Tyson E. Lewis
Megan J. Laverty   *Editors*

Art's Teachings, Teaching's Art

Philosophical, Critical and Educational Musings

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Contemporary Philosophies and Theories in Education

Volume 8

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Editors

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in Corpo) (Intellect Books, 2011); and *Psychoanalyzing Cinema*: *A Productive Encounter of Lacan*, *Deleuze*, *and Zizek* (Palgrave, 2012).

David Jelinek is an art teacher at the Collegiate School in Manhattan. He has written on teacher-student relationships in film and taught on the subject at the Pratt Institute. His sculpture was recently featured in a one-person exhibition at the Andrew Edlin Gallery in Chelsea.

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Chapter 1
Introduction: Redistributing the Artistic and Pedagogical Sensible

Tyson E. Lewis and Megan J. Laverty

1.1 Dire Straits: The Crisis in the Arts and Teaching

In June of 2011, the Center for Arts Education in New York City released a rather shocking document titled "Accelerating Arts Education Funding Cuts and Loss of Arts Teachers Paint Grim Picture for City Schools" (Kessler 2011). Even before the financial recession of 2008, arts education has seen declining investments into arts education services and supplies, with only a 7 % increase since 2006 in certified arts teachers. But this increase in arts personnel is somewhat deceiving because only 16 % of high schools in NYC have certified arts instructors on staff. The arts are, as the report indicates, disappearing from schools—even those schools in the very heart of one of the "cultural capitals" of the world.

The extinction of arts programs is not isolated to NYC alone. The lack of support for the arts in education is a national issue. With pressure to make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) under high-stakes testing regimes, schools are focusing more and more on math, English, and science at the exclusion of the arts, which have been re-cast as an expendable luxury. While the NCLB Act of 2001 did acknowledge the arts as a core academic subject, the arts were quickly eclipsed by the push towards quantifiable improvements on standardized tests. The high-stakes nature of testing has most negatively affected low-income, inner city schools servicing minority populations. One study recently reported "the greatest erosion of the curriculum is occurring in schools with high minority populations, the very populations whose

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access to such curriculum has been historically most limited" (Holcomb 2007, p. 34). The result is a stark reality: there is a growing artistic apartheid where certain children are being aesthetically left behind.

In the face of the withering of arts-based programs or their replacement by design programs, there have been many attempts to re-frame arts in accordance with the very standards that have put them at risk of becoming extinct. In 2004, a report commissioned by the Arts Education Partnership and the National Assembly of State Art Agencies titled *Critical Evidence* (Ruppert 2006) provided empirical evidence that there are at least 65 ways in which an art-rich curriculum improves the cognitive skills necessary to raise test scores in math and reading. And even more broadly, policy statements like "Preparing Students for the Next America: The Benefits of an Arts Education" (2013) by the Arts Education Partnership argues that the arts are central to promoting American economic competitiveness. The arts are sold as strategic support for "bolster[ing] skills demanded of the twenty-first century workforce" by encouraging creativity, problem-solving, collaboration and communication, and increased capacities for leadership. The Partnership for twenty-first Century Skills also provides a "map" that connects the arts to the knowledge economy. Their policy statement argues that "business leaders and visionary thinkers concerned about preparation of students for the future know that the ability to be creative—a twenty-first century skill—is native to the arts and is one of the primary processes learned through the arts" (2010, p. 2). Arts can promote "healthy work habits" including flexibility, adaptability, and self-directing entrepreneurship, thus becoming a useful facet of our information/life-style economy. While some might remain supporters of STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math), such visions come dangerously close to reducing the arts to a mere use-value enhancing science and engineering outputs through creative and metaphoric thinking. To survive, the arts in schools have had to adopt the very languages and standards of markets that overpower them.

It is our contention that philosophy of the arts and of the aesthetic experience can help reclaim the radical potentiality of the arts that are missed when the arts become threatened with either (a) literal extinction or (b) mere strategic survivalism. Choices between bad and worse undermine what the arts have to offer: the different kinds of educational questions the arts ask of ourselves and our bodies outside of questions of utility and efficiency; the particular politics of artistic gestures that suspend set relations between identity, role, and function; the democratic potentials of sensorial interruptions and redistributions beyond hierarchies and economic, social, and political divisions; and the radical possibilities of collective production to break with the factory model. This is not to reduce arts to mere instrumental means to ends outside of themselves, but rather to remind us that when the arts speak, they teach "lessons" that perhaps cannot be learned anywhere else and cannot necessarily be efficiently mainstreamed by the mechanisms of the knowledge economy.

While not often included in discussions concerning the fate of the arts in education, standardization coupled with recession era budget cuts have also leveled damaging blows to the *artistic* nature of teaching. The result has been the increasing dominance of attempts to create "teacher proof" curricular materials based on

"scientific" and "evidence" based research. Beginning with *A Nation at Risk Report* (National Commission on Excellence in Education 1983), there has been a pervasive emphasis on rigid and bureaucratized approaches to curriculum development that is decisively top-down (Moe 2003). The teacher-proof curriculum dictates the goals, content, and methods of instruction so that any teacher, abstracted from his or her particular life circumstances as well as specific teaching contexts, will be able to teach the exact same materials without deviation.

Critics of the prepackaged curriculum emphasize how teachers' work is being increasingly narrowed and simplified so as to be easily measured, managed, and standardized (McNeil 2000; McNeil and Valenzuela 2000). Such critics are right to point out that these approaches to instructional design demonstrate a suspicion of teachers and their work. Teaching as a complex, multifaceted, context sensitive, meaning-rich practice is being quickly eroded by another image of teaching as mere technical procedure. Henry Giroux (2010) has argued that the technical "dumbing down" of teaching is part and parcel of larger economic forces of neoliberalism and biopolitical management over life in schools. Wayne Au points to the "pre-scripted" curriculum (which provides a verbal script for teachers to follow) as a paradigm of a new form of Taylorism that reduces teachers to nothing more than technician, tests to commodified tools of control, and schools to immaterial factories. In short, teaching is no longer about creation. It is now a kind of "piecemeal" (Mahiri 2005, p. 82) task in a larger assembly line where conceptualization is distinctly separate from execution. Given such dire circumstances, what is at stake is not so much de-skilling or re-skilling so much as s-*killing* teachers.

While highlighting the potential causes as well as the significant losses of these changes in teaching, what we would like to emphasize is how this shift towards vocationalization or professionalization has a tendency to eclipse the *aesthetic dimensions of teaching as a craft* (see also Hickman 2011). In this sense, the question of the aesthetics of teaching is integrally connected to and tied up with the question of the politics of teaching within and against forms of instrumental skill reduction.

The two situations which we have outlined are, in themselves, well documented. Instead of adding to the vast literature concerning the various crises in arts education or teaching, we hope that combining two narratives, which are often held apart, reveals something new that, if they were kept separate, would not necessarily appear. In both cases, the aesthetic possibilities of perceptual (re)disruption, imaginative transcendence, and poetic experience are increasingly marginalized if not completely censored in favor of technocratic efficiency and economic viability. Cast in a more political light, perhaps it is not merely that the arts are useless or that teachers are too unreliable to manage their own classrooms but rather that the teachings of the arts and the arts of teaching are *politically* and *ethically* too disruptive to leave unaccounted for by managerial systems obsessed with maintaining a particular order of control. If Plato once censored the arts because of their potentially disruptive effects on the "impressionable" souls of the citizens of the republic, then perhaps we are still living in the shadow of this most primordial gesture—a gesture which has returned with a vengeance in the shape

of administrative advances within neoliberal and biopolitical networks of surveillance. While the particular configuration of the pressures exerted on the arts, art education, and the arts of teaching might very well be different in different countries, we would argue that what we are witnessing in the United States is a global tendency, and thus symptomatic of economic forces which are affecting (to some degree and with local particularities) certain common conditions underlying teaching, art, and politics.

Given this backdrop, we offer the following collection of essays, each of which presents moments wherein the arts of teaching and the teachings of the arts rupture, disrupt, distort, suspend, or negate this very backdrop. As such, this is not a collection concerned with *how* to teach the arts. There are rich traditions specifically located within art education that directly deal with this concern (see Gaudelius and Speirs 2002; Bresler 2007). Rather, this is a collection focused on the teachings of the arts themselves and how the arts affect perception, gesture, and embodied social relations in order to open up space and time for political turnings, imaginative alternatives, and affective intensities. In their own ways, each essay asks: What are the perceptual and sensorial pedagogies of the arts? If philosophical speculation is privileged as an access point to this question (rather than ethnography, history, and so forth), this is because, as Jacques Rancière (2006) argues, philosophical practice is a kind of "in-disciplinary thought" (p. 9) that eludes structures of hierarchical order and common sense distribution of roles. The poetics of philosophy—in all its diverse forms—shares a unique relationship to the arts, which also elude any attribution of unity, coherence, or essence, and thus continually neutralize attempts to suture form and function, practice and social role, appearance and utility. In turn, we also offer a set of essays that concern the arts of teaching—its theatrical, musical, poetic, and curatorial dimensions. In both cases, authors employ continental, aesthetic, psychoanalytic, phenomenological, postmodernist, and pragmatist notions of art in order to shed new light on the pressing importance of aesthetic sensitivities for rethinking what it means to teach, learn, feel, think, and act in today's world. As such, the essays in this collection speak not simply to art teachers (though they might find new philosophical frames through which to view their practices) but also to artists, philosophers, and educators in general: all those who have a concern for what it means to engage in expressions of sensual alternatives to what it means to *be* or *become*.

1.2   Precedents, Precursors, and Possibilities

In this section, we move to distinguish the approach of this collection from notable precedents: Kieran Egan (1942-), Elliot W. Eisner (1933–2014) and Maxine Greene (1917–2014)—three figures that represent specific moments of in-disciplinary thought. Along the way, we will further draw upon Rancière's writings and, more specifically, his understanding of the aesthetic as a heterogeneous regime of the sensible. In introducing Rancière's philosophy of the aesthetic, one of our

intentions is to move beyond more or less humanist understandings of the arts and of the art of teaching as involving the cultivation of specific civic skills or the expansion of subjective dispositions such as the imagination. Shifting from the mental to the embodied, the sensual, and the perceptual, enables many of the essays to take a post-humanist turn that is not prefigured in more or less traditional meditations on the aesthetic in relation to the educational. We also draw on Rancière to show that using terms like "aesthetic," "pedagogical" and "political" is double edged: on the one hand, these terms allow us to isolate important qualities or dimensions of our experience worthy of attention; on the other hand, they can prevent us from seeing how these qualities or dimensions permeate activities not recognizably artistic, educational, or political.

Egan (1988, 1990, 1992), Eisner (2004a), and Greene (2000, 2001) are erudite, intelligent, and passionate about the theoretical and practical possibilities inherent in conjoining the arts and education. These authors, over the years, have defended the inclusion of the visual and performing arts in the K-12 curriculum, effectively reinventing aesthetic education while establishing its new role in schools. In an effort to marginalize such traditional concepts as talent, genius, technique and mastery, they have introduced such ideas as imagination, wide-awakeness, and so forth. Their emphasis has been on art as process rather than as product. Engagement with the arts, they argue, must be cultural and participatory, as well as appreciative and critical. In other words, aesthetic education involves active exploration of different artistic mediums resulting in the initiation of teachers and students into new ways of seeing, hearing and feeling. The object—whether painting, performance art, or poem— must become, to quote Greene (2001), "objects of *our* aesthetic experiencing" (p. 17). Aesthetic experiencing leads to the discovery of alternative perspectives, a heightened consciousness of mystery, fresh significances and the construction of meanings. Aesthetic experiencing awakens us to new possibilities for being alive.

At the same time, these advocates for the arts in schools inevitably illuminated the aesthetic dimensions of teaching. Eisner (2004b)—drawing on Dewey—has written extensively on the central question "What can education learn from the arts about the practice of education?" (see also Hickman 2011). For Eisner, the marginalization of the *art* of teaching means that the aesthetically rooted, qualitative forms of thinking found in teaching are lost. While never providing a strict definition of what such forms of thinking necessarily include, Eisner does list clusters of possible traits including a keen awareness of qualitative purposes, the search for proportionality, somatic knowledge, the importance of attentiveness to practice, the need for flexible ends, a sensitivity toward the relationships between form and content, a valuing of multiple forms of expression, the importance of materials, and an emphasis on motivations for engagement. All in all, the art of teaching—or teaching as a craft—is enriched and expanded through engagement with the arts (broadly conceptualized). While Gert Biesta (2014) is right to problematize any strict identity between the art of teaching and the Aristotelian notion of *poiesis* (the production or fabrication of something through technical skill), it is important to note that this warning does not prevent us from examining

the aesthetic dimensions of teaching. Indeed, it is only through such an endeavor that we can come to appreciate the particular nature of teaching as a craft resistant to scientific instrumentalization.

There is no doubt that Egan, Eisner and Greene have been tremendously influential, and the secondary literature in multiple fields inside and outside of education on their work is too vast to cover here. It is thanks to their influence that we take a different approach in this book, one that is uniquely responsive to the insights from various theoretical schools of thought, the innovation of new technologies, and an inhospitable educational culture (as outlined above). Our focus is not on defending aesthetic education or, alternatively, arguing for the role of the arts in K-12 curriculum. We take this as a given, partly due to accomplishments of Egan, Eisner, Greene and others.

Contributors to the first part consider the formal features of different art forms—whether music, painting, poetry, performance, or film—with a view to illuminating their potentially pedagogical dimensions. Similarly, contributors to the second part consider teaching with a view to highlighting its various artistic or aesthetic dimensions. Unlike Eisner who makes general claims about "the arts" and teaching, essays we have chosen are more focused on the relationships between teaching and particular arts. Hence the title of the book: *Art's Teachings, Teaching's Arts*. Together, these essays celebrate the intrinsic diversity of the arts and teaching because the authors did not see themselves as having to advocate for one or the other under the auspices of a unifying conception like "aesthetic experiencing" or "wide-awakeness." We see this as an advantage because the authors are able to highlight the uniqueness of each art form by means of its educational qualities; and, they are able to highlight the aesthetic qualities of teaching that otherwise go unobserved.

Moving beyond Egan, Eisner, and Greene, many of the authors do not take the perspective of mind, consciousness, creativity, or imagination, either with respect to the creation of a unique artwork or with respect to entering a unique artwork. Instead, they focus on how characteristically aesthetic and pedagogical patterns, rhythms, and structures traverse diverse spheres of activity, from the artist's studio to the dynamics of a elementary school classroom, in order to shape fundamental ways of being that are, in many respects, pre-conscious, pre-thematic, and collective. Essays in this collection move more strongly toward questions of affectivity, desire, perceptual disorientation, atmospheric/bluesy moods, and embodied forms of collective swarm intelligence (see also the work of Ellsworth 2005). We think that this difference in approach reflects an underlying theoretical disparity. Egan, Eisner and Greene remain human-centric in their approach to the arts and arts education. Generally speaking, their strategy has been to defend arts education as essential in the nourishment and cultivation of vital human faculties, or as assisting in the realization of such cherished political ideals as democracy and justice. As important as these approaches have been, they assume that it is the humans who control the art and not the other way around. Deliberation is the critical issue because it is the locus of human agency and creativity. An aim of this collection is to go beyond the humanist paradigm by asking such questions as: What if we

deconstructed the subject and object distinction and conceived of matter as agential and active? What if arts were channels for pre-thematic flows of desire, sensation, or affect that de-form the subject as much as form it? What if we were to conceive of our world as comprised of moods and rhythms that govern our decision-making process? What would become of art and politics on this view?

More often than not, politics in art and art education is associated with social justice projects (Dewhurst 2014). Such work focuses on overt interventions into particular political problems facing communities. This is vitally important work, but what we want to focus on is the space and time of education in relation to the arts and how overlaps between the two create new, uncanny spaces of dis- and re-orientation that defy pre-scripted social, political, or economic roles. Art is not political only when its content concerns political interests or overtly calls for the cultivation of specific civic virtues or activist interventions. Art is politically *dissensual* when it affects distributions of bodies, objects, roles, and functions of people and things in (potentially) unpredictable ways, thus recalibrating ratios between sense and non-sense, noise and voice, subject and object, pleasure and pain, constitutive and constituting powers, and so forth. Against the prescribed allotment of people, places, and things (each with their own logics, performance assessments, and internal rules of conduct), the essays collected here cross boundaries to inquire into in-disciplinary grey zones where new orientations open up that intervene in the policing of boundaries separating teaching (as a purportedly rational, generalizable science) from art (as a purportedly irrational, personal talent).

On this point, the collection as a whole is inspired by the writings of Rancière. Our sense, following Rancière, is that artistic categories like classical, modern and avant-garde, derive their intelligibility from an historical and progressive understanding of art. They rely on transitions or advancements—from two-dimensional painting to three-dimensional painting, from representative painting to non-representative painting and from realism to romanticism—that contrast new from old. Reifying these contrasts into periods, however, gives "only one meaning and direction in history" (Rancière 2004, p. 26) depriving the aesthetic of its radical potential to disrupt such categories and narrative frameworks. As a "regime of the sensible," the aesthetic is distinguished by its heterogeneity, which Rancière (2004) illustrates with the following examples: "a product identical with something not produced, knowledge transformed into non-knowledge, *logos* identical with pathos, the intention of the unintentional, etc." (p. 22). In other words, the aesthetic both is, and is not, itself.

The aesthetic calls into question any given distribution of the sensible by offering a rearrangement or redistribution of it. It repurposes what can be said, done and thought by disturbing, disrupting, or interrupting the meaningfully given. It is, to quote Rancière (2004), "the dream of an art that would transmit meanings in the form of a rupture with the very logic of meaningful situations" (p. 63). It produces a doubling effect: intelligibility and a profound sense of the uncanny. For these reasons, art—and we would add teaching—is to be seen as a political endeavor.

It is now possible to reiterate an earlier point using a different terminology. In the following essays, the contributors explore the role of aesthetic and pedagogical regimes in disrupting managerial and technological modes of framing. By definition, the disruption introduces indecision and is an occasion for rethinking how we distribute differences between art and education. How effective this disruption is will depend on the extent to which it reconfigures experience through new modes of narration, practice, and visibility.

1.3 Essays in This Volume

The essays in this collection are organized into two parts: "Art's Teaching" and "Teaching's Art." The essays in Part One focus on the educative influence of the different art forms. Responding to concerns that art education remains disembodied, depersonalized and depoliticized, the authors address such questions as: How and in what sense does *this* art form "teach" us? How can this art form be employed in classrooms to promote educational virtues like open-mindedness, heightened awareness, experiences of de-subjectification/collectivization, and/or critique? In answering these questions, the authors draw upon a diversity of theoretical frameworks: Giorgio Agamben's critical theory, Maurice Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology, Deweyan pragmatism, Lacanian psychoanalytic theory, and Marxist-inspired thinking. Together, they effectively recast the arts as active, disruptive and interrogatory; and, our involvement in them as embodied and (de) formative. While theoretically diverse, we would argue that when read together the essays focus on moments of aesthetic dissensus wherein perception is disoriented and reoriented toward that which would otherwise be cast out as "improper." The ever-increasing sense of the possibilities for aesthetic re-partitioning of the sensible is further heightened by our intentionally eclectic list of authors, which includes philosophers who are also practicing artists, practicing philosophers of art, and researchers/theorists of art education.

Before addressing the particular pedagogies of the arts, we begin our collection with an essay that paints a broad overview of aesthetic education as well as a warning concerning quick and easy attempts to instrumentalize or functionalize the arts and arts-based education. Ironically we enter the collection with an exit. John Baldacchino starts begins his "exit pedagogy" with a reflection on the eternal return of the essential paradoxes of aesthetic education. With a provocative twist, he wonders whether or not recent attempts to make art education "functional" (under multiple constructivist and pragmatic guises) are not a kind of Hegelian sublation of the didactic moment of Romantic *Bildung*. To then move beyond the problem of such didacticism, Baldacchino proposes a new notion of *Bildung* that resists any positivity and is decisively negative. Using Kundera's novel *Immorality* as a jumping off point, Baldacchino highlights forgetting as an educational "lesson" to be learned from the "exit pedagogy" of the arts—a pedagogy that cannot assure us or comfort us or provide us with functional solutions to problems of perception, self, and identity. For Baldacchino, this means that we learn nothing from art.

Rather, art offers us the experience of *unlearning* the familiar and conventional, and in this sense opens us to new utopian possibilities that, in themselves, are always contingent and uncertain memories of that which has not yet happened. In many ways, Baldacchino's general reflections on the aporias of aesthetics and on aesthetic education set the stage for the more particular investigations of visual arts, literature, music, and cinema which we present below. The following essays could be read as a response to Baldacchino's provocative thesis: Do we learn anything, in a positive sense, from the arts? If so what and how? Do different art forms offer different "lessons"?

The next essay begins with something that is common to art *and* education, namely natality. Natality is the capacity to bring that which is new and unforeseen into existence. With a focus on the avant-garde of the Parisian art-scene, Joris Vlieghe establishes an important distinction between creativity (as a psychological and personal process) and creation (which is impersonal and common event). He argues that education, like art, has made it increasingly difficult to acknowledge creation because of contemporary demands that it invest in the creative originality and uniqueness of each and every learner. This focus on the creative originality and uniqueness of the artist or learner, Vlieghe concludes, suffocates true newness.

In the next set of essays, Susan Verducci, Anne Keefe and René Arcilla explain how a particular art form—narrative, poetry and cinema respectively—educates perception to overcome perceptual blindness. In the first essay of the three, Verducci argues that if educators are to cultivate open-mindedness in themselves and their students, then they need to move from traditional notions of rationality to a more robust understanding of what it is to hold a belief. She artfully explores how our most fundamental beliefs are widely networked and emotionally charged, contributing to their invulnerability and the creation of perceptual blindness. Open-mindedness, Verducci argues, does not prohibit the holding of strong beliefs, but it does oblige individuals to become available to what she refers to as perceptual openings. She proposes that teachers use narratives as a curricular means of creating such perceptual openings: occasions that lead us to see and feel differently. Narratives expose us to a wide variety worldviews, give us practice in adopting another's point of view and enable us to view our own beliefs from the position of a spectator. Put simply, narratives provide the friction needed if individuals are to monitor and revise their own beliefs.

Keefe agrees with Verducci that art can cause us to see differently and is, for this reason, pedagogical. Keefe also moves beyond a traditional notion of rationality, arguing that the reading and writing of poetry are inherently bodily experiences. She claims, following Merleau-Ponty, that because perception is a bodily perspective, perceptual changes result in bodily changes. Put differently, the body gains new significance and reach by means of novel interactions. Keefe illustrates this point with an analysis of two examples of twentieth century ekphrastic poetry: Margaret Atwood's "Manet's Olympia" (1993) and three poems by Marianne Moore. Ekphrasis, she argues, teaches new and more complex ways of seeing, either by interfering with gendered traditions of the image, as in the case of Atwood, or by showing how not everything is disclosed to artistic representation, as in the

case of Moore. The struggle to genuinely look again involves an embrace of the poet's language—its sounds, rhythm and lyric form—as an evocation of the artistic experience. Keefe urges teachers to transform the teaching of poetry from the solely intellectual practice of exegesis to a phenomenological trust in sensory, embodied logic.

The last of the three papers on perception considers the "counter-cinema" of Jean-Pierre and Luc Dardenne in *Rosetta's Stone*. Rene Arcilla interprets the film as articulating a constructive response to our neoliberal predicament by depicting characters struggling to survive on the margins of society. The Dardenne's use the powerful cinematic medium—the actor's bodies are filmed from very close range—to deconstruct the fantasies which movies normally give rise. Contrary to society's ideological reassurances, *Rosetta's Stone* reveals that violence is violating and that the only way to come to a proper understanding of violation is to acknowledge our complicity in violence. Hardened by misfortune, the characters are surprised by how they feel after having hurt someone; they feel that they have violated another's need for recognition. The Dardenne's position us, the viewer, to recognize that we cannot avoid being corrupted by a culture of violence. Rather than providing an escape into fantasy, their films reveal a state of affairs that we would prefer not to see. Their aim, Arcilla concludes, is not to invite a cathartic expression of sympathy, but to realistically represent the existential and ethical struggles incurred by capitalism.

As with Arcilla, James Stillwaggon and David Jelinek turn toward film as a kind of public pedagogy—this time, a pedagogy of desire. Beginning with an overview of our recent fascination with teacher scandals, Stillwaggon and Jelinek argue that the real scandal is an underestimation of how school films educate students to desire the authoritative teacher and educate teachers to desire the desire of their students. Throughout their chapter, Stillwaggon and Jelinek suggest that film is the most powerful teacher of all, structuring the fantasy of education in both its positive (performative) and negative (transgressive) dimensions. Films such as *Election* and *Notes on a Scandal* demonstrate that when teachers attempt to realize fantasies of the "ideal teacher," the fantasies turn into nightmares where desires to connect with students lead to relationships outside the symbolic order of teaching (illicit sexual affairs). At the same time, Stillwaggon and Jelinek, in a dialectical move, also argue that such films can and do play a role in recognizing the potentially beneficial nature of the educational fantasy, one that orients desire toward a better version of the self.

jan jagodzinski also is concerned with the pedagogy of film. His chapter positions contemporary cinema within the broader socio-political context of screen culture, media saturation, and digitization. Given the rise of digital technologies, there is now more than ever a threat to what Deleuze and Guarttari refer to as the Outside. The Outside is essentially a nonanthropomorphic space and time prover-bially on the fringe of the human world of meaning and intentionality. Without this Outside, reality becomes nothing more than repetition without difference and the surplus or excess of the Outside is eclipsed for the continual play of simulacra across our many screens. This is the key threat posed by digitization which arts educators should be most concerned with. As an alternative, this chapter returns to

the question of film, and how film's pedagogy might retain a space and a time for the Outside. Importantly, jagodzinski folds together insights from Deleuze and Guattari and contemporary interest in the brain and neuro-images in order to posit a new, post-human desire that is affective and deterritorializing, pushing beyond boundaries of the control society of which digitization is but one symptom.

With Megan J. Laverty's paper we move from questions of perception, desire, and affective intensities to rhythm or the patterned and recurrent alternation of sound and silence that we find in music. She considers the broader existential significance of this phenomenon using Dewey's aesthetic philosophy. Laverty argues that if Dewey is right that (a) music exemplifies artfulness and (b) to live well is to live artfully, then an education in music—formal and informal—constitutes an education in how to live well. Artfulness, according to Dewey, involves the intelligent harmonizing of the precarious, novel and irregular with the settled, assured and uniform. Laverty explains what Dewey means by intelligent harmonization and contrasts it with those occasions when individuals act from enforced necessity, routine or blind impulse. Laverty offers an intrinsic justification for arts education that focuses on a quality not previously highlighted by Greene and others. Although clearly humanist, Laverty thereby aligns her with other post-humanist contributions by focusing on an iterative process constitutive of our material condition. The aim, as with so much of post-humanism, is not to control or direct this process in the interest of a *telos,* but to vibrate possibility.

In the spirit of Laverty's contribution, Alexander J. Means cautions against conceptions of the arts and arts education in terms of such non-instrumental capacities as imagination, innovation, and creativity. These are the core educational values of corporate-inspired and entrepreneur-led school reform; students must make, experiment, collaborate and question if they are to contribute to the "global knowledge economy." As the language suggests, the motivation is economic: imagination, innovation, and creativity are desirable commodities in light of their exchange value. Means proposes the creation of alternative value systems through engaging with what resists endless commodification, namely our fundamental commonality and equality. The aim, he argues, is to take seriously the idea that aesthetics and aesthetic education work to affirm and construct new forms of value rooted in the common. While aesthetic education may include the arts, it extends to the full range of human experience. Aesthetic education is communicative, community-building, and promises a new life for individuals. It is also, for these reasons, political. It disrupts and reconstructs the given orders of perception through creative acts. Thus, Means concludes that the genuinely aesthetic and the genuinely political are currently under threat; it would behoove us not to be seduced by educational discourse and policy which seems to pay homage to cherished virtues (such as creativity) without recognizing the larger context of capitalism which thrives on precisely these very same virtues.

Sarah Truman and Stephanie Springgay's contribution concludes Part One. As the title suggests, their analysis addresses the role of movement in art, pedagogy, and theory. They distinguish between absolute and relative movement and argue in favor of the former. Relative movement is symptomatic of the Eurocentric,

humanist anthropomorphic perspective because it conceives of movement as human-organized and human-controlled. In an inversion of hierarchies, absolute movement conceives of matter as movement; matter is vital, agential, and endlessly differentiating. The movement is intensive, flowing, and affective. When movement is conceived as absolute, pedagogy becomes emergent. To show that absolute movement can help us re-imagine materialist and post-humanist research-creation methodologies—a complex intersection of art, theory, and research—Truman and Springgay analyze Hazel Meyer's first artist-residency in a public secondary school in Toronto as an instance of absolute movement or swarming. In Meyer's work, art and pedagogy are political in the sense that they are dynamic; they involve movement; they disrupt objectification. The dynamic movement is experienced as an ecology of shifting flows and unpredictable foldings.

Truman and Springgay's contribution nicely segues into part two of the collection. Schools should not seek to expose students to either art, politics, or political art in the interest of emancipating them from their conventionality or ignorance. Instead, schools should aim to involve students in such dynamic swarming with its shifting intensity and immanence. Truman and Springgay remind us that art and pedagogy are not instrumental for a form of life; nor do they instantiate an idealized form of life. They themselves are forms of life in the making. We forget this at our own peril.

The second half of the collection moves from the teachings offered by various art forms to the art/craft of teaching itself. Citing Rancière (2010), we would argue that each essay attempts to understand the aesthetic unconscious of teaching. Just as psychoanalysis drew upon important developments in aesthetics in order to theorize its own practice, so too our authors argue that teaching draws upon various artistic lineages in order to become a craft with its own rhythms, gestures, and curatorial dimensions. In the opening chapter, Tyson E. Lewis argues for a new understanding of the art of teaching beyond what Agamben refers to as the ontology of effectiveness. Taking as his starting point the current terrain of educational discourse and practice, Lewis criticizes the dominance of learning as a symptom of this modern ontology that conflates potentiality and actuality, being and doing. The problem with effectiveness is that it leaves no ontological ground for impotentiality (the ability not to be this or that). And for Agamben, this means that there is equally no place in effectiveness for freedom. But Lewis also goes one step further and argues that even the most ardent critic of learning, Gert Biesta, reproduces the ontology of effectiveness. Through a careful reading of Biesta's work, Lewis discovers the need to reinvent teaching—and teacher education in particular—beyond both *poiesis* and *praxis*. What is called for here is a form of teaching that does not erase impotentiality but rather embraces it. To do so means understanding the gestures of the teacher as theatrical gestures, and thus beautiful.

The next two essays in this section focus on the musicality of teaching which interrupts the current emphasis on "data driven" technique and quantifiable assessments. Eduardo Duarte positions his contribution in relation to his own teaching practice, his scholarly interests in originary thinking, and his expertise in radio programming. The emerging phenomenology of education

focuses on learning by jamming. As a rearticulation of Aristotle's famous adage that we learn by doing, Duarte shifts registers to the aesthetic, emphasizing the unique and constitutive relation between music and teaching and learning. While different kinds of music are possible in a classroom, Duarte focuses on improvisational jamming. The educational jam session is, according to Duarte, a form of collective, improvisational dialogue that is phenomenologically akin to a free jazz ensemble. In both cases, jamming opens up a kairological time where the chronology of the everyday is suspended. Through the kairos of jamming, participants are moved outside of themselves into new possibilities existing in surplus of their individual wills, intentions, or assumed "intellectual" powers. The result is a de-subjectification of each participant and his or her presumed identity as this or that kind of learner. The de-subjectification experienced through jamming together opens up unforeseen potentialities to think and be differently than before. The role of the teacher here is that of the "conductor" who maintains the openness to potentiality in the jam. Duarte's prime example of one such conductor is the music making Socrates prized by Nietzsche in *The Birth of Tragedy*. On Duarte's reading, Socrates emerges as a conductor not just of any dialogue but of aporetic dialogue that sustains open-ended questioning by continually circling back upon itself. If measurable outcomes cannot be determined by such aporetic jam sessions, this does not mean that nothing is achieved. While escaping the exactitude of quantifiable scales of value found in educational assessment today, Duarte is keen to point to the work of the jam: the constitution of a community existing in the unity of difference where each contributes to the whole but in a singularly irreducible way. As such, jamming discloses another educational logic beyond the learning-testing regime of contemporary standardization, and its aporetic-operatic musicality opens education back up to the potentialities of a radical form of multicultural polyvocality.

In some ways, Sam Rocha's contribution is in dialogue with Duarte's but with a bluesy, tragic dimension added into the mix. Jazz, like education, faces a crisis: technocratic reductionism. Against this trend, Rocha makes an impassioned, phenomenologically rich plea for a return to the shared blue note that binds the two together as tragic art forms. Embodying the notion of jazzhop in the very form of the essay, Rocha rhythmically moves from John Coltrane and Miles Davis to canonical academic figures such as William James and Leo Tolstoy to novelist Toni Morrison in order to sensitize the ear of the reader to the undercurrent of the blue note that passes through multiple sonic channels, contexts, and voices both directly and indirectly implicated in educational projects. In all cases, what emerges is a shifting of musical registers from singing—which might be technically proficient according to set scales of excellence—to *sanging*—which recovers the blue note in the voice and returns the art of making music to its soulful, tragic center. But Rocha's emphasis on the tragic should not be read as a lament or a moment of despair. Quite the contrary. The tragedy of the blues is deeply spiritual, aesthetic, and full of profound love—a love that reigns supreme in the face of multiple, unheard-of obstacles facing teachers in schools today.

With his contribution, David Granger addresses the intimate interdependence of mind and body in order to call for a new kind of embodied anti-racist pedagogy.

He introduces analytic somaesthetics as the examination of the experiential dimension of the lived body that is feeling, sentient, and purposive. Such an examination discloses how ideologies of domination are covertly materialized in and maintained by norms of somatic or bodily behavior that remain largely inaccessible to conscious processes. Following Michel Foucault and others, Granger explains that the body is a malleable site for inscribing social power and the struggle to resist such inscription. Just as our bodies express prevailing ideologies, they are also a means of protest, resistance, and performative transgression. Granger focuses on racist somatic norms, including: avoidance of eye contact, maintenance of physical distance, construction of muscles, and alterations in breathing. He argues that, having eluded critical attention, racist somatic norms trigger, reinforce, and even heighten oppressive or discriminatory behaviors in our encounters with racial "others." Having explained why "rationalist" approaches to racism prove ineffective, Granger recommends that educators give students an opportunity to monitor and scrutinize their embodied habits—the artifacts of biopolitics—with a view to interrupting and transforming them. In heightening student awareness of their embodiedness and addressing the visceral logic of prejudice, teachers will artfully transform somaesthetics into a tool of anti-racist education.

Finally, Claudia Ruitenburg shifts from the aural dimensions of education to the visual with her chapter on curating. Today in a media-saturated landscape wherein students are barraged by any number of visual cues, Ruitenburg calls for a "curatorial turn" in education that will help students understand the need to make discriminating, critical, and creative choices in how they organize their visual worlds. For Ruitenburg, curating is not simply collecting. Rather it is the art of selecting and ordering. In this sense, it is always already a constitutive facet of teaching, which is a craft devoted in part to the careful selection and presentation of various materials. But Ruitenburg does not simply want to call attention to this as-of-yet underappreciated dimension of the art of teaching. In addition, she argues that now more than ever, teachers should thematize and make explicit their curatorial roles for three reasons. As the mediatized world of images often verges on disintegration and disconnection curating has not simply become a facet of life online but also a pressing necessity for navigating this complex terrain. Second, because teachers are always already selecting, framing, ordering, and presenting materials, it is important for them to become critical of these implicit decisions and the criteria informing their various selection processes. Finally, a curatorial turn is urgent precisely because of the need to understand the relation between selecting, organizing, and producing publics. Fragmentation is endemic in postmodern culture. Educators and curators alike share a unique role in addressing the problematic of isolation through the fostering of publics, or, as Ruitenburg seems to suggest, fostering the addressability necessary to enter publics.

Drawing on this final suggestion, we would like to conclude with a simple observation: editing a book is a curatorial experience in its own right. And, like curators in museums or classrooms, we find ourselves calling into being a peculiar counter-public: one that is concerned with the work of craft and the craft of work. While this public has no name as of yet (and indeed might be a multiplicity in its

own right), by bringing together philosophers, poets, and art educators we hope to call forth those who share a certain love of and sensitivity toward what is *beautiful* when education is aligned with craft. Although, as Ruitenburg argues, there is never any guarantee that a given public or counter-public will form, the gesture of selecting, organizing, and presenting is one that opens up a time and place for potential aesthetic publics to come together, invent new, poetic names for themselves, experience the Outside of what it means to be human, jam with each other, find new sensual horizons beyond teaching to the test, fall into groovy rhythms, get swept up in absolute movement, and most of all enjoy the strange music, poetry, images that arise when publics swarm.

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Part I
Art's Teachings

Chapter 2
Art's Foreignness as an "Exit Pedagogy"

John Baldacchino

> *The tables stood close together, and it was obvious even through the glass that along with the food, the guests must be swallowing the smell of their neighbours' perspiration. A wave of ugliness, visual, olfactory, and gustatory (...) hit [Agnes] in the face with such force that she turned away, determined to find some other place to satisfy her hunger.*
>
> — Milan Kundera (1991, 22)

In this passage from his novel *Immortality*, Milan Kundera does not depict an experience of beauty but its very rejection. Yet Agnes's feeling of disgust firmly remains within the realms of an aesthetic experience in that it is an experience of perception, which as a definition of aesthetics was shunned when the Romantics conflated it with *beauty*.

