position on the war and neglected to tell the less savory bits.

Fig. 1

Thus, development and traffic patterns of this section of Richmond were literally built around this monument to Lee. The erection of additional monuments followed with the monuments to J.E.B Stuart and Jefferson Davis coming in May 1907.

The Stonewall Jackson monument was completed in October 1919 and the Mathew Maury monument was unveiled on Armistice Day in 1929. These five monuments were presented to large crowds of white citizens of Richmond amidst festivities during Confederate reunions (Wilson, 2003).

The contemporary monument to Richmond native Arthur Ashe was built in 1996 and was the subject of a fierce debate among the citizens of Richmond (Leib, 2006). After a prototype was unveiled in 1994, Virginia governor Douglas Wilder, the first elected African American governor in the US, suggested that the monument to Ashe belonged on Monument Avenue. This led to significant public outcry and

Fig. 2

numerous ideas circulated about the best place for the Ashe monument. Claiming it would be historically incongruent, some argued that a modern person did not belong in the company of Confederate icons on Monument Avenue; other arguments were patently racist (Baker, 1995).

Finally, Richmond's city council agreed to place Ashe on Monument Avenue and in 1996 the monument was unveiled. At the dedication, Douglas Wilder said, "today I feel more pride and relevance in being here on Monument Avenue than I have at any time in my life" (Leib, 2006, p. 206).

Fig. 3

COLLECTIVE MEMORY

Collective memory relates to the Lost Cause and to Monument Avenue because it combines popular understandings of history, that may be incorrect, with a desire to relate these understandings to a group identity (Uhrmacher & Tinkler, 2008). In other words, collective memories can be formed through people's susceptibility to the rhetoric of a dominant group with power to circulate ideas, regardless of historical accuracy. Collective memory is so strong that it can sidetrack or alter personal memories and so insidious that it can become codified in monuments (Loewen, 1999) and in textbooks (Dean, 2009). Zelizer (1995) explained collective memory as the constructed memories of a group that promote the interests of that group, usually the wealthy and powerful. Further, Stanley (2003) described how public memory often circulates among a population in a largely unchallenged manner. The ideas of collective memory are accepted and believed to be true without an acknowledgement of their partial nature, their viewpoint, and their disputed aspects.

Collective memories spread in many ways, including speeches, photographs, movies, the Internet, television, books, newspapers, monuments, and word of mouth. They outweigh and eclipse individual stories, voices of dissent, and other ways of knowing. As an agent of hegemony, collective memory can be a stubborn obstacle against moving toward an equitable society where the voices of many are valued and represented. For example, bell hooks (2009) wrote about growing up in Kentucky where the collective memory included the idea that Kentucky "did not take an absolute position on the issue of white supremacy, slavery, and the continued domination of black folks by powerful whites" (p. 9). This rosy collective memory contrasted her experiences of school segregation, fieldtrips to the local Jefferson Davis monument, and veneration of the Confederacy and the Confederate flag. Thus, the collective memory stood in contrast to her lived experience.

Monument Avenue as an Embodiment of Collective Memory

These statues on Monument Avenue play a significant function in the formation of a collective memory of the Confederacy. Based upon the Lost Cause myth, a fictionalized simulacrum of gentility, heroism, and a beautiful life, the monuments do not reflect a range of people and a range of viewpoints. Instead, the monuments perpetuate and promote a narrow view that reinforces the power of a few and glorifies the Confederacy and slavery. In writing about history and spectacle, Debord (1994) notes, "Myth was the unified mental construct whose job it was to make sure that the whole cosmic order confirmed the order that this society had in fact already set up within its own frontiers" (p. 93). In this way, the sculptures on Monument Avenue construct, perpetuate, and continue to reinforce the Lost Cause collective memory, perpetuating an unequal society. Because the monuments are permanent and a section of the city is literally built around them, they construct and reinforce the power of one group and keep others in a subordinate role.

COUNTER MEMORY

Counter memory differs from collective memory because counter memory is more nuanced and may rely on the involvement of multiple voices telling multiple stories, promoting action, or challenging the very nature of a monument (Young, 1999). Building on the work of Foucault (1977), Giroux (1997) defined counter memory as a practice that:

> Transforms history, from a judgment on the past in the name of the present truth, to a 'counter-memory' that combats our current modes of truth and justice, helping us to understand and change the present by placing it in a new relation to the past. (p. 160)

In describing the public memory and those who it neglects, Stanley (2003) wrote:

> Yet those who do not fit into these narratives, whose presence and motivations are not accounted for by them, are in constant danger of being silenced or excluded, their right to be in democratic spaces called into question. Meanwhile, the actual histories that people live, their complex interconnections with others, are obscured and eventually forgotten. (p. 38)

Thus, according to Stanley, counter memories often represent those who were silenced by the collective memory and they may provide another lens through which to view the past and present, and a vehicle through which to change the present.

The Persistence of the Lost Cause

Though the Lost Cause collective memory no longer circulates freely in an unchallenged manner, certain elements of it continue to thrive within the physical environment and through recent state government actions. The physical environment in and around Richmond features numerous homages to Confederates in the form of local schools, highways, office and residential buildings, and businesses bearing the names of Confederate icons. Examples of this include Lee-Davis High School, Jefferson Davis Highway, Lee School Lofts, and Lee Medical Building. Though official government policies promote equality, elements of Lost Cause linger in many ways. For instance, the commonwealth of Virginia continues to annually celebrate Robert E. Lee and Stonewall Jackson by closing state government offices for a day in January. Originally started in 1889 to honor Robert E. Lee during the Lost Cause era, this holiday has now been celebrated for 122 years, thus showing how state-sanctioned reverence for the Confederacy continues to this day. Furthermore, in 2010 Virginia governor Robert McDonnell issued an executive proclamation to celebrate Confederate history month in April. His initial proclamation referenced the "sacrifices of the Confederate leaders, soldiers and citizens during the period of the Civil War" (Meola, 2010) without mentioning the institution of slavery. Another governmental function in which the legacy of the Lost Cause persists is education. In the fall of 2010, a newly approved Virginia 4th grade history textbook was found to contain factual inaccuracies including that thousands of African-Americans fought for the Confederacy (McCartney, 2010; Sieff, 2010). Though some African Americans served in the Confederate army, the notion that thousands willingly fought for the Confederacy is outside mainstream historical scholarship and is related to the Lost Cause (Leib, 2002; McCartney, 2010; Sieff, 2010). The above examples show how elements of the Lost Cause collective memory continue to linger in 21st century Virginia.