Kundera presents a picture of Agnes's feeling of disgust towards others. To be precise, Agnes finds the sight of other people eating disgusting because she also attributes their eating with sweating. We can object to Agnes's judgement and we can disagree with her perception. However we have to agree that Agnes nonetheless had an aesthetic experience.

2.1 Beauty's Polity

The Romantic turn toward aesthetic education was not exactly unique though its insistence on recruiting aesthetics into a didactic project that was characterised by a notion of beauty was somewhat historical. Throughout its history, beauty as a concept was constantly redefined in ever-changing practical and intellectual contexts, yet in the Romantic Period the dynamic changed and this had serious political consequences.

As the Romantics faced their own private and institutional predicaments, the beautiful increasingly became an integral part of *judgement*, defined by Kant as that "faculty of thinking the particular as contained under the Universal" (1974, 17).

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Unlike theological, cultural, or artistic aesthetics, philosophical aesthetics invested beauty with enough critical and political weight that it was deemed effective enough to educate humankind into bridging over the perceived chasm between the grammars of metaphysics and morality, the true and the good.

As we all know, in the Romantics, another Greek concept—that of *kalokagathia* (which literally translates as *the-beautiful-and-the-good*)—found a somewhat strange revival. However, beyond the functional implication of comportment within the practical parameters of the Greek city-state, the Romantics approached the-beautiful-and-the-good as an aesthetic education with stronger universalistic ambitions. These ambitions now belonged to the art of government, which meant that leading the youth out of the predicament of the age was to be extended beyond good citizenship or fitting comportment.

So while it always seems, at least from a literary and artistic point of view, that the newly found Romantic *kalokagathia* was a way of converging an ethical imagination with a newly articulated discipline of aesthetics, let us not entertain any illusions. In its newly found value, beauty was not meant to simply fulfil a private role or the leisurely pursuits of a *schôle*—as many Romantics would have their contemporaries believe. Rather, the politics of the Romantic view of aesthetic education came from the terms by which it wedded the imaginary of beauty with that of qualified power.

This approach to *kalokagathia* was intrinsic to specific hierarchies and their preservation, and there are no coincidences in the fact that while Schiller may have followed custom, in identifying a prominent politician like the Danish Prince Friedrich Christian to whom to dedicate his *Aesthetic Letters*, in Letter II, he clearly states his real intentions behind what he saw as an educational imperative for an aesthetic entrance into the art—but more so the *tékhne*—of the polity:

> I hope that I shall succeed in convincing you that this matter of art is less foreign to the needs than to the tastes of our age; nay, that, to arrive at a solution even in the political problem, the road of aesthetics must be pursued, because it is through beauty that we arrive at freedom. But I cannot carry out this proof without my bringing to your remembrance the principles by which the reason is guided in political legislation. (Schiller 1967, §II)

So while the impression that we have of these radical aesthetes who rejected the status quo is not as misleading as we think, we also know that what their politics have sown was never innocent, nor delectably idealistic. As our own modernity—by which I mean our own political actuality—confirms, an aesthetic education cuts both ways especially when it results in an aestheticization of politics, where one would quickly realise how, far from innocent, the political implications of an aesthetic education, if uncritiqued, could be dangerous.

2.2   Normalised (and Deadly) Phenomena

This begins to explain Georg Lukács's notable discomfort with the romantic concept of *kalokagathia*. Lukács argued that the Romantics found themselves sustaining constructs of irrationalism that he perceived as giving way to fascism.

This is especially pronounced in his book *The Destruction of Reason* (Lukács 1980), which many, critics and admirers alike, often dismiss as a problematic work. However even when other critical theorists like Adorno would not go along with Lukács's critique of Romanticism, they have amply argued and shown how this offspring of the Enlightenment's equivocation over politics and aesthetics, uniquely entered a state of affairs that remains problematic to this day (see Adorno et al. 2002). Perhaps most of all, it was another close fellow traveller in the critical theoretical tradition, Walter Benjamin, who saw something deadly in what he called "the introduction of aesthetics into political life," where this knotty state of affairs was amply articulated.

In what are perhaps the two most widely read and cited essays by Benjamin, we are reminded how fascism and aesthetics are woven into an illusive ritual of normalisation, where the masses are given a "chance to express themselves," an expression that makes them complicit with their own oppression.

> Fascism attempts to organize the newly created proletarian masses without affecting the property structure which the masses strive to eliminate. Fascism sees its salvation in giving these masses not their right, but instead *a chance to express themselves*. The masses have a right to change property relations; Fascism *seeks to give them an expression* while preserving property. The logical result of Fascism is the introduction of aesthetics into political life. (Benjamin 1968a, 251 emphases added)

The idea of how this entered a form of normalisation is found in his eighth thesis on the philosophy of history, which reads as follows:

> One reason why Fascism has a chance is that in the name of progress its opponents treat it as a historical norm. The current amazement that the things we are experiencing are 'still' possible in the twentieth century is *not* philosophical. This amazement is not the beginning of knowledge—unless it is the knowledge that the view of history which gives rise to it is untenable. (Benjamin 1968b, 257)

In the reinvention of beauty as a moral-political imaginary, it soon became evident that the aesthetic investment in education implied a concrete mechanism for a moral polity in terms of what was determined to be beautiful by specific political ends. In this pedagogical investment, beauty takes the upper hand in aesthetics and leaves the notion of an experience of perception behind. This is where aesthetics becomes an instrument of manipulation, a form of expression that gives the illusion of change and democracy, while leaving everything as it is and in turn reinforces the hierarchies that it serves.

These hierarchies reinforce a high degree of selectivity, which I would regard as functional and instrumental as the investment of the arts in education remains today. By selectivity I do not mean the engineering of ability, as we find in tripartite systems of education. What I mean by selectivity is the discrimination of feelings and experiences that in terms of a pedagogical aesthetics would imply a necessarily uncritical concordance with specific assumptions of knowing and being.

Far from an experience of perception, aesthetics has come to represent a hierarchy of moral conduct that becomes pedagogically intrinsic to a constructivist take on education, irrespective of what this construction is premised upon—be it conservative, progressive, liberal or even radical.

2.3   A Didactic *Bildung* and a Laboured Notion

From the many stories that I have read and in turn told about aesthetics, what holds most relevance here is a pedagogical story. Thus starting with Schiller, it was more or less evident that he made it his business to articulate an aesthetic experience which, albeit playful and some would even say open-ended, was meant to reinforce the desires of *Bildung*.

In his essay "Hegel on Education" Allen Wood explains that, "[s]ince the child is already essentially or in itself a rational being, the entire process of *Bildung* is fundamentally an inner or *self-directed* activity, never merely a process of conditioning through environmental stimuli, or the accumulation of information presented by experience" (1998, 301).

This Hegelian take on *Bildung* is related, though different from, Novalis's claim that "all education (*Bildung*) leads to nothing else than what one can call freedom, although this should not designate a mere concept but a creative ground of all existence" (Beiser 1998, 293).

Broadly speaking *Bildung* stands for education. However here education is quite extended and heavy with meanings. In its evolution *Bildung* is articulated as a *cultural-formative* event by which we are prompted to realize—*and* to mediate—a perception of an inner world that confronts itself with the outer practiced world (See Siljander et al. 2012; Baldacchino 2014, 54–56; Beiser 1998; Wood 1998). This kind of education, this *Bildung*, is more so warranted whenever we pose an ethical question which finds itself framed within the wider, totalizing horizon of what must also be true and beautiful.

While recognizing the rupture, the sense of "anxiety" and the "storm" that they saw as being characteristic of their age, the Romantics felt that something radical must be done. In their literary, philosophical, artistic and political work there seems to be a sense of obligation. They felt prompted to mend or at best make amends through an aesthetic education—indeed a special kind of *Bildung*—that was neither neutral nor simply delectable. It had to be an aesthetic education that facilitated mediation, as understood through the implements of critique and judgement. Yet while I see the rupture I would still see the Romantic sense of aesthetic education as being positively construed, notwithstanding the recognition of the non-identitarian character of the dialectic that brought about this rupture in the first place.

So here I pose a question to myself and ask whether the Romantic excuse for aesthetic education is still the same excuse that we make in the earlier part of the twenty-first century—even when we often speak in different tongues while still battling over the notion of being modernist or post-modernist, given that we have come to appreciate that our perception of history seems to have shifted from one which is characterised by a dialectic to a rather strange, contiguous relationship which is undercut by an asymptotic state of affairs.

I also wonder whether the same excuse keeps recurring and returning to us because we seem to enjoy the didactic side of *Bildung* even when we know (or perhaps we choose to forget) that a few hundred years ago Hegel was already warning us against such a self-induced comfort. As he famously declares in his

Introduction to the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, "the road can therefore be regarded as the pathway of doubt, or more precisely as the way of despair." This is because what happens on this road "is not what is ordinarily understood when the word 'doubt' is used" but a realisation that "this path is the conscious insight into the untruth of phenomenal knowledge, for which the supreme reality is what is in truth only the unrealized Notion" (Hegel 1977, 49–50).

Let us not forget that in Hegel's own definition, "the Notion is the principle of freedom, the power of substance self-realized" (Hegel 1989, §160, 223). So the dilemma for us is how the doubt by which we realize that this freedom is "unrealized," could begin to restore or add anything to this self-realized freedom.

2.4   Calling for an Excuse

Back on the grounds of our own attempts to engage with the practice of this doubt and the educative assumption of an aesthetic experience, we must ask whether this calls for an excuse.

In an aesthetic experience as we have come to know it, we would have to ask whether the excuse that we bring up has to do with avoiding the predicament which for some would embody the implications of absolute freedom through such possibilities; while for others it comes to represent the opposite, i.e. the necessity of education as the moment of *doubt* by which we can state the incompleteness of this kind of freedom.

Put another way, the question is very simple: Do freedom and intelligence call for the realization of a fulfilled state of affairs? Or does a concept of education rely on a continuous state of doubt? And would this state of doubt reveal that freedom is *unrealized*, where contrary to Hegel's scheme of things, we assume and take a pragmatic turn—not dissimilar from what Dewey does vis-à-vis Hegel—and declare that freedom is in fact the realization that there is no closure to anything we do?

This prompts two classic questions that still haunt education: (a) should education be invested in the reassurances of a constructivist stance? In other words, should the politics of education amount to a struggle to establish viable forms of emancipation and inclusion, where things would add up, enact, and reassure us in such won freedoms? Or (b) should we renounce the desire to secure the certainties of emancipation?

However beyond this imposed choice, could one seek to secure possibilities that would never presume to construct or "mend" anything, but would allow us to make sense of the contingency by which education becomes an open-ended horizon of freedom and intelligence?

This leads to a third question: (c) what shape does an excuse for education take, as it warrants an aesthetic imaginary that is heavily invested in an educational construct that seeks to avoid incompleteness while at the same time finds itself incapable of resolving its predicament by dint of the artificial pairing that is often presented between genius and creativity, nature and experience, and other "common sense" assumptions?

2.5   Remembering to Forget?

Kundera gives us a very strange solution. Agnes had to survive her aesthetic experience of the ugly and the disgusting by constantly remembering to forget. In a flower aptly called "forget-me-not" she sought a referent of beauty that would limit her aesthetic experience to what looks and smells nice. In other words, Kundera wants Agnes to engage in a willed form of forgetfulness by making herself *unforget*.

> She said to herself: when once the onslaught of ugliness became completely unbearable, she would go to the florist and buy a forget-me-not, a slender stalk with miniature blue flowers. She would go out into the street holding the flower before her eyes, staring at it tenaciously so as to see only that single beautiful blue point, to see it as the last thing she wanted to preserve for herself from a world she had ceased to love. She would walk like that through the streets of Paris, she would soon become a familiar sight, children would run after her, laugh at her, throw things at her and all Paris would call her: *the crazy woman with the forget-me-not* . . . (Kundera 1991, 22)

Maybe Agnes is operating *Bildung* as it should be, as a negation of what is, as an exit from the whereabouts of being and knowing. Maybe from Agnes's experience we take a Hegelian approach to *Bildung*, rather than a Romantic one. Or is she reinforcing the notion that an aesthetic experience is so personal that any attempt to mediate it would have to be enforced on others? When all is said and done what is to Agnes a disgusting scene, becomes a warm and soulful meal to those who'd prefer to dig into a beef burger than run around Paris staring at a *forget-me-not* in their hands.

As I continue to return to Plato's beautiful concept of anamnesis and the mythical desires that it has always promised (granted that we seek to remember in order to re-learn); I am also mindful that "not to forget" warrants that we do the opposite—*forget*!

2.6   "Quantitative Borders" and Art's Foreignness

> Suddenly frightened by her hatred [towards a younger lady in the sauna of her gym] [Agnes] said to herself: the world is at some sort of border; if it is crossed everything will turn to madness: people will walk the streets holding forget-me-nots or kill one another on sight. And it will take very little for the glass to overflow, perhaps just one drop: perhaps just one car too many, or one person, or one decibel. *There is a certain quantitative border that must not be crossed*, yet no one stands guard over it and perhaps no one even realizes that it exists. (Kundera 1991, 23)

Confronted by a work of art, where one is lost in unfamiliarity and foreignness, the border that one crosses is *quantative* enough to induce a pain and fright from an acute sense of insecurity. Painful insecurity tends to entirely negate the *situatedness* by which, Merleau-Ponty (1989) argues, we make sense of the world. This also negates the situatedness by which, Maxine Greene (2000) states, we can educate ourselves and each other.

Yet while being overwhelmed by the quantity of occurrences that disturb or block a sense of being situated, as one begins to engage with the foreign and the unfamiliar in a work of art, the distinctions that we often assume to be set firmly between quality and quantity become irrelevant. Thus as we speak of borders—that could be as physical as they could be cultural or mental—we could articulate this in quantitative terms, perhaps in terms of an infinite occurrence by which the "foreign" begins to assume a different meaning.

Somehow, this description becomes insufficient and it leaves in us what Kant, in his attempted articulation of the Sublime, calls a "want of accordance" which gives us a feeling of pain but also a sense of pleasure:

> The feeling of the Sublime is therefore *a feeling of pain*, arising from the want of accordance between the aesthetical estimation of magnitude formed by the Imagination and the estimation of the same formed by Reason. There is at the same time *a pleasure thus excited*, arising from the correspondence with rational Ideas of this very judgement of the inadequacy of our greatest faculty of Sense; in so far as it is a law for us to strive after these Ideas. (Kant 1974, §27, 119–120 emphases added)

Confronted by a work of art that makes one feel foreign is not different from being in a city like Beijing where, with no knowledge of Cantonese or Mandarin, one becomes illiterate in an instance and where even images would not convey the same meaning that one assumes in a world that takes semiotic globalisation for granted.

This recalls Kant's concepts of mathematical and aesthetic magnitude and how they could define foreignness as this exerts in the foreigner a feeling of pain and pleasure. Being a foreigner in a city like Beijing, one begins to get an inkling where one could locate the sublime. Take for instance a tall building or a pyramid, which prompts one to mathematically guess the quantity of stones in the structure as well as their weight and the work that it took to make them, while at the same, the structure asks us to take a step back and engage with the huge presence itself as a magnitude.

As a foreigner confronted by a work of art or as a new visitor to Beijing, one could understand how the quantitative becomes qualitative, and vice-versa; while at the same time one begins to speculate and generate new approaches to the world that were neither qualitative nor quantitative.

In this move between the mathematically and the dynamically sublime we find ourselves wondering whether a space "in between" could ever allow us to be at home with this experience of perception as an aesthetic experience. It is an experience that seems to emerge from a clash, rather than a convergence, between aesthetic and mathematical estimates. Such estimates leave us lost between the incompatibility for which we could find a reason, and for which some would still insist that we retain one measure. Yet with or without a universal measure, to remain "in between" simply overwhelms and confuses us.

This sheer sense of feeling lost prompts the viewer to take an exit from the comfort of certainty and familiarity. This exit is an attempt to live by unlearning the

familiar and the certain—in other words, by unlearning both the borders of quality and those of quantity.

2.7 Art's Memory of a Future

Here we find ourselves confronted by several questions. Upon exiting, could we ever begin to understand something from the *outside*? Why should foreignness guarantee the unlearning of experiences by which we come to belong? Does one need to reject a sense of belonging in order to engage with a world that is mostly marked by contingency?

Here I propose that we begin to approach the sense of belonging in reverse—indeed to *invert* belonging. By inverting belonging we could regard the sense of belonging as Agnes chose to hold a forget-me-not in order to forget her existential crises. By now we know that to hold a forget-me-not is to forget and unlearn the necessities that have denied us the ability to appreciate, live and even survive contingency.

To embrace contingency as a radical break from certainty, one begins to qualify and diversify the assumption of truth itself and indeed take the leap by which we enter what Lukács (1971) calls, "art's 'special' world" which, we could add, is almost always a contingent and unfamiliar world. By entering art's 'special' world, we give ourselves the opportunity to engage with a world marked by the peculiar senses that are gained from a recognition of particularity and its contingent state.

As I have argued elsewhere, I would regard this world as an *agôn* extended over a wider horizon that leaves behind the limitation of an enclosed ground (Baldacchino 2012). Through art's *agôn* men and women gain a vantage point, where as wilful participants in the continuous dispute that is art, they recognise knowledge as a form of making. Vico (1953, 248–249) rightly argues that making articulates knowledge. Knowledge is the privilege we gain by making, and by which we claim new grounds as *beings that make*. To the faculty of *making* one must add that of *unlearning*.

What was discussed above is enough to confirm that when we discuss art and education we need to bear in mind the immediate paradox that emerges between them. To enter this paradox in the milieu of aesthetic education would open other dimensions that cannot be simply subsumed in one notion.

In doing art we hold truth as a *memory that is not yet realized*. This entertains a high degree of peculiarity that is premised on the plurality of particulars by which art comes about as a form of making. I would call this a "memory" because we are always bound to attach it to a strong sense of belonging: we approach it with nostalgia, a desire to "come back home."

With nostalgia asserted as a form of homecoming, the memory by which truth in art looks at the future allows us to speak of truth as *that-which-has-not-yet-happened*. This "memory" remains relative, indeed contingent upon, a whole raft of conditions. However as a *memory* of a future, as a utopia that may or may not

happen, this approach to truth has one certainty and one truth-value: its own uncertainty.

But what is the use of a desired memory of *what-is-to-come* as a desired assumption of *what-might-be-possible* but could well not happen at all?

2.8   Avant-Nostalgia and Art's Disposition

Bearing in mind that only art can facilitate this form of thinking, it is easier to see how the human desire for a future meaning is invested with a nostalgic puzzle; a desire prompted by our ambitions, dreams and teleological projects. This nostalgia is a constructed memory of what we yearn for. So just like an inverted belonging, this is a nostalgia that works in reverse.

This is what I mean by *avant-nostalgia*. The avant-nostalgic invariably belongs to any individual who yearns for an intimate meaning with the relative nature of space and time (Baldacchino 2002, 46–49). However, as we speak of space and time we also need to bear in mind that while Galileo challenged and ultimately beat the certainty of a geocentric universe, Einstein set us apart from those a priori assumptions by which we have hitherto assumed to approach the notions of space and time. What we're left with is an internalised desire towards certainty that is consciously confronted by the contingency that shapes us and by which we in turn shape the world.

While this sounds pretty hopeless, it retains an intimacy that belongs to us, and it is what makes us both human and inhuman. So while we nurture the intimate desire of certainty as free and intelligent individuals on the plane of the human and the real, we can only entertain a reversed sense of belonging that is always marked by a sense of universal singularity through which we take on the responsibility of solidarity.

Solidarity is always dissuaded and besieged by the fascist dismissal of difference. This dismissal is partly nurtured on the pain that we often feel from the want of accordance, which rationally we misplace on a rejection of difference and contingency.

To fulfil our responsibility of solidarity we cannot simply take refuge in the truth of the walled polis, but we have to accept the contingent truths of the human whose avant-nostalgic memories prompt us to constantly unlearn and forget the moral-aesthetic constructs by which we are made to belong. In unlearning, and in this disposition towards an exit pedagogy, we would recognise what is hidden behind the reassurances offered to us in the school, the media, parliament, church and the market.

2.9   Kundera's Excuse?

A pedagogy of exit that sustains or comes about through unlearning and a sense of inverted belonging could reveal a peculiar kind of pedagogical immanence in Kundera's work—although here, I would prefer to assume how this immanence is revealed as yet another *excuse* rather than an affirmation of learning or teaching through the arts.

Kundera's *Immortality* provides—perhaps by accident or perhaps intentionally—a situatedness that ties itself to an aesthetic experience from which one withdraws. Thus for Agnes's sister Laura, "vomiting was not [her] truth but her poetry: a metaphor, or lyrical image of pain and disgust" (Kundera 1991, 108). In Kundera's *excuse*—if one could call it that—everything appears to invert what is *seen*. What is seen is an image that is in no way neutral or subjective. What is seen is systematically expected to be seen. Custom, convenience and habit have schooled us to see what we expect to see and in turn look like we are supposed to look. This is how we are expected to belong, as gradually, the expectations have been designed, at least according to constructivist assumptions, to teach us what to *learn* about the world. Yet Kundera sees through this constructivist utopia, and instead reveals what the dystopian implications of its construction really are:

> The word *change*, so dear to our Europe, has been given a new meaning: it no longer means *a new stage of coherent development* (as understood by Vico, Hegel or Marx), but *a shift from one side to another*, from back to front, from the back to the left, from the left to the front (as understood by designers dreaming up the fashion for the next season). (Kundera 1991, 129)

In this awareness of how "imagologues" decide to construct the world and teach us what the walls should look like, or how we should react to the world, and what progress should mean, Kundera decides to leave out reality by inhabiting the world from outside.

In his political critique, he moves out, indeed he appears to exit altogether, to air a subtle yet strong critique of oppression. Yet while remaining outside, he claims the world from within the deepest possible intimacies that the body could convey. In his classic *The Unbearable Lightness of Being* oppression is entangled with the most intimate and embodied experiences of a doctor who decides to move out while remaining intimate with the mechanism by which the State and the body partake of a synchronous desire. This leaves the reader in total ambiguity; whereas one is attracted to this embodied erotically expressed sense of belonging, one is immediately thrown back with disgust and urged to leave the scene and with it, the polity.

The trope of disgust as instruments of a political-aesthetic 'education' are everywhere to be *seen* in the intimacy through which *Immortality* unfolds a narrative that resists the image and seeks to forget by reminding itself who and what one might be or become:

> Just imagine living in a world without mirrors. You'd dream about your face and imagine it as an outer reflection of what is inside you. And then, when you reached forty, someone would put a mirror before you for the first time in your life. Imagine your fright! You'd see

the face of a stranger. And you'd know quite clearly what you are unable to grasp: your face is not you. (Kundera 1991, 35)

How could this inability to grasp what one never knew—one's own face—be a moment of learning what one may or may not be? Evidently this is impossible, even though some would argue that this remains inevitable. Is the face a moment by which one inverts one's assumed belonging and changes the parameters by which one situates the self in relation to what it may or may not look like?

This is where I find in Kundera a fundamental challenge to any constructivist assumption of aesthetic education. In and of itself, an aesthetics that "teaches" is challenged by the expectancies through which it finds itself invested. Like learning, this teaching expectancy fails to provide anything except a reinforced narrative that bears no resemblance to the plurality of truths by which one thinks and constructs one's self; and where the truths by which we are supposedly taught to remedy this forgetfulness remain contingent and ultimately beholden to someone else's whims.

2.10 The Forgetful Dispositions of Art's Unlearning

Rather than try to tie all the lose ends with which we're left in this rather strange twist on the story of aesthetic education, here I want to sum up what I wanted to convey in this essay, hoping that it can lead this discussion further:

I. Beyond its meaning of an experience of perception, aesthetics represents a hierarchy of moral conduct that becomes intrinsic to a constructivist take on education.

II. This presents a dilemma that warrants an excuse, which in education becomes manifest in the concept of *Bildung*. This seems to have shifted from an education that is characterised by a dialectic to a rather strange, contiguous relationship which is undercut by an asymptotic state of affairs.

III. The concept of *Bildung*, in its various forms, prompts three questions for education: (a) Should education be invested in the reassurances of a constructivist stance? (b) Should we renounce the desire to secure the certainties of emancipation to make sense of the contingency by which education becomes an open-ended horizon of freedom and intelligence? (c) What shape does the excuse of education take as it warrants an aesthetic imaginary that is heavily invested in contingency?

IV. We make and do art to articulate foreignness. This also prompts one's partaking of foreignness as a foreigner by taking one's exit from the comfort of certainty and familiarity, and by attempting to unlearn both the borders of quality and those of quantity.

V. Art and education prompt an immediate paradox that provides several opportunities: (i) Because art is a form of knowing through making, it can *invert* our sense of belonging by which our teleological projects become a nostalgic disposition towards the world projected by the speculative possibilities of

what is yet-to-come. (ii) In what is yet-to-come, art-making is *avant-nostalgic* in that it chooses to exit the certainties of a walled polity that only seeks to emancipate those on the inside while it rejects those that it deems to be outside. (iii) Pedagogically speaking, this is articulated by art as unlearning in whose disposition towards an *exit pedagogy* we seek to deconstruct the deadly reassurances of that consented common sense by which the school, culture, government, creed and the market have continued to frustrate our desire to engage freely and intelligently in a socially just and democratic community.

It seems to follow that systems of polity, systems of creed, systems of fact or fiction, systems of certainty—all and without exception—have oppressed anyone who questioned them. Given this, humans would therefore run for the refuge of the memory of a future by which they do art as a way of knowing the world and themselves. This leaves me, as a human being amongst other human beings, with no choice but to doubt publicly, in front of everyone, and declare that I acknowledge everyone and that the moral axiom of my life must be to strive to doubt and reject that I am or could ever be the last human. In doing this, I might begin to understand how we as humans can live together without falling prey to the temptation of certainty and without excluding each other.

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Chapter 3
A *Poietic* Force That Belongs to No One: Reflections on Art and Education from an Agambenian Perspective

Joris Vlieghe

3.1 Art, Education and the Capacity for Producing Newness

There are many good reasons why setting up a dialogue between the world of art and the realm of education can be productive. For instance, the profession of the educator/teacher has often been compared with the work of the artist: this is clear when we consider the typically *modern* idea of defining education as *Bildung* (in the German context at least), which literally means that the child or student gets 'formed' or 'shaped', whilst at the same time – like the skilled sculptor – the teacher has to respect the particular qualities of the 'material' he or she has to work with. In *pre-modern* times, this link was perhaps even more clear, as any educated person was supposed to be initiated in the 'artes liberales' – the various branches of learning ('arts') like geometry or rhetoric, which were supposed to be indispensable for any edified person. Vice versa, with the exception of the rare case of a prodigy, artistic practice is typically something which presupposes a long and hard training – and although child-centered and child-friendly pedagogies have become common today, the field of art is (perhaps together with that of sport and athletics) one of the few domains were teachers 'of the old style' are still allowed to impose harsh forms of discipline on their students.

In this contribution I would like to shed light on the interrelatedness of art and education from a different angle. The central idea I explore is that art and education are *both* fundamentally related to the capacity to create, or more precisely, *the capacity to call into being newness*, i.e., something that properly spoken didn't exist before and which is therefore not to be expected to occur. In relation to art this idea is perhaps more easily to fathom than in relation to the educational: even if there

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exists no consensus whatsoever how art should be accurately defined – which is illustrated by the many divergent attempts to come to such a definition throughout the history of western philosophy – it seems reasonable to claim that the bringing into being of something that didn't exist before counts as a minimal criterion to distinguish art from that which is not art. Even the 'production' of a ready-made, which at first sight seems to defy this criterion, might still be considered as bringing into presence something that was not foreseeable: its effect depends upon the brute denial of what the audience normally would expect. This explains why the artistic gesture of turning commodities into works of art cannot be repeated: the 'newness' here resides in the total lack of newness, and the effect this creates can be only achieved once. It is for eternity linked to the name Marcel Duchamp.

Analogously, the concept 'education' might be minimally defined in terms of an opening towards something that is unforeseeable. Admittedly, if one takes into consideration what educational institutions, ranging from the family to university, actually achieve, this mostly consists in a mere process of initiating the new generation into an existing societal and cultural order: education appears then as an indispensable instrument devised to make function properly the existing society. Nonetheless, looking at other uses of this term, it seems that mere socialization and education don't entirely overlap: moments and events that bring about a deep transformation of what we are, *in spite of* what is to be expected on the basis of biological dispositions, psychological traits or a given social and cultural background, are called 'educational' for that precise reason. In that sense education is opposed to mere growth or maturation: it is not about the continuation of a given order of things, but refers to the possibility of a *transformation* of the existing. Albeit that this happens more often than not as a matter of fact, it is still important to take this possibility of profound change into account. Referring once more to the traditional account of education: it only makes sense to 'educate' someone if we somehow believe in (or tacitly accept) his or her *Bildsamkeit* of other people, i.e., the capacity to transcend his or her destiny (Mollenhauer 1983).

In her essay on *The Crisis in Education* Hannah Arendt (1958a) makes an even stronger claim, arguing that this possibility of transformation is what defines education (and which makes it different from other activities that only seem educational). For her the need to educate young people is what is distinctive about the human condition. It is a specifically *human* response to the fact of birth, i.e., the coming into being of newcomers who first need to be raised. But, whereas in the animal realm the young only get prepared to continue an existing way of life – out of a concern with the survival of the species they belong to – the *education* of a human creature who sees the day of light is something radically different. Every newborn poses a challenge to the existing generation. And, this is a challenge to which we must relate – in the way that no human being can refuse to take a position vis-à-vis her own mortality or to the fact that we don't live alone in this world (even if we refuse to acknowledge our own finitude, or decide to go and live as a hermit). More precisely, it is inherent to the human condition that with every birth the possibility of something unforeseen comes about. Arendt refers to this characteristic of what it means to be human as *natality*. This is to say that every newcomer has

a capacity to act differently than the present generation is used to. In that sense the newcomer also poses a threat. It would be more comfortable to behave as if education is synonymous to the preparation for an already established way of life, but then education is being reduced to a biological function or an instrument for safeguarding society as it is. However, the true calling of the educator, so Arendt argues, consists simultaneously in introducing the newborn into the existing world *and* in keeping open the possibility for a *renewal* of this world (Cf. Lewis 2011).

This renewal is of course always a task, and not something that ever can be guaranteed to occur. It is also not something the older generation should directly envisage to take place. This would go against the very notion of natality: that which is truly new is *something we should accept* and not something we should enforce. If we try to command or steer it, the 'new' is not appreciated for what it is, but only seen as a resource to be put at work for realizing a more prosperous future. In other words: putting all our hopes on the promise every new generation brings for saving all that goes wrong in the existing society comes down to an *appropriation* of natality for our purposes. As Arendt makes clear, this is the very seed of totalitarian regimes (Arendt 1958a, p. 177). For her the 'essence of education' consists in the all but easy challenge to let the 'new' be *truly new*, even if this implies the possibility of changes that are not necessarily to the liking of the older generation.

Taking as a point of departure that both the sphere of art and the sphere of education can or should be understood in relation to this capacity for re-*new*-al, I will try to show in this contribution how a further exploration of artistic practice leads to insights that are also relevant for coming to grips to what is stake in education. My main argument, for which I found inspiration in Giorgio Agamben's first published book – *The Man Without Content* (1999a) -, is that the almost self-evident idea that art has to do with creation of the new is often very superficially understood. Following Agamben, I will argue that there exists a particular sensitivity for the production of the 'new' and the unforeseen that has nevertheless nothing to do with the way in which we have become used to look at art, i.e., in terms of the genius and the *creativity* of the artist. With Agamben it could moreover be argued that the value we ascribe to creativity (a character-trait that singularizes the artist as artist) has made us blind for the power of *creation* (the common capacity to bring newness into being), paradoxically as all this might sound at first sight.

To make these radical claims a bit more concrete I will illustrate all this by means of a more detailed discussion of a very specific period in Western Art History, namely the first two centuries of the Twentieth Century, during which the Avant-Garde of the Parisian art-scene struggled quite explicitly with issues regarding the meaning and the possibility of artistic *creation*. This means that I will not completely follow the firm assertions Agamben makes in his book regarding the history of art, or regarding the predicament the art-world finds itself in today and the possible salvation that lurks around the corner. My aim is rather to make an analysis which has bearings on our understanding of what is at stake in education today. In a similar way it could be said that we all too easily settle for very superficial views on education's power for renewal. Perhaps education has also to do with creation

without creativity, an idea that becomes increasingly difficult to acknowledge due to certain contemporary evolutions which demand that education should invest in the creative potential, originality and uniqueness of each and every learner, but which – seen from the perspective I want to develop in this article – actually suffocate the sense for true newness.

3.2 ~~Art~~ as the Privatization of *Poiesis*

There is no place here to discuss in detail Agamben's theory of art, so I will limit myself to some major ideas he develops. It is important to stress that his approach is historical, but not in the traditional sense that in order to understand a work of art we first have to get acquainted with its historical background and a whole canon of important art-works, in order to be able to understand a concrete artistic creation (for instance that in order to fully appreciate a *Crucifixion* by Rubens, we have to possess knowledge of Christian iconography, have to know that Baroque painting is a reaction to earlier style forms like Renaissance and Mannerism, that this style-form is connected to a religious reveille instigated by the Church to combat protestant reforms, etc.). I won't suggest that knowledge of this kind of history is unimportant. Nevertheless, such an approach also implies that every practice of art-making gets a precise place and meaning within a larger framework which precisely defines what is great art and what not. Following Foucault on this point, Agamben's ambition is rather to set art free, or at least to open it to new possibilities, by using history in a different, viz. genealogical, way. This is to say that the accuracy of the historical account is subordinate to the effect which it might have (whilst in the traditional account of history this accuracy is of the greatest importance). Therefore, the focus of such a reconstruction of the past is actually *the present*, meaning that art might be liberated from preconceptions and prejudices which, due to the history that lies behind it, seem to be inevitable. A genealogical research precisely aims at neutralizing this alleged necessity: if we understand that things have a history, we might also sense that things can be radically different.

Now, Agamben (1999a) reconstructs western art history as a continuous attempt to *appropriate* the original sensibility for what it means to bring newness into being by all sorts of strategies and devices which have become commonplace today. In former times, which Agamben locates in Ancient Greek times, the power to create new things was not yet a force to be attributed to individual people who possess unique competence. Elaborating Nietzsche's famous claim on this point, initially there was no opposition between artist and spectator (Ibid., p. 2): artistic production was intrinsically a *communal* activity in which the participants which we today artificially oppose as creators and consumers were literally one. This, of course, might sound odd, but it does make sense if we concentrate on the experience of bringing something new into reality, and the rapture and frenzy that go along with it. What counts is not that someone wants to bring some idea or feeling to expression in order to make someone else to appreciate this as a (unique) piece of

art. What is at stake is *creation as such*. Fully experiencing this power to create is a very potent state to find oneself in, regardless if one is producer or consumer. True artistic experience is precisely characterized by the fact that it destabilizes and even suspends the oppositions and classifications we are used to make. Moreover, it possesses the power to invalidate every existing societal regime, i.e., the way in which our collective lives are ordered according to similarities and distinctions regarding identity and position. In this context Agamben (Ibid., p. 3) refers to Plato's famous denunciation of the artist in *The Republic*, where he states that the artist should be banned from the well functioning and well ordered city-state. Rather than interpreting this as an attempt to denounce art as something superfluous or unimportant (in view of humankind's calling to develop more relevant capacities such as labor force or reason), Plato's fierce reaction might also be read as an acknowledgement of the inspirational and possibly *insurrectionary power of art*: experienced as this basic capacity for newness, it might not only inspire people to think that society might be different from the way it is actually organized, but all the more gather them on the basis of a shared feeling – turning them into a community with its own political agency which has the power to defy the currently existing regime.