ARTHUR ASHE MONUMENT AS COUNTER TO ELEMENTS OF THE LOST CAUSE

The Arthur Ashe monument was built at a time when the African American community in Richmond had enough political power to tell a story that contrasts the hegemonic narrative created by the monuments to Confederates (Uhrmacher & Tinkler, 2008). Because Arthur Ashe was a contemporary figure his sculptural presence is not a counter memory to the Confederate monuments themselves. Instead, the Ashe sculpture is counter to the dominant narrative of the Lost Cause and some of its lingering elements, represented collectively by the other monuments on Monument Avenue. The Ashe monument challenges two specific lingering elements of the Lost Cause in Richmond's collective memory: that Confederate leaders are the heroes who should be venerated and that Richmond's pre-Civil Rights era past should be glorified.

Because the Confederate icons are idealized in sculptural forms on Monument Avenue, their presence seems fixed and permanent, defining who and what a Virginia hero is.[3] In contrast to this presence, Arthur Ashe challenges the ideals of who a Richmond hero can be. In discussing how Ashe's presence would change Monument Avenue, then Governor Douglas Wilder stated that the men sculpturally depicted "are heroes from an era which would deny the aspirations of an Arthur Ashe. He would stand with them, saying, 'I, too, speak for Virginia'" (On streets where Confederates reign, 1995). We believe that there was a pre-existing cannon of heroes and Ashe expanded this cannon on Monument Avenue. Because he was a humanitarian, worked to improve the lives of others, and struggled against racist laws and policies, he exemplifies a different concept of what a Richmond hero can be.

Another aspect of the Lost Cause still circulating today is the unexamined glorification of the social, political, educational, and economic structures of the past (from the pre-Civil War time to the Civil Rights era) without acknowledging who these structures advantaged and disadvantaged and how these structures created and perpetuated inequality. According to Uhrmacher and Tinkler (2008) "The Arthur Ashe Monument challenges the need of some white southerners to glorify their past, a past which was based on slavery" (p. 233). The presence of the Ashe sculpture on Monument Avenue reminds us that he was denied access to public places including local tennis courts because of the color of his skin. It points to the fact that it was not so long ago that Richmond was a legally segregated city with many citizens denied access to public facilities.

3 Matthew Maury, Stonewall Jackson, Robert E. Lee, and J.E.B. Stuart were all from Virginia. Though monuments in the "(re)member-and-(re)present" category can be permanent sculptural counter monuments, they can also be temporary interventions to existing monuments including events such as a flash mob that repurposes the monument, or they can exist solely through digital media.

By introducing an additional point of view to the narrative of Monument Avenue the Arthur Ashe monument complicates how we think about the racial structures of society that prevented Ashe and other African Americans from accessing publicly funded community resources. These structures of oppression, which bell hooks (2000) describes as the white supremacist capitalist patriarchy, continue to exist today in different ways and continue to afford privilege to some while keeping others in subordinate roles. In our present city, issues of educational inequality represent one way that this problem is perpetuated. As evidenced by the controversy that exploded in response to the proposal to place this monument on Monument Avenue (Leib, 2006), it is clear that Richmond still struggles with the legacy of slavery and that some citizens were disturbed by the possibility of a monument that would disrupt the collective memory of the Lost Cause.

HOW MONUMENTS FUNCTION

Monuments are meaningful elements of the built environment that derive their power from multiple sources. Loewen (1999) explains how the conventions of hieratic scale, including size, lasting materials, landscaping, and allegorical allusions to authority, constitute a visual language of power in monuments. Through these conventions, many traditional hero-on-a-horse style monuments tend to buttress collective memories and the power of the leading group by asserting a sense of domination over the human audience and the landscape. Loewen (1999) encourages viewers to consider every element of a monument as an intentional decision chosen to create a particular meaning. There are certainly other types of monuments which take a post-modern approach by deliberately avoiding the conventions of hieratic scale as described by Loewen (1999). We discuss examples of this type of monument later in the article.

Hieratic Scale in the Material Language of Hero-on-a-Horse Monuments

The use of monumental size, lasting materials, and pristine landscaping are ways the sculptures on Monument Avenue express importance throughout time and demand attention. The conventions of hieratic scale express domination: posture, excessive muscles, and placement on a horse convey a sense of power (Loewen, 1999). Further, the well-kept landscapes around the monuments show that the monuments are still considered important by the community in the present day.

Stories of Wealth and Power

Monuments often represent the position of those who established that monument, serving as a representation and perpetuation of collective memory. Loewen (1999) noted that wealthy individuals often control the design and

Fig. 4

funding of monuments, resulting in monuments that reinforce and normalize their power in the minds of community members. In particular, Loewen pointed out that throughout the United States, and especially in the Southern states, there are monuments to people who fought to promote slavery.

A Language of Power on Monument Avenue

Monument Avenue uses many conventions of hieratic scale to convey power, domination, and grandeur. Sheer size makes an impression with the monuments ranging in height from the J.E.B. Stuart monument at a height of 22 ½ feet to the Davis monument at 67 feet.

The Lee monument is surrounded by a large lawn in the middle of a traffic circle and is sometimes used as park space, the stairs of the base serving as a place to climb or sit. The Davis monument also invites passersby to climb its steps. Some of the other monuments feature small flowering gardens around their bases. All of the monuments are dramatically lit at night. A local rumor is that police patrol the monuments, shining searchlights on them to ensure they are not vandalized. The houses and the sculptures on Monument Avenue symbiotically elevate each other in status through the many conventions of hieratic scale.

Monuments as Agents of Hegemony

The tendency for permanent works of public art to fade into the background of our conscious thought is what can make them powerful agents of hegemony. When a monument's presence and message become so routine that passersby

Fig. 5

do not notice or question them, the monument gains more power to affect thoughts and culture by normalizing its message. The Confederate sculptures on Monument Avenue have tremendous power as symbols of the white supremacist capitalist patriarchy (hooks, 2000) and therefore deserve critical attention in the art classes of Richmond's public schools.

PEDAGOGICALLY TOPPLING THE MONUMENTS

Though our first instinct was to suggest a literal toppling of these monuments, upon further reflection we came to see that a more powerful approach is working to pedagogically topple them. We agree with Merewether (1999) who wrote that trying to erase a period of history by physically removing monuments commemorating that period can be a dangerous form of revisionist history. Some might even argue that to destroy the monuments would infringe upon the rights of people who celebrate the monuments and the men they represent as part of their heritage and would not be in the spirit of human rights. As prominent public art in Richmond, studying these monuments in school classrooms relates to the ideas of many art educators (Alexenberg & Benjamin, 2004; Bae, 2009; Buffington, 2007; Green, 1998; Russell, 2004; Stephens, 2006; Whitehead, 2004). We believe that teachers who engage their classes in mining public objects for meaning can provide their students with the opportunity to think critically about issues of local and global relevance, such as racism, permutations of history, and the functions and possibilities of public art in the context of a specific place in their own community. In the following sections, we

make suggestions for how teachers could address Monument Avenue or other commemorative sculptures in their classrooms.