So, if Plato still lived in an age in which the dangerousness of art was very much clear, one might wonder why this is no longer the case today. To cut a long story short, during the genesis of modern western society a turn has taken place from understanding our capacity for creation in terms of *poiesis* to a self-understanding based on the category of *praxis*. This phraseology refers to the work of Aristotle and basically comes down to the difference between activities the sense of which lies in experiencing to bring something new into being (*poiesis*) and activities the sense of which lies in experiencing that creation is the result of a particular interest, desire or will (*praxis*).[1] In a sense, as Agamben remarks (Ibid., p. 69), the use of the term 'activity' in this attempt to come to a definition is already wrong-headed and testifies to the fact that the shift he describes has already taken place: today we find it natural to conceive everything humankind is capable of doing as an 'activity', i.e., as an intentional mode of behavior (bringing our will into actuality). Drawing

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[1] Referring to Heidegger, Tyson E. Lewis (2013) makes in his recent book on study a similar distinction between willfulness and willingness. Here he argues that the very idea that the human will should be the most important concern of education is central to western thought. However, it is often overlooked that this is merely a historically contingent idea and that it presupposes a specific metaphysics. When we define ourselves in terms of willfulness, reality will appear as a whole of resources that is just at our disposal. But, we might equally take another attitude towards reality, which is more passive and which lets reality just *be*. This presupposes a *willingness* on our behalf to neutralize our *willfulness*. Lewis sees reemerging this opposition in Agamben's reading of art history. *Poiesis* corresponds then to the willingness towards the original capacity for creation, whereas *praxis* corresponds to the figure of the will that in the end only wants itself and therefore appropriates this anonymous force. More than Lewis does himself, I stress here the *communizing* character of the willingness to renounce this will to appropriate: when one stays true to what creation *as such* means, it is *always* implied that what 'we' bring into being transcends the individual level.

on a heavily Heideggerian vocabulary, for Agamben it has become obvious to say that today

> Man's [sic] "doing" is determined as an activity producing a real effect [. . .] whose worth is appreciated with respect to the will that is expressed in it, that is, with respect to his freedom and creativity. The central experience of poiesis, pro-duction [which literally means *bringing into being*], is replaced by the question of the "how", that is, of the process through which the object has been produced. In terms of the work of art, this means that the emphasis shifts away from what the Greeks considered the essence of the work – the fact that in it something passed from nonbeing into being, thus opening the space of truth (*a-letheia*) and building a world for man's dwelling on earth – to the *operari* [putting-to-work, making an *opus*] of the artist, that is, to the creative genius and the particular characteristics of the artistic process in which it finds expression. (Ibid., p. 70)

This is not just saying that since Modernity an economic way of thinking has increasingly taken hold of humankind, defining (and evaluating) all human doing as forms of productive labor (as Arendt (1958b) for instance claims; Cf. Agamben 1999a, p. 69). The main idea Agamben tries to capture here is that the capacity to create, which in a sense *belongs to no one*, becomes the object of a process of appropriation: it is then regarded as an ability which only a very special category of people possesses, and which defines these eccentrics as artists. Instead of paying attention to the originating force behind an artistic production, we focus more and more on the exceptional achievement of an even more exceptional human being. In that sense the shift Agamben recounts consists in a privatization of the power to originate: the common power 'to build a world' is more and more defined as a 'work' (*opus*), which is solely the fruit of some extra-ordinary will-power. In other words, whilst art initially was appreciated, or in the case of Plato: feared, because it never ceased to be in relation to a *force to create* (making something new) or *to originate* (building a world) – a force that was no one's private possession -, the work of art has increasingly become defined as a *creation by* a very *original* person. Art has thus become *praxis*. Likewise, creativity took the place of creation, and this shift has made it difficult to understand that art might also refer to the process of creation 'as such' (Ibid, pp. 72–76).

This evolution didn't take place overnight and is linked up with other inventions and shifts to which I can refer here only briefly. One major element in this whole story is what Agamben calls *the invention of aesthetics* (Ibid., p. 6). With this he refers to the fact that, especially since Modernity, art is dealt with as having to do with a unique and sacrosanct activity which makes it different from and superior to all other forms of human productiveness. That is why, as Agamben points out, we are usually shocked when we find out that in times not so long ago important art objects were gathered together with many other things we now deem as total kitsch in so called *Wunderkammer*, which were very popular in the Sixteenth Century (Ibid., pp. 28–33). This is furthermore linked to another evolution, viz. that art (as opposed to kitsch) has to be defined from the perspective not of its creator, but of its spectator. Referring to Kant's philosophy of art (a textbook case of this shift), the art-object (as opposed to natural forms of beauty and to non-artistic forms of production) is defined on the basis of the particular sentiment it produces in the

audience, which should by all means be disinterested pleasure, i.e., a form of gratification that is 'pure' because it responds in no way to any practical, economic, physiological or psychological benefit the spectator might experience (Ibid., pp. 1–7)

To be clear, Agamben is not holding a plea to exclude the figure of the audience from his view on art, putting all the stress on the creative genius. As I said, incipiently there was no opposition between the two, so there is no reason to stress one of both. This only makes sense *after* the invention of the bifurcation between artist and spectator. Agamben's whole point is that the romantic cult of the artist's originality, as well as the modern idea of the disinterested spectator, are two sides of one and the same coin: both are related to the aestheticization, and thus the privatization of the capacity to bring newness into being. This capacity has increasingly become the property of either the artist or of the (wo)man of good taste. Just like creative genius, a good taste is something which by definition cannot be possessed by everyone. Next to this, Agamben discusses other strategies which contribute to the trivialization of the original experience to originate and the growing acceptance to see art as the product of *praxis*. The most 'recent' of these strategies (one should keep in mind that his book was first published in 1970) is the interpenetration of the spheres of nature and art (Ibid., pp. 50–51), i.e., two categories that are usually regarded to be each other's opposite (the natural is that what is given, i.e., that which literally 'grows by itself', whilst the cultural is the fruit of human enterprise, i.e., that which is literally 'the fruit of labor'). On the one hand it has become quite common to deal with nature in the way we care for important artistic objects, such as the idea that we should conserve landscapes like a Renaissance painting needs proper protection. On the other hand it has become acceptable that objects that properly belong to the sphere of art (because we can find them in museums or in textbooks on art history) have all the characteristics that belong to the most ordinary things we rely on in our daily lives (which have nothing special about them and are thus in a certain sense 'natural'). More precisely, with the invention of pop-art, objects that may be endlessly reproduced and marketized can now be regarded as art. And, ready-mades, which are already fully 'made' and thus completely opposed to any creative invention, can be considered as the product of a respectably artistic gesture. In both cases culture and nature become indistinguishable. Because of these strategic shifts, art gets more and more removed from its *poietic* origin.

Bringing things together, at the moment that the aestheticization of *poiesis* (i.e., defining art as something unique, autonomous and sacrosanct, which only certain people can create and which only certain people can appreciate) joins the evolution I just described, we have to face a serious predicament: even if the genius creates nothing (new) she is still a genius. And so, artists not only become obsessed with the question what art should be, but this question becomes the sole and proper object of art: art is being reduced to discussions about art (Ibid., p. 48). Consequentially, the original experience of the capacity to create has become more and more difficult to grasp. And this happens precisely at the moment that originality, singularity and creativity are so much appreciated. For Agamben, the conclusion is clear. The aestheticization of art has sounded the death knell over art: art has become ~~art~~ (Ibid.

p. 43). And that is why Agamben, on the basis of his *reconstruction* of western art history calls for a uncompromising and total *destruction* of aesthetics (Ibid., p. 6). However, all this shouldn't be taken all too literally, as if the only solution consists in destroying all that exists and returning to a pure and edenic past. As I indicated, a genealogical inquiry is not about historical accuracy, but is just pointing to mechanisms (like the invention of the split between artist and audience, or the double interpenetration of art and nature) which have real effects today (e.g., the trivialization of *poiesis* in favor of *praxis*). It is thus a reconstruction (and thus a story) that is true insofar as it helps us to come to terms with the present, but also insofar it has to force to help us think differently about art.

3.3   Cubism, *Poiesis* and Realism After the Demise of Realism

Taking Agamben's reflections as an invitation to think about art's possibilities and impossibilities (rather than as a final judgment), I would like to leave it to the reader to draw her own conclusions in regards with the contemporary art scene.[2] My intention is rather to use his framework to reflect on a specific period in western art history, which overtly deals with the tensions Agamben has identified in his own genealogic account. As announced, I will go back a century or so, to an era in which numerous art movements succeeded one another, only to last a very brief period of time. All these different '-isms' (fauvism, futurism, constructivism, etc.) could be seen as very well-meant attempts to deal with a very great challenge to art which touches upon what Agamben has identified as *poiesis*, as the experience to create newness and the attempt to keep this original power of originating alive in all and every work of art.

More concretely, this challenge was double. First, until the nineteenth century, artists could not take seriously the idea that art has a history: even if they were very well aware that in the past people had a quite different look on what art supposed to be, it was nevertheless clear that they themselves belonged to a period that was the apogee of a long story in which they had a particular place. For instance the

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[2] Although this concerns a most interesting and pressing issue to deal with, it is not the focus of this essay. Nonetheless, I am most grateful to the editors of this book to have drawn my attention to certain implications of Agamben's analysis for the contemporary art scene that challenge my own views. Contemporary art shows perhaps above anything else that creation (in the strong sense I understand this expression) is no longer possible and that the only thing left to do is to find a way of relating oneself as artist to one's practice which transcends the whole *praxis/poiesis*-divide. This comes down to what Lewis, with Agamben, calls *study* (Lewis 2013). This concerns an activity which no longer produces anything 'new', but which *radically* suspends any productive logic. As such an experience of potentiality in its most literal and direct sense is granted. How this conception of study relates to my own analysis of cubist art practice requires a more extensive discussion (and should therefore be dealt with at another occasion).

Renaissance defines itself as a major advance vis-à-vis the late-Medieval art movement which they called Gothic (i.e., barbaric), and as a return to and emulation of the great work of the art of Antiquity. With the raise of true historical consciousness, such an attitude towards the past is no longer possible: the most artists can say is that their taste or style is different, but this only pertains to a consciousness of contingency, not an affirmation of their superior position in time (Cf. Agamben 1999a, p. 53).

Second, during the nineteenth century, technological evolutions have invalidated the premises that for a long time laid the basis which made it possible for artists to believe in this great story of continuous advancement of art through time: until then art practice defined itself in relation to the idea that it produced unique works (*opera*) that answered to specific challenges. In painting and sculpture this task consisted in *representing* reality. And so Renaissance painters believed to succeed way more in fulfilling this task than the insipid and incompetent medieval craftsman they succeeded. The invention of photography, which brought this project to perfection and which put an end to the ambition to create something unique, posed therefore an almost unsurpassable problem.

The succession of so many art movements at the beginning of the twentieth century can be understood against the background of no longer being able to escape this double deadlock. One major response to this challenge consisted in giving up the ambition to represent reality in favor of a concentration on the inner life of the artist. This started with Impressionism in the 1870s, when the most progressive, i.e., the most creative artists of the day, renounced the ambition to reconstruct on their canvases reality as we think it is, and instead began with directly painting whatever it is the eye sees. The next step of this evolution was the pre-War Avant-Garde, a movement which basically consisted in deforming visible reality in view of the expression of an emotional world behind it (e.g., Fauvism), or in completely giving up any link with the existing world (e.g., Expressionism), sometimes in favor to make visible a spiritual realm (e.g., Mondriaan or Kandinsky).

The movement we currently designate as Cubist, and which is connected to the experiments Georges Braque (himself a former Fauvist) and Pablo Picasso undertook in the first decade of the last Century (1908–1911) is often regarded as part of the same project (Nash 1999). After all, these artists essentially decompose the existing world in such a way that, apart from fragments here and there, the painting becomes very difficult to interpret: without a title it would even become unreadable. This effect, of course, is only enhanced by the 'unrealistic' shape of these fragments (which actually don't suggest three-dimensional cubes, but which are flat two-dimensional facets), the use of a monochrome pallet, a dispersion and distribution of light and shadow that defies all physical laws, and the complete blurring of borders between objects or between objects and background. The right question to pose is then what possibly could be the intention behind such a bizarre attempt to deform reality (or to get rid of reality).

Nevertheless, it could be equally argued that what Cubists actually did was to give a different response to the double challenge I just described: instead of abandoning the 'realist' project in favor of authentic and individual expression,

they perhaps remained precisely *realists*. They were in other words realists who created art in the full consciousness of the *final* demise of the realist project. As Nash remarks in this connection: '[i]t is a paradox of much cubist painting [. . .] that though it is often hard to know *what* is represented, or even *where* it is meant to be, that unknown, uncertain object is undeniably tangible' (Ibid., p. 168). The fragmentation of reality into flat geometrical forms and the recomposition of these facets in ways that obstruct identification of the painted object(s), is a means to make tangible the construction of reality *itself*. Seen from this angle, it is highly inappropriate to heap together Braque's and Picasso's attempts (at least in this specific period) with for instance the Fauvists' desire to deform reality or Kandinsky's aspiration to do away with the perceivable reality all together.

What they aim at, and what they render palpable, in their works is a materialization of what it means to construct something by means of paint and canvas. So, what is at stake is indeed something different from any traditional realist account of painting: their art is not a representation of an existing reality (like the tradition of the seventeenth century still-life and portrait painters, to which they are clearly indebted). Trying to construct a plane-model of Picasso's *Girl with Mandoline* is completely unfeasible in the real three-dimensional world (Ibid., p. 173). But, at the same time it is not the case that they answer the crisis of representation by yielding to the tendency to turn art into a medium of the expression of private feelings and spiritual yearning. And so, in my view, if we want to come to an adequate understanding of Cubism, we are better off not to regard their canvasses in terms of *representation* of reality, neither in terms of the *expression* of something beyond the visible reality, but in terms of *a presentation of what it means to produce something new*.

In Agamben's terminology, this comes down to saying that the Cubists' paintings are not about realizing with success the will to accurately represent something/someone or to express inner/spiritual life (*praxis*), but about making manifest and at the same time conserving the original power of creation (*poiesis*). And therefore, an adequate understanding of Cubist painting has to relate to *creation* rather than to *creativity*. What is being made visible on the canvas is not the successful actualization of an intention of a particular individual, but the very possibility to bring something in reality, i.e., that we *can* construct reality. In a sense Cubism renders palpable the original power to originate before this power gets privatized by the will of a particular artist and her ambition to express her creativity and originality.

In other words, by means of a bizarre deconstruction and reconstruction of reality, cubism materializes what other styles of painting that aimed at constructing reality could never show (but always presupposed). Paradoxically as it might seem, it is only when any realist aspiration has foundered, that it becomes possible to sense what this project was all about (Cf. Agamben's remarks on potentiality as impotentiality, See Agamben 1999b, pp. 177–184). In that precise sense the cubist movement can indeed be seen as a *realist* undertaking (Nash 1999). To substantiate this claim, I will have a brief look to the further developments of Braque's and Picasso's experiments. The period I am talking about is a very short one (three of four years) and is entirely the work of those two artists. However, much of the

works we spontaneously associate with the name 'Cubism', date from after 1911 (Ibid., p. 174), or relate to idiosyncratic experiments that have little to do with the work of Braque and Picasso. One might think here about Delaunay's famous depictions of the Eiffel Tower, where 'Cubist' fragmentations become a means of expression of a desperate mood (p. 175), Léger's use of colored facets to rebuild recognizable objects from the real world and especially so-called 'Synthetic Cubism' (as opposed to its 'Analytic' variant) – a movement in which Picasso himself participated starting from 1912 (together with Juan Gris), and which consisted in making collages in which elements from concrete reality are literally pasted on the canvas (like pieces of cardboard or sailcloth, news-paper cuttings or parts of wrapping paper).[3]

Idiosyncratic attempts like Delaunay's use of 'Cubist' methods to evoke the sadness one might feel strolling through the streets of Paris can be seen as a privatization of the force this technique has for rendering visible *poiesis*. Of course his paintings bear much resemblance to the earlier work of Braque and Picasso, but still they are different and should be placed under the heading of *praxis*. The same goes for the work of Léger and that of the Synthetic Cubists. In fact, these painters behave as realists in the very traditional sense of this word. This is because with their *compositions* of fragments they aim at a representation of reality: once the fragments are put together on the canvas we precisely know what is being represented. However, when the original Cubist artist decomposes and recomposes reality beyond easy or unequivocal recognition, she *suspends* the representational logic behind the traditional realist concept of painting. But, precisely with this last and exceptional gesture, Cubism was able *to do the impossible*, so to speak: precisely by renouncing the will to represent reality, it discloses what it means to be able to bring reality into presence.[4]

The lesson to be taken from all this is thus that the forthright attempt to recreate reality somehow obscures the original force to create reality. This reminds me of a

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[3] The many phases Picasso went trough are indicative of the cult of the creative genius he liked to embody. Clearly, Picasso is a most paradigmatic case of an artist who self-consciously sought to be a unique, exceptional and original individual. The analysis I pursue here is situated at the level of the formal qualities of art works. However it might also be interesting to explore in greater detail and on a more psychological level how concrete artists in their own lives manage to appropriate what I have been describing as the anonymous force of creation. From this perspective, Picasso would be a very ambiguous, but most significant case to research.

[4] In a short essay on Cy Twombly, Agamben (2003) makes a similar analysis: Twombly's works of art should be described as movements of 'decreation', i.e., gestures that *suspend* or *interrupt* the way in which we normally perform a certain practice. This, however, doesn't imply that the artist renounces to perform this activity. On the contrary, for a very brief moment he renders visible the very possibility that we *can* perform this activity. By taking the concrete practice of writing beyond any possibility to signify something Twombly discloses the potentiality of this activity: we sense what it means to be able to write (i.e., that it is the putting of very material traces on a surface, forming thus strings of more or less regular forms, which offers the possibility to generate meaning). Twombly captures so to speak the materiality and corporeality behind the potential for writing (Cf. Noland, s.d.)

remark which Paul Feyerabend, in a totally different context than this one, makes at the end of *Against Method* (1993). There he discusses how the Dadaist movement influenced his own 'anarchist' thought:

> Assume you tear language apart, you live for days and weeks in a world of cacophonic sounds, jumbled words, nonsensical events. Then, after this preparation, you sit down and write: 'the cat is on the mat'. This simple sentence which we usually utter without thought, like talking machines (and much of our talk is indeed routine), now seems like the creation of an entire world: God said let there be light, and there was light. (pp. 265–266)

Within this movement one may find a similar duality in possible approaches. On the one hand, the Dadaist poet felt that the burdens of convention and the rule of reason suppressed human's capacity to create and to lead an authentic life. Therefore they experimented with language beyond its 'normal' rules of use. This is to say that they tried in a very *intentional* way to show that our 'normal' use of language is very limited and that we are unaware of what we are actually able to do with the language that is at our disposal. On the other hand, they sometimes just wrote down the most banal utterances people can make. And, these everyday phrases, in all their simplicity and blandness, reveal for Feyerabend better the original force of language, when compared to Dadaism's attempts to gain access to this force by transgressing the normal use of language. In other words, to show directly that one is able to use language in new ways, might be regarded as a less adequate way to experience humankind's *poietic* capacities. Paradoxically, it is perhaps the simplest use of one's language that might bring about an experience of really *being able* to use language.

3.4   Creation and Creativity in Education

Keeping this in mind, I would like to conclude this contribution by returning to the world of education. As I said in the beginning, the reason why an educationalist might draw any conclusion from my considerations so far, is that both art and education are spheres of life that are difficult to conceive without taking into consideration the capacity for bringing newness into the world. Now, Agamben's genealogical reading of art history, next to my own reading of the vicissitudes of Cubism (and to a lesser extent of Dadaism), are not just meant to draw some formal or superficial similarities. This juxtaposition of art and education might help us in coming to terms with *that which is fundamentally at stake in education*.

Today more than ever creativity, originality and the will to posit oneself as the most unique individual have become the key values of education. No one in one's right mind would say that schools have to produce standardized goods at the end of the day, as was the case in former and less enlightened times. On the contrary, education should appeal to that what makes every learner special and assist her in developing this unique potential to the full. A very pertinent phrase which captures

this is the slogan the Flemish governance has placed above the entries of all of her public schools: 'here everyone is V.I.P'.[5]

Although nobody can really be opposed to this tendency, there still might be raised fundamental questions. One line of criticism consists in saying that the way in which educational policy tries to steer the concrete practice of teaching and learning testifies to a will to put at use each and every learner's potential to contribute to the well-being of herself and of the whole of society. This well-being is defined in terms of productivity and entrepreneurship (or at least in terms of measurable outcomes) and so all actors concerned are supposed to realize as efficiently as possible this surplus-value (which also means that these actors are individually made responsible and accountable for their success). However, the dark side of all this is that all actors in the educational field (students, teachers, schools, etc.) get one-dimensionally positioned according to a precise role. One's role as teacher or student gets very narrowly defined, and this precludes other possibilities to conceive education. The problem is not so much that we are directly being oppressed by forces beyond our control (after all, the existing educational regime is based on our very will and desire to be productive and entrepreneurial), but that the self-evidence of the existing discourse makes it difficult to think and live otherwise (Masschelein et al. 2007).

The paradoxical result of this is that, although the contemporary educational regime demands that students continuously behave in creative, original and flexible ways, education has also unmistakably become a *conservative force*: rather than granting an opening towards new possible forms of individual and collective existence, it is functional to an existing societal order which thrives on the willingness of all to be maximally productive. Education, understood in this instrumental way, only contributes to the survival of a given order, and - referring to Arendt's thoughts I discussed at the beginning of this contribution – this would mean that education is being reduced to something like a biological function. This would mean that the properly humane has disappeared: education has become a matter of sustaining an order which is perceived to be inevitable, rather than being the guardian of natality (Cf. Masschelein 2001).

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[5] My analysis here relates first of all to current developments in the European context. Similar tendencies can be found in higher education world-wide. At first sight the 'No Child Left Behind'-policy in the United States is a counter-example to what I say here: after all this policy implies forms of conformism and standardization which go against the particular capacities and individual talents of pupils. Nonetheless, it could be argued that this policy testifies to a larger evolution at work in the world of education as such, viz. a tendency to define education as a matter of putting at use, as effectively as one can, every available resource in order to secure the well-functioning of society. This is to say that a logic of productivity (*praxis*) increasingly takes hold over education. Although 'No Child Left Behind' requires standardized testing, the introduction of this measure is precisely justified on the basis of the idea that it will contribute to the kind of society in which *all* will be able to make the best out of their talents. Even if standardization actually leads to a certain conformism, it is certainly not based on the belief that state-financed schools should produce identical, colorless and spineless creatures. What is at stake is a maximal utilization of the available human capital.

It is at this point that the reflections on the productive powers of art might be helpful. What I have tried to make clear is that *creation* and *creativity* don't necessarily mean the same, and that confusion between the two can have serious consequences. If what is at stake in education is indeed this capacity for bringing newness into being, stressing the values of originality and creativity might do more harm than good. It comes down to a far reaching privatization of the power to create and to originate. When this force of renewal is linked to an expression of will-power it becomes difficult to experience the impersonal character this force originally has – or, more strongly stated, it becomes withdrawn from sight that it is only due to this impersonality that real transformation comes into being. When the force of renewal is seen as an individual capacity, the change that follows might in reality only be a continuation of the same.

If all this seems farfetched, I would like to bring in here a last reflection by a philosopher who has also linked artistic creation to education, Simone Weil (an author who was the subject of Agamben's unpublished dissertation, See: de la Duranteye 2009, p. 22). In an essay on human personality she argues that the great achievements of humankind are above anything else qualified by their *impersonality*: when confronted with one of the major creations humankind has generated, it is impertinent to praise the individual beyond the achievement (Weil 1962, p. 14). We don't need any knowledge about the individual person called Homer (supposing that this person actually ever existed) in order to appreciate the untimely beauty of the *Iliad*. The undisputable greatness of Gregorian chant has, still according to Weil, everything to do with its impersonality: it is of no interest whatsoever which particular person may have invented it. To substantiate her claim Weil then turns to the scene of the classroom. There, she claims, it is only when students commit an error that the level of the individual person and her will should be taken into account: when a child gives a wrong answer to the teacher's question, this should be ascribed to this student as a private person, e.g., as a result of her individual lack of attention and willpower. But, when she answers the teacher's question correctly it sounds utterly senseless to Weil to see this as an expression of her individuality. On the contrary, the point is that she just has given the right answer, and the correctness of this answer has nothing to do with her will in any positive sense. At most, the will has succeeded in suppressing individual characteristics that may hinder her giving the correct answer (Ibid.). This last example has of course nothing to do with the capacity for producing newness (it has more to do with producing something of unsurpassable value),[6] but nevertheless it points in the same direction

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[6] In that sense Weil's conservative view on teaching is different from (and more conservationist than) Arendt's plea for conservatism in education (Arendt 1958a). As I explained in the first part of this essay, for Arendt education is all about initiating the *new* generation into an *existing* world, in such a way that its capacity for newness is preserved: if the existing generation refuses to take responsibility for the *old* world (for instance by preparing the newcomers for a *new* world), then they strike the newcomers from their hands the possibility of true re-*new*-al. For Arendt conservatism isn't a goal in itself, but a way to secure the possibility of a different future. In spite of this difference, in both Weil's and Arendt's accounts there is a strong emphasis on the idea that there is a world which is given, which is important in its own right and which precedes and transcends individual interests and desires. And so, for Arendt *and* Weil, education is conceived as a response to this world: it follows from a regard or even love for this world.

as the conclusions I have drown from a juxtaposition of art and education, viz. the idea that a too great stress on the person and her will might be seen as an appropriation that betrays a capacity for the new (or for the culturally valuable in Weil's case), a privatization of a *poietic* force that properly belongs to no one

In sum, what I have argued for is that it makes an important difference if we look at education as a phenomenon to be considered as *praxis* or as *poiesis*. The main idea I have defended is that, because of its orientation to the new, education is often regarded as *praxis*, especially in the context of the existing (policy) discourse and its stress on creativity. Just like it happened in the reception of the Cubist movement, we might then completely misunderstand what is at stake, and erroneously regard the original potential to create as the fruits of the endeavors of an individual will. What is more, when we classify education as a matter of *praxis*, we also protect ourselves against the possible danger that is inherent to *poietic* activity. Precisely because it transcends the individual level, aesthetic experience has a community-building and a community-transformative force. Negatively formulated, it threatens the existing order and that is why we dread it. But, positively formulated, it makes the unthinkable and unforeseeable possible. Like in Cubism and Dadaism, in order to come and understand that newness is possible, it isn't necessarily required to complicate things, and a far too direct willingness to enforce newness to occur (as was the case in the most extreme Dadaist experiments or in the inverse attempts of Synthetic Cubism to present the real once more after the crisis of representation) may work counterproductive. Perhaps an adequate understanding of what *poiesis* means is a crucial step towards an (educational) future that is different from what we know today. If this is what art has to teach education, I regard this as a very important lesson to take.

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Chapter 4
Opening Minds Through Narratives

Susan Verducci

A Riddle: At 3:00 p.m. a man is driving a car. His son is in the back seat. The son is wearing a seat belt but the father is not. Suddenly a big truck crosses the center-line and hits the car head on. The father is thrown out of the car and is killed instantly. The boy is still alive because he wore his seatbelt, but he is badly injured. At 3:10 p.m. an ambulance arrives and picks up the boy to take him to the hospital. At 3:20 p.m. the ambulance arrives at the hospital emergency room. It is immediately determined that the boy needs an operation, and at 3:30 p.m. he is taken to the operating room. The doctor walks in and looks at the boy's face. Suddenly the doctor is in shock with shaking hands. The doctor says, "I cannot operate on this boy because he is my son!" The doctor leaves with a new doctor coming in to perform the operation. Question: Who is the doctor?

Take a minute to try and answer the riddle before reading on. I will return to it later.

4.1 Introduction

In his thought provoking *Knowledge and Virtue in Teaching and Learning* (2013), Hugh Sockett writes, "The task [in schooling] is not merely to give children a sense of certainty or the wisdom in holding strong beliefs, but to strive constantly for the consideration of alternatives as they grow and to lay down the habits of thoughts embedded in the virtue of open-mindedness…." Sockett makes clear that "open-mindedness is not in opposition to one's having strong beliefs, as if everything were always on the table." His phrase "as if everything were always on the table" intrigued me.

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What does it mean for beliefs to be "on the table" in classrooms? The word "table" seems to inspire a complex set of idioms having to do with viewing: "under the table" refers to something happening in secret or being hidden from view; "laying one's cards on the table" and "turning the tables" position something differently in view; the verb "table" means putting something aside for later consideration; and "coming to the table" refers to the opposite, bringing something into view with others who are sitting "at the table." In this context, having beliefs "on the table" in classrooms means they are in view, ready for consideration.

Sockett's use of this richly situated idiom to suggest that not all our beliefs are in view and ready for consideration provides terrain for thinking about cultivating open-mindedness in schools, especially when students and teachers hold firm beliefs. It leads me to ask a question: Can teachers and students be relied upon to bring their beliefs to the table for open-minded consideration?[1]

I ask this question and frame the problems that arise, not to challenge the importance of open-mindedness for teaching and learning, but to point to the ways that certain perceptual limitations and an impoverished view of how we hold beliefs can hinder our abilities to be open-minded and to cultivate open-mindedness in schools. In what follows, I claim that schools should pay attention to the *perceptual* opening upon which open-mindedness depends, and propose using narratives as a curricular means of doing so. The argument requires: "setting" the table with a brief exploration of the conceptual work that contributes to our understandings of open-mindedness; "laying on" the table evidence for perceptual blindness and belief invulnerability that hinder genuine openness; and finally, showing how narratives function to bring our beliefs "to the table."

4.2 Open-Mindedness

William Hare (1979, 1985, 2004, 2011) and other prominent philosophers (Baehr 2011, 2013a, b; Sockett 2012; Seigel 2009; Adler 2004) support the idea that open-mindedness should be an aim of liberal education. Hare (2011) defines open-mindedness as "an intellectual virtue that reveals itself in a willingness to form and revise our ideas in the light of a critical review of evidence and argument that strives to meet the elusive ideals of objectivity and impartiality." He argues that three "interlocking" and "complementary" components comprise an open mind and ought to be cultivated in classrooms. They are: (1) genuine openness to new ideas; (2) critical assessment of these new ideas; and (3) a willingness and eagerness to

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[1] The beliefs under consideration in this essay are those that are relevant for public schooling in a pluralistic democracy, and about which reasonable people disagree. They typically pertain to political, social and moral issues salient for citizenship. I also intend the word "beliefs" to include things like principles and commitments.

revise one's beliefs in the face of evidence (2004). This essay centers on Hare's first component, genuine openness to new ideas.

Jason Baehr (2013b) defines open-mindedness somewhat differently. He writes that an open-minded person is "characteristically willing and (within limits) able to transcend a default cognitive standpoint in order to take up or take seriously the merits of a distinct cognitive standpoint." Unlike Hare, his definition does not necessitate impartial and objective rational assessment. Nor does it assume the conflict or adjudication models of open-mindedness that comprise Hare's definition. In the conflict model, open-mindedness is relevant for situations of "intellectual conflict, opposition, challenge or argument, and in particular, to situations involving conflict between a person's beliefs on the one hand, and an opposing position, argument, or body of evidence on the other" (2013a). In the conflict model, open-mindedness requires moving "beyond or temporarily setting aside one's commitments to give a fair and impartial hearing to the intellectual opposition" (2013a). The adjudication model identifies situations in which one is "*neutral* with respect to the items being assessed" (2013a). Baehr illustrates this latter model with the example of a judge preparing to hear opening arguments in a trial. Both models involve the rational assessment of at least two competing positions.

Baehr points out additional types of situations in which open-mindedness is relevant, but impartial and objective rational analysis of conflicting positions is not: (1) when we try to follow or understand some perspective-shifting possibility that requires letting go of our assumptions about the world and (2) that of the detective who imagines or conceives of a coherent explanation for data (2013b). Although these later types significantly expand the conception of open-mindedness, this essay's concern with strong belief places it within the conflict model.

Although Hare and Baehr may disagree about certain aspects of open-mindedness, all work on the subject recognizes human fallibility. In fact, open-mindedness assumes fallibility. And fallibility can occur on a number of levels: perception; attention; memory; interpretation; evaluation; judgment; action; anticipated consequences; and so on. There are many ways that we can be wrong. The question driving this essay, "Can we be relied upon to bring our firm beliefs to the table for open-minded consideration?" takes a closer look at fallibility at the level of perception.

4.3 Perceptual Blindness

Attention has already been paid to certain perceptual biases. A number of theorists (Sockett 2012; Riggs 2010; Hare 1979) note confirmation bias as an obstacle to open-mindedness. Confirmation bias is the tendency to favor information (or sources of information) that validate or confirm one's beliefs. For example, choosing news sources that align with and confirm one's political beliefs reflects this form of bias. In addition to confirmation bias, Riggs notes that overconfidence and wishful thinking can diminish our ability to see clearly in a ways that impact open-mindedness.

I propose additional perceptual limitations may be at play. To explore this idea, I return to the opening riddle. I wonder if you struggled with the riddle as I did. I had difficultly seeing the doctor as a woman, as the mother. Despite having clear, strong and publically articulated beliefs about women as doctors, despite having women doctors, and despite having a graduate degree in gender studies (this is a bit embarrassing), I perceived the situation in a way that blinded me to the doctor being the mother.

My difficulty with this riddle affords me at least three new lines of thinking. First, it provides me the opportunity to question and rethink the content, depth and complexity of my beliefs about gender. The riddle allows me to bring my perceptions, and by extension, my beliefs to the table for open-minded consideration. In rethinking the substance and scope of my beliefs, I can ask whether I have been honest with myself. Perhaps *self-deception* has kept me from acknowledging stereotypical gendered beliefs that influenced my inability to perceive the doctor as a woman. If so, this self-deception might help me avoid experiencing the discomfort, shame, fear, or guilt in having these views about women in medicine. In placing my gendered beliefs "on the table" for consideration, I can begin to explore not only alternative possibilities, but also explore whether I *can* approach the topic with a truly open mind. For, as Hare (1979) suggests, we can fool ourselves about our open-mindedness; "There are cases in which a person deceives himself into thinking that he is willing to revise his opinions when he is not in fact prepared to do this." The riddle gives me the opportunity to re-examine my perceptions, my beliefs *and* my openness to changing my beliefs.

Second, the riddle points out to me that even though I may carry strong beliefs about gender, the structures and processes of perception operate in ways that that affect my ability to see their salience in this situation. My inability to solve the riddle makes me think that similar situations may present themselves – situations in which I should bring my beliefs to the table, but I cannot because I am blind to their relevance. Thus, the riddle shows me the possibility of an utter perceptual failure that can thwart the good work of open-mindedness.[2]

The importance of perceptual blindness for open-mindedness in teaching and learning can be seen in Robert Lake's moving letter to his son's kindergarten teacher. In "An Indian Father's Plea" (1990), Lake describes his son's sophisticated education in his native culture. Lake writes the letter to awaken the teacher to see

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[2] Sockett (2013) notes that in significant ways, schooling itself functions to "blind" us. I laughed out loud when he commented that, "this riddle was obviously thought up by a teacher. You know, I am giving you this mass of information. Now here's a question to which I demand a right answer: 'Who is the doctor?'" This seems accurate, and Sockett shows how teachers can structure their classrooms in ways that counteract this tendency. In Sockett's ideal classroom (2012), teachers cultivate an "epistemological presence" that opens students to question and to explore. Even so, and despite our efforts to counter it, information comes to us in ways that shape and divert our attention. And some situations demand quick evaluation, judgment and action, making exploration impossible. The problem I pose stands, even in a classroom with an "epistemological presence." It is a problem of human perception, and though teachers and schooling can exacerbate or ameliorate it, the problem remains.

how his kindergartener's rich cultural skills and understandings belie the "slow learner" label assigned to him.

> He is not culturally "disadvantaged," but he is culturally "different." If you ask him how many months there are in a year, he will probably tell you 13. He will respond this way not because he doesn't know how to count properly, but because he has been taught by our traditional people that there are 13 full moons in a year according to the native tribal calendar…. He may also have trouble writing his name on a piece of paper, but he knows how to say it and many other things in several different Indian languages. He is not fluent yet because he is only 5 years old and required by law to attend your educational system, learn your language, your ways of thinking, and your methods of teaching and learning.
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> The "slow learner" label signals that the teacher "missed" seeing his son. This teacher did not realize that she should be bringing understandings about the relationship between schooling and culture "to the table" in her assessment of this child. She was blind to their salience.

The "Invisible Gorilla" research by Christopher Chabris and Daniel Simons (2010) shows us how this can happen. This research identifies a phenomenon by which humans fail to perceive unanticipated stimuli when they are focused on a task that demands their attention. They call this phenomenon inattentional blindness. In the study, subjects are shown a video of 6 people – three in white shirts and three in black shirts – passing two balls amongst themselves while moving through and around each other in a small circle. Subjects are asked to count the number of times the people in white shirts pass the ball. The researchers found that people tend not to notice when a person in a gorilla suit walks through the action. That is right; they did not notice a GORILLA walking through the scene! When the subjects' attention focused on watching and counting the ball passes, they were blind to the gorilla. Viewed through the lens of this study, the teacher in the Lake letter was engaged in the task of *assessing* the child, not *understanding* him. In doing so, she missed "seeing" her student.

A different type of perceptual blindness can be seen in the film *12 Angry Men* (1957).[3] The narrative tracks jury deliberations in the trial of a teen accused of killing his father. The teen comes from an impoverished and ethnic background, and this capital case seems closed with the first jury count – 11 guilty. Only one juror wishes to consider the case further, and it is unclear whether the reason is that he believes the boy is innocent or that he feels that determining the fate of another person requires at least five respectful minutes of discussion. As the jurors begin a more thorough examination of the evidence, the narrative uncovers the biases and agendas that cloud the jurors' ability to be open to the possibility that the boy is innocent. The most dramatic uncovering occurs when the final holdout changes his vote to not guilty. At the end of the film, it becomes clear, even to the man himself, that he has seen the boy on trial through the prism of his own troubled relationship with his estranged son. This father has been blind to how his familial relationship shapes his perception of the accused boy and his judgment of the boy's guilt; the

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[3] My thanks go to Hugh Sockett for this example.

father's experience with his son has skewed his ability to see. When circumstances force him (and the other jurors) to perceive this connection, his mind opens to see the evidence for reasonable doubt more clearly.