Teaching Collective Memory

Because the monuments on Monument Avenue were erected during the time when the Lost Cause version of Civil War history circulated freely, these monuments represent and valorize not only the Confederate icons whose likenesses they portray, but also the Lost Cause era. Thus, a unit devoted to studying these monuments could be interdisciplinary and clearly connected to history. This unit might begin with an investigation into the Lost Cause era coupled with an investigation into the lives of the men depicted on Monument Avenue. Through this inquiry, teachers can help students understand the concept of collective memory. This can facilitate student learning about how the Lost Cause narrative emerged and continues to circulate. Through developing an understanding of the context, both temporal and social, of the construction of the monuments, students will consider what the monuments meant when they were constructed, and what they may mean now. Probing into the significant controversy surrounding the placement of the Ashe monument will add another layer to this inquiry. Working to understand the concept of counter memory (Foucault, 1977) may enable students to understand a wider range of ideas about the past and present history of Richmond and to see how they can work for justice now.

Teaching Counter Memory

To further push the idea of a counter memory, we suggest that teachers have students think about other people from Virginia or Richmond who could be represented on Monument Avenue in order to tell a wider, more inclusive story about Richmond's past and present that might lead to change today. As described by Young (1993), counter monuments work against the, "traditionally didactic function of monuments, against their tendency to displace the past they would have us contemplate" (p. 28). Thus, we believe Russell's (2004) categories of monuments: "hero-on-a-horse," "form-and-freedom," and "collaborate-and-create" could be augmented with the addition of a fourth category related to counter monuments. We name this category "(re)member-and-(re)present" and intend this to include monuments such as the previously mentioned statue of Arthur Ashe, Krzysztof Wodiczko's interventions on monuments, and various monuments worldwide that tell stories neglected by the dominant narrative in that locale. Teaching students about the purpose and function of counter monuments allows students to research people of local importance from historical or contemporary times who are not included in the collective memory. There are

numerous notable people from the Civil War era whose presence on Monument Avenue would dramatically change the meaning of the street. For instance, though Henry 'Box' Brown, who escaped slavery in Richmond in 1849 by being packed into a crate and sent to abolitionists in Philadelphia, is memorialized in a sculpture elsewhere in Richmond, putting a sculpture of him in a prominent location like Monument Avenue could demonstrate human ingenuity and desire for freedom.[4] Additionally, Elizabeth van Lew, a Richmonder who developed many clever means to pass information to the Union army during the Civil War, could be the subject of a monument that might show one aspect of the often hidden role of women in the Civil War. Having students consider how sculptures of a range of people related to the Civil War could change the meaning of Monument Avenue would involve them in thinking about collective memory and counter memory.

After students investigate a particular individual, this unit could turn into a design problem for students. Students could consider ways to represent a person as a visually powerful monument, to show the accomplishments of the individual, and to allow for the representation of multiple (and possibly conflicting) points of view. Students will have to decide whether to use the traditional conventions of hieratic scale in their design, or to invent or appropriate other techniques to convey importance and invite attention. Having students work through the artistic process of designing a maquette and developing a rationale for placing their monument on Monument Avenue would involve them in the decision making process and allow them to participate in creating a plan that could involve civic action.

(Counter) Monumental Strategies of Contemporary Artists

Another option to have students investigate monuments would be to look at the work of two contemporary artists whose work deals with monuments and issues of memory: Maya Lin and Krzysztof Wodiczko. Through the study of their approaches to commemorative works of art, students could develop plans for a contemporary monument to the Civil War era, or plan some type of artistic intervention that would involve changing the narrative told by the monuments on Monument Avenue. Studying the work of Lin could enable students to learn about conventions of monuments other than the traditional hieratic scale. In Lin's work including the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, the Women's Table, and the Civil Rights Memorial, she creates pieces that are at human scale, allow interaction between the viewer and the memorial, and represent many people rather than one hero. In addition to the conventions she developed, students

4 There is a monument to Henry "Box" Brown along the James River in Richmond. However, this is on a walking path, not on a major thoroughfare in the city.

could also consider how her works serve to humanize important events rather than distance them, literally or metaphorically, from the viewers.

Further, students could approach the idea of a counter memory working against the current narrative by considering how Wodiczko changes the meaning of monuments by projecting images and text onto them. By projecting video and sound on existing monuments as a form of artistic intervention, Wodiczko (1999) chooses to "reveal and expose to the public the contemporary deadly life of the memorial" (p. 51). These temporary interventions bring additional voices, often those of marginalized people, to the story that the monument tells, forcing the viewers to re-see the monument they may have ceased to examine critically. For instance, in the Bunker Hill Projection (1998), Wodiczko superimposed enormous images of women whose children had been murdered onto a large obelisk shaped monument to the Revolutionary War battle in Boston. Through this, Wodiczko connected the loss of life during a crucial Revolutionary War battle to the contemporary situation of the loss of life, due to a high murder rate, in the neighborhood around the monument. According to Hamlin and Desai (2010), Wodiczko, "believes that public monuments play an important role in civil, and specifically democratic societies, and can serve as significant sites for discussion and debate about current events and history" (p. 67). By studying his process, teachers and students could critically think about ways to alter the meaning of monuments in their area through artistic interventions. These could involve projections, craft bombing,[5] guerrilla art and sanctioned performances, flash mobs, digitally altered images, audio tours with multiple perspectives, public dialogue as performance, among other means. By exploring this range of possibilities, a class could develop a temporary intervention, suitable for their area that functions as a counter memory to disrupt the hegemony of the collective memory. Signage, interventions, and dialogue about the monuments are all possible ways to change the meaning of the monuments without erasing their existence from history. Even initiating new rituals, including play, in the public space surrounding the monuments could be a way of pedagogically toppling them and reclaiming a landscape that is otherwise oppressive.

We think that the goal of building an understanding of collective memory and counter memory is not to have all students agree on a new monument or come to hold the teacher's viewpoint. Instead, our goal is to have students recognize that history looks different to different people at different points in time. We also want students to think about their built environment, consider the monuments they see and ask themselves: "What stories do these monuments tell?" "Whose stories are told?" "Whose stories are neglected?" "How can I work with others to help expand the stories that monuments in my area tell?"

5 Though it can take many forms, craft bombing usually involves temporary and unauthorized additions of crafted objects to a public place.