The teacher's focus on assessment did not allow her to see the Lake boy's knowledge. Subjects in Chabris and Simons (2010) study missed seeing the gorilla. An angry man could not see how his relationship with his son shaped his perception of a boy on trial. All were as blind as I was with the riddle. An important feature of this blindness is that it makes information relevant for open-minded judgment *invisible*, impossible to perceive. Moreover, like confirmation bias, it is self-disguising and extraordinarily difficult to recognize in and by one's self.

This analysis brings me to a third line of thinking the riddle provokes: in the face of perceptual blindness, I need something like the riddle (the letter, other jurors) to provide the friction that signals me to see that my beliefs are shaping (and limiting) my perception. If I cannot see or feel my beliefs challenged or recognize difference or alternatives, I most likely will not be able to bring my beliefs to the table. For open-mindedness to have meaningful force in a classroom, it must be engaged. And this engagement can require perceptual stimulation.

And thus, in addressing the question of whether we can be relied upon to bring" our beliefs to the table and subject them to open-minded consideration, I reply: "not always." To be genuinely open we need to be *perceptually* open. And, in cases of self-deception and perceptual blindness, we may need sources of friction to open our minds to perceive what is there for us to see.

4.4   Problems with Vulnerability

When Sockett (2012) writes "open-mindedness is not in opposition to one's having strong beliefs, as if everything were always on the table," he signals that we might not want to have an open-mind about certain beliefs, such as slavery or pedophilia. He tells us that we do not want to be so open-minded that our brains fall out. He also warns that we do not want to be so set in our beliefs that we are unable to absorb new information that might disconfirm them; we also don't want to be closed-minded. Theorists have been discussing the problem of strong belief since the conversation on open-mindedness as an educational aim began. One framing of the debate explores the potential tension or possible contradiction in holding strong beliefs and being open-minded at the same time.

I don't intend to enter this debate as framed. However, it usefully highlights that we might not want to be open-minded about some beliefs *and* that some beliefs may be supported in ways that challenge viewing them with an open-mind. Taking up this latter point, I explore how strong beliefs can be networked and emotionally charged in ways that cloud perception, and make these beliefs less vulnerable to open-minded consideration.

In cases of conflicting beliefs, an open-minded person is "disposed to revise or reject a position if sound objections are brought against it. Or, in the situation in

which a person presently has no opinion on some issue, she is disposed to make up her mind in the light of available evidence and argument as objectively and as impartially as possible" (Hare 1979). Rational assessment is fundamental to open-mindedness in the conflict model.

Ann Chinnery (2013), however, highlights an important distinction between beliefs that aim for empirical truth and the sorts of strong beliefs I consider here. Her response to Jennifer Logue's views on social justice education challenges the idea that in schooling we can treat these beliefs similarly. Chinnery writes,

> In a conception of education that aims at objective, impartial truth, open-mindedness is needed so one can adjudicate competing knowledge claims and revise one's own position if it is found wanting on the scale of rational justifiability. But I suspect that the knowledge claims Logue is most concerned about in her paper and her teaching do not fall within the domain of rational thought….[T]he ideas we hold about people whose race, gender, sexuality, religion, or ability is different from our own are probably not as susceptible to evidence or rational counterargument as the concept of open-mindedness would suggest.

Chinnery cites George Yancy's (2012) delivery of the paper, "How Can You *Teach* Me If You Don't Know Me?" In it, he describes his experience as a black man walking down the street.

> The sounds of car doors locking are deafening: Click. Click, Click. Click, Click, Click. Click, Click, Click, Click. ClickClickClickClickClickClickClick. The clicking sounds are always already accompanied by white nervous gestures, and eyes that want to look, but are hesitant to do so. The click ensures their safety, effectively resignifying their white bodies as in need of protection vis-à-vis the site of danger, death, doom, and blackness. In fact, the clicks begin to return me to myself as this dangerous beast, a phantom, rendering my body the site of microtomy and volatility. The clicks attempt to seal my identity as a dark savage.

Like Chinnery, I remember Yancy's presentation well – the pounding rhythm of the word "click," the hard finite opening and closing "k" sounds, my recognition, my discomfort. The presentation riveted, accused and challenged me. It shook my perception and complacency in fundamental and disturbing ways. Chinnery writes,

> The point I want to make is that the educative potential of his phenomenological account ought not to be measured by standards of objectivity and impartiality, but rather by its power to destabilize prevailing assumptions about everyday racial relations and about our own position and complicity in those relations. Hearing and learning from Yancy's address requires something more than open-mindedness and the capacity to weigh evidence and argument; it requires us to be open to that which might shatter our knowledge, our identities, and even our self-understanding as knowing subjects.

I also doubt that we easily open ourselves to consider our most fundamental beliefs and understandings in the light of sound rational objections. Chinnery points out that we need something *more* than rational assessment to open us "to that which might shatter our knowledge, our identities, and even our self-understanding as knowing subjects." Many beliefs that we ought to be open to revising in the face of evidence not only have rational structures, but they also have emotional substrates that connect them to our identities. These emotional substrates can undermine the power that traditional notions of rationality, the notions that most conceptions of open-mindedness assume.

In addition to having emotional ties to our identities and self-understanding, beliefs may have complex connections to other beliefs and commitments that can tie up or close off perception. Wayne Riggs (2013) recently introduced the idea of "construals" to the conversation on open-mindedness, a concept that helps us recognize these complexities. He writes that a construal is "an interrelated network of beliefs and other doxastic attitudes that together provide a 'picture' of some part of reality. Presumably, these networks are often comprised in part of propositions, along with representations of evidential and explanatory relations among those propositions." Basically this notion of construal means that although we have individual beliefs about the world, these beliefs can only be considered *individually* in theory. In the human psyche, they are networked with other beliefs, attitudes, explanations and justifications about how the world works.

Each construal is more than the sum of its parts; in other words, the epistemic significance of a belief does not reside in the individual belief, but in the network itself. If beliefs are so protectively networked and rooted in the human psyche, conceiving of open-mindedness as bringing a single particular belief to the table for rational consideration may be seriously problematic. The connections of one belief to others and to attitudes may serve to affix it, making the possibility of open viewing and consideration difficult.

Consider, for example, Galileo's theory of heliocentrism (that the earth travels around the sun, rather than the opposite). It earned him a date with the Roman Inquisition, and later, in what was seen as an attack on a pope, house arrest for heresy. At the time, his theory and evidence contradicted prevailing beliefs about the structure of the universe, and because these beliefs were connected with fundamental religious commitments, they were woven to networks of other beliefs. They were not only tightly woven to other beliefs, but they also embodied strong "feeling" substrates. People were not convinced by Galileo's scientific evidence because they were not *moved* to separate their beliefs about the earth's place in the universe from their other beliefs. Their emotionally charged construals closed them to perceiving the scientific data in a genuinely open way.

If we are to take perception and its limitations seriously in cultivating open-mindedness in classrooms, teachers and students must be open to seeing and feeling differently. If we neglect perceptual openness and belief vulnerability to focus solely on the critical assessment of propositional beliefs, we may be bringing a butter knife to the table when a steak knife is necessary.

4.5 Implications for Cultivating Open-Mindedness in Classrooms

How might this analysis inform our efforts to cultivate open-mindedness in classrooms? A number of theorists make recommendations for educational practices that provide a starting place for thinking about genuine openness. They suggest that we

expose ourselves to a wide variety of ideas and worldviews (Riggs 2010) and provide "access to a plurality of values" (Adler 2004). Steve Bramall (2000) emphasizes the significant difference between "those with different points of view" and "those with similar viewpoints but holding different beliefs." Framing open-mindedness hermeneutically, he draws attention to the limited and partial nature of any point of view. In so doing, Bramall stresses the importance of engaging in dialogue with people holding different perspectives on the world. Taking this focus one step further, Jason Baehr (2013b) suggests that we provide students with opportunities to practice open-mindedness through *adopting* other standpoints. Riggs (2013) concurs; if we are "to take up or take seriously a construal that is at odds with our own," we must come to understand another person's construal "from the inside." We must come to understand the relationships between its elements and how they work to make the world intelligible to that person. Riggs writes that to do so involves sympathetic consideration. "One sympathetically considers a construal when one reflects upon it in a way that brings to mind the possible evidential and explanatory connections among the propositions of the construal." Although empathy might better capture what Riggs refers to here, suffice it to say that both sympathy and empathy have cognitive, perceptual and affective components. When we move "inside" the construals of others, we move into new thinking, seeing and feeling territory. Complementing this view, Adler (2004) asserts that open-mindedness also requires moving to a spectator position on our own beliefs, developing a "capacity to view our own beliefs as if an observer." These theorists recommend moving inside a plurality of other viewpoints, and interpreting these perspectives sympathetically – all the while looking at our beliefs as if they were not our own.

These curricular recommendations indicate that embodying the *perceptions* of others so that we might see and feel things differently is one goal of cultivating open-mindedness in schools. The emotional and cognitive embodiment of the perceptions of others can be seen as fundamental to genuine openness, and one entryway into actual and possible perceptual worlds is the arts. In fact, the arts are uniquely situated to help achieve this goal. Across time and across cultures, humans have expressed their perceptions, their beliefs, their feelings, their perspectives and their cultures through the arts. Engagement with works of art allows audiences access to these perceptions.

I propose that exploring literary and visual narratives – fiction, non-fiction and some new narrative forms[4] – can provide opportunities to open minds to the perceptions of others in classrooms. Regardless of whether we explore these narratives through individual inquiry, dialogue or performance, they offer us the opportunity to perceive and experience realities and perspectives other than our own. In *The Company We Keep*: *An Ethics of Fiction* (1988), Wayne Booth writes

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[4] New sorts of narrative fictions, such as video games, fantasy role-playing games, live action role-playing games (e.g., Forest of Doors and Civil War reenactments) may also be interesting possibilities.

that we "pursue" the "Other" in our encounters with stories; he connects this pursuit "to internalize other selves" with learning. Martha Nussbaum (1983, 1990) argues that there is a particular mode of grasping and attending reality that happens when we engage with narratives. Nussbaum shows how we are drawn into vicarious experiences of these other realities in ways that can stretch our understandings of the world and of ourselves. We enter the worlds of Harry Potter, *12 Years a Slave*, Dungeons and Dragons, *Breaking Bad*, and Emma Bovery *as if* they exist for us here and now. Samuel Taylor Coleridge's "poetic faith" captures this "willing suspension of disbelief," this conscious process of *make-believe* in which we voluntarily, imaginatively and affectively move into the perspectives of others. Literary, filmic, theatrical and virtual narratives can make audiences and actors "ready" to move away from the comfort of their own perceptions and beliefs as they reveal the complex interior and exterior worlds of others (Ferri 2007; Stanislavsky 1936/1964). In doing so, they help reveal our own worlds more clearly. In other words, they allow us to perceive and inhabit other people's perspectives *and* to look at our own from a spectator position. Like the riddle, they have the potential to alter our perceptions – permitting us to see, feel and think differently.

Maxine Greene (1990) calls works of art "reservoirs of possibilities." And, these possible worlds can provide the sort of friction we need in conditions of strong belief. Greene writes,

> Provoked to attentiveness, beginning to be authentically present to illusioned worlds in their particularity, [we] may be at least capable of looking at things as if they could be otherwise. Awakened to alternative possibility, alive to the uses of breaking through boundaries, [our] lives and expectations may be changed.

Genuine openness requires the ability to look at things as if they could be otherwise. In her work on releasing the imagination, Greene uses verbs such as awaken, attend, perceive, witness, discover, expand, grasp, complicate, and liberate to describe the sorts of experiences we might have with narratives and other works of art (1990, 1995). They can release us to perceive what is, and what is not yet. They can open minds.

Of course, we must treat narratives in particular ways in classrooms if they are to open minds. First, we must treat them as Martin Buber recommends, dialogically. Buber calls this intersubjective relationship *I-Thou*, and opposes it with an *I-It* relationship. Kenneth Paul Kramer (2013) writes that engaging in an *I-Thou* relationship requires a shift away from the self and toward the text as "other," as *Thou*. We experience the "otherness" of the text at the same time we experience the saying of *I*. "In this *mutual confirmation of the self and text*, the reader is brought into a more intense realization of the text's presence…. [T]he reader [also] becomes more aware of his or her situation, circumstances, and attitudes." Again, this means that as we inhabit the perceptions of others (*Thou*), we may also come to a better understanding of ourselves (*I*).

David B. Norris (2001) distinguishes between thinking *with* stories and thinking *about* stories. "Thinking about stories conceives of narratives as objects to be examined [*I-It*]. And in this, they are separate/distinct from the examiner….

Thinking with stories is a process in which we as thinkers do not so much work on narrative as take the radical step back, almost a return to childhood experience, of allowing narrative to work on us." When narratives "work on us," they infiltrate our perceptions, our emotions and attitudes. Some have the power to disrupt us, "suspending usual, habitual and largely unconscious ways of being and perceiving" (Bai and Cohen 2014). They move us. Both thinking "with" stories and thinking "about" stories are necessary dimensions in cultivating open-mindedness. Thinking "with" stories can provide the embodied friction for opening minds in the face of perceptual and vulnerability problems. Thinking "about" stories involves critical analysis and assessment of reasons and the worlds articulated in the narratives.

A number of thinkers (Katz 1996; Nussbaum 1990; Brudney 1990; Newton 1995) emphasize the importance of using complex, contextually thick and sustained narratives for exploring particular lives. Yet other sorts of narratives can be helpful, perhaps not so much in exploring the perceptions of others, but in providing the friction that allows us to perceive, monitor and challenge our beliefs.[5] Given the democratic purposes of schooling, I would add that high quality multicultural narratives, both fiction and non-fiction, can effectively provide invitations to examine our own perspectives. My point is that for engagement with narratives to open minds, these narratives need to be chosen thoughtfully and facilitated carefully. Only those narratives that have the potential to be meaningful to teachers and students will be likely, in my view, to open minds.

Even if narratives are chosen with care, developing open-mindedness through narratives can be problematic for other reasons. Stories and myths convey powerful messages across generations, and they can cultivate particular forms of habituated responsiveness. Think of the endless tales of rugged individualism that fill our cinemas and schools. These stories emphasize a particular set of American values and the ways they are manifested and negotiated in the world. Exposure to narratives in educational contexts can inculcate values, and as a more critical viewer might see it, indoctrinate students. Indoctrination is not an insignificant worry, since it involves getting students to accept beliefs in a non-rational way. Nevertheless, the pedagogical treatment of narratives, a treatment which remains vulnerable to both misuse and abuse, requires more exploration than space allows here.[6] As we worry about imposing narrow interpretations of stories for didactic or indoctrinatory purposes, we may also worry about inflaming our students' emotions in ways that completely bypass critical thinking. Although we need *more* consideration of affect's role open-mindedness, we must not value critical assessment *less*. Narratives, if chosen and taught well, can be useful for opening minds, but the critical thinking components of open-mindedness remain a fundamental reason why we consider it an aim of liberal education.

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[5] See, for example, Bai's and Cohen's (2014) work on short Japanese teaching stories called Zen koans.

[6] See Verducci & Katz (2011) for some ideas.

4.6   Conclusion

Can we be relied upon to bring our strong beliefs to the table for open-minded consideration? Not always. Self-deception and perceptual blindness can bypass our efforts to be genuinely open. These challenges suggest that at times we may need some sort of friction to help us to perceive and understand our own beliefs and perspectives, as well as those of others. Moreover, our beliefs are embedded in networks and have emotional roots that can divert or narrow our perception, making beliefs less vulnerable to open-minded consideration. If genuine openness is to be cultivated in classrooms, we must take seriously the limits of human perception that are pre-cognitive and pre-reflective. Engaging with well-chosen and meaningful narratives affords us *practice* in perceiving and considering alternative perspectives. Narratives can provide the sort of friction that makes perceptual openness possible in conditions of strong belief. They make the invisible visible. In helping to lay "on the table" what was previously hidden from view, narratives can open-minds in classrooms.

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Chapter 5
An Organism of Words: Ekphrastic Poetry and the Pedagogy of Perception

Anne Keefe

> *Outside the classroom words have their own chemistry....*
>
> –Gerald L. Bruns, *What Are Poets For?*

> *The operation of expression, when successful, does not simply leave to the reader or the writer himself a reminder; it makes the signification exist as a thing at the very heart of the text, it brings it to life in an organism of words, it installs this signification in the writer or the reader like a new sense organ, and it opens a new field or a new dimension to our experience.*
>
> –Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*

This chapter will argue that, at its most basic level, the interpretation of poetry is a bodily experience. The language, rhythms, sounds, and images of poems are objects that engage our sensory perception, tapping in to a kind of instinctual, semiotic connection between the body and language. Rather than engaging with the arts as a way of honing students' perceptual capabilities, or cultivating the ability to think through complexity and difficulty in literature, our contemporary world of high-stakes testing (along with its attendant imperative that the arts justify themselves in terms of test scores and marked improvement of *other* subject areas) has allowed the American educational system to alienate students from the very source of their own agency in the arts: their bodies. As John Dewey points out in *Art as Experience*, "when an art product at once attains classical status, it somehow becomes isolated from the human conditions under which it was brought into being and from the human consequences it engenders in actual life-experience" (2005, p. 1). While Dewey primarily focuses on the visual art object and its recontextualization within the museum, his point parallels the canonization of poetic works within the

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academy. In school and university classrooms, those poems anthologized by Norton and explicated for students by companies like SparkNotes become for students the stuff of exam questions and a distinct, black or white, right or wrong approach to a fixed interpretation. As poets and teachers we hope that students might "take a poem/and hold it up to the light/like a color slide//or press an ear against its hive" (Collins 1996, ll. 1–4), as former US poet laureate Billy Collins has it in his poem "Introduction to Poetry." Yet, more often than not, students have been taught to interrogate the poem, to translate its meaning as a simple one-to-one relationship between poetic language and plot summary. Rather than "beating [the poem] with a hose/to find out what it really means" (ll. 15–16), I will locate our reading, understanding, and teaching of poetry in a kind of phenomenological trust in the body's sensory experience—one that coincides with (but doesn't necessarily parallel) the poet's sensory experience in the writing of the poem. I will argue that the pedagogical tools for understanding even the most obscure and impenetrable poems reside within our own bodily perceptual logic and that, when we ignore this embodied logic in favor of the imperative to find the so-called right answer to the poem, we ignore a visceral and fundamental connection to the phenomenal power of the arts. Using the case study of ekphrastic poetry, or poems that take visual art as inspiration and subject matter, I will demonstrate that the kind of attention to detail demanded by the ekphrastic poem's focus on and description of the art object can be taken as a method for reading the lyric poem as perception in language. The theoretical approach outlined here can transform the teaching of poetry by shifting students' experiences of poetry from the solely intellectual practice of exegesis to a whole-body sensory *experience* of language, sound, form, and vision.

I will begin by tracing the phenomenological approach to perception in the work of Maurice Merleau-Ponty, demonstrating the ways in which ekphrasis in particular illuminates the relationship between perception and language. I will then move to two examples of 20th century ekphrastic poetry that engage the power dynamics of the ekphrastic encounter in order to show how ekphrasis teaches us new, more complex ways of viewing. These poets use ekphrasis as a way to focus the reader's viewing of the image or art object, determining figure and ground and calling to our desire to see and sense with our whole bodies. The poem "Manet's Olympia" by Margaret Atwood demonstrates the phenomenological method by which the poet can control language to focus the reader's gaze a certain way, casting individual details in a new light. In this instance, Atwood uses the poem as a political tool to teach readers a new way of viewing that interferes with a gendered tradition of objectifying the nude female body. I will then discuss three poems by Marianne Moore, whose ekphrastic attention to detail reveals the ways in which the poet looks and looks again in a struggle to enter into a kind of embrace between language and the perceptual experience. Moore's imaginative evocation of the artist's own "style" captures the perceptual trace of the visual artist within the lyric form and language of the poem.

5.1   Toward Whole-Body Sensing

In *Phenomenology of Perception*, Maurice Merleau-Ponty lays out a detailed phenomenology of our perceptual engagement with the world as one grounded in our bodily experience. Arguing against dominant ways of thinking about perception—the empiricism of the third-person Cartesian rationale in which the subject's mind is separate from the objectified body and what Taylor Carman has called the "semantic paradigm" (2012, p. x) in which perception is constructed in and through language—Merleau-Ponty insists on a first-person, embodied perceptual experience in which the body exists fully embedded within the world at the same time as it opens out into the world. For Merleau-Ponty, perception is "not just sensory or intellectual, but *bodily* perspective" (Carman 2012, p. xii). "My body," Merleau-Ponty claims, "is my point of view upon the world" (2012, p. 73). Greatly influenced by *Phenomenology of Perception*, artist and critic Joyce Brodsky outlines what she calls "whole-body seeing," or seeing as a "dialogue [that] takes place between *my lived body and the embodied work*" (2002, p. 100). Brodsky extends Merleau-Ponty's critique of the theorization of perception to our contemporary understanding of the postmodern gaze. As she puts it, "a founding myth about perception is that visual experience is primarily an act of looking at things in a static manner, the scientific, photographic/cinematic, and now digital encounter as representative. Postmodern critiques of this tyranny of the eye have resulted in an equally mythic entity, the infamous gazer. In both cases it is as if the body was non-existent" (p. 104). Separating the art from the body that made it by placing the visual art object in the museum or placing the poem in the canon or curriculum not only separates art from its original purpose whether as a practical, religious, or ritualistic object, but also impedes our bodily connection to the art as viewers or readers. That is, ignoring the body both severs the art from the bodily process of the art's creation while denying the active bodily experience of the person perceiving the art. Not to be confused with interpretation based on the artist's *intention* (politically, culturally, or otherwise), I am arguing for an awareness of the body's *intentionality*, or what Merleau-Ponty describes as the draw or pull of possibility that objects have, a kind of call to our bodies that rise up into the world to interact. I believe this is what Brodsky is describing as she argues for "whole-body seeing:"

> I want to consider that *some* of the complex actions entailed in an artist's practices are somehow embodied in the work; that the work is the trace of those activities. If that is the case, it is equally reasonable to think that in perceiving them *some of those operations will be understood in an embodied manner*, and some may even be performed during the interactivity. This is not the same as claiming that the viewer is expected to replicate the artist's ideas, feelings, or particular movements. (p. 102)

Brodsky gives several examples in which our contemporary expectations as viewers accustomed to the museum setting might be complicated by this dialogue between viewer and artwork; similarly, when students encounter a poem within the classroom their experience is too often at a kind of artificial and analytical remove. They want, as Collins puts it, to "tie the poem to a chair with rope/and torture a

confession out of it" (1996, ll. 13–14). I suggest that we give students the opportunity to become aware of and tap in to their own sensory responses to what I am
calling the bodily experience of the poem—its sounds and rhythms, its semiotic
relationship to language, its phenomenological trace of the poet's creation process.
Here, I will suggest that it is the ekphrastic encounter—when the poet writes of the
embodied artwork within the lyric space of the poem (a work of art in and of
itself)—that fully brings to life not just the whole-body seeing that Brodsky is
proposing, but whole-body *sensing*.

While all good poems teach a willing reader how to read them, ekphrastic poems
in particular make overt the sensory and perceptual power of lyrical language.
Ekphasis as a mode of poetic composition has an established trajectory dating to
Homer's description of Achilles's shield in *The Illiad*. The original Greek etymology of the word "ekphrasis" refers to the rhetorical strategy of vivid description
bringing images "to the mind's eye" of the listener.[1] Because of these roots in the
rhetorical tradition, scholars of ekphrasis are often led away from an engagement
with the poems as lyrics and toward a reading of ekphrasis as merely an act of
description that succeeds or fails based on the poem's fidelity to the artwork
invoked, a model in which the ekphrastic poem acts as an analogue to art historical
writing or art criticism. Other contemporary theorizations of ekphrasis have been
dominated by two models that engage verbal-visual difference. The first, the sister
arts model, is traced by Jean Hagstrum in the 1958 study *The Sister Arts*. This
model, dating back to Horace's "ut pictura poesis" (as a painting, so a poem), is
based on similarities between poetry and painting and emphasizes how the function
of the two genres is the same in that both use artifice to mirror beauty. However
much this model insists on similarity, it also admits to a friendly competition
between the two arts of poetry and painting—a kind of sibling rivalry[2] in which
the hierarchical relationship (dating back to the Renaissance) between poetry's
intellectual work in language and the manual work of painting or sculpting still
seems to linger as a Cartesian division between mind and body.[3] A second model of
ekphrasis, the Medusa model, captures the male poet's anxiety and desire to control
(and to silence or to speak in place of) the dangerously seductive female image—a
relationship of conflict reworked as a hierarchical and gendered antagonism
between the verbal and the visual. James A. W. Heffernan identifies "the Medusa
model" within ekphrasis as a moment when "the conflict between word and image
becomes a conflict between male authority and the female power to enchant,
subvert, or threaten" (1993, p. 108), suggesting that particular poems engage in
this model when staging "a duel between male and female gazes" (p. 1).
W.J.T. Mitchell claims the Medusa as "the perfect prototype for the image as a

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[1] See Ruth Webb (1999) and (2009).

[2] See, for example, Lesley Steven's "Sister Arts or Sibling Rivalry? Cezanne and the Logic of the
Senses," *Word & Image* 24.2 (2008): 152–161.

[3] See Hagstrum (1958, pp. 66–70) on the renaissance origin of the paragone between poet and
painter.

dangerous female other who threatens to silence the poet's voice and fixate his observing eye" (1994, p. 172). While all of these models attempt to capture a charged dynamic in the ekphrastic encounter of word and image, none sufficiently addresses the unique creative process behind the ekphrastic poem, which I have elsewhere called the "ecstatic embrace" (Keefe 2011) of verbal and visual, and they therefore limit our understanding of the perceptual experience of the ekphrastic lyric as a phenomenally strong artwork in its own right.

While Brodsky asserts that "encounters with persons or things in the world are through the dynamics of bodily participation [and that] art is only a subset of that phenomenon" (2002, p. 102), I propose the ekphrastic poem as the prime example, not of a *sub*set of phenomenological experience, but as *the* example of heightened phenomenological experience, a missing link in Merleau-Ponty's *Phenomenology of Perception*. While Merleau-Ponty structures his argument against ways of thinking about perception that foreclose on the intertwining between perception and bodily experience, the paradox of his position is that it must be articulated in and through language. Language becomes an unresolved sticking point for Merleau-Ponty. That is, while description lies at the heart of the phenomenological method, our perceptual experiences are, for Merleau-Ponty, *pre*-linguistic. We have "no language prior to language" (Merleau-Ponty 1993, 80), Merleau-Ponty argues, "to speak is not to put a word under each thought; if it were, nothing would ever be said" (81). Rather, "Language signifies when instead of copying thought it lets itself be taken apart and put together again by thought" (82). Lyric composition is exactly this process—a moving between the rising up of a semiotic impulse and the strict aesthetic attention to what poet Stephen Dobyns calls "best words, best order." As in the Kristevian semiotic theory of poetic language (Kristeva 1984), language before and between thought bears the trace of the body just as the music of poetry does. As this semiotic language breaks forth into the symbolic, it scrambles semantic rules and opens new possibilities. What Kristeva marks as a distinction between symbolic and semiotic, Merleau-Ponty cites as a distinction between empirical and creative, arguing that "Empirical language can only be the result of creative language" (1993, 81). Therefore, it is not that *all* empirical or analytical language fails in the descriptive functions at the heart of both phenomenology and ekphrasis, but that we must open ourselves to creative or semiotic language as an embodied experience in order to later move on to access a complex and nuanced analytical interpretation. We see this process unfold in Collins' poem "Introduction to Poetry," for example, where students and readers are asked to "walk inside the poem's room/and feel the walls for a light switch" (Collins 1996, ll. 7–8)—to experience the poem with the whole body—before coming to an interpretation.

This approach does not negate the difficulty of phenomenological description. For example, in an analysis of Merleau-Ponty's work in relation to the uncanny and challenging artwork of Louise Bourgeois, Lorna Collins argues that what she calls "wild being" (an analogue for Merleau-Ponty's idea of flesh—a kind of carnal matter that exists before the subject-object split) "may be expressed or sensed in…artworks, though *not necessarily disclosed in describing them*" (2010, p. 55,

emphasis mine). Brodsky, too, laments the difficulty of describing in language the experience of viewing the artwork:

> It is almost impossible to articulate that embodied experience when I write about it. The results of transforming synergistic relations into words in the case of sensuous objects results in a condition of loss and absence with only the eye/mind/image in play. . .. The perpetual antagonism between most artists and critics partially stems from this fact. As I have experience in both roles, I know that making artworks and being in their presence as a viewer, and writing about them are entirely different kinds of experiences. (2002, p.107)

Brodsky is not a poet, and while the situation of the ekphrastic poem does replicate the experience of a viewer attempting to write about the perceptual encounter that Brodsky describes above, I am arguing that the lyric poem is a special case of such writerly experience. The lyric poem can open up a unique space in which language can embody the sensuous precisely because language is not the re-presentation of the artwork, but the artwork itself. Perhaps unknowingly, Collins hints as this when she discusses the ways in which Merleau-Ponty leans toward the ekphrastic impulse in his lyrical language:

> Merleau-Ponty believed that language itself was elemental, carnal, and could express the primordial horizon of meaningful, embodied situatedness in the world, and he intertwined language into the fundamental chiasm of flesh. However. . .his own efforts to disclose the 'wild being' of flesh remain challenged by his linguistic method. He seeks the 'mute' word *before* speech, to source the chiasm of language and world. . ... But language is not confined to words. Merleau-Ponty so often speaks of Cézanne's language of colors. (2010, p. 55)

Indeed, the nature of ekphrasis as a layered work of artistic creation that simultaneously traces the poet's sensory experience is a continual draw for Merleau-Ponty who, in his later work *Sense and Non-Sense*, moves toward the example of Cézanne and to the repeated synesthetic comparison of verbal and visual. The synesthetic "language of colors" stands in for Merleau-Ponty's claim that art—both visual and verbal—has a pedagogical function that changes the body. Take the following passage, for example:

> Learning to see colors is the acquisition of a certain style of vision, a new use of one's own body; it is to enrich and to reorganize the body schema. As a system of motor powers or perceptual powers, our body is not an object for an "I think": it is a totality of lived significations that moves toward its equilibrium. Occasionally a new knot of significations is formed: our previous movements are integrated into a new motor entity, and our natural powers suddenly merge with a richer signification that was, up until that point, merely implied in our perceptual or practical field or that was merely anticipated in our experience through a certain lack, and whose advent suddenly reorganizes our equilibrium and fulfills our blind expectation. (2012, pp. 154–55)

Here, Merleau-Ponty suggests that the literal acquisition of the knowledge of colors (this is red or that is blue) is not an intellectual exercise, but a means by which our body gains new significance in its interaction with the world. Art teaches us in this way, providing a new style of sensing, a new use for our bodies; in turn, our bodies respond to this call, reorganizing the sensory around this new experience. This is why Merleau-Ponty is so drawn to Cézanne. For Merleau-Ponty, Cézanne's "painting was paradoxical: he was pursuing reality without giving up

the sensuous surface, with no other guide than the immediate impression of nature, without following the contours, with no outline to enclose the color, with no perspectival or pictorial arrangement" (2012, p. 12). He goes on to explain, "In giving up the outline Cézanne was abandoning himself to the chaos of sensations" (p. 13) and therefore his paintings represent their own coming into being. The painter's abandonment of the self or an "I think" in the moment of perception moves beyond/before the subject object dichotomy, what Merleau-Ponty calls "the painter who sees against the painter who thinks" (13) in order to privilege "the process of expressing" (17). Merleau-Ponty uses the language of the critic in these descriptions of Cézanne, but, as I have argued above and elsewhere,[4] the language of ekphrasis is a lyrical language, not a critical one. Merleau-Ponty claims, "only one emotion is possible for this painter—the feeling of strangeness—and only one lyricism—that of the continual rebirth of existence" (18). The poems that follow will take up these two intertwining strands of ekphrasis—the strange and the lyrical—moving beyond critical description and into the embodied poetics of perception.

5.2 Feminist Disruption of the Sensory: Margaret Atwood's Political Ekphrasis

"Try that posture, it's hardly languor" (l. 2), commands Olympia, the speaker of contemporary Canadian writer Margaret Atwood's 1993 ekphrastic poem, "Manet's Olympia." The poem goes on to characterize the "indoor sin" (l. 10) of the prostitute in her own bed and the discomfort of the model's posing body, all artifice and sharp angles. Then there is the gaze of the maid who, according to Atwood, looks on the nude form judgmentally thinking in "an invisible voice balloon: Slut" (l. 13). But, Atwood wants her reader to see something the late-twentieth or twenty-first century viewer may miss, something that captures what was so subversive about this infamous Manet painting in the first place. As Janet Malcolm puts it, "Manet's *Olympia* shocked viewers at the Salon of 1865 because instead of a rosy, complaisant nymph rising from the waves surrounded by cherubs, it showed a pale, self-assured prostitute lying on her unmade bed" (p. 12). Indeed, Atwood asks the contemporary reader to:

> Consider the body,
> unfragile, defiant, the pale nipples
> staring you right in the bull's-eye.
> Consider also the black ribbon around
> the neck. What's under it?
> A fine red threadline, where the head

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[4] See Keefe (2011).

was taken off and glued back on.
The body's on offer,
but the neck's as far as it goes. (ll. 14–22)

In these lines, Atwood's bitingly witty reversal of the gaze allows the model's nipples to "star[e] you right in the bull's-eye," forcing you, the reader, to consider the body's very materiality, a thing defiantly "on offer" but only as far as the neck. The uncanny head that's been "taken off and glued back on," like the head of a broken doll, becomes both object and agent by the end of the poem, but not before Atwood has identified another viewer of the image, "someone else in this room. You, Monsieur Voyeur" (ll. 26–17). Here, the repeated second-person address to the reader become the "you" of the voyeur, a "you" that encompasses the gaze of the male artist and our own looking as readers/viewers in one final gesture of defiance. Perhaps not surprisingly, that gesture is speech:

I, the head, am the only subject
of this picture.
You, Sir, are furniture.
Get stuffed. (ll. 30–33)

In speaking back to the gaze (here gendered male), this poem can be read as an inversion of the Medusa model of ekphrasis, which casts the image as still, silent, and feminized, offered up for the taking of the male poet's verbal control. Far from offering a simple act of description of the painting that inspires her, Atwood works directly against the Medusa model by inverting its power dynamics to overtly challenge traditionally gendered representations and rewrite the subaltern into a position of empowerment. In giving voice to the silent posing woman as she imagines Olympia telling the viewer/voyeur to "get stuffed," Atwood implicates the viewer in a troubling history of the male gaze as well as the specific historical reception of this image[5] and uses the mode of ekphrasis to re-order and disrupt the perceptual experience of the painting for contemporary viewers.

The situation of contemporary ekphrasis in a digital age (an age in which images are freely available via the internet, media, public and even virtual museums) is unique in its demand that readers simultaneously read the poem as we re-read/view the image. Because of this overwhelming availability of images, creating/recreating shock itself becomes a tool of the ekphrastic poet to fix the reader's attention on certain details in the image—that is, to force the reader into taking the time to reconsider his or her own perception, as Atwood does in making what may seem like a silent nude to many viewers into a strange, disturbing, and funny encounter— an uncanny broken doll, an angry speaking picture, a defiant and sarcastic woman in full possession and embodiment of the meaning of her posed body.

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[5] As US poet laureate Natasha Trethewey has put it, "Historically, women's roles in the service of art is [sic] clear in how mad people were at Victorine Meurant, who was the model who posed for Manet's 'Olympia.' Rather than really getting mad at Manet, people got mad at her because she was this brazen hussy who dared stare out of Manet's painting" (Haney p. 28).

Phenomenologically, Atwood uses the space of the poem to interfere with our perceptual experience, forcing us to consider details like the black ribbon around the neck, suggesting a new, ominous association of the ribbon detail as the thin thread that hides evidence of this woman's decapitation. We now have a new sensory response—a quite visceral and uncanny one—interjected into whatever our original bodily response to the woman's nudity may have been. At the same time, Atwood expands the visual field to include the voyeur and in doing so, subverts our embodied perception of the object, putting us as viewers/readers disturbingly out of touch with our own sensing by making us focus on it. Our own bodies have been drawn into the frame and objectified. To use Merleau-Ponty's words, this poem "throws our image of the world out of focus, distends it, and draws it toward fuller meaning" (1993, 115). The poem teaches us something we will never forget about this image—we can never again view this woman, or perhaps any reclining nude, in the same way again.

5.3   Marianne Moore's Curatorial Pedagogy

It has been well established that the American modernist poet Marianne Moore was continuously drawn to the world of visual art. She studied drawing and painting as a child and her journals, letters, and scrapbooks reveal that she continued to sketch throughout her life. Her involvement in the contemporary art scene was not only a product of her editorship of the *Dial*, for which she reviewed several exhibitions, art books, and galleries, but also of her personal interest and attraction to the unique ways of looking exemplified by painting, photography, sculpture, and other art media. She saved numerous articles about current artistic trends, such as cubism and its related movements, which she was introduced to through her involvement with Alfred Stieglitz's gallery *291*. In contrast to Atwood's deliberate challenge to the viewer's perception in "Manet's Olympia," Moore's poems about art reveal an imaginative pull toward the moment of the painting or art object's creation, a desire to recreate the founding perception such that the poems reveal the trace of the artist's own embodied perceptual experience. In Moore's ekphrastic poems, the poet herself emerges as a kind of volunteer museum docent, a not-quite-expert who struggles in her mediation between the visual and the verbal in order to educate about beauty, craft, and symbolic meaning. We know Moore as a collector of artifacts, words, tales, and pictures. Through her ekphrastic work, we begin to see her as a curator of an unnamed and invisible museum,[6] an "imaginary possessor" for whom the ekphrastic poem becomes a distilled space in which to view the art from multiple perspectives—to imaginatively "own" it, touch it, feel it as if turning it about in our hands. Moore becomes curator, docent, and audience/viewer,

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[6] For further readings of Moore as a collector and within the museum, see Loizeaux (2008, pp. 80–93) and Catherine Paul (2002), especially Chapter 4 (pp. 141–193).

collecting, explaining, and justifying her collections based on her own taste, thereby erasing the hierarchical distances between who can buy art, who can teach and arrange a collection, and who can observe the art on display.