CONCLUSION

A work of commemorative sculpture in conjunction with the surrounding landscape tells a story that is part of the community's collective memory. Sometimes the story being told has the hegemonic power to eclipse other stories and voices, contributing to human rights issues. Through pedagogically critical strategies, including artistic interventions that change or add to the meaning of the monument, students can consider a variety of viewpoints and voices, thus chipping away at the monumental power of a harmful collective memory. Further, teachers can use monuments and memorials to center discussions of perennially relevant human rights topics such as racism, colonialism, and atrocities like slavery and war. Richmond's Monument Avenue contributes to the enduring strength of the myth of the Lost Cause, but it also offers citizens of Richmond something on which to focus a dialogue on the deeper issues of enduring aspects of racism and inequality in our community today in service of change. These issues are not limited to the Confederacy and slavery; the histories of many other groups including women, American Indians, and Latin Americans, have been neglected or misrepresented on the sculptural landscape of the United States. In particular, Loewen (1999) describes how sculptural depictions of American Indians frequently show them in subservient roles to Europeans by appearing passive and by being positioned physically below the Europeans in monument. Across the country, monuments and memorials that are the sources and reflections of deep seated collective memories provide opportunities for communities to re-evaluate collective memories, introduce counter memories, and add additional narratives to what is commonly known about a monument. Art classrooms are excellent places for these discussions.

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El Museo de la Memoria y los Derechos Humanos: Pedagogic Reflections

Kathleen Keys

ABSTRACT

This article addresses human rights issues of the built environment via the presence of monuments in public places. Because of their prominence, monuments and public art can offer teachers and students many opportunities for interdisciplinary study that directly relates to the history of their location. Through an exploration of the ideas of collective memory and counter memory, this article explores the specific example of Monument Avenue in Richmond, Virginia. Further, the authors investigate differences in the ways monuments may be understood at the time they were erected versus how they are understood in the present. Finally, the article addresses the practices of contemporary artists who work with monuments and how teachers and students might study monuments in art classes.

INTRODUCTION

With a background in social justice art education research (Keys, 2003, 2005, 2007) and fifteen years of teaching experience in museums, community arts settings, and higher education, I journeyed to Santiago for fall 2010 as a Universities Study Abroad Consortium (USAC) visiting professor at the Universidad de Andres Bello. Once there I began exploring El Museo de la Memoria y los Derechos Humanos (MMDH), the existence of which in a post-dictatorship society is significant. Inaugurated January 11, 2010 by President Michelle Bachelet[1] it was a major Bicentenario project funded[2] by the Chilean government. The building of MMDH (Figure 1) acknowledges that Chile is healing, but also stresses that what happened under Pinochet's dictatorship must not be forgotten.

MMDH affords myriad learning opportunities, however the following investigation will focus on areas relevant to the field of art education, as presented through the lens of a Visual Art & Human Rights (VAHR) course taught by myself (a U.S. visiting professor) and taken by U.S. study abroad students. Within the course, MMDH's architecture and design, resonant artworks and artifacts, and its role in Chile's "reencuentro" were explored. In this article

1 Bachelet was elected the first woman president of Chile and is a torture survivor of Villa Grimaldi where she and her mother were detained, and later exiled. Her father, who served under Allende's government and was also imprisoned and tortured, and died of a heart attack in prison (Eshet, 2008).

2 $25 million was originally dedicated.

Fig. 1
El Museo de la Memoria y los Derechos Humanos

evidence indicating "meaningful learning" (Falk & Dierking, 1992, 2000) as experienced by students in these three areas are documented in course materials and shared. Critical reflections further examine the pedagogy of MMDH and inspire suggestions for future teaching practice involving visual art and human rights. Although specific to this case the findings may assist future exploration and participation in visual art and human rights inquiry.

The Dictatorship

In 1970 democratic-socialist Salvador Allende Gossens became the 33rd freely elected Chilean president. Watched by socialist supporters and detractors across the world, "Chile's Unidad Popular[3] (Popular Unity—UP) during [its] 1,000-day period, became a veritable laboratory of social transformation" (Gaudichaud, 2009, p. 58). On September 11, 1973, conservative elements within the army and government led by General Augosto Pinochet and backed by the CIA[4] overthrew Allende's government. Allende's resultant death and the coup were incredibly tragic for the Chilean people and began a time of great sorrow. Prior to the takeover, Pinochet and his supporters ensured Chileans had little access to basic necessities so those involved in the coup could use the ensuing social chaos as a platform for support of the dictatorship.

Initially as visitors to Chile the students and I felt disconnected from this painful history, but quickly acknowledged our complicity, due to the U.S. governments clandestine support. The coup, with its great humanitarian toll,

3 See Gaudichaud (2009) for an in depth account of Unidad Popular history.

4 There are no overt mentions in MMDH of the U.S. involvement, but the U.S. supervision is well documented in the Chile Declassification Project initiated by President Clinton available on the CIA website.

stemmed from interests advanced by Chilean elites and the U.S. government. Cold war policies, and fears that a successful socialist movement in Chile would create a stronghold for communism in our hemisphere added weight to U.S. economic and foreign policy interests in Chile. Polumbaum (2002) summarizes the covert U.S. involvement:

> [After the] United States-backed efforts to prevent Allende from winning failed...[they] continued with...a campaign of destabilization. The CIA funneled millions of dollars to opposition groups, conservative media, and bands of thugs to foment social unrest...the United States also pursued a policy of economic aggression: blocking loans, squeezing credit, disrupting trade flows, terminating nonmilitary aid..."Make the economy scream" was one of the instructions from the White House. (p. 66)

During the following 18 years a state sponsored program of execution, forced disappearance, unlawful incarceration and torture was implemented. Targets for violence were anyone associated with Allende: agrarian workers, peasant activists, unionists, academics, artists, writers, poets, journalists and ordinary citizens working to improve conditions for all Chileans. Over 1 million middle and upper class "enemies of the state" fled into exile to avoid violence, incarceration, terror, torture, and death, while more than 80,000 citizens, children included, were not so fortunate. Finally in 1988 Pinochet was voted out of leadership (except for his self- and legislative appointment as a lifetime senator) in a plebiscite and Chile began its difficult transition back to democracy.

Chilean Commemoration

During the last two decades Chile has struggled with the challenge of a torn collective memory regarding its painful past. Segments of the population supporting, feigning ignorance about, or living in denial of the violent events of the dictatorship have lived alongside those who personally experienced violence and loss. These conflicting realities in turn have led to radically diverse opinions regarding dictatorship events, and about the ways they should or should not be commemorated. The Comision Nacional de la Verdad y la Reconciliacion (CNVR), a Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), was created in 1990 to investigate human rights violations. In 1991 they released the culmination of their findings in the Rettig Report, encompassing human rights abuses resulting in death or disappearance that occurred in Chile during the years of military rule under Augusto Pinochet. Mandates for symbolic reparations followed and led to the gradual establishment of over 190 modest memorial sites across Chile.[5] For the most part, however, recognition, reparation, and justice for victims emerged slowly.