As early as 1964, critics such as A. K. Weatherhead were noticing Moore's particular use of perception and visual description within her poems. Weatherhead notes two distinct types of vision, that of "the close-up," a focused look by which the poet observes minute details and describes the accurate particulars of an object or scene, and that of the "bird's-eye-view," which takes in a "general panorama" of a scene without a demand for accuracy (1964, p. 482). This parallels Merleau-Ponty's distinction between figure and ground, emphasizing the body's alternation between the two as it experiences the object. In her more recent study of Moore and visual art, Linda Leavell updates Weatherhead's two types of vision to three modes of vision: an observational mode, which Leavell claims is most natural for Moore and which most closely resembles the phenomenological act of description, with "the playful, ironic delight in surfaces and oddities that characterizes [the poem] 'The Steeple-Jack'"; an intellectual, didactic mode that seeks to analyze the image; and a spiritual mode in which poetry can "educate visualization, refine the language, and, by threatening the tyranny of imprecision, liberate the individual" (1995, pp. 216–217). In the "The Steeple Jack," Moore insists on mediating the visual of the landscape from a distance, as the artist might have. This kind of distanced vision is described in relation to art by Norman Bryson in *Vision and Painting*, as "the gaze": a "prolonged, contemplative [look, that regards]. . .the field of vision with a certain aloofness and disengagement" (1983, p. 94). However, Moore is anything but aloof and disengaged, hoping to engage with the scene in the same embodied way as she imagines the engraver Albrecht Dürer would likely have viewed it. What Moore connects with in the poem is this artistic distance, paralleled with the "bird's-eye-view" of the steeple-jack, that allows the artist to change the colors of his watercolor from the representational "pine green" to the more abstract expressionist "peacock blue and guinea gray" (l. 15) just as Moore shifts from the initial scene of a seaside town to the exotic climate of the "banyan, frangipani, or/ jack-fruit trees" (ll. 37–38). Moore is drawn to what she imagines as the artist's *style*, in Merleau-Ponty's sense of the word, "the emblem of a way of inhabiting the world, of treating it. . .in short, the emblems of a certain relationship with being" (1993, 91). And yet, while Brodsky's "whole-body seeing" argument suggests that we might be able to gain some embodied sense of how the artist *saw* something, in this instance the visual artist's "representation" is merely imagined. As Bonnie Costello points out, Dürer's sketches did not always come from direct observation; he was "a realist of the imagination and not of nature." Costello explains,

> Moore admires Dürer as an artist at once of originality and precision (criteria she also set for herself), but points out that in the best pictures he has obtained his sense of fact second hand, filtered through prior representations, a tendency of course akin to her own drawing of the particular from books, pictures, films. (1981, p. 194)

In a July 1928 *Dial* review of an exhibition of Dürer works Moore asserts that "liking is increased perhaps when the concept is primarily an imagined one"

(*Collected Prose* p. 203). In the poem, Moore parallels the imaginative work of the poet with that of the artist by aligning her vision with Dürer's.[7]

Because the medium of a wood block or copper plate records the artist's bodily movement, prints such as Dürer's deictically point to the moment of their creation, a literal trace of the artist's own body. In this way, though they are reproducible, they are indivisible from their embodied moment of origin. They point to what Bryson has called the "founding perception" or the formation of the image in the artist's mind, and also to the body of the artist, which is present in each line of the carving into copper, as a stroke of ink in Chinese painting reveals the movement of the hand (Bryson 1983, p. 89). With each line, the spectator can imagine Dürer moving the plow in the copper plate or wood block, a medium that records every touch permanently within its surface. Moore's intervention is to set the poem at this moment of the founding perception, a tactic that further energizes the experience of the poem by re-creating through imagination the perceptual experience of the artist. Moore becomes an imaginary possessor as she takes on the embodied experience of another artist, seeking to see through his eyes the visual possibilities brought into focus by an engagement with the scene at hand. In writing the poem, Moore has in mind "a small Turner-like water-color of the Tyrol," possibly Dürer's 1495 painting *View of the Arco Valley in the Tyrol*. However, the seaside scene described in this poem is one that comes out of Moore's own imagination, not the poet's meditation on or reaction to a specific art object. By maintaining a distanced view, Moore has expanded the frame of the picture to include the scene of its making, a "notional" or imaginary ekphrasis that engages her wonder about the image's creation.

In "Nine Nectarines," a poem that serves the pedagogical function of Leavell's spiritual mode, Moore describes the painting of nine nectarines and a unicorn-like creature, the kylin, on the surface of a porcelain plate. Interestingly, Moore's description barely references the art object of the painted porcelain, except to emphasize its status as a "much-mended plate" that has presumably been used as a functional object but is now recontextualized as an art object. Instead, Moore focuses on the nectarine itself and offers a detailed consideration of its creation and the natural history of its existence, questioning whether it is artificially cultivated or a natural adaptation of the peach. As Robin Schulze (1998) has carefully traced in her article claiming Moore as a nature poet, in "Nine Nectarines" Moore defends

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[7] As Leavell notes, Moore and Dürer were very alike: "Like her he was an innovator, heralding a new period in art history; also, like her, he was fascinated by detail and influenced by technology. Printing was still a new invention, and Dürer made the woodcut and copper engraving respectable art forms" (215). In making a respectable art form of the engraving, Dürer also helped to introduce a major shift in the relationship between words and images. That is, because of their relatively easy reproducibility, woodcuts and engravings were used in texts as either functional, accurate representations (as the photograph would initially be considered) or as illustrations. Both functions established these prints with a hierarchically lower status than their verbal counterparts. However, Dürer's influence made reproducible prints equal and independent art objects by freeing them from the responsibility of translating words into images (as in an illustration) or representing with accuracy (as a news photo would).

the nectarine, siding with Darwin and refuting the claim of the nectarine as "derivative." This defense of the nectarine includes a defense of its symbolic meaning in Chinese myth and culture. As Schulze points out, "The nectarine and the peach, ancient fruits thought to originate in China, serve as emblematic motifs in Chinese art and symbolize immortality and the promise of eternal spring" (Schulze 1998, 7). Moreover, the defense of the kylin's mythological importance as a sort of hybrid animal undervalued by scientific reasoning parallels that of the nectarine, both instances privilege the imaginative over and above the scientific.

By emphasizing the value of the mythic over the scientific, Moore reveals her pedagogical intent to use ekphrastic poetry to return the reader to the wonderment of a "founding" perception. In earlier versions of the poem, which compare the Chinese plate to British china adorned with scenes of hunting and cultivated landscapes, "Moore. . .fashions a strenuous argument against deforming control of the natural world that juxtaposes two very different views of nature: the progressive, scientific perspective of the West that works to dominate and use nature, and the conservative, philosophical perspective of the East that, in Moore's view, humbly accepts the integrity of nature and its processes" (Schulze 1998, p.11). In the final version of the poem these comparisons between different sets of china plates are revised away, and the Eastern attitude toward nature is reflected more subtly through Moore's description of the style of painting. The nectarine, while it is a naturally occurring mutation of the peach, is more wild, wondrous, and less precise than the peach. In the poem the nectarines are arranged by two's, symmetrically down the branch except for the odd, ninth nectarine that hangs as "a single one/on twigs that/grew the year before" (ll. 3–4). While, as with "The Steeple-Jack," we do not have a specific work of art to reference for this poem, we can assume a particular style of Chinese brush painting. We can imagine the "uninquiring brush" made of bamboo and held upright in the hand of the painter. We can see the minimal, quick, elegant strokes that, while themselves precise, render a delicate "half-moon leaf-mosaic" out of the orderly nectarines (ll. 16, 12). These few strokes can render the globe of the fruit with recognizable color and depth, but they are a stylized rendition of the fruit, hardly the detailed biological sketches of the flora and fauna in Moore's own notebooks. This Chinese style of painting with its flat surfaces and rich colors leads Moore away from the depth of precision, visual detail, and textured surfaces of an artist like Dürer into a different style. Instead of adding linguistic texture through detailed scientific and biological language as she has often done in other plant or animal poems, here Moore allows the language to reflect the simple brushstroke. She layers words as the painter would layer color:

> [the four] pair's half-moon leaf mosaic turns
> out to the sun the sprinkled blush
> of puce-American-Beauty pink
> applied to bees-wax gray. . . (ll. 12–15)

To write simply "pink" or "gray" would be imprecise, even inaccurate, and Moore's layering of language (both in her use of colorful imagery and her references to heirloom strains of fruits) parallels her layering of the myth, meaning, and symbolism of the nectarine and the kylin. The Chinese painter himself embodies all the meaningful emblems of the poem: the precise imprecision of the painting style, the value of nature, and the mythic symbolism. In this poem, the Chinese master is a master of perception, one whose embodied creation is emulated by the poet. Just as the pointed star at the end of "The Steeple-Jack" must "on a steeple/[stand] for hope", the almost mythic cultural identity of "a Chinese" (sic) at the end of "Nine Nectarines" must stand for all of Moore's wonder at the lure of Chinese art. The unknown artist must bear the weight of the symbolic for Moore, a more difficult task than Dürer's since the knowledge of the artist him or herself is imprecise, is really replaced with the imaginary. Thus, while the vision in gazing at the plate may be "close up" in "Nine Nectarines", its symbolic scope is wide-ranging; it engages both figure and ground. For Moore, this Chinese artist embodies the purity and truth that makes good art, and the minimalist style embodies a way of being in the world that exalts nature rather than manipulating or interfering with it. The quick, simple brushstrokes of the carefully measured representation reveal much more than the actual fruit. This kind of art, with its mythical resonance and straightforward presentation is able to, as Leavell suggests of Moore's spiritual mode, "educate the individual" about a particular attitude toward nature and myth, here revealed as an ecopoetic lesson in sustainability. Moore takes on this pedagogical role of mediating symbols to the reader, encouraging wonder over and above scientific curiosity not only so that we understand the value of the art object, but so that we can appreciate its artistry, its symbolic meaning, and its history—all elements of the poem's experience that would be lost without this new perceptual apprehension of the sensational experience that the ekphrastic poem enables.

Both "The Steeple-Jack" and "Nine Nectarines" have emphasized that dismantling, abstracting, confronting, and rearranging is the work of the aesthetic of collection. In Moore's poems, she does this work through accumulating eclectic sources and weaving together associations and symbolic meanings. In her ekphrastic poems in particular, Moore has chosen to align her poetic craft with the craft of the visual artist—Dürer and the Chinese artist are themselves dismantled and rearranged in order to construct larger perceptual meanings, in order to get the "truth" not by scientific investigation, but by igniting a sense of wonder and allowing the poem to embody a perceptual process, in both form and content, that again moves beyond simple description and engages the style or way of being in the world of each of these artists.

The poem "When I Buy Pictures" serves as Moore's own poetic statement revealing the process and potential of the ekphrastic lyric. Seeing and possessing are aligned as we read from the title —"When I Buy Pictures" – directly into the poem: "or what is closer to the truth/when I look at that of which I may regard myself as the imaginary possessor" (ll. 1–2). This enjambment emphasizes the double meaning of truth, a proximity between buying and looking, and between reality and the narrative of reality. Looking becomes the real truth of the poem;

Moore cannot buy all the fine art "pictures" she might want. The title of the poem, which if taken literally could only be in the voice of a very wealthy art collector or museum curator, is shown to be a sort of exercise in imaginary possession. Even the diction of the first few lines, the overwrought stuffiness of "at that of which I may regard myself" gives the impression of an official capacity. John Hollander, too, notes Moore's curatorial voice in her description of the tapestry in "Charity Overcoming Envy" as having "an echo of the kind of workaday ekphrastic prose one finds in an exhibition catalog, occasionally almost literally quoting from curatorial comment" (299). In this setting of an imaginary museum, the language of ekphrasis wavers from lyrical to prosaic.

"When I Buy Pictures" continues to provide a potential strategy of curating works of art. This strategy is surprisingly simple because it is based on pleasure: "I fix upon what would give me pleasure in my average moments" (l. 3). The list of works of art that follows is wide-ranging, drawing from functional art ("the medieval decorated hat box," "a square of parquetry"), impressionism ("an artichoke in six varieties of blue"), symbolic art ("the snipe-legged hieroglyphic"), and religious illustration ("Michael taking Adam by the wrist"). In the end, all these works must be enjoyable, not forcing "too stern an intellectual emphasis on this quality or that" (l. 13). In other words, the works must not force the viewer in to analysis of the image; they must not force meaning making but instead inspire it or call to the body to turn and look. The object calls to the poet because it is "lit with piercing glances into the life of things" and "acknowledging the spiritual forces which have made [them]" (ll. 17–18). All of Moore's careful descriptions of the Chinese artist and Durer's imagination fall away, and she simply desires to look at what calls to her. The use of language thus becomes a means of collecting loved objects. As Leavell suggests, for Moore, "to look at a picture or at a poem, or at a nude or an object or an animal, and really see it is to 'buy' it, to display it in the house that is the imagination. Each of Moore's poems is a room that contains the things she *sees*..." (1995, 132). Ultimately, Moore demonstrates how all art objects phenomenologically reveal their makers. This revelation can include the founding moment of perception, the object's historical past, its symbolic or mythic resonance, its relation to the art of nature, and its effect on the spectator. Moore's poems do more than serve as rooms to display because they display in the particular and ordered manner that a museum might: the pictures are hung as collections with precise lighting, and each art object is paired with the contextual commentary and interpretation of the museum docent, explained with the knowledge of the curator who describes the artistry, the history, and whose appreciation of the art reveals her intimate knowledge of the imaginative force that has created it. At the same time, these are loved and intimate objects, returned to again and again because of the body's recurrent desire to truly sense their being in the world.

5.4   The Pedagogy of Perception: A New Sense Organ

What the ekphrastic poems discussed above can teach us is just how delicate and fleeting our ability to sense with the whole body can be when our dominant way to express that perceptual experience is through language. When an artwork or a poem succeeds, it becomes representative of a new way of sensing for the body. It teaches the body to sense. As Merleau-Ponty puts it, "The operation of expression, when successful, does not simply leave to the reader or the writer himself a reminder; it makes the signification exist as a thing at the very heart of the text, it brings it to life in an organism of words, it installs this signification in the writer or the reader like a new sense organ, and it opens a new field or a new dimension to our experience" (2012, p. 188). In particular, the ekphrastic embrace between poem and art object can succeed in acting as a phenomenological trace, as sensation-in-language, and in doing so can become for the reader "an organism of words," or "a new sense organ." At the same time, however, the lyrical space of the poem also opens the reader up to other perceptual possibilities, as Atwood shows us, allowing the poet to purposefully challenge our sense of whole bodies. This creates a tear in the fabric of our perception in order to teach us to sense differently. In many cases, poets use ekphrasis to engage with art that they themselves do not understand or which has a certain detail that engages their wonder. Perhaps this is a detail that they simply love, or some aspect that they can't quite resolve or make sense of, or a way of being embodied in the style of the work that they are particularly drawn to. And they begin to focus their viewing on that detail (akin to what Roland Barthes has called the punctum in the photograph—a thing both strange and familiar) that draws the focus, that becomes figure to the ground of the painting. The poet's perceiving body is called to this detail which shines, eliciting the poet's desire to look from multiple angles, to layer multiple gazes. The poem becomes a linguistic record of the act of perception, while for the reader the poem is itself an art object to be called or drawn to. The poem then requires that we as readers read and read again, focusing on the details that call us, determining figure and ground, gaining our own grip on the object. In the classroom, exegesis of the poem forces us to take an analytic stance when really we experience poetry in the body. We can learn from the ekphrastic impulse to look and look again, to read and read again so that we begin to sense that the poem's language is the body's breath, its rhythm a beating heart. The poem calls us to return to our body, it is "essentially a modulation of existence" that "finds in the poetic apparatus the means to make itself eternal" (p. 152).

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Chapter 6
Rosetta's Moral Body: Modernist Lessons from the Dardennes

René V. Arcilla

Although no longer modern, modernist art still draws crowds. Try getting into MOMA on weekends. For all that, however, only the aesthetic movement's most blinkered fans would claim that it draws much interest, except negative, from educationists. Most of us have more important things to measure, promote, and thunder about than art. Furthermore, to the extent that we notice this particular art at all, we usually take it for a convenient whipping boy. Modernism is what happens when we turn our backs on the world in favor of sterile, elitist, "formalist" concerns.

No one can deny, though, that new forms of injustice are changing our world. Or more precisely, resurgent ones. The redoubled expansion of transnational, corporate neoliberalism following the collapse of communism and social democracy has historically placed us in a distinctive predicament. How can we possibly resist this social order if it is affirmed, in every corner of the globe and at every minute of the day, by interlocking media industries that drown out any contesting voice? Under these conditions, even we education scholars and practitioners, particularly those concerned with the state of our democracy, may be inclined to give the modernist project a second look. Modernist artworks, as I explain more fully in my book *Mediumism* (2010), typically stress and explore the material and formal properties of their mediums. One of the most powerful sources of representations of our experiences that support the current social order is cinema. I propose to examine how the alternative, counter-cinema of Jean-Pierre and Luc Dardenne rejects this supportive role. Their breaks with some of the formal conventions of mainstream movie making, breaks which make their films modernist, articulate a constructive response to our neoliberal predicament. In this fashion, they encourage us to appreciate the power of the cinematic medium to record truths that criticize the fantasies to which it so regularly gives rise. They illuminate how teaching films not

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only with an eye to their contents, but also with one to their formal features, may foster insights into our society outside the theaters.

Over the course of their last six fictional feature films, *The Promise* (1996), *Rosetta* (1999), *The Son* (2002), *The Child* (2005), *The Silence of Lorna* (2008), and *The Kid with a Bike* (2011), the Dardenne brothers have developed a signature style (*Two Days, One Night* (2014) was released in the US after this essay went to press and is not considered). At the center of it is a distinctive way of filming actors' bodies. These bodies are observed from an unusual proximity, often by a hand-held camera that trails, precedes, or otherwise moves around the actors as they move, sometimes concentrating on their hands, legs, necks, or other parts in action. The camera also studies the actors' faces, but often it finds only impassivity. Devoted to this close observation, the filmmakers evidently care much less about the conventional task of establishing an overarching context for their stories, one which discloses the characters' histories and motivations. Consequently, actions can begin and end abruptly, especially at the start and close of the film, and can proceed for stretches without any clear sense of direction. Although these formal departures from the norm have made the Dardennes' work instantly recognizable, they can be quite puzzling. How may we make sense of them?

Let me initially set aside two ways of replying to the question in order to clarify the kind of response I will be developing. One way of explaining why the Dardennes film actors the way they do is to refer to their aesthetic taste. They simply like how these images look. Now I do believe that some such judgment is at work, but the problem with settling for this kind of answer is that it gives up on comprehending this taste. Even if there remains in the end something idiosyncratic about it or taste in general, we may still be able to understand their taste at least partially and so have it make a difference to our own. A second, related way of explaining their filming approach is to root it in the particularities of their history. They are drawn to these images because the images remind them of certain experiences they have lived, consciously or unconsciously. Again, I do not at all deny the truth in such an account. However, few of us will have access to the relevant biographical facts of their lives, let alone to the facts' subjective significance for the Dardennes—nevertheless, we can *feel* that there is something right or wrong about their filming. It is a basis for this feeling that I would like to try to elucidate, one which must be rooted in a predicament that we and the Dardennes share. It will not be the whole story behind their approach, of course, but it should shed light on why some of us respond so sympathetically to their work.

For me, the reason this filming approach is so moving is that it dramatizes a coherent, political and moral engagement with the world. It is this engagement that renders their taste comprehensible. More specifically, this moral and political perspective makes a person's body visible in a certain way. I shall try to explain how, considering all six films and paying specific attention to *Rosetta*.

Let me start with the Dardennes' politics. In what sense is their recent corpus of work, so unlike their earlier, militant documentaries, still political? It is such because it continues to bear witness to the fact that our society is conflictually divided. It focuses on fringe characters, people very different than most of us

reading this, people whom many would normally ignore or look down on as losers, criminals, or pathological cases. They are struggling to make their way in society, yet the same rules of the game that enable us to establish a comfortable position for ourselves cast them out to the margins. These rules concern above all the competition for profit and the defense of property. They require that people like these must be placed under living conditions so desperate that they surrender themselves to exploitation. Our economic system in effect sacrifices these outsiders in order that its insiders may prosper. By drawing attention to this social division in film after film, the Dardennes confront us with the quintessential political question, in the words of the old IWW song: which side are you on?

Their perspective on the world is thus rooted in a political choice. Their camera remains literally at the side of these characters. The first shot of *Rosetta* is of a door bursting open and the eponymous woman rushing through, followed closely behind by the camera. The milieu into which we dive is hardly peaceful. It is charged by the struggle to survive. We witness Rosetta doing things for reasons that are obvious and urgent: she is trying to find the money, food, and shelter necessary to hang on another day. (This urgency is less pronounced in *The Son*, although the arrival of Francis at the training center dramatizes the sense that for many like him, their education there represents a last chance at a stable life.) Because the conditions for this struggle are socially imposed, however, the struggle belongs to a general state of war. The fight for existence is continuous with combat against an obscure, hostile force that holds one, and others in one's class, down. Rosetta cannot live in this milieu without suffering all the blows the rules of the game inflict on those that society needs to take advantage of. Again and again, doors are slammed in her face as she is steered toward the few open ones left for people like her, the ones her mother fell through. And on the path to her destiny, she learns to inflict blows of her own. Accordingly, each of the films is centered on a character who turns on his or her equally oppressed neighbor, who attacks someone close to him or her, who weakens still further the fabric of their community. Rosetta first lets Riquet almost drown and then actively betrays him.

Rosetta and the other films, then, are dramatic denunciations of our capitalist society. The political perspective of the Dardennes' challenges us to extricate ourselves from the violence in which we participate and which propagates itself through us. Yet how is this possible if the very rules that hold our society together in so many ways condone that violence? Indeed, as I observed at the start, how does one find support for rejecting this society if the latter has a monopoly on its representations, broadcasting them in powerful media like the movies? It is this question that broaches the films' moral dimension; furthermore, this questioning leads to a modernist revision of the films' formal conventions.

The Dardennes' answer has two basic parts. The first amounts to an explanation of how we may come to recognize, against society's ideological reassurances, the violence as violating. And the second part points to a path for overcoming it.

The sole way we can arrive at a proper understanding of the violence, the Dardennes intimate, is by acknowledging our guilt at having committed it. Prior to such a personal and moral admission, the violence is apt to seem simply part of

the way the world works: something bad but not evil. Although none of the films'
characters are sadists, they have evidently been taught that life is harsh and must be
accepted as it is. Young or old, they possess no sentimental illusions; they are
hardened to misfortune. Pleasure is fleeting; pain is always around the corner.
Nothing like a loving force reliably providing for their happiness plays a role in
their lives. What these human beings are nevertheless unprepared for, what sur-
prises them, though, is how they feel after *they* have hurt someone. Their society
offers them few words to articulate and deal with this feeling—but it enters and
moves them all the same. The narratives of these films chart the growth of the main
character's realization that he or she has fatally broken a real law.

Rosetta is accordingly a story that can be divided into four sections. In the
prelude, extending to the entrance of Riquet, we follow a representative day in the
life of the young woman. We watch her struggle with an employer who lays her off,
with her mother who has succumbed to alcoholism and prostitution, with store-
keepers who refuse to hire her but who bargain for the clothes she has scavenged,
with the landlord who would prefer to be paid in sex, and last but not least, with the
cold in her thin coat. It is hardly surprising that Rosetta at first takes Riquet for still
another enemy. But he brings her employment, friendship, and a chance at a normal
life in society, which inaugurates the second part of the story. It lasts until Rosetta
once again loses the work. The third section commences with her beginning to look
at Riquet differently, resentfully and schemingly, and ends when she informs on
him to the boss and takes over his job. In these three parts, the Dardennes portray
her transformation from a victim of the general violence to a transmitter of it. What
does not change, however, is her will: she acts singlemindedly and without com-
punction in her competition for a job.

This will starts to falter in the final stretch of the story, as Rosetta now has to
wrestle with her guilt at getting Riquet fired. That sentiment at first takes the
personified form of him chasing her on his motorbike like an ancient Fury, one
more external foe. But it roots itself more deeply inside her when he later shows up
among the customers, meekly asking for a waffle. The defeated enemy has been
replaced by an image of her own formerly suffering self. This image divides her
will. Can she pretend she does not know this person? Could she want to harm
someone like herself? Is this job really so desirable?

When Rosetta runs into her mother who lies drunk at the trailer camp, she
realizes that she is trapped. This is the point where the film most resembles another
classic: Robert Bresson's *Mouchette* (1967). As she would in Bresson's world,
Rosetta faces a nihilistic choice. Either she could continue to flee her miserable
situation, at the cost of turning herself into one of those people who adds to the
misery of others. Or she could accept her lot and numb herself like her mother. She
rejects both of these ways of half-life and, like Mouchette, decides on death instead.
Absurdly, though, grace intervenes—not in the form of Bresson's invitation to
believe in a tranquil afterlife, conveyed by Monteverdi's *Magnificat*, but in that of a
summons to a more engaged life in this world. At first, she is saved by her own
poverty: those of us who have access to unlimited supplies of gas in our suicide
attempts will not be so lucky. And then she is redeemed when Riquet, who shows up

at the camp this time in the guise of the exterminating angel, morphs at the very end into a different kind of figure. He is the one who helps her up after she has collapsed. Indeed, it could only be him.

I think this is the meaning of the look on Rosetta's face with which the film culminates. She recognizes at last that she is morally tied to Riquet. Throughout the events on the screen, she has been fighting for recognition from normal society as if she were in danger of disappearing. At one point, she believes she has achieved it; before falling asleep in Riquet's apartment, she engages in a dialogue with the voice of society she has internalized: "Your name is Rosetta . . . My name is Rosetta . . . You have found work . . . I have found work . . . You have found a friend . . . I have found a friend . . . You have a normal life . . . I have a normal life . . . You will not fall into the hole . . . I will not fall into the hole." But the moment is merely a moment and before long, she is back on the edge of the abyss. The recognition she craves from our society is by nature unsatisfying: how could it be if it demands that she deny part of herself, the part that is like the others above which it lifts her? She is bound to sense eventually that this kind of recognition that divides society divides her from herself—and hence is no true identification at all. But her concluding recognition of Riquet, accepting his recognition of her, is a different matter. It acknowledges that they are alike subject to a universal, primal, moral law, deeper than that of capital. Luc Dardenne, in his collected journal notes, *Au dos de nos images* [*On the Back of Our Images*] (*1991–2005*), affirms that "the human look, in which we can read simultaneously the desire to murder and its prohibition, is what cinema has for a vocation to capture" (Dardenne 2005, 16, my translation). The film closes with such a face-to-face, exchange of looks, an "optic," to use a word which Dardenne quotes from the philosopher Emmanuel Levinas. It opens us to the human face as if it were "the first word, the first address" (Dardenne 2005, 17, my translation).

Rosetta violated the prohibition against violence and it reasserted itself in her conscience. She must now acknowledge that she is a wrongdoer, someone who has cast herself out of nature itself. How can she live with this self-knowledge? She can do so only with the understanding aid of others like herself, others who have both absorbed society's violence and made the same, fatal mistake of dishing it out. Others who have accepted responsibility for living under a judgment. Rosetta and Riquet evoke the possibility of an alternative community, one ruled by a more vital conscience of what must *not* be done and supported by the mercy of others. So too do Igor and Assita in *The Promise*, Olivier and Francis in *The Son*, Bruno and Sonia in *The Child*, Lorna and Claudy in *The Silence of Lorna*, and Cyril and Samantha in *The Kid with a Bike*.

In the Dardennes' work, there does not appear to be any way to avoid being corrupted by our general climate of violence. Their political denunciation is all the stronger for leaving no refuge for innocence. Nevertheless, they suggest that we can resist and try to master our aggressive mores by submitting ourselves to the relentless trial of our guilt. This entails learning that we are bound to the persons we have wronged: we will never be at one with ourselves, at peace, until we confess our fault to them. Such a moral act is the beginning of an honest conversation on

how we may henceforth live together as humans struggling against dehumanization. Riquet and others may forgive the wrong, or they may not; I think that the Dardennes' emphasis, however, is less on any conclusive resolution than on opening communication. More generally, the films end on open-ended moments when the protagonists face the possibility, but only the possibility, of freely departing from their social tracking. Out of such departures, society can start to refound itself not on the hope for advantage but on the concern for our disastrous fallibility. When I ponder the last shots of the six films, shots in which the above pairs of characters are brought together by the law for a moment of communion (in *Lorna*, Claudy is represented by his imagined baby; in *The Kid*, the moment occurs just prior to the ending, at Cyril's resurrection by Samantha's call), I find that they all point tentatively to utopia. To a collective project to overcome the violence.

A brief word about the Christian echoes. One of the most thought-provoking qualities of the Dardennes' work is that it invites us to rethink, almost from zero, well-worn terms of our traditional moral language. What is sin? How could there be a law? Who is the judge? Why believe in redemption? Like Kryzstof Kieslowski's *Decalogue* (1988), their films demonstrate the contemporary pertinence of this language. Even more than Kieslowski, however, the brothers take up the challenge of doing so in a world that is assertively secular, where money rules.

Perhaps I am now in a position to reflect on the significance of the Dardennes' approach to filming actors. How does this approach dramatize their political and moral perspective? Let us first consider what this distinctive form precludes.

As I mentioned, it results in fewer establishing shots of a story's world as a whole. Unlike most movies, we are not provided as a rule with emblematic settings into which a character enters. This reluctance on the part of the filmmakers expresses an antipathy to detachment in general. The Dardennes do not assume a god's eye point of view. They rather attach us to their protagonists in as tight a manner as possible. We have to see things as these people see them, in bits and pieces and on the fly. Hence as we hurtle along beside Rosetta, it is not clear where we have come from or where we are planning ultimately to go. Our gaze is restricted to the obstacles we must avoid as we try to live from day to day, treading repetitively down the same ruts.

This desire to stay close to the main characters also rules out the picturesque. The characters are restless and so too is the camera. There are no breaks for beholding the world's beauty in stable, well-framed, harmonious images. Instead, Rosetta is too busy trying to stay alive. The Dardennes' approach expresses a fidelity to this struggle and a rejection of anything that would prettify it, that would deny it. They affirm the stance, exemplified by the critic Theodor Adorno, that suspects that truth in our capitalist era lies on the side of ugliness (Adorno 1997).

Indeed, this interest in miserable truth places their works specifically in the tradition of neo-realism, a movement that flowered in Italian film during the late 1940s and 1950s and that constituted much of the basis for André Bazin's influential theoretical writing (Bazin 1962). Such works stress a particular understanding of the cinematic medium: that it is above all one of documentary recording. Rather

than facilitating escape into fantasy, all artistry should be put in the service of showing a state of affairs that actually exists in the world independent of the film and any cosmetic distortion. This disclosure will be more meaningful when it is of something that we would prefer not to look at. In this respect, the neo-realist tradition represents an ongoing protest against the Hollywood tendency, no matter how far-out its flights of fancy, to naturalize and reinforce recognizable features of the world that play an ideological function in reproducing a particular social order. Accordingly, while the Dardennes and their colleagues employ a host of skills in staging, acting, shooting, and editing in order to compose a story in film, the ultimate aim is not the specific story, let alone any demonstration of virtuosity. It is the illumination of the world in which this kind of story regularly takes place. This is why the narrative of *Rosetta* is relatively simple and contains episodes attentive to daily, quite undramatic doings. These typical interactions with the world can tell us just as much about this world as cathartic turning points. For example, I find few images as poignant as the shot of Rosetta putting a worm on her fishing hook, her hands red with the cold. That flush cannot be made up.

Finally, the Dardennes' filming approach shifts the actor's expressivity away from the face. (In this, they depart sharply from Kieslowski who finds in his actors' faces Rembrandtesque portraits of haunted grandeur.) I earlier remarked that their characters' faces usually register little emotion; perhaps a more careful way of putting this is that they tend to remain stubbornly ambiguous and do not emit the stereotypic expressions. It is as if the filmmakers wanted to impede our reading of these people, our empathy with them. What could be a reason for this? I think it has to do with their social station. Because they are exposed to so much hardship and disadvantage, they lend themselves to being objects of pity. It would be so easy to sympathize with their plight, especially if we recognize the usual signs of pathos flashing across their faces. But in his notes, Luc Dardenne criticizes the media's tendency to reduce all who suffer to passive victims of misfortune. What gets glossed over is the meaning of their active struggle, particularly when that struggle revolts against us (Dardenne 2005). In contrast, the Dardennes' protagonists remain at bottom enigmatic and unpredictable; they cannot be taken for granted. However beaten down Rosetta is, we would not want to condescend to her: her spirit is too disconcertingly wild.

The Dardennes' approach, then, precludes detachment, the picturesque, cinematic escape, and facile sympathy. It abjures conventional means of placing the characters in a familiar world. This follows from the film's political perspective. The milieu of these characters is precisely separate from, even opposed to, the one most cinema-goers, let alone scholarly readers, live in. To see this, we have to be with them in the thick of their insecure world, and so disposed to a view that is much more unstable, preoccupied, and guarded than is normal for the "middle class." The Dardennes' politics makes certain conventions in filming actors, and certain ways of regarding people, no longer credible, at least not to everyone.

So what replaces these forms? How do the Dardennes positively present their characters? As I observed, they stress the person's moving body. It appears more important than any words the person utters; more important even than the causal

pattern of his or her behavior that forms the film's story. Why is this? I believe there are two main reasons.

The first derives from a central theme of these films I have repeatedly raised: that of struggle. The films are about nothing if not that. They concern the destiny of beings who are responding to their mortal vulnerability. These beings must exert themselves to protect themselves; sometimes, the only way to prevail will seem to require that they harm someone else. The beings of such a battle are thus touchingly destructible, on the one hand, and capable of acting as weapons, on the other. If we are looking for such double-sided beings, where else will we find them than in human bodies? Rosetta's, made visible by the actress Emilie Dequenne, viscerally materializes her exposure to pain and extinction. We feel in our own bodies the want and anxiety that drives it to the point of exhaustion. And yet that same body is capable of flinging someone into the water to drown, as she was flung by her own mother. For the Dardennes, the body is the focus of pathos generated by an unsheltered struggle with the physically threatening world outside.

What moves the body, though, comes from within. This is where the mystery resides to which the Dardennes return again and again to contemplate. As I described earlier, their characters inhabit an underworld that allows violence to fester. Little outside them, especially in the form of discourse, appears to check its spread. However, there is something inside that can awaken them to what they have done and what they consequently have to do. Although this conscience has few words available to make itself present to the mind, the Dardennes show that it is powerful enough to alter the movements of the body. Their protagonists do not explain their actions, either to themselves or to others, but inexorably they change. The most explicit example of this may be in *The Son*, where Olivier, in reply to Magali's shocked question of why he is ingratiating himself with the murderer of their son, declares, "I don't know." Across the film, he acts increasingly obsessed without understanding why, as if he were possessed. Similarly, Rosetta's erratic course of action, where she hesitates before pulling Riquet from the mud, then throws him into unemployment, and then throws her own job away, all proceeds without any evident comprehension until the very end. In the puzzling, changing behavior of these characters, we witness a kind of conversion taking place, one which will interrupt their class destiny.

A second reason for the Dardennes' emphasis on the body, then, is that it testifies to the possibility of a moral counter-education even in the absence of supporting discourse. No matter that society has relaxed strictures on violence; an unspoken law governs the characters' bodies. Their deeds have internal, initially invisible effects that are bound to teach them a lesson. As we follow these bodies, they are at first strikingly opaque. Their actions, like their very existence, appear contingent, without any fundamental reason. Furthermore, they seem so not only to us but to the characters themselves, who evince little interest in self-understanding. When the moral law is broken, however, a new force takes over. The characters find them-selves doing things that they not only do not understand but do not want to understand. But they will. It will take some time for this understanding to travel, as it were, from deep inside the guilty body, through its altered actions, to the mind;

only afterward will the character be ready to confess to the person he or she has wronged. In order to dramatize this time and let its instinctual necessity come into view, the Dardennes have developed an approach that registers the body's opacity, and its gradual lifting. From a back advancing and a whirl of arms and legs fighting for work, Rosetta grows into a collected look.

I hope I have broached some ways of understanding the Dardennes' approach to filming actors in the light of their class politics and their morality of fallenness and confession. This approach not only insists on an engaged attitude toward the films' characters and their worlds, but it dramatizes the mortal struggle and moral instinct in their bodies. The brothers' departure from the usual attention lavished by movies on an actor's flesh is thus inspired by something more than a purely aesthetic interest in form for form's sake, in a trivialized version of modernism. Their formal innovation discloses an inner source of the voice of political and moral resistance, one which may become increasingly crucial for us to heed as the media voices outside succumb to collusion. Indeed, by showing us, to the contrary, that films have the potential to do more than entertain us with ideological fantasies, the Dardennes, and teachers of their films, demonstrate the pertinence of modernist works to the struggles of our time.