5 See MMDH website at: http://www.museodelamemoria.cl/

The inevitable discovery of mass graves on the outskirts of Santiago, the arrest of Pinochet in Great Britain, and later his death ignited intensified movements toward justice. One end result of this long and arduous process is the MMDH, which like other institutions of its kind, is a pedagogic site (Keys, 2005; Trend, 1992). It is an example of how a constructed public site may work to mend or alter "collective memory and [how] the built environment may be modified to promote healing and positive social change" (Armada, 2010, p. 899). However, it is vitally important to remember these same sites may also work to manipulate, hide or illuminate certain interpretations of historical events, or present only partial truths.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

Memorial museums are under-explored (Williams, 2007) and new research is vitally important as more memorial and human rights museums appear in our global landscape. Their primary goals of preventing future human rights abuse and atrocity heightens the need for their thorough exploration and critical review. This case study claims relevance in art education and human rights inquiry based on theory from several fields. Research on learning outcomes in museums is found in art museum education (Villeneuve, 2007), general museum education (Falk & Dierking, 1992, 2000; Falk, Dierking, & Foutz, 2007), and literature on memorial museums (Collins & Hite, 2009; Hite, 2011; Williams, 2007). Researchers (Jeffers, 1999; McManus, 1993; Soren, 2002; Walsh, 1991) explore museum visitation and learning outcomes using methods such as description, interview, observation, reflection and journaling similar to methods employed here. This case study is further informed by writing on Chilean memorial sites (Baxter, 2005; Collins & Hite, 2009; Hite, 2011), and societal and cultural reparations (Bacic, 2002; Gomez-Barris, 2010; Meade, 2001).

Falk and Dierking (2000) theorize "meaningful learning" within museums in "The Contextual Model of Learning" (p. 136). Gleaned from reviews of hundreds of research studies, it incorporates eight key factors "as particularly fundamental to museum learning experiences" (p. 137). Within the realm of *Personal Context*, meaningful learning in the museum depends on the presence and level of the visitors' motivation and expectations for the visit; their prior knowledge, interests, and beliefs related to museum content; and the levels of choice and control over their own visitation time and exploration in the museum. Within a *Sociocultural Context*, learning is dependent upon the presence, levels and quality of sociocultural mediation within the visitation group (such as discussion or interaction among visitors/class); or facilitated mediation by others (such as docents, museum staff, etc.). Lastly, learning within the *Physical Context* is based on the factors of visitors receiving advance organizers and orientation; the design

of the museum; and the extent and level of reinforcing events and experiences taking place later outside the museum (Falk & Dierking, 2000).

RESEARCH SITE & PARTICIPANTS

MMDH was incorporated into the VAHR course as a key experiential learning site. Participating in the course were eight students (7 from the U.S. and 1 from Denmark; 6 female and 2 male) ranging in age from 18 to 30, and in either junior or senior years of degree-seeking study. Two exceptions were an 18 year old male and a 30 year old female (with an MFA in photography). The VAHR course objectives included fostering human rights awareness, exploring artists and artwork engaging human rights issues, and developing related artistic practice.

Participants had little to no prior knowledge about Chile between 1973–1990 or after. To build an "experiential landscape of human rights" (Dickinson, Ott & Aoki, 2006) course experiences set out to create a web of evolving understanding, developing a horizon of meaning making for students about visual art and human rights in Chile. Before visiting MMDH we reviewed and discussed initial writings (Agosín, 2007, 1996; Eschet, 2008) and completed several other fieldtrips.

DATA COLLECTION & ANALYSIS

Case study data is collected from interviewing, observing, and from analyzing documents (Merriam, 1998). As Wolcott (1992) notes, what researchers are essentially doing is systematically "watching, asking and reviewing" (p. 19). Here, data collection included gathering of course documents such as instructor field notes, student journal reflection entries, and course evaluations. These documents were then reviewed and analyzed for evidence of students' "meaningful learning." The key data set was comprised of students' journal entries prepared for an ongoing assignment. Mirroring contexts for examining "meaningful learning" in museums, questions gathering key data included the following:

> **Physical Context:** What were your reactions to the architecture, space and physicality of El Museo de la Memoria y los Derechos Humanos? How did you feel intellectually, physically, emotionally, and spiritually in the space?
>
> **Personal Context:** Which areas, exhibitions, or installations resonated with you most strongly and why? What did they/it make you think about?
>
> **Sociocultural Context:** How does MMDH reflect past President Michelle Bachelet's strong commitment to "reencuentro" or a coming together within Chile? (VAHR Journal assignment, 2010).

The mining of documents (Merriam, 1998) involved the reviewing and analysis of data. Next themes were grouped and re-analyzed. Evidence of "meaningful

learning" emerging from responses included: a) the creation of new inquiry questions, b) comparisons or contrasts to other life or learning experiences, and c) synthesis of course topics and materials. To critically explore the pedagogy of MMDH, I reviewed popular media publications, consulted literature by Latin Americanist scholars, and corresponded with human rights activists in Chile and the U.S.

Collins and Sandell (1997) discuss how research questions, processes and discovery are influenced by many factors. My experiences as a researcher, instructor, and past museum educator do present a strong bias within this study. As do my convictions about the role of art within social justice work. Yet while I believe that meaningful learning occurs in museums, the inquiry here is based on more advanced questions looking closely at pedagogic possibilities. My goals are to understand student perceptions and interpretations about MMDH experiences to accurately articulate facets of its pedagogy.

The question as to how researchers can "assess the rich, complex, and highly personal nature of museum experiences, and specifically learning from and in museums, in valid and reliable ways" (Anderson, Storksdieck, & Spock, 2007, p. 202) is far from being completely answered. However, I took several steps to help foster such personal experiences for students. The potential for reactivity exists in terms of students feeling the need to write "for the instructor." To counter this I consistently modeled respect and consideration for diverse opinions. Additionally, weekly journal entries counted only 1.4% toward the course grade, lowering the risk of reactivity. Questions were open-ended, multi-part and reinforcing, making them stronger and more sensitive data-gathering tools.

In order to assess the course, evaluation forms developed by the USAC central office at the University of Nevada, Reno were distributed by USAC Santiago program staff to students prior to final grade calculation. Seven of the eight students submitted forms. Data mined from the anonymous evaluations indicates that a strong majority of students were excited and interested in museum visits. In response to the question, "What type of exercises/ activities/ topics did you find most beneficial," six out of seven responses were positive and communicated a perceived benefit of museum visits in general. While specific visits to MMDH were not mentioned, this data indicates a general perceived benefit, and suggests intellectual interest and engagement, thus increasing the potential for "meaningful learning" to occur.

Physical Context: MMDH Plaza, Architecture, Design & Space

Physical context is an important factor impacting the efficacy of learning. However, "[t]he importance of space and spatial effects in the museum experience is a topic routinely neglected" (Williams, 2007, p. 77). It is especially important to consider physical context in museums (Henry, 2007; Falk & Dierking, 1992, 2000), as visitors move throughout and interact within an educational space. Self-directed acts of roaming and making discoveries in a museum, "stimulate curiosity and imagination, while allowing for the sheer pleasure and delight in looking" (Walsh & Piper, 1994, p. 109).

MMDH architecture incorporates metaphors and symbols relating to Chile and its painful history, as well as a hopeful outlook for tomorrow that mirrors contemporary Chilean society. For example, the expansive metal relief of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights[6] bordering one vast concrete MMDH plaza wall, and the Victor Jara[7] lyrics memorialized in a large mural by artist Jorge Tacla on another wall, link history of the dictatorship to subsequent past actions and finally to a space of contemporary reflection within the MMDH plaza. Additionally the museum structure itself, "[t]he Arc of Memory...is a transparent space with flexible pathways where the play of natural light illuminates the interior generating unexpected effects" (Museum Brochure). In response to questions about their perception of the museum design and architecture, students described MMDH as beautiful (2), impressive (2), gorgeous (2), big/ vast/ huge (4), calm (2) creative, tranquil, positive and striking.

Evidence of "meaningful learning" surfaced in responses relating to the thoughtfulness and care, transparency, and peace communicated through MMDH's physicality. Two respondents cited that the perceived high amounts of attention and time dedicated to designing the museum were notable and thus sincere. Students correlated these thoughtful architectural and design elements with careful attention being paid to the needs of Chile. Some mentioned how the architecture answered a need to subdue the difficult content or pain within. Several noted the metaphoric and real transparency showing through the large light-filtering windows. They noted that the architecture and design allows for light to pass through, preventing claustrophobia in a psychologically uncomfortable space, and producing a calming effect, until you started reading and listening to the art within (USAC students/ Santiago Program, 2010). Three mentioned the reflecting pools, water-mirror, and running water features as supporting ideas and feelings of peace, calm, tranquility (USAC students/ Santiago Program, 2010).

Williams (2007) states that "internal museum spaces shape interpretation" (p. 96). As one student noted, "Overall I felt that the openness of the floor plan

6 Chile is one of 48 countries that signed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, approved December 10, 1948 by the United Nations. (Approximately 23 years prior to the coup d'etat of 1973). Hernan Santa Cruz, Chilean ambassador to the UN, was one of eight authors of the document.

7 The mural contains the lines of the last poem written by folk singer, Victor Jara while detained (and later murdered) in the Chilean National Stadium.

Fig. 2
El Velaton, view from meditation space

complimented the content of the museum and the desire to be open about the topics addressed in the exhibits. While the items on display definitely provoked sadness it was not at all oppressive" (USAC students/ Santiago Program, 2010). Two respondents made connections with prior life and learning experiences to other human rights memorials and museums such as the response of "utter anguish" while visiting "Aushwitz, Buchanwald and various other Holocaust sites;" and with the National Vietnam War Memorial's similar use of "clean and modern lines and stone wall engravings" (USAC students/ Santiago Program, 2010).

El Velaton. Strongly resonant for three students and inspired by the candlelight memorial service and national tradition for remembering and denouncing the loss of loved ones, *El Velaton* (Figures 2 & 3) a combination of artifacts made into an artistic installation, is a place of meditation and silence. Traversing all three floors are "[framed images] of the detained, disappeared and executed...Mixed [in] were some empty frames with no images. I believe these to be symbolic of people that were detained and disappeared or perhaps no photos existed of them" (USAC student/ Santiago Program, 2010).

Many students articulated the powerful sentiments of mourning, memory, and commemoration this particular installation emanated.

> This was so meaningful to me because it was so...heartrending...To see faces of those who will never be seen again and be surrounded by

Fig.3
El Velaton, broad view

> memoriam candles made the experience very personal. We are all of one human family and what happened in Chile not only resonates in Chile, but it also resonates with me personally. It hurts my heart to know that people are capable of such horrible things. It makes me wonder how such people are able to sleep at night and what thoughts run through their minds when they are committing such atrocities. (USAC students/ Santiago Program, 2010)

Personal Context: Resonance with MMDH Art & Artifacts

Near the main lower level entrance and exit, three installations set up a context for viewing human rights abuse and atrocity as a global problem. On the left stand 80 small frames chronicling the establishment of the 190 modest Chilean memorials. At knee level on the right (Figure 4) sit framed documents citing name, origination, and accomplishments or status of the global TRCs. "This exhibit...reminds visitors that Chile's case is not singular but only one example of many" (USAC students/ Santiago Program, 2010).

Noted as resonant by two students is a unique world map created from small square photographs, putting visible faces to victims and events (See Figure 4). "In this visual global atlas...there were depictions of human injustice...Photos of poverty, abuse, lack, war, violence, and suffering were included. This resonated strongly with me because it demonstrated that the abuse of human rights is indeed a global phenomenon, with practically no exceptions" (USAC students/ Santiago Program, 2010).

Sparked by these MMDH installations, the VAHR class discussed this contextualization of human rights abuse and atrocity as a universal challenge and global problem. We wondered if this perspective projecting world-wide or

Fig.4
World Map installation

universal violence lessens the gravity of particular human rights atrocities. We discussed the global map and the TRC posters as both interesting installations and as posible cop-outs or excuses. Building a foundation for a partial defense or immunity for the remembering country, rather than a place of mourning, memory and commemoration. We brainstormed other installations, artworks or artifacts we might suggest for entryways and exits. We noted that the MMDH was lacking in the presentation of new global imaginaries (Hite, 2011) or directions and images of contemporary life without human rights abuse. Nor were ideas prevalent for preventing, discouraging or ending human rights atrocity in Chile or across the globe.

Although clearly important and necessary in society, what security does the hope and dictate of "Never Again" echoed by MMDH and other memorial museums provide for us? What has been learned from Holocaust memorial museums and other human rights atrocity memorials and museums? Many memorial museums present a theme of "never again" but lessons from the Holocaust did not avert genocidal tendencies or aims across the world. Where are the museums, exhibitions, artifacts and artworks that offer advice about how to ensure that similar atrocities actually "never again" occur? Is experiencing and learning from these examples of injustice in the physical and personal context enough for our future generations? What else can be done?

Witnessing Cruelty, Terror, Hope & Joy. Williams (2007) comments that "artifacts exist at the intersection of authentic proof, reassurance, and melancholia" (p. 50). Similarly art and artifacts work at making their own content real (Gussak, 2004). In journal entries respondents noted resonations with artifacts such as the filmed testimonies of torture survivors; Allende's last

Fig. 5
MMDH video exhibition area

radio address; interviews with his aids; and small, beautiful, incredibly detailed, and ornate carvings from wood and bone made by interned prisoners. Several other film/ video artifacts resonated with students, and it was shared that these artifacts were the hardest to explore (Figure 5). These mainly conveyed images of military rule being enacted with mass pepper spraying and fire hosing of citizens, or other examples of public humiliation.