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Chapter 7
A Note on the Scandals: The Role of Filmic Fantasy in Reproducing Teaching and its Transgressions

James Stillwaggon and David Jelinek

7.1 Introduction

Teachers have lately taken on a scandalous place in the public imaginary. News of teachers failing to raise student achievement in poor districts, changing students' grades on standardized tests to meet achievement benchmarks, collecting large salaries while on administrative leave, engaging in sex acts with one or several students, and revealing too much about their personal lives on social media has brought teachers into the public eye under a new and unflattering light. Some slandering of the teaching profession is strictly political, while other forms of teacherly indignity seem clearly personal, but one shared element among these various scandals is that their capacity to generate attention is directly tied to the disconnect between the public's ideal expectations of teachers and the all-too-human acts that give rise to scandal.

In this essay, we explore one source of public fascination with disgraced teachers, and to some extent, the impetus felt by some teachers toward acts that are impossible to justify within their own professional ethics. We argue that the public's interest in fallen teachers derives from the imagined ideal character of the teacher noted above, and acknowledge that this ideal is propagated through a variety of channels. While others have taken up the unimpeachable ideal as the product of a variety of social influences (Britzman 1986; Keroes 1999; Weber and Mitchell 1995), we focus specifically on the filmic representation of teaching as a site where an ideal fantasy of the teacher is both reflected and reproduced (Burbach

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and Figgins 1993; Dalton 1995, 1999) and where our unquestioned ideas about teaching might be considered in a different light.

In the first section, we draw attention to the authority of the teacher as it is presented in film. On the one hand, the physical positioning of the teacher in relation to the class and the film in relation to the viewer creates an imagined relationship of authority between the cinematic teacher and the living audience: the audience walks away believing that teachers know something even if the audience has learned nothing. On the other hand, the formal positioning of the teacher contributes to the narrative function of the film, in which the teacher teaches the student "[w]hat he is lacking," (Lacan 1961, I.11) creating the conditions of student striving by presenting teaching as beyond desire (Brooke 1987; Davis 1987; Felman 1982; Frank 1995; Stillwaggon 2008).

Yet, as we note in the first section, these norms of positioning, both formal and narrative, are often maintained in the breach. Teachers who get close to students on film do so by descending to their students' level, giving up their prized positions, and teachers whose desires are disclosed suffer the loss of their professional and personal identities. Complicating our common understanding of teachers as ideal ordered subjects is the fact that school films are filled with protagonist teachers who break the conventional rules of the school in order to serve their students, reinforcing the authority of the institutional role by demonstrating its loss while at the same time exhibiting the teacher as a tragic hero. In the second section, we consider the effect of cinematic teachers, as authorities in the eyes of the audience, transgressing the school order for the good of the students. Analyzing Zizek's (Fiennes 2007) claim that films give us our desires, we add that films only have the power to educe desire insofar as they provide their audience with a powerful and impossible fantasy, temporarily negating the symbolic order that constitutes and governs social life outside the theater.

But if Zizek is right, and films produce desires in their audiences not only in the context of the theater during the film's running time, but extended into daily interactions, we may expect that at times the publicly held ideal of the teacher, precipitated through the heroic *and* transgressive fantasies of individual teachers, will produce behaviors that cut violently against the moral grain of schools and society. Teachers' attempts to realize the fantasies of teaching they experience on the screen and to satisfy the problematic desires that these fantasies produce results in a rift in the symbolic order evaded in fantasy: the dream becomes a nightmare (Fiennes 2007) as the conflict between fantasy and the symbolic order offers us a glimpse of the drives that underlie human interactions. The public fascination inspired by teachers' disgrace lies precisely in the horror of this conflict: how can our rule-bound society give rise to motivations for which it cannot account?

In the third part of the essay, we follow out Zizek's claim that the fantasy-made-real becomes a nightmare to consider films in which the recognizable fantasy of the heroic teacher is exposed as concealing its own dangerous drives, and in which the erotic potential of teacher-student relationships realizes itself in transgressive pleasure rather than pedagogy. We consider the recent emergence of these explicitly sexualized themes in school films in light of a parallel growth in the

representation of real teacher-student sex scandals in the news. Against Zizek's (2000, p.388) defense of Mary Kay Letourneau as an ethical actor who refuses to "compromise her desire," we maintain that the representation of teachers on film has strong, unknown pedagogical effects on the viewing public, and that without a greater discourse around these fantasies and the emotions they produce, they may leave teachers with desires and other aspects of their identity they fail to understand.

While we use the term "school films" throughout the essay to designate those cinematic sites that reflect and reproduce our society's shared, impossible ideal of teaching, it should be noted from the outset that this shorthand does not refer to a film genre or type but instead includes a wide variety of films that happen to share the common feature of representing teachers. Our review of films in this essay alone includes an existential drama (*Jonah, Who Will Be 25 in the Year 2000*), a *Bildungsroman* (*The Paper Chase*), a dark comedy (*Election*) and a thriller (*Notes on a Scandal*). This fact is significant to our study because despite the diversity of films that portray teaching, the teachers portrayed throughout maintain their relationship to an imaginary ideal, exposing desires in their students, in the audience, and at times in themselves that offer both pedagogical promise and personal peril.

While the analysis of school films provides an opportunity for cultural critique generally (Beyerbach 2005; Chennault 2006; Cohen 1999; Farber et al. 1994), the ubiquity of the teaching fantasy is of special interest to teachers and students alike insofar as it offers a reflection, albeit darkly, of the social beliefs and expectations that structure pedagogical relationships. This is not to say that all teachers and students pattern their behaviors explicitly after the idealized characters they see on the screen, but rather that film is yet another formative text, a kind of public pedagogy that cannot be ignored if we are to understand the kinds of professional identities available to teachers. With a better working understanding of the teaching role that exists as part of our social structure before any particular individual steps into it, we can imagine a curriculum of teacher preparation focused as much on the question of teacher identity as it is currently focused on the practical demands of teaching methods. It is with this enhanced curriculum in mind that we consider the unspoken curriculum of teacher identity embedded in school films.

7.2 Positioning the Teacher

Britzman (1986) rightly identifies part of the impossible idealization of teachers as the result of a certain type of immaturity. As teachers serve as one of our earliest transferential objects, away from our original fascination with parental authority and projected onto various trusted persons in the world, they remain locked in that imaginary place, just as our parents do, even as we become educated toward their imagined authorial position. Despite the fact that we move beyond individual

teachers' authority, developing our fluency within various symbolic orders, the authority and imagined integrity of teaching remains.

As we have argued elsewhere (Stillwaggon and Jelinek 2011) films both reflect and reproduce the structural patterns by which teaching holds as an idealized authorial position in society, magnifying the significance of the teacher's place while producing unexpected variations in the manifestation of their authority. Just as Britzman's work suggests the development of a critical lens through which we may read pedagogical authority through the personal experiences of those subject to authority, we consider here what it might mean to read against the grain of the teacher's authority as it is manifested through popular media. It may be disappointing to hear that as rational adults we must continue to negotiate with media influences; we typically think of media as something we turn on and turn off, rather as something that turns us on or provides the conditions of possibility for our actions. But the moving power of the movies is precisely the reason both teachers and students bring them into the classroom either intentionally or unintentionally: having been moved, we seek to move others. We know that popular media shapes the way our students see the world; if we can grab hold of the media, or work within its expectations and norms, we might be able to use it to shape our students. The greater question that lies within the fundamental teaching fantasy of influence is whether we are capable of coming to understand the influence that media, among other sources, has already had upon us before we have the opportunity to manipulate it for our own purposes: how it has us before we have it.

Films set in schools, focused on young people's struggles to overcome the abject condition of youth and fulfill their human potential in adult society maintain a particular, sentimental hold on the popular imagination. Part of this hold, following Britzman, entails the fact that school films tend to reproduce the childhood fantasies of promised adult completeness and corresponding erotic striving toward self-realization that continue to haunt the adult psyche. Contributing to these narrative elements, however, school films draw from a formal quality of filmic storytelling that lends itself to engendering and maintaining desire through fantastical images.

On the one hand, the imagery of the filmic narrative must attract the viewer or its art would fail; on the other, the idea that we might be so easily manipulated draws attention to the fact that even our desires – those gaps and lacks that shape who we are – are never entirely our own. This loss of self in the desire inspired by fantastical images becomes even more engrossing and worrisome when we think about the fantasies that inform institutional identities such as teachers and students, in which the realization of a public good depends upon our performance of particular desires and beliefs. How can the serious work of education be so dependent upon a play of images and fictional narratives?

One way of understanding the public, pedagogical power of the movies is to consider the way the film positions its audience in much the way the authority of the teacher positions the student. In a movie theater – and to a lesser but still relevant extent at home – we, the viewer, accept the structural establishment of an authority: specifically the screen and, by extension, the *auteur* we project beyond the screen. It can be argued that the larger the screen, the more authoritative the relationship, but

in general, whether the screen size is relatively modest (as in all too many theaters these days) or large (as in all too many homes), the screen is angled down at us from above. We sit and look up while the screen looms in a position of authority. We accept this positioning and role as long as we continue to watch. The only alternative is to walk out, to withdraw.

The screen has something to impart; for us to learn, we must sit, listen and abide. The screen is in a position of knowledge, of information, even if it is in the form of entertainment. It is the supplier, and we in turn supply it with its power by serving as the receivers. We must remain silent: it is not a sports event or an experiment in social media. Distractions must be avoided; cell phones turned off. As in the classroom, the most devout moviegoers can be recognized by their abstaining from eating, whispering or passing of notes.

The relationship of film to viewer parallels that of teacher to student. When one sees a film about the classroom, a mirroring takes place: we sit and watch as students on the screen sit and watch the teacher. Larger than life – in dramatic poise and actual size – filmic teachers are given great authority without ever having to speak. When they do, all people – fictional and real – listen.

Teachers assume and are granted a position of authority – the *sujet suppose savoir* – simply by being assigned the title of "teacher" but also by being assigned an actual physical place within the classroom: often standing, in the center, at the head, behind the largest desk, at the podium, in the light, whether or not this position conforms to their will. Students are grouped together, an unidentified mass left quiet in the darkness, smaller in stature with smaller desks and chairs, seated and in attendance.

A scene from *Jonah, Who Will Be 25 in the Year 2000* (1976) illustrates the role of film in positioning the audience as students in relation to the teacher. The scene opens with a shot from the perspective of a student sitting in the middle of a crowded classroom. Students shuffle and giggle as an administrator enters the room and stands at the desk, announcing that their history teacher has retired and introducing M. Perly, who will be teaching the class. The class' nervous, adolescent giggling explodes into laughter when the administrator departs and Perly hoists an enormous briefcase onto the desk and removes a cutting board, a metronome, a butcher's cleaver, and several feet of blood sausage.

"Remember, my father was a butcher and my mother sang operetta very well," Perly exhorts the students, enforcing a point that is both hyper-personal and yet transformed to suit the aims of the classroom. Setting the metronome upon the desk and appropriating the sausage as a metaphor for time, he launches into an impossibly broad lecture about repetitions in history that allow for prophets and historians to see beyond their own historically-bound consciousness. From hysterical laughter the students turn to rapt silence and the camera angle turns 180°, panning across the faces of the students, amazed and attentive (except one, who sleeps). The student fantasy of a teacher who is both recognizable and knowledgeable is matched in its mirror image: the teacher's fantasy of students who are taken aback, moved, and set aflame by what the teacher has to say.

The content of Perly's lecture seems entirely replaceable: in *To Sir*, *With Love* (1967) Thackeray achieves the same adoration with a lesson that involves making a salad. But the fact that Perly's lecture focuses on gaps in time is reinforced by a brief segment cut into the scene in which a man gets out of bed, retrieves a gun from a dresser drawer, considers shooting himself, but shoots a clock instead. The segment trains our focus back on the fantastical significance of the teacher's lecture: that the study of history reveals an escape from the tedious suffering of time. The lesson of the film recapitulates the teacher's words: "In total synthesis, time disappears." Even the monotony of the classroom can be overcome through the ideal meeting of the teacher's fantasy (students who desire to know what the teacher knows) and students' fantasy (a teacher who knows what students want to know). This escape from time is not only possible but manifest: thanks to editing, the entire lesson takes about eight minutes, leaving out all the pauses, repetitions, and awkward exchanges common to real classrooms and ending with the students' thunderous applause.

If the school film makes its audience susceptible to the authority of the fictional teacher by presenting a fantasy of teaching, enhanced by the formal filmic elements of selective perspectives and editing, as well as the authority of film itself, these elements take on a more palpable weight when employed in the narrative of the film. In the first scene of *The Paper Chase* (1973) – as the opening credits role – indistinguishable students take their places to become part of the auditorium's architecture. The titles have faded when a recognizable individual is presented: Professor Charles W. Kingsfield, Jr., whose name alone is particular and resonate. Positioned on an elevated stage behind a lectern, he commands the class with an authoritative voice, steering questions toward students chosen at random from the navigation aide of a seating chart. Behind his dais, the regal Kingsfield preaches forth on Contract Law. Just as citizens are bound by contract, so too the students to the teacher, class and school, so too the audience to the screen. Latecomers to either form will be made to feel uncomfortable, as if they have missed something essential.

But the teacher's standing in school, contingent as it is upon physical and hierarchical position, is also susceptible to downfall precisely by virtue of its success in educing student desires. Later in *The Paper Chase*, the student protagonist Hart enters the empty classroom and steps up to the lectern in an imagined reversal. The result is a revealing scene: Hart assumes Kingsfield's position only to look down upon his own place, which presents itself as a disturbingly empty chair. On the one hand, this visualization from the perspective of the professor shows Hart the crisis of identity that attends his feelings of lack: from the professor's place of power, he is merely another transient figure occupying a perennially empty chair. The only way for Hart to feel the kind of authority to which he aspires would be to look down from the seat of power and see another student looking up at him with the same confusion of fear and striving that he recognizes in himself. But it is precisely in recognizing the necessity of an abiding student to his own ascension to authority that Hart also begins to understand the contingency of Kingsfield's authority on his own striving. In a classically Hegelian (1977) reversal, Hart

realizes that the story in which he participates is actually his, not Kingsfield's – a point that is underscored by Hart's burglary of the library archives to read Kingsfield's notes on their common precursors:

> I am almost the living extension of the old judges. Where would they be without me? I carry in my mind the cases they wrote. Who would hang their pictures if there were no law students? It's hard being the living extension of tradition.

Hart's crime, spurred by his desire, is significant to the reading of school films because it demonstrates a transgression of the social order in which the teacher has the answers and the power. At the same time, Hart's uncovering of the teacher's desire begs the question of how films, as reflections of that social order, contribute to the teacher fantasy of student desire and the student fantasy of teacher authority mentioned above. In the next section, we draw on some general aspects of film in relation to fantasy as an aspect of the human condition as way of understanding how filmic teachers both help to shape and to undo the public ideal of teaching.

7.3 From Fantasy to Transgression

If the school film is successful in reinstating the fantasy of a *sujet suppose savoir*, thereby placing the audience in the position of the desiring student, the narrative characteristics described above do not accomplish their task entirely on their own, nor does the formal structure of the filmic classroom rely solely on the collective experience of the audience as subjects of the conditions of contemporary schooling. Films of all narrative genre operate on their capacity to deliver a fantasy of completeness in relation to which each member of the audience finds herself lacking: the power of the movies comes from the fact that they meet us where some consciousness of our incompleteness is already at play.

Zizek's claim that films give us our desires can be better understood through an exploration of the role of fantasy in educing desire. The filmic fantasy offered by the screen would seem to be a fulfillment, but it instead creates a kind of pleasurable dissatisfaction – the realization of something wanting in the subject. The world of the screen is a projection of some aspect of the unconscious, both in structure and content, but at the same time freed or stripped of the ordinary regularity of habits and routines within which our lives pass. According to Zizek (2007), this break achieves two ways of looking at human life. First, it reveals structures of the psyche, including its motivations and limits. Second, it allows an escape from the mundane, the experience of a fantasy we either could not or would not pursue in our ordinary lives. The fact that these fantasy images are nonetheless that which we turn to in order to understand ourselves leads Zizek to claim that the images are somehow more real or more revealing than the lives of the viewers. But how do the fantasy images of the cinema provide the viewer with desires she would not otherwise have?

Rules are meant to be broken. While human life has come to be defined largely in terms of linguistic, moral, and other social rules, we know our limits and understand the rules that define us by trespassing, transgressing, and breaking from the expected in an affirmation of the human tendency to refuse its environing conditions. Any totalizing set of rules outlining a way of life carries with it the pleasure (*jouissance*) of breaking with the rules as a way of affirming the idea that we cannot be contained by them. As Camus (1991, p.11) claims, "Man is the only creature who refuses to be what he is." To this we might add: "and enjoys the perversity of being otherwise."

The limit of our *jouissance* is that in it we reaffirm the power of the rules we break. This limit can be explained further by separating it into subjective and objective terms. Objectively, without the existence of the rules that dictate the operation of the mundane, transgression would not be possible. A breaking that served not only to break with but to destroy existing rules would quickly erode the conditions of its own possibility. On the other hand, the experience of breaking limitations, going beyond the permissible, is experienced by the human subject as beyond pleasure, as too much pleasure to be maintained beyond the momentary break. The joy of breaking from the given, of asserting oneself, is accompanied by the fear and dread of becoming detached from the very rules that make sense of the world and the transgressive act itself. Worse, a prolonged experience of *jouissance* reveals to the subject that there is no such thing as a mere negation of rules: the space of *jouissance* itself is replete with the terrifying insistence of the drives that threaten the ego's fragile stability. It is this unbearable nature of *jouissance* that leads Zizek to claim that the realization of fantasy is a nightmare. The joy of breaking is thus like a vacation: a journey to a somewhere else that would be unbearable if it were not for the common tedium of the home that waits at the end of the trip.

The limit of *jouissance* is only a real limit, however. That is, it is only problematic insofar as transgression cannot be a regular feature of ordinary life. While our pleasure in breaking can never be brought into the real in any durable way because of its destructive capacity with regard to the rules that constitute human life, it can nevertheless be maintained in fantasy: an interior affirmation of the self powered by the rejection of those discursive social norms that in turn mark the limits of the subject. Fantasy does not participate in the paradoxical problem of *jouissance* insofar as it has no need of being actualized. Instead, fantasy relies upon the power of ordinary human norms to fuel its existence as an escape from the Symbolic order into a separate realm in which rules are suspended. Film involves the fantastical representation of social transgressions. It shows us everything that we cannot or would not dare to do. The power of film is that it allows us to experience illicit transgressions secondhand, playing a part in the *jouissance* of the characters on the screen while at the same time protecting ourselves from the fantasy made real, the nightmare.

The hero of the cinema, through whom we vicariously experience the pleasure of breaking the rules, has at least two characteristics that we lack. First, he has the transgressive joy of breaking with the ordinary, the story that claims him out of his

own life and draws him into a narrative where nothing is actually at stake despite the chaos that threatens him, as ordinary rules have been suspended for the sake of the vacation from human norms. The hero has endured the nightmare, providing him with a position of knowledge to which the audience has no access. The relationship of the viewer to the hero is therefore analogous to that of the child to the parent, the student to the teacher: in each binary, the former looks to the latter as a *sujet suppose savoir*, who carries the knowledge that completes human subjectivity. As the child's desires are directed toward the place where the parent or teacher stands in an attempt to achieve the knowledge and authority of the parent, the viewer's desires drive towards the filmic hero, demanding the viewer to create himself in the model of the hero if she is to understand herself.

This process of emulation, this following through of desire toward a filmic fantasy, produces new opportunities and difficulties in various fields of human flourishing depending on the degree of difference between the conditions of the fantasy and the conditions of ordinary life. A person might find himself buying a fedora or a pistol, not because it fits with the demands or aesthetics of his corporate work life or suburban home life, but precisely because it does not: the synechdocal effect of possessing a piece of the impossible makes the actual more livable. Fantasies that are closer to home, or closer to work, such as those presented in school films, have a potentially greater and more thorough motivating force, at times becoming a prime, if unrecognized, motivating force in choosing a career or making decisions within one's line of work. To that degree, however, these close-to-home fantasies also carry with them a greater threat of confusing the fantasy as a sustaining fiction with a realizable ideal.

In the next section, taking this construct of film, fantasy, desire and transgression as a way of interpreting human interactions, we turn to some well-known teacher transgressions and the explanations and justifications offered by the offenders. Beginning with films that recognize the transgressive potential embedded in the ideal fantasy of teaching, we explore some of their common themes and employ these in coming to understand their real-life counterparts.

7.4   The Dream as a Nightmare

Sheba Hart, the troubled teacher at the center of *Notes on a Scandal* (2006), fulfills all the requisite characteristics of the heroic filmic teacher. Attractive, intelligent, pale in a sea of diverse skin tones, creative, caring, and privileged, she arrives to her new inner-city teaching post from afar and above, but without making a show of her difference. As Barbara Covett, the frustrated narrator of the film describes her, "Hard to read the wispy novice. Is she a sphinx or simply stupid? Artfully dishevelled today. The tweedy tramp coat is an abhorrence. It seems to say "I'm just like you." But clearly she's not." Most importantly, Sheba is not a teacher. While the experienced teachers at her school argue about policies and reports, the audience is instructed to look upon Sheba as one who might be able to make a difference

because of her difference. In all of her characteristics, she inherits a tradition of the filmic fantasy of heroic teaching, in which the teacher's outsider perspective allows her to see the ways that school rules are oppressing student voices, and to position herself in opposition to these norms.

But just when we expect Sheba to make a break-through with her students in the anodyne manner taken up by so many filmic teacher heroes, either by initiating a hip-hop poetry curriculum or intervening in a student's family life, we see her instead losing her elevated position of authority by performing oral sex on a student. The scene is presented in a manner both judgmental and celebratory, ambivalent at best in its condemnation of the act. The partial view of her dalliance with 16 year old Steven is intercut with scenes from a Christmas pageant occurring on the same campus at the same moment: students and teachers applauding and singing "Glory Be to the New Born King."

Confronted with her crime, Sheba's excuses and explanations are pitiful, but they demonstrate the way in which the attempt to realize a fantasy, and the teaching fantasy in particular, opens the possibility of transgressive pleasure in which the horror of the real is experienced through the bodily drives that are typically restricted by social norms. Sheba's interest in Steven is initially aroused by the possibility that he might function as the occasion for her realization of a teaching fantasy: the teacher as savior. As Steven has been excluded from the standard curriculum due to his special needs and claims trouble at home, Sheba must transgress the bounds of her professional duties and outside the official rules of the school in order to fulfill the imaginary ideal that guides her profession. Once the bounds of school norms are overstepped in order to approach the realization of the fantasy, however, the very rationalizations by which one would choose to overstep one's bounds are equally lost. This loss of reason, or the limits of the symbolic order that provides the human subject with its limits, precipitate the horrific events that unfold.

Meeting after school for private art lessons, Sheba and Steven are no longer bound by the laws that define them in their institutional roles. Their banter turns from art to personal, friendly themes, and Sheba admits to Steven that she is no good at cooking. "Do you suck?" Steven asks, smiling, his question met by uncomfortable silence, then a stumbling dodge. While Sheba has suspended the rules that mark her as an authority in order to achieve a higher educational purpose, she is unable to realize that educational purpose precisely because she has given up the authority required to bring it to fruition. Her inability to answer Steven's frank question exposes the fact that she is not in control of her fantasy, and further exposes the fact that she wants something more from her students than she can realize from within the limits of her institutional role.

The audience comes to understand just what it is Sheba seeks from her pedagogical relations through a confession to Covett. Initially, her explanation follows the pattern of the teacher's fantasy of student desires: "I hadn't been pursued like this in years." But once she steps outside her traditional teaching role, "It became a secret, and, well secrets can be seductive." Giving herself over to the realization of the fantasy, she begins to experience the pleasure of breaking with the rules:

> This is going to sound sick, but something in me felt... entitled. You know, I've been good all my adult life. I've been a decent wife, a dutiful mother coping with Ben. This voice inside me kept saying, "Why shouldn't you be bad? Why shouldn't you transgress? I mean, you've earned the right."

In short, while Sheba pursues the same fantastical ideal as Hart does in *The Paper Chase*, namely, to stand in such a position as to excite the desires of her students, the fact that she does so outside the regulated practices of teaching makes her susceptible to those blind drives that teaching practices serve to hold at bay. Her total incapacity to answer to the moral demands put to her by her husband and Steven's mother when her secret is exposed demonstrates her horror at her own act.

The audience's horror at Sheba's behavior receives some degree of distraction, if not mitigation from the fact that Sheba herself serves as the fantasy object for two senior teachers at her school. Brian Bangs' and especially Barbara Covett's attempts to turn Sheba's fall into the occasion of their own lecherous gains help maintain the audience's initial perception of Sheba as a naïve, heroic character, a somewhat innocent victim of her circumstances, while reinforcing the idea that all teachers are susceptible to a dangerous fantasy of exciting others' desires. This fantasy, according to the film, can be made useful to the task of education, but always remains the gateway to a threat lying just beneath the surface of pedagogical relations.

Election (1999), which portrays the problem of the teaching fantasy in a darkly humorous narrative, begins with a narrated claim on the part of Jim McAllister, the protagonist teacher, that he did in fact live a fantasy of teaching as a contribution to the civic good. In contrast to this narration, McAllister's body, his clothing, his car, even his lessons distinguishing ethics from morals betray a mediocrity that undermine the optimism of his words. Even before his life unravels, the more quiet failure of his teaching fantasy can be identified in the person of Tracy Flick, McAllister's overly ambitious student who, without the desire that a teacher dreams of inspiring in his students, is able to rattle off answers to the questions that tire McAllister himself. Flick's determination without desire threatens to ruin McAllister's teaching fantasy, and as a result he seeks to command a greater authority than his teaching position allows.

Unlike Sheba, who attempts to realize her teaching fantasy by inspiring the educational desires of one student through friendship, McAllister's transgressive attempt to realize his teaching fantasy is more complex. Frustrated with his wife's sexual demands that are too tied to the goal of pregnancy, he attempts an affair with Linda Novotny, the wife of a fellow teacher who has been fired for pursuing an affair with Flick. The audience realizes McAllister's conflation of fantasies in a scene in which he makes love to his wife. The camera assumes McAllister's perspective as he looks upon his wife's face. She demands, "Just like that, yeah! Fill me up! Fill me up! Yeah! Fill me up!" as, through McAllister's fantasy, her face transforms into that of Linda Novotny, and later to Tracy Flick, each repeating the same demand in a similar string of phrases.

McAllister's tangle of frustrated desires and illicit fantasies can be summed up in the transposition of faces that appear on the screen, all making the same demand.

His perception of his own impotence in relation to his wife's demand to "fill [her] up," his inability to take up the authorized place of the father, leads him outside the symbolic bonds of the marriage bed and into a fantasy of domination in which his drive can be exercised without any worry over whether and how children might come about as a result of sex. But the object McAllister chooses in order to escape from the social order is already too telling, and already ties him back to the social order he wishes to escape through the fantasy of teaching that gives his professional life meaning. In his fantasied partnership with Linda Novotny, McAllister places himself in the position of Linda's husband Dave. At the same time, as McAllister takes Dave's place, he also imagines himself as the teacher who excites Flick's desires, the teacher who holds the promise of filling Flick up in a way that McAllister cannot.

Like Sheba Hart, McAllister's fantasies of serving as the object of desire for both his colleague's wife and his student turn to horror when he attempts to make them real. His attempt to rig the school election – a confused ploy to regain the power he never had as a teacher – ultimately brings an end to his teaching position.

Both McAllister and Sheba end up ruined by their attempts to realize the fantasy of the ideal teacher, and their appearances late in their respective films give clear visual cues that each has lost the symbolic status associated with teaching. Each suffers a moment of appearing in public, disheveled, incoherent and seemingly mad. Their portrayals closely match the mental instability often ascribed to real teachers who step outside their ordinary roles and engage in romantic affairs with students.

Debra Lafave, a Florida teacher arrested for having sex with her 14 year old student, demonstrated these characteristics in a televised interview (Lauer 2006) in which she claims that at the time of the affair she did not know what she was doing was wrong. Self-described as a "modest person" who wanted to teach in order to protect students from the very situation that she perpetrated, her defense was simply that her actions were due to "a fog I was in." Yet the fact that Lafave drove over 100 miles to have sex with her student in the back of her car, and reportedly told her student that "One of the things that turns me on is knowing that I should not be having sex with you" suggest an unrecognized wish to escape those professional limits that constitute the teacher-student relationship. As with her filmic counterparts, Sheba Hart and Jim McAllister, once these boundaries were successfully evaded, the relationship that ensued could no longer maintain its pedagogical significance. While her defense attorney successfully redescribed Lafave's behavior as the result of a bipolar disorder, the circumstances of her transgression beg the question of how the popular ideal of teaching portrayed in school films encourages teachers to measure their worth in terms of the personal connections and pedagogical desires they ignite in their students. When these elements are conflated through the filmic ideal of breaking the school rules in order to reach the student, the teaching fantasy may easily become a nightmare.

Zizek (2000) takes aim at the bipolar disorder defense of teachers accused of statutory rape by claiming that the medicalization of their motivation removes desire from its all-too-human context, thus depriving the individual of her humanity

as a way of explaining something which in other contexts needs no explanation. He turns to Mary Kay LeTourneau as an example of someone who, despite her diagnosis of bipolar disorder and subsequent treatment, returned from prison to commit herself in marriage to her victim: an act that is clearly outside the bounds of the manic mood swing suffered by bipolar patients. Yet Zizek's otherwise sound critique of medicalized desire swings too far in the other direction, citing LeTourneau's behavior as an authentic, ethical act of personal volition against the conditioning forces of contemporary society that would have us betray our desires in order to fit a prescribed norm.

Zizek's claim misses the mark on two levels. First, it neglects the symbolic function of the law at play in LeTourneau's conviction, in which she becomes the abject, monstrous biological condition, punished to support the dubious assumption that the social order has no responsibility for the horrors that it occasionally brings about. Second, and perhaps more importantly, Zizek's claim that LeTourneau's behavior constitutes an authentic act undermines his own psychoanalytic foundations by reinstating the ego at the center of its own interests. Zizek's redescription of one of the most infamous teacher-student relationships is both romantic and counter-intuitive, but it threatens to undermine the Freudian-Lacanian structure in which Zizek operates, and in which our own desires are at best only partially known to ourselves (Britzman 1998).

According to Lacan (1999), the ethical commitment of love derives not from an act of personal volition but from the impossibility of sex, the failure of the sexual act to overcome the Aristophanic split that marks human subjectivity with loneliness and desire. The incompleteness of the subject experienced in desire, the relentless return of the drives, the misrecognition suffered by the ego in its attempts to connect: none of these sources of suffering are relieved by the sexual exchanges that seem to promise an overcoming of each through union with another. For Lacan, love is the consolation of sexual failure, a commitment to a way of life, a relationship, a shared project that takes up the two lovers in a detour from their failed attempt to become one. Certainly LeTourneau's life after prison might be described as a sort of ethical repetition, reliving her transgressive affair through the mundane elements of married life. What Zizek misses, however, is the fantasy of oneness between teacher and student that gives rise to LeTourneau's eventual ethical turn. This fantasy, and the desires it incites, are precisely what are at stake when we consider the teacher's place in the popular imaginary and the effect this place has on teaching ethics.

The effect of film on teachers' identities, desires, and fantasies can be seen in the more tabloid-oriented stories about teacher-student relationships that regularly make their way to the public eye. But the seductive force of film is not limited to sex. Every teacher who views herself as a selfless hero, who believes he can overcome the effects of intergenerational poverty and oppression through *Rumblefish*, or who breaks with the institutional rules that constitute her professional identity in order to make a human connection with a student, succumbs in some manner to the fantasy of teaching presented in film. Teacher educators, too, who believe that the aim of the teaching relationship is some sort of friendship or

caregiving, who view the teacher as a powerfully and positively subversive agent in the lives of young people trapped in a lifeless caste system, have fallen for the lure of the school film.

But if the lure, in this case the ideal fantasy of teaching, is always already present in the practice of teaching, and if, as Lacan (1961, XI.14) states "The lure [of transference] is reciprocal," this fantasy in which both teachers and students participate may serve as a starting point for desires that are truly pedagogical in addition to those that are typically make headlines. Following Plato's claim in the *Timaeus* that Eros is the origin of all things and their opposite, *Election* offers a glimpse of the edifying nature of desire:

> Dave Novotny: I know it seems crazy, but Jim, what I'm trying to tell you is that Tracy and I are totally, totally in love.
> Jim McAllister: In love?
> Dave Novotny: Yeah. It's serious. She inspires me in ways that Linda never has. She even wants to read my novel.
> Jim McAllister: But you haven't written your novel.
> Dave Novotny: That's the whole point! I've got the whole thing right here [pointing to his head] I just need to get it out there. And Tracy wants me to write it so she can read it. It's beautiful.

Outside of the fact that Novotny and Flick are having an illegal, extramarital affair that effectively destroys their relationship as teacher and student, what Novotny describes is by some measure beautiful and might serve as a gesture toward understanding the positive value of the teaching fantasy that has been described here in largely negative terms.

While Novotny short-circuits the pedagogical relationship as a result of misreading his own desires, his inspired moment of re-dedicating himself to his novel demonstrates the connection between the fantasy of the teacher as a knowing subject, shared by teachers and students alike, and a related desire for recognition that is similarly shared. While recognition between teachers and students is inherently asymmetrical – students seek recognition *from* the master while teachers seek recognition *as* the master – the fantasy of teaching sets the conditions of striving in the classroom that make growth possible. The instantly recognizable nature of this fantasy throughout the school films that reflect and reproduce it also propagate the desires that correspond to these fantasies, so that when we walk into a classroom in either role, our expectations are already on. The challenge for teachers and teacher educators is to learn to read the effect that filmic fantasies have on the complex of ideals and desires they bring to the classroom, so that our fantasy of teaching draws us out of ourselves, towards better versions of ourselves, rather than outside the symbolic order that constitutes the pedagogical relationship.

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Chapter 8
~~Cinematic~~ Screen Pedagogy in a Time of Modulated Control: To Think the Outside

jan jagodzinski

> *A control is not a discipline.*

> (Gilles Deleuze)

8.1 Introduction

When it comes to the arts, the usual suspects line up: visual art, dance, drama, poetry, literature, music and so on. Arts education and its pedagogy find themselves in a difficult situation. In the twentieth century, the arts have lived in the shadow of the sciences as a hierarchy of disciplines became established as part of the general public curricula. In contemporary public schools they often continue to be relegated to second-class status by being placed as supplementary, secondary or complimentary subject areas. Visual art, film and 'new' media, find themselves in an even more difficult position in the contemporary curriculum. They are being tugged in a number of directions at once, caught and taught either within what are 'fine' art courses or annexed as part of what has been called 'visual literacy' in English public school curricula. Nestling them in departments of English, whether in public schools or universities, has been especially problematic, as media arts have been subjected to what was once called the 'linguistic turn' where hermeneutic and semiotic analysis were the order of the day. Perhaps even more problematic than this state of affairs, the visual arts, film, and 'new' media are slowly being decentralized and placed 'across the disciplines' in such a way that their specificity is being lost. This deterritorialization mirrors the tendency of all the arts undergoing interdisciplinarity. The push to include art as part of STEM initiatives (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) to become STEAM, with all that the force that such an acronym can muster, is part of this. These trends are part and parcel of the shift to a globalized economy of capitalism that is accompanied by the attempt to

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move the arts into spaces where they are able to increase the economic wealth of each nation via idealized notions of 'creativity' to enable corporate global industries to compete more effectively. The literature on this is rather extensive and need not be rehearsed here.[1]

I begin this chapter with this brief prelude of the arts-scape in order to question what might be a 'line of flight' out of such an assemblage to continue the creative force of the arts for education in another direction than the one that has currently trapped and captured its trajectory. Cinema is the starting choice of this exploration, but it will spill off into contemporary screen culture. I draw on the philosophical developments of Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari as the basis for the ideas I try to articulate. Why begin with cinema? There are a number of reasons for such a focus. The most obvious is that cinema in its many hybridic genres—from documentary to action flicks—finds itself 'at work' as an *agent* within student lives; indeed the general public is both affected and effected by cinema, if not directly, then tangentially as establishing the 'atmosphere' of common sense. Film is used extensively across the various subject areas in public schools. As part of 'screen culture,' cinema also holds the place of 'public education' as watching films in theatres and on television, and increasingly as well on all other screen devises (computers, i-pads, mobile phones, YouTube), 'educates' the public in particular ways. There is no escape from screen technologies, and cinema, in the broadest sense (animation, digital film, short film, feature length, YouTube), is highly influential in what Deleuze (1995) called a society of control, while Guattari (1997) preferred World-Wide Integrated Capitalism.[2]

The idea of a 'control society' is the second reason I have chosen to focus on cinema as an art that can make a difference in our schools. By control society Deleuze|Guattari identify the move that is slowly taking place away from discipline societies as articulated by their friend Michel Foucault. This latter development is well known, and it should immediately be said that contemporary societies, those where global capitalism has become the dominant force via neoliberalist ideas of individualism, are a blend of both discipline and control. Synoptically put, surveillance technologies have made the tracking of time and space possible, enabling events to be anticipated in order to prevent their occurrence or to encourage them to occur. Manipulation has become more and more sophisticated in terms of assuring that the potential of the future is closed. With databases, consumer behaviour and risk analysis can be assessed. So while the rhetoric of individualism appears to be on the increase, modulatory power in a digital age recognizes individuals but has *no concern nor care* for them.

Control through modulation is subtle and 'at a distance.' It is time based rather than being spatial. Modulation requires the use of 'big data' and the agency of

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[1] For a summative review when it comes to arts education see the collection by Gielen and Bruyne (2012).

[2] This development takes other names. I personally call this designer capitalism (jagodzinski 2010). Franco Berardi (Bifo) (2009) calls it semiocapitalism.

algorithmic codes that enable the manipulation of time and space as a constant flow or continuum, thereby assuring that bodies are directed to their best efficiency via risk assessment. Environments are thus 'controlled;' borders are flexible if the codes are known and inaccessible if they are not. Borders rather than being impenetrable become membranes that can filtrate out the unwanted. Discrimination is always subtle and structural; the attempt is to keep as much stability as possible so that market exchanges can continue without the violent disruptions that make investors nervous. Information is therefore a commodity that is exchanged to maintain the state of stable control as much as possible. For Deleuze this is the core notion of 'dividuality' in a digital or control society where the 'superject' (Deleuze 1993, 19–20) emerges—a subject that enters into the flow of data and performs actions in a network. The dividual is an 'electronic body' of information that can be modulated according to the codes that are selected: a dispersed subjectivity is thus targeted. The control society is crucial for understanding how the arts have changed and how educators might respond to such insidious controlling mechanisms through curricular means.

8.2   Outside

Deleuze and Guattari, drawing from Friedrich Nietzsche and Maurice Blanchot, point to what they call the Outside. The Outside, a difficult concept to grasp, refers to the excess that always escapes any form of structuring. It is outside what it means to consciously think. In other words this dimension of time and space is always out of the control of anthropocentric thinking; that is, any 'thinking' or agency that can be attributed to those 'things' not in our control. It immediately brings up the non-representable and a radical deanthropomorphization, a world-without-us, the *Planet*.

Perhaps a better way to explain this is drawing on the interesting distinctions that Eugene Thacker (2011) makes between the world-for-us (*World*) and the world-in-itself (*Earth*), both of which remain anthropocentric. The world-in-itself as *Earth*, while not-human, is still something revealed to us. The Outside is closer to the cosmology of the *Planet*, its inhuman forces, what Deleuze|Guattari would call the *given as given*, a plane of *pure* immanence. If this aspect of existence is foreclosed, we are unable to have change that makes a *difference*. I draw the notion of difference-in-itself from Deleuze as an attempt to identify events that change the ontology of our existence, rather than repeating innovatively what already is. The repetition of innovative difference is precisely what control technologies are capable of doing. Deleuze (1988, 131) calls this a 'superfold,' the ability to generate endless transformations by manipulating several elements of a code to exhaustion. This is the advent of 'superman' (replacing the two previous forms of God and Man), and, unfortunately, it has not proved any better than its two previous forms.

As for cinema, Gregory Flaxman (2012) makes the point that the Outside is continually being closed via *digitialization*, or one might qualify this to say that a particular digitalized assemblage of the cinematic machine is doing this, closing off the potential to expose us to aspects of life that enable wonderment and mystery. Cinema has drastically changed over the past three decades as there is no part that has not been digitalized. The image is now an aggregate of data, a product of algorithms, made possible via digital cameras, digital editing formats, and digital projectors. The image can now be infinitely manipulated and adjusted without any respect to an original trace. The use of Computer Generated Images (CGIs) has become common where the divide between live action and digital animation has become irrelevant. The actor = action, presence = absence. This means, more than ever, we are dealing with artifice that generates what is passed for common sense.

Unobtrusive virtual reality (VR) or virtual worlds would be the ultimate achievement of this trajectory where the Outside is closed off entirely. This is and remains the end game of cinematic technology where we have a perfect illusion of the outside world in all its glory and in all its ugliness. Digital CAVE environments that display hyper images would be an example here, but these structures are cumbersome in relation to such devises as wearable immersive environments that are now being designed such as Virtual I/O i-glasses. The significance of *time* replaces *space* in this development. The world now shifts from being *cine*matic to becoming what I call *synematic*, a shift from the panopticon to what I would refer to as a synopticon where the many watch the few and the few watch the many. The first development (many watch the few) is the development of celebrity cultures, while the second (few watch the many) is a surveillance culture. In both cases this 'overview' position enables a Controller to replace God in a position of transcendence. Both are modifications that emerged from the disciplinary culture prior to WW2. Celebrity emerges with the television screen in the 50s', taking over from big-screen Hollywood 'stars,' while surveillance emerges from the disciplinary institutionalized structures (schools, penitentiaries, market consumerism) via CCTV technologies where bodies are able to be tracked by the codes or traces they leave behind as information from which 'big data' can then be crunched to extrapolate the patterns of movement and behavior. I will come back to these points pedagogically later in this essay.

8.3   Thought and the Unthought

Pedagogically all of this is significant for the arts because of the *affect images* cinema and new media arts provide, which happen to take place below the level of consciousness. This claim has now become quite acceptable thanks to a host of neurologists beginning with Antonio Damasio who championed the 'emotional brain.' Historically, early cinema theorists drew a parallel between the moving image and an image of the human thought process in terms of naïve realism. Another line of thought by Dziga Vertov, the Russian director, was that the camera

assemblage produces a *non-human* form of thought. Cinematic vision has no anchoring center or organizing viewpoint as we do, where interests and the very fact we have sensing bodies determine selection and organization of flows of perception. Movement, following Henri Bergson, *is* the image, and for early theorists like Walter Benjamin, cinema brings us into contact with an 'optical unconscious.' This again is truly significant for pedagogical considerations as *new thought* is created via the mechanism of the camera and the mechanistic (not mechanical) vision that is produced. *This mechanistic production of images has a direct correspondence with the mechanistic nature and production of thought itself, which has huge implications for arts education*. Deleuze makes the case in his two cinema books, beginning with the movement-image of classical Hollywood action films that it is not so much the technological nor the optical artistry that is crucial to the correlation between the moving image and human thought, but the realization that the mechanistic images produced by the cinematic assemblage are both automatic and autonomous. Why is this so important to pedagogy? Neurological research confirms that much thought is automatic and nonconscious, formed by psychological and physiological automatisms that are the basis of conscious thought. These molecular automatisms or brain circuits process information at the *affective level*, below the level of consciousness, at the sub and unconscious levels without the interaction of conscious thought or cognition.

For Deleuze, such 'thinking' is autonomous, and not something *performed* by the subject. Thinking is not something we 'do,' rather it is something that happens to us from the Outside. "Something in the world forces us to think" (*DR*, 139). The pedagogy of the screen now comes into play. Autonomous unconscious thinking forms what Deleuze calls an "image of thought." In Benjamin's terms, we might call this the "optical unconscious." But it also forms the ideology of common sense, forms of representation that both Deleuze and Guattari tried to overcome by theorizing 'pure' difference; that is, difference in and of itself, not caught by an opposition to sameness. An 'image of thought' underlies all thinking as the world is framed by a common sense. As such it is an immanent state. "With cinema, it is the world which becomes its own image, and not an image which becomes the world" (*C1*: 57). Such an 'image of thought' is always more or less changing as the ontology changes, marked by the unthought, which is what is yet to be thought. The 'unthought' in thought is the pure difference of the Outside that cannot be accommodated or assimilated into something we know. Deleuze calls this unthought Life.

A new image of thought comes about only when we are confronted with the unthought – with non-human Life, which forces us to think and re-think our own thinking. It necessitates an encounter with the world-without-us (Planet). As Deleuze puts it, "Life will no longer be made to appear before the categories of thought: thought will be thrown into the categories of life. The categories of life are precisely the attitudes of the body, its postures. [...] To think is to learn what a non-thinking body is capable of, its capacity, its postures. It is through the body [*and not the intermediary of the body as with phenomenology*] that cinema forms its alliance with the spirit, with thought" (*C2*, 189). This is when learning takes place,

and transformative becoming is activated. An *encounter* must take place between the accepted 'image of thought' and the cinematographic and|or screen image that is confronted so that the body is affected with Life.

The point being made here is significant to say the least for screen media pedagogy. Screen technologies in control societies present a new challenge to arts education. Unlike other arts (characters in literature, actors in dramatic arts of theatre or dancers) movement is not attached to a centered body, like that of a character, performer, actor, nor is it stilled (static) as in painting and photography. The cinematic image moves itself; it is the first image capable of producing automatic and autonomous movement: movement not anchored to a subject and automatic movement, which is not seen from some fixed viewpoint. This is why Deleuze names it a "movement-image." The consequences of this are startling in that there is a direct link between the movement-image and the unconscious movements of thought. In other words, at this level, 'correlationalism' does not function. There is no subject|object divide. The gap is breached: the automatism of cinematic images is directly correlated with the automatism of our thoughts below the level of consciousness. There is no 'time' for reflection upon what is unfolding as we become transfixed by what we see moving, and then react emotively as a result. Fast editing with many cuts and no pauses for our own thoughts puts us in a world of sound-images that the brain is constantly processing. Such effects are magnified via gaming technologies where the bodily sensorium is fully involved. Such media affects are the result of the '*brain*' *being a screen*, as Deleuze puts it, wherein we become affected on the pre-reflexive, pre-linguistic level of thought. "Cinema, precisely because it puts the image in motion, or rather endows the image with self-motion, never stops tracing the circuits of the brain" (Deleuze 2000, 366).

Drawing on Spinoza, Deleuze refers to the establishment of the circuitry between the viewer|actor and the screen as a 'spiritual automaton,' *only* when the 'intellectual automatism' (common sense as fantasy formations) of our unreflective habits becomes disturbed, shocked or interrupted. "The automatic movement is capable of producing a shock to thought, communicating vibrations to the cortex, touching the nervous and cerebral system directly" (*C1*, 156). Something 'alien' disturbs our mind as new syntactical circuits are created in the brain and new connections are formed. The brain 'grows.' In the most powerful sense, Deleuze argues that by "mounting the camera on an everyday body" (*C2*, 189), it is possible to transform it into a "ceremonial body" freeing the individualized body from a rigid series of meanings, and then opening up the potential for becoming something else. Here, pedagogically there is the role of cinema and screen images to break with the society of control that modulates bodies via their habitualized tracings, a powerful way to think how screen pedagogy can become a counter-actualization to a mediated social order by keeping the Outside open; that is, Life open. Screen images as images of thought are then equally capable of stimulating|shocking thought as well as stifling|massaging thought. The creative act works with the former rather than the latter *mode* of life that shapes the biopolitics of existence.

For Deleuze, the *time-image* of thought is most capable of achieving these effects of the 'spiritual automaton' wherein 'true' thinking takes place as the

thought of the Outside comes 'at us.' As Deleuze puts it, "The attitude of the body relates thought to time as to that outside which is infinitely further than the outside world" (*C2*, 189). A reversal of sorts takes place as the vanishing point is not projected at a transcendental point of infinity; rather it is an *immanent point* within the brain itself, internalized in such a way as to present the *univocity* of being. This means the implied Whole is composed of the forces of duration – "emergence, change and mutation" (Deleuze 1988, 87). This Whole is paradoxically never totalized, but constantly transforming at the edges of chaos offering us the paradox of an infinite Whole. It changes its shape undergoing differentiation or individuation as an involutionary process, as the plasticity of the brain modulates itself in its very singularity. Infinity becomes a cosmological and metaphysical proposition. The virtuality of mind is thus opened up to all its multiplicities that are transcendent and not transcendental in nature. In other words, human thought has a certain fragility to it, which forces the unthought to strengthen it.

Unlike the chronological structures of time that shape the movement-image narratives, the time-image no longer proceeds via rational incisions but conflates and reorders the past, present and future. Deleuze offers a complicated analysis of the way various time-images are structured. To oversimplify: with the movement-image, time is structured around the present. The past and the future shape the present. With the time-image, the focus is on the past as developed by Bergson. The future and the present are shaped by the past; the *crystal image*, for example, gives us a simultaneous grasp of the present and the future through the past. It is only with what Deleuze called the "third synthesis of time" that the future takes place and a 'true' becoming is to be had. The past and the present inform the future. This last development is where the brain and the screen enable a multiplicity of potential directions to be actualized and learning to take place as the future remains truly open and not modulated by control societies. Patricia Pisters (2012) has explored this development calling it the neuro-image. It is the neuro-image where the potential of pedagogical screen cultures and cinema is so badly needed because of the dangers of the digitialized image in control societies, to which I now return.

8.4 Control

The question as to whether the Outside is being shut down in control societies is what should worry arts educators as digital media economies swarm our screens and push toward immersive edutertainment environments that are able to modulate learning to pre-achieved ends by incorporating more and more of the bodily sensorium (see jagodzinski 2010). Flaxman (2012) refers to the making of Cameron's *Avatar* as a paradigmatic example where cinema leaves nothing to be unseen. Cameron has revitalized 3D technology where the frame is gradually dissolving like the curved screens that are slowly being introduced for television and eventually computers as peripheral vision is being shut down and the efficiency of *attention* to viewing the images increased. The Outside can be entirely cut out

with Google's Goggles where just by looking at artwork, architecture, perhaps any future object, a database fills you in as to what you see. What is not encoded does not exist. Different assessments of the environment are eliminated. The stage-lot or sound stage of former times is slowly being replaced by motion-capture stages where live actors are integrated into the CGI environments via motion tracking suits. In the case of *Avatar*, this motion-capture stage had eighty to ninety digital cameras surrounding the actors. Cameron used an advanced stereoscopic or 'virtual' camera, which now has become part of the digital assemblage of screen production (film, video, television, animation). These cameras enable him to capture the performances of the actors from any perspective within the 360° spectrum. Production and post-production becomes a matter of manipulating data where digital film is reduced to algorithms. The director 'processes' the film immediately. There are no 'shot sequences' that are cut and edited together. It is one continuous flow that can be manipulated as if working on a long surface.

Cameron's innovations also included digital cameras mounted on an actor's head so that they could be aimed on each actor's face. Every possible expression could then be recorded and worked into the 'alien' Na'vi face so that it was 'human' enough to pass. Apparently this took an entire year to resolve. This is the 'faciality of anthropomorphism' at its evil best. 'Man' always finds his reflection in things, beneath things, on things and so on. *Avatar* is a prime example. The "uncanny valley" has been broached. Animality and the inhuman become pixeled away. The Na'vi are now an object for us. These cameras can now be purchased to get a 'dog's eye view' of the world, or to record an event for oneself when mountain biking, running, skiing and so on. Ironically, Deleuze's idea of mounting a camera on an everyday body with a desire to 'becoming other' has backfired. With these i-spy cameras the intention is to make the experience as 'real' as possible. The 'ceremonial body' becomes yet another monad. The everyday and ceremonial body are collapsed together just as the human *becomes* Na'vi, a mere enhanced reflection.

Avatar is the apotheosis of the movement-image where all 'lack' for the spectator has been dissipated, acknowledged and technologically satisfied as if the camera = the human eye and the look = gaze. This digital assembly is striving to be reached by the corporatization of public schooling and universities through the 'smart' classrooms with the teacher placed in a position to make sure the interface between information and students is flowing properly, like Cameron. We, as students and viewers, are completely sutured into its environment through the machinic assemblage Cameron has crafted, which has very specific targeted affects and attention perimeters to ensure success. This n + 1 position that we then occupy is the site/sight/cite[3] of ideology in its 'pure' state, for there is no need to question its construct. It reconfirms our common sense and the fantasies that sustain it. Desire is thus reproduced from this absent position.

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[3] I use this antonym throughout my former work to indicate the confluence of Lacan's three registers: the non-site of the Real, the sight of the Imaginary and the cite of the symbolic.

Cameron's use of mobile digital cameras supersedes the older video cameras as recording devices, which had previously superseded emulsion film in their ability to record present action and confirm more profoundly that the world is a flow of images in constant transformation. Time via video could be stretched, slowed down, repeated, rewound much like music in its movement of flows. It occupied a dimension as part music and part painting, as a time-form. All these aspects have now been further incorporated into what is a digital assemblage. With these possibilities, the off-screen disappears as images become effectively limitless, a superfold. Cameron is able to render and select any shot and sequence of shots that advance the narrative. Editing and shooting are effectively collapsed. There are no 'rushes' to be viewed; they appear instantly, so to speak. Only 12 frames were left 'undoctored' in *Avatar*, each frame and every shot calculated to achieve maximum effect and attention at a high cost. *Avatar* is the apotheosis of the movement-image that structures control societies, especially in the consumerist industries and gradually into the edutainment industries supported by large corporations and the military for efficient, simulated learning of complicated electronic weaponry. As, Deleuze put it, "the move toward replacing the system of a window and the world outside with one of a computer screen in a closed room is taking place in our social life: we *read* the world more than we see it" (*N*, 157, added emphasis). To which can be added that the infinity point that finds itself in that screen, now finds itself in the infinity point in our 'monadic' dividual selves.

What I have outlined for the 'movement image' can be directly applied to the data mining and archiving that goes on in control societies, where all the captured information that is being generated via tracking the movement of bodies and communication that take place via the Web, Google, Twitter, YouTube, blogs, chat rooms, cell phones, bulletin boards and anything else that generates useful data, is then used by financial, governmental and edutainment industries to measure and direct the emotional quotient regarding virtually any event that is taking place, and then to steer the market machinery to continue its oxymoronic customized mass distribution of goods and services; to enable the police to do a more efficient job; to assist the healthcare industry in coping with its stresses and offset costs; and to make teachers and professors more efficient at communicating course content, and so on: in brief, designer management of society through technologies of modulated control shaped by n + 1. "Open source" takes on a wry meaning contra to its "copy left" former meaning. Arts education becomes part of managing and adding to this "affective" and "immaterial" labor, as creativity is sucked up to perform its role in producing networks of sociability, taste cultures, and communication. As Clough (2009) succinctly puts it "affective modulation and individuation displace subject formation and ideological interpellation as central to the relation of governance and economy" (50). Authenticity and trust is now mined from the 'intrinsic body' (its emotional states and unconscious micro-gestures of habituation) and the brain (the assortment of waves it emits recorded via fMRI scan imagery) to tell marketers what the viewers 'really' think, to cut through right to what they believe to be their 'authentic' selves: the unconscious does not lie! All this is well understood, but it does nothing to displace the grand manipulator

who sits *visible* at the apex of control. Fox News gives its audience what it wants by tapping into the intensity of the public's anxieties, fears, and worries over America's loss of superiority on the global scene as terrorism hides behind every rock. Its viewers see themselves reflected back at them, as the emotional frame of the 'news' casters reassures their own feelings and emotions, which Fox has already mined through its data surveys and feedback. It is the 'most trusted' news program because it assures what its believers want to hear.

The molar subject that is being shaped by educational institutions in control societies through screen|cinematic cultures is a *digital being* reinforced by an anthropocentric image of thought that continues to place all nonhuman life as a commodity at disposal and dependent on (super)Man. *Avatar* remains the exemplar of transhuman projection of this Imaginary molar self: a disabled man is projected into an 'alien' life species that is superior in strength in every which way. Think the Na'vi as the apotheosis of a digital ensemble machine, which, as Guattari (1995) said, "operate[s] at the heart of human subjectivity, not only within its memory and intelligence, but within its sensibility, affect and unconscious fantasms (4). Jake Sully's transformation into a Na'vi is the ultimate fantasy of becoming Other; the pod he enters, establishing a techno-bio-integrated circuit, enables his transformation to take place. This is the ultimate 'screen' interface where Jake Sully's body now *disappears*. The interface's sole function in such digital assemblages is to regulate *difference* so that boundaries are collapsed to make the transition as smooth and trouble free as possible. The conceptual difference between being and doing also collapses. He becomes a "superject," at the end of the film a complete flow, which, in the current state of 'gaming' can only take place for short bursts of time, although those who have not heeded such affective loading have been subsumed by the body's jouissance and died of heart conditions. Sully's in-and-out experiences of being a Na'vi expose the inherent antagonism between inhabiting a physical identity and being 'free' of it, which apparently happens at the end when cyberspace is no longer hallucinated as virtual, symbolic or metaphorical but becomes 'virtually real' for him as his transformation is complete. (We would call this psychotic.) Yet, more to the point, the 'disappearance' of Sully's body as code means he is not necessarily tied to a specific physical body. He could conceivably be 'plugged' into any other coded body. "Beam me up, Scotty."

In this set-up, as with virtual games in general, space is vacated (distances are breached) and substituted by hyperspace (cyberspace) or virtual reality. Chronological time also 'disappears' as an instantaneous circuit is created in relation to the human perceptual and proprioceptive bodily system. In short *space is time*. They are conflated as depth disappears as we work with the surface of the screen. Screen reality is simply a flow, a process where perspective is *enfolded* from being far and near to here and there as its hyper-compressed 'space-time' *invades* us as actor-viewers. All such binaries collapse: original/copy, medium/message, style/content, subject/object and especially signifier/signified. The vanishing point is now internalized within us, the new molar dividual subjects. The question becomes: *does such an experience replicate and intensify the artistic process or rather pervert it*? Anyone engaged in the arts has experienced this loss of chronological time,

engagement in the process and production of the artwork, and the feeling of success or disappointment when 'finished.' However, put into the context of control societies, such a process becomes 'maddening' and 'impossible' to do *on demand*. This is brilliantly explored by Terry Gilliam's (2013) film, *The Zero Theorem* where a programmer Qohen Leth, a gifted computer hacker is asked to solve the titular Zero Theorem, an impossible proof that verifies the meaninglessness of existence.

Unquestionably, the pedagogy of the arts faces a neoliberalist Leviathan for those educators who struggle to tap the Outside where the vanishing points at either ends of the spectrum—as externalized by the moving image (like *Avatar*) or internalized by the time-image (like the advancing technologies of video games)—have been colonized through the capture of affect via data mining of the proprioceptive (inner) body organs, especially the brain as the new frontier. Education becomes a continuous never-ending loop of 'learning to learn' where the binary work and play is smoothed over: one moves from one flow (work) to another (play) and then back again in an endless loop. Unfortunately, this mirrors or mimics Deleuze's own theorizing on the virtual|actual couplet that the *crystal* time-image demonstrates so well, the back and forth between the actual and virtual around a "point of indiscernibility . . . constituted by the smallest circle, that is the coalescence of the actual image and the virtual image, the image with two sides, actual and virtual at the same time" (*C2*, 69). We need only substitute work for actual and play for virtual with the recognition that the most 'creative technologies' provide flex time, time that is no longer chronological but equally a mixture of past, present and future. With one exception: the future, which I hinge my roll of the dice on below in the neuro-image.

8.5 What Is to Be Done?

For Deleuze (1998; *C2*, 255), the question of a control society raises the need for a 'people to come;' the future of pedagogy needs to assume a leadership role to *create* such a people who, as Deleuze says, "are already there," to compel them into existence. Such a preposition has been recently taken up and explored by Deleuzian influenced educators (Wallin 2011; Carlin and Wallin 2014). Deleuze also raises the question of 'a belief in *this* world,' despite all its corruption, misery, struggle to see love and joy in their affirmative forms so as to overcome *ressentiment* and cynicism—a difficult ethics to live by. It is a form of what Deleuze|Guattari named schizoanalysis—a schizo becoming of which art is a privileged site/sight/cite. It counters death, despair and *ressentiment* with life. The schizo self comes across again very much like the dividual whose electronic body at the molecular level is so many part-object signifiers that can be analyzed as a multiplicity of selves, each of which forms an assemblage that marketeers can target. In contrast, Deleuze and Guattari have something else in mind. They call for a schizo consciousness where one is aware of one's own molecularity and multiplicity in the way the self is constructed by the social order into molar frames. Utilizing the masculine

(intentionally?), they write: "The schizo has his own system of co-ordinates for situating himself at his disposal, because, first of all, he has at his disposal his very own recording code, which does not coincide with the social code, or coincides with it only in order to parody it" (A-O, 15). Applied to the arts as a creation of a bloc of sensations via affects and percepts that compose the artistic assemblage is a fine balancing act: on the one side stepping too far in the schizo direction can lead to artistic psychosis, deemed by some as 'outsider art,' and valorized by the late Lacan as Joyce the *sintome*. However, only so much delirium is tolerated. There are limits as to what you can get away with as a school art teacher. No one takes such creation seriously enough. It's too crazy, and so it is often dismissed. It may be 'discovered' and appropriated into the museum institution at a latter date, but the artwork's arrival is either too early or too late to make any intensive impact.

Leaning the other way can also lead to a failure of affect; that is to say, an artwork's ability to affect and be affected, by way of being just too pedestrian or literal. Its vitality or force appears vacant, a 'dead' work, lying on a pure plane of death. A schizo artwork's (product|processes) force is to deterritorialize, to rework the potential of an assemblage, to set that assemblage loose, free. Assemblage here is a flow of heterogeneous dimensions held together by desire; it is not a conglomeration or a composition of things that make up a form. Schizo artworks and processes exert a power of the false to worry the truth claims as transcendental illusions that are always already in place. The fabulatory nature of identity and history is exposed. This is not 'critical theory,' nor is it judgment. It is more of a subtraction, an $n-1$ wherein certain forces are strengthened, others weakened, some speeded up, others slowed down. Such is the enactment of a transcendental empiricism—it addresses a specific problematic and it actualizes the virtual potential of that problematic. In what Deleuze|Guattari call a 'minor politics,' they write about Kafka's method (*procédé*) that is specific to the socio-historical concerns of his time: "The assemblage appears not in a still encoded and territorial criticism [i.e., critical theory] but in a decoding, in a deterritorialization, and in the novelistic *acceleration* of this decoding and this deterritorialization [. . .] This method is much more intense than any critique" (1986, 48, added emphasis). Acceleration here implies the $n-1$ dimension that Kafka strengthened to stutter the German language.

Deleuze (1998) is quite specific in his claim that art has nothing to do with communication; art is a *form of resistance* to control society[4] that is reinscribing representation by mining affect in all sorts of clever ways, designing lifestyles, cities and so on. His direction, gleaned from *Anti-Oedipus* through to *What is Philosophy*?, has a specific agenda of 'what is to be done,' to echo Lenin's famous phrase. But what is to be done has none of the 'solid state' politics that belong to disciplinary societies. Evaluation of Life is not based on (transcendent)

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[4] Articulated most succinctly in his 1987 talk on creativity. Available on *YouTube*, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7DskjRer95s. A shortened and truncated version can be found in Deleuze (1998).

judgment (morality), but on (immanent) ethics; the affects of love, hate in relation to actions, passions and values that are in play. Arts education that is a counter-actualization to control society, following Deleuze|Guattari, would be a creative resistance and *a* Life that moves in the direction of 'three virtues' of 'imperceptibility, indiscernibility, and impersonality' that reconceptualise resistance as an affirmative process (*ATP*, 280). The end game of transformative becoming is to become 'imperceptible,' which sounds quite odd, and our schools would never allow it for it runs in the opposite direction of informational control. The idea here is to bring in the Outside as much as is possible for anyone: to deanthropomorphize perception to where the world-without-us becomes plausible. It is an embrace of or an immersion in the world that *surpasses the inclusivity of being human.* "The imperceptible is the immanent end of becoming, its cosmic formula" (*ATP*, 279). This state unquestionably is certainly mystical and mysterious. As they put it: "To be present at the dawn of the world" (ibid). That is the link between these three virtues. "One is then like grass: one has made the world, everybody/everything, into a becoming, because one has made a necessarily communicating world, because one has suppressed in oneself everything that prevents us from slipping between things and growing in the midst of things" (ibid). It is a beautiful dream of the true sense of commune-ism. This should be arts task in schools. To think, will and grasp an *event* that awakens us from the Outside so that we are able to *think* again. It is to imbue the world with vitality and grace, recognizing creation and destruction as the couplet that joins us to the world. It points to Spinoza's "third kind of knowledge," a move from individuality to *singularity* where there is a concern with the pure intensity of life, meaning a general concern with life and death, what Deleuze (2001) called 'Imma-nence . . . A Life.' It is to reach what Spinoza called beatitude, the joyous affirmation in and of the world.[5] It is thus to pass beyond a finite realm of our being to the infinite of the Outside. "Art wants to create the finite that restores the infinite" (*WIP*, 197). In this way the human is overcome.

Another way is for arts educators to 'pin' our desires on the emergence of a neuro-image where the future remains potentially open.[6] This is an extension of the Deleuzian time-image, which is slowly being colonized by the marketing industry that continually turns the future into a series of actualized *possibilities*, thereby closing it down as control reasserts itself. When consumption and production collapse on each other, financial capitalism becomes "gaseous" (Deleuze *C1*, 80) as everything turns into a 'smooth' space. Performance becomes judged on the rate

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[5] For the difficulty, if not the impossibility of achieving this state of beatitude see Deleuze (1997). Another translation of this essay can be found in Deleuze (2003). The state of beatitude as a way of life, a mode of living, becomes an affirmative and ethico-aesthetic pursuit wherein there is a minimum of reactive passions, yet the maximum power of acting and existing is achieved. One thinks of great leaders here like Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr.

[6] Some may not agree with Pisters (2012) account of the neuro-image, but I see her theorizing the cinema of the digital age, the shift from a 'cinema of seers' that happens after the WW2 as Deleuze wrote to a 'cinema of the brain' where the neurological imagination has been opened up via the various computer generated tomographical images (CT scans, fMRI).

and speed of flows, which educators are finding out as time and numbers of students in classes become key issues in public schools generating protest as this disciplinary institution begins to crumble. If the kids aren't 'juiced' and 'loving it,' then something is 'wrong.' The pedagogical *intensity* that is required for all this (we no longer need 'model' teachers) is exemplified by TED talks, a conflation of technology, edutainment and design within a 20 min presentation that 'delivers' the message through its performative style by a truly engaged presenter, or (again) that of *Fox News* where the intensity of the performer-news-reporter makes up for the waning of belief in the news by the public, and in America's global standing as a world power. Delivering the weather, sports, or world events collapses into what is a *performative image*: can its force and vitality deliver its message, like *Avatar*? Can it do the job? Eloquent oration, like that of President Obama, only gets you so far unless it has an 'affective fact' behind it like: "yes we can!"[7]

The neuro-image tries to 'outrun' this process given the disappearance of any inside/outside distinction as binaries collapse: there is no difference to be found between civilian and the military as the conflicts all over the world demonstrate, especially Syria, and the Middle east. We find ourselves in a position where everything is exposed – corruption, climate change, dangers of addiction – but are paralyzed to do anything about it. For Deleuze, virtual (simulated) images are not 'possible' images in the sense that they can exist 'in' reality, but as yet they do not do so. The virtual is what is already actual (in comparison to a television screen where the actual image seen is not merely possible as if it were *real*); therefore the virtual does not belong to visual representation. There is an imperceptible gap between a 'passing present' (the actual) and the 'past,' which is preserved (the virtual as memory and imagination). In the time-image the virtual is the general past, as Bergson theorized it. The past as virtual is always already over and fixed, recorded, encoded or filled. It is 'real' in this sense, while the 'passing present' appears as a simulacrum. In the time-image where the past (or virtual) is the primary focus of narratological unfolding, marketing through big-data mining is able to control special interest group behaviors into the future by pre-empting any issues and risks which may come up via detailed analysis of audience feedback, especially their affective (sentiment) feedback responses. This is mining the past to restore representation. In this way events are created to offset any forms of flow turbulence. Affect is modulated to minimize negativity and to promote emotional investment in the company, product, label and so on. 'Trust,' reliability and service become the key signifiers of corporate virtue. Probe-populations are experimented upon to assure greater prediction, which was the case with *Avatar*. The future is modulated to prescribed ends within degrees of tolerance.

A shift to the neuro-image enables a further opening to the Outside. Following Pisters, it is the emerging image of thought of the digital age, forming the framework of a schizoanalysis of contemporary screen culture. Our contemporary screens

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[7] Affective fact is developed by Massumi (2005).

present us with brain-worlds where we no longer look through the character's eyes so much as experience their minds. Characters are no longer 'seers' as much as displaying the fragility of the human psyche, a delirium where spatial and temporal coordinates become quickly lost, from one end of the extreme where the internalization of schizophrenic hallucinations are matched with the other end, as the externalization of cosmic space. The neuro-image is an exploration of the future via Deleuze's third synthesis of time where both past and present are recut with different speeds, intensities and orders to keep potentialities open. We are placed in the perspective of future time. It is directed at the Planet-in-itself as the 'eternal return' of difference addresses us as a species amongst other species. The neuro-image is a form of *counter-actualizing* the current image of thought that has incorporated both movement and time images for control. The neuro-image opens up the future through what I have called self-refleXion.

Self-refleXion, whether pertaining to cinema, screen culture, or education refers to a *reflective doubling*, the intuition of the doubling of time as virtual|actual, revealed by the time-image and neuro-image to generate *thought* as a becoming. We cannot see ourselves seeing ourselves, to occupy a point outside ourselves. What we can do, however, is to grasp *events* in our world that impact us to grasp their underlying virtual intensities and affective significances, as each event has a corporeal and non-corporeal dimension. Virtual affects, like love and hope for instance, do not have an image of thought, but can be actualized. Every event is an encounter with chaos (the given as given, the Outside, cosmos) but it is the event that makes chaos emerge. There is no chaos per se without the generation of thought and no chaos that is inseparable from the screen. However, art "does not actualize the virtual event but incorporates or embodies it: it gives it a body, a life, a universe" (WIP, 177). In this sense counter-actualization manifests itself as process|product upon which self-refleXion is both within it and yet without it as an impersonal response.

As Deleuze maintains, the media is unable to "grasp the event ... they often show a beginning or end, whereas a short or instantaneous event is something going on. ... The most ordinary event casts us as visionaries, whereas the media turn us into mere passive onlookers, or worse still, voyeurs" (*N*, 160). Self-refleXion, in contrast to the post-structuralist self-refle*x*tion is to experience the virtual real events—their intensities, sensations, affects and becoming that coexist alongside the actual *in* this world; that world is always a concrete case, predominantly shaped by neoliberal control. How can art (film) act as flow to transform, express, sense, think and live through – that is counter-actualize an event? Through self-refleXive schizo counter-actualizations such redemption can be achieved. "[S]ubjectification is about [...] bringing a curve into the line, making it turn back on itself, or making force impinge on itself. So we get ways of living with what otherwise be unendurable" (*N*, 113). For arts education this process of counter-actualization has already started in the resistances that are in the making by artists and teachers alike. They pry open representational thought that now attempts to establish a global capitalist order via built-in mechanism of control. Art on the other hand "involves sensation in a higher deterritorialization, making it pass through a sort of

deframing which opens it up and breaks it open onto an infinite cosmos" (*WIP*, 197, added emphasis). Politically, the task of arts education in schools and universities would be the dismantling of representation via our counter-actualizations where the virtual (as abstract machine) produces incompossible worlds that address the socio-political assemblage of the control society held together by the forces of desire. Perhaps this way the Outside will let in the light so that the future remains open as education in the broad sense grapples with the increasing schizophrenia of *our world as it chokes 'on' the Planet*.

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Chapter 9
Music as an Apprenticeship for Life: John Dewey on the Art of Living

Megan J. Laverty

> *A note of music gains significance from the silence on either side.*
>
> <div align="right">Anne Morrow Lindbergh</div>
>
> *I sat by the window, alternating*
> *my first lesson in reading with*
> *watching time pass, my introduction to*
> *philosophy and religion.*
>
> <div align="right">Louise Glück</div>

9.1 Introduction

As debate about arts education continues to intensify, arguments defending the intrinsic value of the arts are eclipsed by arguments defending the arts as instrumentally valuable. This development is unsurprising if one considers the psychological force of our practical interests and the usefulness of anything which contributes to their fulfillment. Thus, it is reasonable for individuals to favor the arts if it can be demonstrated that they advance such practical interests as academic achievement, democratic citizenship, and innovative design. My intention is to resist such a trend by offering a robust defense of the arts as intrinsically valuable, drawing upon John Dewey's philosophy of art and, more specifically, music. Maxine Greene (2001), a preeminent interpreter of Dewey's philosophy of art, stresses the role of aesthetic experience in initiating new ways of seeing, feeling,

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and thinking. While I am sympathetic with Greene's analysis of aesthetic experience and think there is a lot of truth to what she says, I focus on our desire to live well (Garrison 1997) and Dewey's thesis that to live well is to live *artfully*. I clarify the concept of artfulness by contrasting it with occasions when individuals act from either blind routine, or blind impulse, coercion, routine or impulse.

Dewey (1925/2008, p. 269) defines artfulness as "an intelligent mode of practice" that harmonizes "the precarious, novel, irregular with the settled, assured and uniform." To be artful is to put "everything in common between means and ends" (Dewey 1925/2008, p. 277). In the second part of this three-part essay, I interpret Dewey on the unification of the instrumental and the final using an analysis of rhythm. Dewey claimed that music best exemplifies artfulness because of its "evident temporal emphasis," which allows it to illustrate "the sense in which form is the moving integration of an experience" (Dewey 1934/2008, p. 188). Together, the discrete sounds and silences of a piece of music combine to create a familiar and cumulative effect. These uniquely placed sounds and silences are both radically new and prophesy what is to come; they are ends and means.