Students further relayed their discomfort in looking and thinking about these images, films, and events in their journals.

> I felt it difficult to read many of the pieces describing specific actions by the government such as news stories about kidnappings or executions. However, the piece I found most difficult to watch was the video showing the attack on La Moneda and people's reactions as they listened to what was going on. (USAC students/ Santiago Program, 2010)

> It was mystifying to me that people would do this to their own fellow countrymen. Especially when it showed the martial law in the streets and military and police abusing people for no reason. It was even more odd to think that all this took place not too long ago in places around the city that I go to now. (USAC students/ Santiago Program, 2010)

A notable criticism of MMDH is that its content and organization is based on using the Rettig Report as its guide, leading "to an over emphasis on physical repression, torture, imprisonment, and forced disappearance, while failing to convey the day to day terror among many segments of the population imposed by a pervasive climate of fear" (Lowy, personal communication, March 8, 2011). This pervasive fear led to nearly two decades of psychological violence forced onto society.

Student commentary also included the joy, relief and even slight humor from watching the film/ video clips of the campaign for and celebration of the successful plebiscite and "No Vote" that ushered Pinochet out of office after 17 years.

> [It] was amazing to watch how the people of Chile banded together despite everything...It was beautiful to watch their overwhelming joy when it was finally announced that the No vote was victorious. They finally had something to believe in again and even though I was not physically there during the time of the No vote, I felt like I was right there with them sharing in their joy. (USAC students/ Santiago Program, 2010)

Aforementioned student journal excerpts exhibit "meaningful learning" due to the empathy, understanding, and deep resonance reflected in them. Additionally, they indicate how watching purportedly unbiased documentation of events unfold presents a virtual interactive re-living, and replaying of activities that now seem to be inscribed on the mind, heart and psyche of viewers.

Chilean Arpilleras. Despite their notable displays, a perplexing awkwardness exists around the arpilleras donated by Isabel Letelier. Chilean resistance arpilleras created from approximately 1974-1994, were small patchwork tapestries created from burlap, and scraps of cloth. They contained fearful scenes of everyday life under the dictatorship and memorials to the makers disappeared relatives. They were smuggled out of Chile and brought to the world the story of the arpilleristas fruitless searches in jails, morgues, government offices, and the tribunals of law for their husbands, brothers, and sons (Agosin, 1996).

In relation to their existence as a form of resistance and empowerment for creators and viewers of that time, it is strange that they have been relegated to an outer corridor wall/ hallway on the third floor near the cafe. More than half are installed well above the average eye level of an adult. It is as if they are somewhat shelved away. Arguably a more central exhibition will convey more about the day-to-day life under the dictatorship as experienced by those most affected. Art educators (Desai, 2004; Keifer-Boyd, 1998; Keifer-Boyd & Maitland-Gholson, 2007; Keys, 2011) discuss arpilleras as exemplars for facilitating difficult conversations about political and social issues. Currently, "shelved away" at MMDH they are much less accessible.

Sociocultural Context: MMDH's Reframing of Collective Memory

President Bachelet advocated for "reencuentro" or a "coming together" rather than for unatainable forgiveness or reconciliation. One would assume, that for the Association of Families of the Detained and Dissapeared (AFDD), surviving victims and others owed symbolic reparations, that MMDH was a welcomed gesture returning dignity to its citizenry. Thus, students connected the presence of MMDH as clear progress toward "reencuentro" and as positive state participation in public human rights discourse. The applause, awe and wonder of the MMDH reflected by students and myself was difficult to contain as we discussed our reactions to its grand stature, compelling content, and its presence as a clear indication of Chile's forward movement in commemoration of the dictatorship events, and the healing or "reencuentro" of Chilean society.

Unfortunately, these initial perceptions were later challenged after learning about MMDH's hurried and exclusionary design process. Numerous Chilean human rights organizations such as the AFDD and others were excluded from the process of creating the museum (Lowy, personal communication, March 8, 2011). Tensions and conflicts surfaced when Bachelet officially announced the forming of the MMDH in 2006 cutting

> across existing negotiations between a consortium of [Chilean] human rights NGOs...looking to negotiate state funding for a "Casa de la Memoria" a "house of Memory" proposal whose major difference from the eventual state announcement was that the NGOs themselves were to design, staff and run the project...Believing they had basically reached an accord with the Lagos government, the groups were astounded when the incoming administration announced independently through the press, plans for the Memory Museum with the same objectives. The NGOs were informed that their role would be limited to handing over their records to form part of the Museum´s collection, complementing [official archives]...Resulting tensions led to the withdrawal of various NGOs. (Hite & Collins, 2009, p. 398-399)

Even for the inauguration, international guests and other elites, were sent invitations well before the ceremony, while the Museum staff failed to make sure the human rights community in Chile, had received invitations (Hite, personal communication, March 7, 2011). Its focus instead was on the elites and the inauguration occured during a key time of political transition between administrations and leaders, at the expense of all who had struggled for acknowledgement and justice for so long (Kornbluh & Hite, 2010).

As interest in visitation to MMDH increases and it catalyzes human rights discourse, many are reconsidering the potential of MMDH. "In spite of the exclusionary process, the Museum is unbelievably successful at opening up conversations and exposing new generations to the painful past and those responsible" (Hite, 2011). This is because "[m]emorials have the power to make visible, literally, a social consciousness, to assert a message, to catalyze a necessary conversation" (Hite, 2011, p. 7). Thus despite its initial pedagogic flaws, MMDH is contributing to a transformation in Chile from forgetting and oblivion to one of perpetuating an active human rights culture.

CONCLUSIONS

Experiences with MMDH's architecture and design, art and artifacts, and our ensuing reflections relating to Bachelet's idea of "reencuentro" enabled course participants to generate and ask new and complex questions, vibrantly continuing human rights inquiry within our classroom, and for some it increased intentions of pursuing future work related to human rights. The quality of this evidence shows evolution in the students' contemplation and understanding of visual arts and human rights issues. Thus, continuing pedagogic reflection about what MMDH and similar institutions teach and do not teach us is vitally important in the future of human rights discourse.

Overall MMDH is an acknowledgement of the past, without ideas or conversations on how to engender human rights cultures beyond grand recognition, collective mourning, and memorialization. What we learned from the displays and exhibitions that record the violence of the military regime assembled under the over-arching mantra of "Never Again!" is a baseline, a beginning for human rights engagement. What are new ideas and responses regarding the creation and cultivation of human rights cultures in our world? Hite (2011) calls for memorials and sites of memory that instigate the formation of global imaginaries of respect for human rights and peace. Many are hopeful that there is room for evolution in the MMDH life cycle to encourage and include these types of global imaginaries.

How might MMDH move to represent the extended climate of fear, estrangement, silence, and immense cultural violence perpetrated by the state? How do we address and engage with ideas surrounding the CIA and U.S. involvement? As Desai (2004) explains "[a]s art educators we need to address this silence" (p. 61) not in an attempt to correct the collective memory but rather to renew what Simon calls the "living history for a community" (cited in Desai, 2004, p. 61). What can art educators do to address these extended silences? Educators can take protest art such as Chilean arpilleras and related content into their classrooms in innovative, critical and complex ways (Desai, 2004; Keifer-Boyd, 1998; Keifer-Boyd & Maitland-Gholson, 2007; Keys 2011). We can include the study of Chilean artists (dictatorship, post-dictatorship and transition) such as Eugenio Dittborn (Coloma, 2006) and Guillermo Nuñez (Gomez-Barris, 2009) into our pedagogical work. Certainly inviting stories of exile and other intergenerational experiences from Chilean-Americans into our research and classroom inquiry will instigate new ideas and reflection for art study related to state violence and including reflections about human rights, memory and commemoration through and with art. Other avenues include the study of counter-memorials (Hite, 2011; Hite & Collins, 2009) and their production within art education.

There is no question that artists, art educators, students, and human rights workers and advocates can continue to evolve important human rights inquiry and discourse in our world. To provide additional starting points, newly surfacing suggestions for continuing inquiry and reflection within related human rights study in art education and stemming from this research and learning experiences at the MMDH are listed below.

- How do memorial museums inspire universal struggle against injustice? How do museums of memory and human rights present charged and political content in more subtle ways?
- What art and artifacts are created by people experiencing human rights abuse or atrocity? Or living with its memory?
- In what ways do memorial museums move toward reunion, reconciliation or reencuentro?
- How can we compel more artists and art educators to work with human rights issues?
- What does art referencing human rights abuse and atrocity look like?
- What do human rights cultures look like? What does art referencing progress toward human rights cultures look like?

Looming national budget cuts implemented by Chilean President Sebastian Pinera to reparations projects may cause financial hardships for MMDH. Likewise MMDH's extension programming, outreach, and thus its progress toward Bachelet's "reencuentro," and its ability to aid in building a human rights culture in Chile, may be impacted. Doubtful, however, is the possibility that this new, transparent, luminous and immense recognition of pain and suffering caused during the dictatorship will be silenced any time soon.

> [A]ll the people of Chile...must accept that the atrocities did happen and vow not to forget that they happened...Its mere existence as a place of memoriam for this time in history says that it, as well as the people involved, will be remembered (USAC students/ Santiago Program, 2010).

Although like people, museums as Williams (2007) reminds us, sometimes do disappear.

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Surreal Friends: Leonora Carrington, Remedios Varo and Kati Horna.

Edited by Stefan van Raay, Joanna Moorhead and Teresa Arq.

London: Lund Humphries in association with Pallant House Gallery, 2010. 142 pg. ISBN 978 1 84822 059

Book Review by Erin Tapley

For many K-12 students, exposure to Surrealism is memorable. Perhaps the idea that abstraction or distortion and odd juxtapositions can be both skillfully rendered and interesting is revelatory for them. Frequently, landmark works of Salvador Dalí and René Magritte are displayed in classrooms. And while, Frida Kahlo has increasingly been discussed, many people ignore the contributions of female and non-European artists to the Surrealist movement. The book *Surreal Friends* looks at three women (emigrants from Europe) who joined Kahlo in Mexico and practiced Surrealism earnestly and for the duration of their lives. *Surreal Friends* is a companion book to a retrospective exhibition at the Pallant House Gallery in London. The show was largely that of Leonora Carrington's work, but also featured works by her friends and neighbors, Remedios Varo and Kati Horna.

Coincident with the centennial celebration of the Mexican Revolution, this exhibition celebrated Mexico's open arm policy to European refugees of both the Spanish Civil War and WWII. Carrington, Horna and Varo all settled in the suburb of Colonia Roma, Mexico in the late 30's and early 40's, escaping the events in Europe. While friends with one another, they each maintained an introspective working style that yielded a quintessentially feminine Surrealist aesthetic. Unlike their male counterparts, who often objectified the female figure and psyche, these women produced an aesthetic that has been much theorized as a depiction of intuition itself. The art world has only recently considered contributions of female Surrealist artists, whose work testifies to the diaspora of the movement.

An issue this book emphasizes is the nature of these women's relationship as both amicable and familial. Horna and Carrington's children played together and Varo and Carrington's work has definite chronological correlation. Like many Surrealists, these friends tried to incorporate the lifestyle of Surrealism as inquiry into the subconscious and happenstance by engaging in word play games and games of eidetic circumstance. Varo and Carrington wrote two Surrealist plays around 1954. All born within a decade of one another (Remedios Varo in 1908 in Spain, Kati Horna in 1912 in Hungary and Leonara Carrington in 1917 in Great Britain), they involved themselves in revolutionary movements of the early 20th century Europe, often by partnering with the contentious leading men of these struggles. In so doing, they defied expectations of the social classes and genders into which they were born. Varo and Horna endured prison time for their rebellious actions and Carrington was committed to a Spanish asylum when her bohemian and fervent relationship to much older artist, Max Ernst, was quashed. Even as emigrants to a distant urban culture, these women supported political causes in Mexico and remained dedicated to honing their artistry.

A slight critique of the book is its lopsided coverage of the three women. Most chapters spotlight Carrington's life and work, dealing less with Varo or Horna. Many readers will be unfamiliar with Kati Horna who never had the financial backing or ambition to publicize her work as Carrington and Varo did. However, Horna's work in photography uses superimposition and montage, producing a sentimental mood uncommon in the movement's early years.

As any group of artists who espouse similar objectives, their work is still individualized based upon upbringing. The *Surreal Friends* all received either fine or commercial art training and furthermore were affected by the conditions of their childhoods. Carrington has links to Irish folkways and study in Italy that is apparent in her architectural settings and gnomish figures. Dry British humor often informed her paintings as germinated in word play and irony. Varo was the most intense of the trio (in terms of career ambition). Varo was raised a Spaniard and painted androgynous, beakish characters amid settings rendered in uncomfortable perspective. Her work came into western consciousness in 2000, with a retrospective show at the National Museum of Women in Art. Both Varo and Carrington read copiously about mysticism, alchemy, Jungianism and other means toward the transformation of consciousness.

The book, *Surreal Friends* is a lovely treatise on a trio of women whose work exudes a sense of searching. While Simone de Beauvoir claimed that women in Surrealism were "everything but themselves" it is also arguable that Surrealist women did exceed the normal objectification of "women" as popularized by key male Surrealists. The 200+ color illustrations in this book prove this strength and offers keen insights into these three artistic lives.

FURTHER READING:

Women in Surrealism:
http://www.suite101.com/content/women-in-surrealism-a236786#ixzz16dXjd59D

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