In the third and final part of the essay, I introduce Dewey's idea of recurrence in order to draw out the educational implications of Dewey's philosophy of music. Briefly stated, Dewey thinks that there is "no rhythm without recurrence" (Dewey 1934/1987, p. 170). Recurrence is the relationship established between past and present; it contributes to the qualitative distinctness of anything repeated: words in language, sounds, a shared glass of wine at the end of the day and the all-too-familiar gestures of those we know well. As with artfulness, music best exemplifies recurrence because it involves the formal repetition of sounds and silences and yet, with each repetition, the sounds and silences are imbued with different qualities and meanings. I conclude that if living well involves living artfully and, if music best exemplifies artfulness because of its temporal and formal qualities, then an education in music provides an apprenticeship in artful living. Anticipating the discussion that is to follow, I turn my attention to our renewed interest in arts education and offer a critical perspective on instrumental justifications for the arts in schools.

9.2 The Instrumental Ethos[1]

Arts education is confronted by a moment of unprecedented threat; it is in crisis. Narrower government priorities and reduced funding have caused arts departments—including visual arts, theater, music, chorus, and dance—to be downsized and, in some cases, closed. When forced to economize, a school's art program is often the first to be cut. For example, middle schools commonly have only one art

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[1] My comments in this section are informed by two articles: Raimond Gaita, To Civilize the City?, *Meanjin*. http://meanjin.com.au/articles/post/to-civilise-the-city/; and Anne Carson, The Idea of A University (After John Henry Newman), *The Threepenny Review* (1999) 78, 6–8.

teacher for all grade levels and rarely offer programs in theater and dance. Alongside these developments, parents, students, administrators and policy-makers are asking: Why is a formal education in the arts even necessary? They note that new technologies have given the arts an almost "indigenous status" in human life (Dewey 1934/2008, p. 9). People create, share, and encounter poems, stories, music, photographs, images, and videos more than ever before; social media has transformed us into curators, critics, performers, singers, dancers, photographers, writers, and film-makers. Artistic license has become, to quote Walter Benjamin (1986), "common property."

Clearly, the arts continue to play a vital role in human life in the twenty-first century, eroding a once basic distinction between artistic and ordinary endeavors. Given the pervasiveness of artistic endeavors, the proliferation of after-school programs, and the pressure on schools to reduce costs while improving student achievement, it makes sense that policy-makers, school administrators, educators, and parents would entertain as reasonable, the possibility that schools might cease to offer formal instruction in the visual, musical, and dramatic arts. Instead, their mandate would be to direct school resources, finances, and expertise towards promoting such preeminent and practical subjects as science, technology, engineering, and mathematics [STEM].

Not everyone is willing to accept this new state of affairs. Educational researchers advocate for the arts by arguing that they promote transferrable, cognitive and social skills—including disciplined concentration, creative thinking, problem-solving, innovation, and collaboration—and desired academic outcomes—including verbal and mathematical achievement. These researchers conclude that a formal education in the arts serves our practical interests, narrowly construed. In an era of global economic uncertainty, instrumental justifications of formal arts education programs are understandably strategic and, to a degree, truthful. After all, justifications are intellectual strategies that come into effect when a custom, tradition, environment, institution, idea, or activity is adversely threatened. Their purpose is to legitimate and preserve the endangered practice by demystifying, articulating, and defending its value.

The problem for any such justification is that our values are not valued equally; values fall within cultural, professional, educational, and personal hierarchies. The decision to justify a practice in terms of either its intrinsic or instrumental value is determined by such a hierarchy of values. We find a powerful contemporary illustration of this in art education. While the values intrinsic to art education—self-expression, associative thinking, imaginative play, spontaneous creativity, and aesthetic appreciation—are considered developmentally appropriate for infants and children, they are readily sacrificed as the individual matures into adolescence and adulthood. Values such as associative thinking and imaginative play are seen as superfluous for non-artists; most adults value academic achievement, career advancement, and financial security. Our current hierarchy of values leads to an instrumental redescription of K-12 arts education as contributing to cognitive, academic, and entrepreneurial success. While this instrumental redescription may ensure the immediate survival of school-based arts programs, it would be naïve to

think that it does not impact the way art is practiced and understood, as evidenced by new accountability goals referencing artistic "competency" and "literacy".

Instrumental justifications are deeply troubling for at least four reasons. First, and perhaps most obviously, they are susceptible to the causal fallacy (Winner and Hetland 2000; Winner and Cooper 2000): a correlation between two activities does not establish that they are causally connected. For example, although a correlation exists between playing an instrument and improved mathematical performance, it is extremely difficult to isolate how band practice directly improves mathematical ability. Second, instrumental justifications imply that the means are *only* instrumentally valuable; that is, they derive their value from an intrinsically valuable end. Therefore, if an alternative means can be found to achieve the same intrinsically valuable end—in a more time and cost effective way—then it would be reasonable to adopt the new means in favor of the old. Although an arts education might improve cognitive and mathematical performance, it is quite conceivable that other activities will improve these performances equally well, if not better.

Consider a somewhat extreme analogy. The film, *Limitless* (2011) invites viewers to imagine what life would be like if it were possible to ingest a pill that allowed 100 % use of our brain. The immediate appeal is we would become highly functioning without any of the personal costs. The film's protagonist, Eddie, is transformed from struggling writer to financial wizard overnight. He also writes a best seller in four days, learns a language in hours, outsmarts the experts and develops foresight, athleticism, and charisma. *Limitless* is more than a fanciful thought experiment, for it is increasingly the case that students are selling, buying, and ingesting prescriptions drugs (Ritalin, for example, which is also known as "kiddie coke"). My point is that if such a "smart pill" were to be invented, it would render formal education, including arts education, redundant, unless we develop arguments that redirect attention away from learning outcomes to the ethical, aesthetic, and metaphysical dimensions of schooling.

A third reason for concern is that instrumental justifications create an ethos or culture that has corrosive effects. For example, the instrumentalist redescription of arts education has depleted the conceptual resources that allow us to seriously understand an engagement with and in the arts. The words are still available, but they lack purchase because we have lost a way of speaking, seeing, and being that renders them intelligible. Within an instrumental ethos it is difficult for arts teachers and students to register and sustain their deepening engagement with the minutiae that defines what they do and nourishes who they are. For the visual artist it is the myriad shades of color, barely distinguishable changes in light, as well as the variety of their materials (charcoal, pencils, paintbrushes, acrylic and oil paints). These minutiae allow for new meanings if the art teacher and student trust them as a source of artistic, pedagogical and metaphysical insight. Unfortunately, the instrumental ethos forces arts educators to become reliant upon the empirical and social sciences as the only source of objective knowledge.

The fourth reason is that instrumental justifications underestimate, and thereby obfuscate, the deep formal connection between the arts and life. I defer discussion of this to the next section, but the point I wish to underscore

here is that it is impossible to know in advance, or immediately afterwards, how an arts education will prove to live on in an individual's life. Aesthetic experience, to quote Alexander Nehamas (2004, p. 30), "is inextricably woven into the everyday."

Philosopher of music education, Heidi Westerlund, believes that the instrumental ethos prevalent today is impoverishing music pedagogy. She argues that music teachers encourage students to learn an instrument *as a means to* understanding music theory; students are encouraged to participate in their music classes *as a means to* an end-of-year performance. Theory is privileged over practice and performance is privileged over rehearsal. Thus, theory and performance are perceived as having intrinsic value whereas practice and rehearsal are perceived as having only instrumental value. According to Westerlund, the pedagogical problem is that music educators neglect to create conditions that make music classes experientially valuable in their own right. Westerlund recommends that music educators focus on "the acts of learners when, for instance, learning musicing, are not just ways and means to approach the world of professional musicians and their artistic achievements" (Westerlund 2008, p. 83). She develops her argument by drawing upon Dewey's philosophy of valuation. While I share Westerlund's pedagogical concerns, I draw upon Dewey's philosophy with a different emphasis.

According to Westerlund, Dewey criticizes an entrenched theory of ends and means; namely, that ends are ultimate, unchanging, and intrinsic goods pursued by individuals using means of only instrumental value. Westerlund locates Dewey's critique in his philosophy of action. Dewey rejects the definition of action as a means to an end. Having accepted that all experience is qualitative (I will return to this point below), he argues that some activities are inherently enjoyable and for this reason a source of value, which, in turn, positions them to inform the ongoing reconstruction of ends. More specifically, Dewey argues that the arts intensify human experience because they unify means and ends—"the consummatory and the instrumental coalesce" (Westerlund 2008, p. 85). Westerlund applies Dewey's insight to music education in key ways. She suggests that music students should not consider the end-of-year performance as the end of their studies. It is more likely that they will have alternative ends-in-view that are more closely associated with assessments about the qualitative value of their learning experiences relative to their personal aspirations (their desire to play an instrument, join a band and/or have a lifelong interest in music). Westerlund concludes that music educators must adopt a holistic approach by asking what kinds of events are experienced as qualitatively good by the students themselves.

I share Westerlund's concerns and agree with her proposed solutions, but would go further and suggest that her exclusive focus on Dewey's philosophy of action causes her to overlook his designation of music education as a fitting apprenticeship in the art of living. Westerlund fails to appreciate the foundational role of rhythm in Dewey's thoughts on the means-end continuum. Rhythm derives from the Latin term, *rhythmus*, which denotes a patterned sequence of sounds. Dewey builds upon such an idea by defining rhythm as an "ordered variation of changes" or, more simply, artistic form (Dewey 1934/2008, pp. 152 & 154). Rhythm gives form to experience, thereby making it artful. The most comprehensive statement of Dewey's

philosophy of experience is provided by his later work, *Experience and Nature* (1925/2008). In that book, he defines nature not as material substance but as temporal flux. If nature is a sequence of events, then rhythm is the ordered variation of these events which makes experience possible. Dewey claims that music best exemplifies artistic practice because it is quintessentially rhythmic or dramatic (Dewey 1934/1987, p. 188)—I return to this point in the third and final section, but for now I wish to develop an interpretation of Dewey on rhythm that demonstrates (a) how music exemplifies rhythm—understood as "the moving integration of an experience"—and, (b) how rhythm is critical for artfulness (Dewey 1934/2008, p. 188).

9.3 Dewey on Rhythm and Artfulness

Dewey assumes that experience "reaches down into" nature (Dewey 1925/2008, p. 13). Experience, he writes, "is not a veil that shuts man off from nature; it is a means of penetrating continually further into the heart of nature." (Dewey 1925/2008, p. iii) Nature has a temporal quality; it consists ultimately "of events rather than substances" (Dewey 1925/2008, p. 6). It is "characterized by beginning, process and ending"; each event has a "serial connection" to every other event (Dewey 1925/2008, p. 91, 92). Any event ensues from, and is the culmination of, all prior events. According to Dewey, this is an event's terminal or final quality (Dewey 1925/2008, p. 92). He writes that nature "has what in the literal sense must be called ends, terminals, arrests, enclosures" (Dewey 1925/2006, p. 82). Although an event shares in the nature of past events it is not simply a by-product of them. It possesses its own "initial, unpredictable, immediate qualities" which Dewey refers to as its efficacious or instrumental quality (Dewey 1925/2008, p. 92). Each event's efficacious quality contributes to nature's changing, unstable and unpredictable character. Nature, Dewey concludes, combines the precarious and the assured, the incomplete and the finished, the uncertain and the stable, and the hazardous and the safe.

The "incessant beginnings and endings" that characterize nature are qualitative in the sense of being "immediately felt" (Dewey 1925/2008, p. 83, 6). Dewey explains that: "Empirically, *things are* poignant, tragic, beautiful, humorous, settled, disturbed, comfortable, annoying, barren, harsh, consoling, splendid [and] fearful (Dewey 1925/2008, p. 82; emphasis added)." While these qualitative determinations are felt, Dewey cautions against conceiving of them as mere feelings, particularly if what is meant by a feeling is that it is psychological and occurs within us. For Dewey, "[T]he existence of unifying qualitativeness in the subject-matter defines the meaning of 'feeling'." These traits, he argues, stand on "the same level as colors, sounds, qualities of contact, taste and smell" (Dewey 1925/2008, p. 82).

The point about these beginnings and endings—the logic of their drama—is that they are immediate and qualitative. We feel absorbed by endings and excited by beginnings. Initially, beginnings and endings are accidentally and spontaneously discovered. Not all of them are beautiful or comfortable; some are tragic, annoying, barren, fearful, or harsh. Over time, we seek to secure positive outcomes rather than negative. Dewey writes: "Our constant and unescapable concern is with prosperity,

success and failure, achievement and frustration, good and bad. Since we are creatures with lives to live, and find ourselves with an uncertain environment, we are constructed to note and judge in terms of bearing upon weal and woe—upon value" (Dewey 1925/2008, p. 33). In other words, by refusing to passively accept what comes their way, individuals react to these beginnings and endings by inevitably seeking to initiate, hasten, and multiply phases of pleasure as they seek to abruptly conclude phases of annoyance and frustrations.

It is the inevitability of our responses to these beginnings and endings that inspires Dewey to distinguish between the temporal quality of existence and the temporal ordering of human life. Temporal order reflects humanity's desire to regulate the passage of events: we strive to direct our experiences toward their consummatory fulfillment while cognizant of nature's unpredictability, instability, and change. Temporal order is the result of reflection and deliberation. It only occurs once events acquire meaning by means of language. As Dewey explains: "When an event has meaning, its potential consequences become its integral and funded feature" (Dewey 1925/2008, p. 143). We project ourselves into a co-created future whenever we estimate and judge an event's meaning or potential consequences. Depending on the judgment, we will either strive to conserve the event in an effort to bring its potential consequences to fulfillment or, we will obstruct the event in an effort to thwart its potentially destabilizing consequences. The problem of experience, for Dewey, is not to eliminate change in favor of certainty; rather, it is to balance the precarious with the assured and the uncertain with the stable. Dewey writes that the "the issue of living depends upon the art with which these things are adjusted to each other" (Dewey 1925/2008, p. 65). Love of wisdom comes down to a concern with the choice and administration of the "proportional union" of these phases of experience (Dewey 1925/2008, p. 65).

In Dewey's view, art solves the problem of experience, but for surprising reasons (Dewey 1925/2008, p. 277). Dewey argues that art involves "a peculiar interpenetration of means and ends" (Dewey 1925/2008, p. 282). We find satisfaction in aesthetic objects because they simultaneously compose—by means of form—and arouse—by introducing the new (Dewey 1925/2008, p. 58). Art "proves that the difference between means and end is analytic, formal, not material and chronologic." (Dewey 1925/2008, p. 280). In other words, while it is possible for us to intellectually distinguish means from ends, they remain conjoined existentially (Dewey 1925/2008, p. 90). The clue to their harmonious union is "measure, relation, ratio" or, what Dewey elsewhere describes as rhythm (Dewey 1925/2008, p. 64). In music, rhythm refers to the patterned interval of beats or, the alternation of pulse and rest. It could be said that music *is* rhythm because the alternatives are either silence, the playing of a single musical tone without variation, or discordant noise.[2] With rhythm

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[2] Noel Carroll argues that Dewey's definition of an aesthetic experience is not sufficiently broad to include such works that do not possess such qualitative unity, such as John Cage's 4'33'. I agree with David Hildebrand who argues, following Richard Shusterman, that "While contemporary artworks may be filled with 'jarring fragmentation and incoherencies' (or even silence), such aspects must be understood not simply in relation to the artwork as an isolated object/event, but to the 'more complex forms of coherence' that arise 'within a larger coherent totality of meaning' in

we are able to create and compare different tempos of change. Dewey stresses that no particular rhythmic structure should be posited as the normative standard.

Dewey appreciates that rhythmically alternating sounds and silence makes each participating sound and silence both a summing up *and* a stepping forward. Each alternating pulse and rest fulfills an aroused expectancy at the same time as it creates a new longing and curiosity. Dewey writes that a rhythmic silence "punctuates what is done while at the same time it conveys as an impulsion forward, instead of arresting at the point which it defines" (Dewey 1924/2008, p. 179). And each beat, "in differentiating a part within the whole, adds to the force of what went before creating a suspense that is a demand for something to come" (Dewey 1934/2008, p. 159). The arts and, more specifically, music impress because they completely integrate expectancy and fulfillment—instrumentality and finality—"by the *same* means instead of by using one device to arouse energy and another to bring rest" (Dewey 1934/2008, p. 174). Music, in particular, is so well-ordered because each new element "at once records and sums up the value of what precedes, and evokes and prophesies what is to come" (Dewey 1934/2008, p. 174). The movement of change is ordered in such a way as to simultaneously excite *and* calm (Dewey 1934/2008, p. 166).

Adopting a different terminology, the American composer, Aaron Copland, explains the same phenomenon as follows: "Music's incessant movement forward exerts a double and contradictory fascination: on the one hand it appears to be immobilizing time itself by filling out a specific temporal space, while generating at the same moment the sensation of flowing past us with all the pressure and sparkle of a great river. To stop the flow of music would be like the stopping of time itself, incredible and inconceivable."[3] Copland, like Dewey, views music as exerting a "double and contradictory fascination." The effect of playing or listening to music is to find oneself in an extended present; our attention is entirely taken up with a singular moment in time, characterized by a note, an interval between two notes, or the reappearance of a musical phrase. It is tough to imagine that time extends beyond the present moment into the past and the future. At the same time, we have the impression of tremendous unity and movement across time. Whether we are listening to an improvised jazz performance, an aria, or a heavy metal band, we are carried forward by the Individual notes, intervals, and musical phrases become almost indistinguishable as the music is allowed to wash over us; we allow ourselves to become adrift in changing tempos and shifting intensities. As with Copland's image of a flowing river we delight in the inevitable and indiscernible movement of the music.

In relationship to Dewey more specifically, when "every closure is an awakening and every awakening settles something," then a sequential or mechanistic relationship has been transformed into a directional or dramatic order (Dewey 1925/2008, p. 174).

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the experienced situation that frames the work." (157–158) – cited in Felicia E. Kruse, "Temporality in Musical Meaning: A Peircean/Deweyan Semiotic Approach", *The Pluralist*, 6.3. (2011), p. 57.

[3] Copland, 27–28, cited in Felicia E., Kruse, Semiotic Approach, *The Pluralist* 6.3 (2011), 55.

Put differently, the sequential or mechanistic relationship, with its *de facto* boundaries between elements, is a necessary but not sufficient condition for the possibility of directional or dramatic order. In a directional or dramatic order the relational elements are converted into parts of an expanded whole. Repetition and variation are conjoined, creating feelings of satisfaction, repose, calm, interest, suspense, and curiosity. Thus, directional or dramatic order is characterized by "continuity, cumulation, tension and anticipation" (Dewey 1934/2008, p. 143). Again Dewey finds concrete illustration in music. He writes: "A musical phrase has a certain close, but the earlier portion does not therefore exist for the sake of the close as if it were something which is done away with when the close is reached. And so a man is not an adult until after he has been a boy, but childhood does not exist for the sake of maturity" (Dewey 1925/2008, p. 84). Dewey argues that earlier events, like childhood, inevitably precede and are connected to later events; they are without doubt a means to an end. But, importantly, they do not for this reason lose their intrinsic value.

Dewey defines rhythm as the "ordered variation of changes" or "rationality among qualities" (Dewey 1934/2008, pp. 158, 174). While he holds that rhythm pervades the literary, musical, plastic, and architectural arts, he locates it in nature first and foremost (Dewey 1934/2008, p. 152, 154). For Dewey, "rhythm is a universal scheme of existence, underlying all realization of order in change" (Dewey 1934/2008, p. 154). It inheres in the regular cycles of the seasons, dawn and sunset, day and night, rain and sunshine, and birth and death. Rhythm divides existence into measures that allow for variation in intensity: "certain forms grow strong against the weaker forms" (Dewey 1934/2008, p. 14). For this reason, Dewey sees modulation—i.e. knowing where and for how long to put the emphasis—as the chief problem of life. He thinks that living creatures demand both order and novelty. The constant rhythm of undergoing and acting (surrendering and reflecting) characterize the individual's relationship with the environment. In summary he thinks that "order, rhythm and balance, simply means that energies significant for experience are acting at their best" (Dewey 1934/2008, p. 189).

9.4 Conclusion: Recurrence and the Artful Unity of a Human Life

Dewey holds that there is "no rhythm without recurrence" (Dewey 1934/2008, p. 170). He distinguishes recurrence from the repetitions inherent in sequential or mechanistic relationships, arguing that relationships recur as they simultaneously sum up and carry forward the dramatic ordering of experience. Thus, recurrent relationships individuate and connect the parts of experience, allowing them to "vitally serve in the construction of an expanded whole" (Dewey 1934/2008, p. 171). These relationships include: friendship, marriage, home, neighborhoods, gardening, cooking, hiking, and art.[4] Relationships allow us to look backward to the

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[4] For a discussion of the role of repetition in marriage see Søren Kierkegaard, *Either/Or*, Vol. II, ed. And trans. Howard and Edna Hong (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987), 138–144.

past and forward to the future—each time effecting a new presentation of whatever is repeated. Each repetition is colored by, and amplifies, previous occurrences, which has the effect of deepening the meaning of a relationship and progressively unveiling and expanding its true possibilities. We cannot flee from nor dwell in the past. As with a piece of music, life propels us forward: past experiences are remade in order to "enter integrally into a new pattern; they take on "new color and meaning" as they are "employed to grasp and interpret the new"" (Dewey 1934/2008, p. 144; Dewey 1925/2008, p. 270).

A powerful illustration of what Dewey means by recurrence is to be found in Talbot Brewer's discussion of friendship in *The Retrieval of Ethics* (2009). In seeking to defend the irreplaceability of character friends, Brewer argues that "t [T]he rituals and repetition of friends and lovers are never mere repetitions, because... here is here a possibility of limitless accretion of layers of perceived meaning, hence of limitless repetitions in the outward form of shared activities, without a single repetition in the inner texture of these same activities" (Brewer 2009, 262–263). Together, these self-deepening interactions create a habitable world of shared possibilities unavailable to others. It is this world of shared possibilities that make the death of a friend so devastating for the one that remains.

As if anticipating the conceptual difficulties, Dewey explains the phenomenon of recurrence as follows:

> Every movement of experience in completing itself recurs to its beginning, since it is a satisfaction of the prompting initial need. But the recurrence is with a difference; it is charged with all the differences the journey out and away from the beginning has made. For random samples, take the return after many years to childhood's home; the proposition that is proved through a course of reasoning and the proposition as first enunciated; the meeting with an old friend after separation; the recurrence of a phrase in music; of a refrain in poetry (Dewey 1934/2008, p. 173).

What Dewey means here, I think, is that the repetitions undergo a qualitative transformation. They stop being merely formal, if they ever were that, and come to represent steps or stages in a psychological and collective journey. In this context, Dewey mentions the case of a person returning after many years to a childhood home and the case of old friends meeting up after a period of separation. In both cases, everything has aged, including the childhood home. The point Dewey wishes to underscore in his discussion of recurrence, however, is not so much change, as it is the individual's understanding of these reiterative moments. The person returning to his or her childhood home appreciates how vitally it figured in his or her growing up. Walking through it will inspire vivid memories that could not be recalled otherwise. The old friends who meet up after a period of separation have a sense of their earlier significance to one another and just how that significance reverberated throughout the period of separation. Perhaps they separated over an altercation that they realize was of less consequence than the dissolution of their friendship.

Adopting a different terminology, the individual in each case can tell a story about how the childhood home or the friendship figured in his or her life. Their lives have taken on a distinctive coherence and unity. Alasdair MacIntyre, introduces the idea of "the narrative unity of a human life" (MacIntyre 1981; Gaita 1991), arguing that the unity of a life is given in a story which reveals its meaning. Thus, to deliberate about an action is to invoke the story of one's life, and vice-versa. The story of one's life undergoes constant revision as new events and actions alter the significance of past actions as well as interrupt and create future possibilities.

Dewey decries that this lack of unity or artfulness in ordinary human existence: most individuals are engaged for most of the time in activities with "no immediate intrinsic meaning" (Dewey 1934/2008, p. 271); they are trapped in a relentless and vicious cycle of having to pursue extrinsic necessities. We are educated in order to work, we work in order to afford our education and a home, and yet we use our time there to recuperate the energy we need for work. According to Dewey, these activities are only labeled "useful" because their combined effect is to assist us in attaining such commodities as: "shoes, houses, motor cars, money and other things which *may* be put to use" (Dewey 1934/2008, p. 272). Consumerism blinds us to the quality of how we live: "by way of narrowed, embittered and crippled life, of congested, hurried, confused and extravagant life" (Dewey 1934/2008, p. 272).[5] We ignore our most basic human impulse "for possession and appreciation of the meaning of things" (Dewey 1934/2008, p. 272). In other words, we fail to live artfully by way of a balance between "the precarious, novel, irregular with the settled, assured and uniform" (Dewey 1934/2008, p. 269).

The difference may be brought out by considering the "extreme routinization" of K-12 schooling (Higgins 2011, p. 445). The rhythms of school are simple and unvarying: opening and closing bells ring at the same time each day; all classes are a fixed length of time, whether 45 or 90 min; each day has the same number of classes and the daily schedule of classes is repeated throughout the semester. Throughout the day, students routinely move from one task to another, making it hard for them to achieve a sense of continuity and purpose. They learn to view their education as mercilessly dominated by the pursuit of extrinsic necessities: students will study Geometry in middle school in order to quality for Calculus in high school; they will study physical education in high school in order to fulfill their annual credit requirement; high school students will participate in community service and a team sport in order to improve their college application. Together, these activities are considered "useful" because they culminate in a college education and professional certification—which, in turn, help the individual attain more commodities.

How might the arts educate us to existentially integrate the instrumental and the final? Life, like art, is a practice. As a practice, the arts enlist habits. For example, scales and a set repertoire of musical pieces are repeatedly rehearsed in order to

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[5] For a related critique of consumerism that also draws on aesthetics, see René V. Arcilla (2011) *Mediumism: A Philosophical Reconstruction of Modernism for Existential Learning*, New York, SUNY, Chapter Five, pp. 65–82.

give earlier performances an opportunity to influence later ones. Dewey characterizes musicians as learning by their work—"as they proceed, to see and feel what had not been part of their original plan and purpose" (Dewey 1934/2008, p. 144). In other words, the routine playing of an instrument educates the musician's powers of observation which, in turn, leads to subtle and significant shifts in his or her playing (Dewey 1934/2008, p. 98). Needless to say there are complex causal issues here that are beyond the scope of this discussion. In the face of such complexities, Dewey is, nevertheless, interested to emphasize that there are absolutely no shortcuts to achieving a meaningfully unified life; artfulness takes time, repeated practice, and must be allowed to progressively unfold. It is not the case that individuals should pursue the activities in order to attain the perceptions or, conversely, that we drop the activities having arrived at the perceptions. Rather, the perceptions reflect an engagement over time.

If, as Dewey argues, art "involves bringing to a better balance than is found elsewhere in either nature or experience the consummatory and the instrumental phases of events" (Dewey 1925/2008, p. 8), and if "music in its evident temporal emphasis illustrates perhaps better than any other art the sense in which form is the moving integration of an experience" (Dewey 1925/2008, p. 188), then it follows that a formal music education is imperative. Music students experience the transformation of sequential or mechanistic relationships into directional or dramatic orders—they literally get to feel rhythm. Thus, accomplished musicians are able to take more "liberties" with a musical score than novices are inclined to do, because they are able to recognize the gulf "between mechanical or purely objective construction and artistic production" (Dewey 1934/2008, p. 169). Accomplished musicians recognize that variation is "an indispensable coefficient" (Dewey 1934/2008, p. 169) of order. Dewey casts art education as an apprenticeship in existing temporally or dramatically; the student learns to be at home in the world.

Dewey's argument has implications for the pedagogy of arts education. Music educators must strive to create conditions that make participating in music classes experientially valuable in their own right. For this goal to be realized, music must be experienced as an individual, collective, and historic process. Only then will music teachers and students be fully present to the finality and instrumentality of the musical scores that they encounter. As soon as a piece of music becomes fixed, defined, and determined, then everything else related to learning is reduced to means.

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Chapter 10
Aesthetics and Educational Value Struggles

Alexander J. Means

10.1 The Enclosure of Educational Value

The headline from NBC News read, "Principal fires security guards to hire art teachers—and transforms elementary school" (NBC 2013). Orchard Gardens, a public K-8 in the Boston area community of Roxbury, was opened in 2003 with high hopes and expectations. However, from the beginning Orchard Gardens was plagued by conflict and academic dysfunction. As a result, the school quickly found itself ranked in the bottom five of all public schools in Massachusetts. Serving a population of mostly poor and mostly black and brown youth, Orchard Gardens was the type of school where backpacks were banned due to the fear that students kept weapons and other contraband in them. And like many urban public schools, security guards at Orchard Gardens often outnumbered teachers in the hallways. According to various reports (McGuiness 2013; Hsieh 2013), this all began to change in 2010 when incoming Principal Andrew Bott decided to dismantle the school's massive security infrastructure and redirect hundreds of thousands of dollars from its security budget to hiring a cadre of art teachers. Arts and humanities programming now permeates everyday life at the school. This turn to the arts and creativity is credited with spurring the radical transformation of Orchard Gardens. Test scores in all subjects have improved (even as test preparation has been significantly reduced), student conflicts have dramatically receded, and students report that they actually enjoy going to school (McGuiness 2013; NBC 2013; Hsieh 2013).

While a school modeled on the arts and imagination is not a particularly new or innovative idea, the conversion of Orchard Gardens would appear to represent a very different logic of school organization typically associated with the dominant

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educational policy trajectory and its disenchanting attachment to instrumental rationalities and hierarchical corporate management. However, in contrast to what many progressive and radical educational critics tend to assume, this does not mean that creative and imaginative capacities are not accorded considerable value within the language of corporate school reform. In fact, we are incessantly told that in a global milieu where economic value is increasingly generated through advanced technical and immaterial labor—finance, intellectual property, design, and innovation—that creativity and other non-instrumental and expressive qualities typically associated with progressive pedagogies and arts-based education are more crucial than ever. From corporate philanthropists to free market advocates and business gurus, to academics and journalists, to the pages of financial magazines and popular manifestos such as Daniel Pink's *A Whole New Mind*, Ken Robinson's *Out of our Minds*, and Seth Godin's *Stop Stealing Dreams* —creative and imaginative capabilities are positioned in mainstream educational debates as core educational values. Within this light, the success of converting Orchard Gardens from a "prison school" to a school founded on creativity and the arts could perhaps be viewed as the fulfillment of the corporate school reform ideal.[1]

The cognitive dissonance begins to emerge when we look a little more closely at how creative value is conceived in dominant educational discourse. This requires a brief excursus into the question of value itself within late modern culture. The anthropologist David Graeber (2001) suggests that there are three traditional conceptions of value:

1. "value" in the sociological sense: conceptions of what is ultimately good, proper, or desirable in human life
2. "value" in the economic sense: the degree to which objects are desired, particularly as measured by how much others are willing to give up to get them
3. "value" in the linguistic sense, which goes back to the structural linguistics of Ferdinand de Saussure and might be most simply glossed as "meaningful difference" (pp. 1–2)

Graeber argues that, by themselves, each of these ways of framing the concept of value are insufficient, largely because they do not account for ongoing processes of human action and transformation. Alternatively, Graeber develops a theory of value as "the way individuals represent to themselves the importance of their own actions" (p. 47). "Value" in this sense is understood as a guide to individual action that is always immanent to, but contains the potential to exceed, larger social processes and systems. "Value" is thus "the way people who *could* do almost

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[1] The negative consequences of zero tolerance policies, prison cultures, and criminal justice encroachment in schools have become widely acknowledged in educational research and theory. For some of the most insightful critical analysis see (Giroux 2009; Lewis 2003; Saltman and Gabbard 2010). My own work has sought to decenter the emphasis on *militarized security* in schools and educational research through a focus on the structural and symbolic threats to *human security* of which zero tolerance policy is only one manifestation of a broader devaluation of social and education life under neoliberalism (Means 2013).

anything (including, in the right circumstances, creating entirely new sorts of social relation) assess the importance of what they do" (p. 47).

Building on Graeber's theory of value as the self-representation and immanent capacity for ethical judgment and creative human action, Massimo De Angelis (2007) has offered the language of "value practices." For De Angelis, value practices constitute the way we see, act, and define for ourselves positives and negatives in relation to others and the world around us. Value practices are thus "social practices and correspondent relations that articulate individual bodies and the wholes of social bodies in particular ways. This articulation is produced by individual singularities discursively selecting what is 'good' and what is 'bad' within a value system and acting upon this selection" (p. 24). Overlapping webs of value practices thus coalesce into distinct *value systems* that organize dominant ways of seeing, perceiving, imagining, and making ethical judgments on what is included and excluded from our social reality. Value systems may develop that challenge our orientation to the world leading to new possibilities, while at other times they harden into habituated frameworks of perception and thus foreclose creative action. Drawing on the work of Canadian philosopher John McMurtry, De Angelis refers to such enclosed systems as *value programs*. He observes that "a value system is a conceptual grid through which we see the world; it defines (even unconsciously) what is good and what is bad, what is normal and what is abnormal, what we must resign ourselves to, and what is possible to change" (p. 26). In contrast, "a value program," De Angelis writes, "is a value system that cannot *conceive* of an outside beyond itself" (p. 26).

For De Angelis, and others working within the autonomist Marxist tradition, the value system of neoliberal capitalism, and its intricate web of market values and consumer identifications, constitutes the critical horizon of social imagination and contestation today.[2] It is a value program, or paradigm, that seeks to subordinate all external forms of value to its internal logic and drive for accumulation. Of course, there is nothing inherently new in pointing out the expansive *colonizing drive* of capital. As Marx (1977) detailed, as a system, capitalism is centrally concerned with the endless production and circulation of a specific form of value, i.e. surplus value (the division between wages allocated and the excess value produced through the labor process). In order to fulfill the coercive demands of perpetual accumulation, capital must attempt to incorporate all value systems and value practices into its own distinct value orientation. This entails enclosing values and social relations held in common (land, labor, and culture) by expropriating them as private property. Within our current historical moment, the value system and program of neoliberalism, or what Michel Foucault (2009) once referred to as a "permanent economic tribunal," has attempted to extend the colonizing drive of capital into ever-new domains of life. We can see this in the worldwide enclosures and privatization of the planetary bios and public resources that took shape with the

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[2] For further analysis of value and capitalism today see Max Haiven's (2011) brilliant essay on value struggles over the radical imagination within the strictures of financialization.

rise of globalization in the 1980s and have intensified in the post-2008 period of financial crisis and austerity (Harvey 2010). More crucially for the discussion that follows, new enclosures of human experience including art, creativity, friendship, knowledge, sensuality, and communication have become increasingly central to contemporary patterns of expropriation and valorization (Berardi 2009; Haiven 2011).

Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri (2009) have argued that this enclosure of human experience has meant that the *common*, defined as both the actual and potential site of creative social production, has become a driving force of global capitalism. This is not to suggest that industrial production has declined in either volume or in its exploitive substance as Hardt and Negri sometimes seem to suggest (the rise of neo-feudal sweat-shop labor across the postcolonial world attests to that), but that the command and control aspects of valorization are increasingly *dependent* on the production of what Marx referred to as the "general intellect" that includes forms of collective knowledge and subjectivity. Hardt and Negri suggest that the value program of capital has thus become increasingly *biopolitical* as social life itself and ideas, images, codes, and affects produced in common are drawn deeper into capital's value program. This process has *spatial* and as well as *temporal* dimensions as divisions between labor-time and leisure-time and public-space and private-space have rapidly fragmented. This is perhaps most readily visible when one thinks about how digital technology allows the workplace to extend into the domestic sphere, while the preferences we register and the data we produce through our personal internet usage through Facebook, Twitter, Amazon, Google, Flickr etc. become the basis for targeted digital advertising, new product development, and direct production of information as future exchange value and intellectual property for capital. For Hardt and Negri, the circuits of biopolitical production, immaterial labor, and the expropriation of value from the common have created a fundamental contradiction. As capital attempts to incorporate the full range of value practices and value systems produced in common, it creates frameworks of enclosure and control that inhibit the creativity and productivity of the common. For instance, ideas become potentially more valuable and can lead to greater innovation as they are freely circulated and exchanged allowing the general intellect to blossom organically, while intellectual property places restrictions on knowledge through patents and other protections. Hardt (2010) puts it this way: "the more the common is corralled as property, the more its productivity is reduced; and yet the expansion of the common undermines the relations of property in a fundamental and general way" (p. 136).

Now it is precisely these struggles over the common that I believe we must keep in mind when considering tensions in how the value of creativity and imagination are conceived in educational discourse today. Let us take a recent article in *Fast Company* magazine written by Jennifer Medbery, CEO of an educational technology company called Kickboard, as a representative example (Medbery 2013). The article, titled "Reinventing Education to teach creativity and entrepreneurship," is suggestive of a twofold view of value to be derived from the educational common: (1) the value of student subjectivities as future productive labor; and, (2) the value

of direct profit generation from processes of teaching and learning. Medbery suggests that in our current economic environment schools need to graduate students with creative and imaginative capacities to fill and invent the employment niches of the future. These are students who "tinker, create, and take initiative" rather than simply "regurgitate facts and formulas." At first blush, this might suggest the need to break from the all-encompassing focus on measurement and high-stakes testing that has dominated classrooms since the passage of the No Child Left Behind Act in 2001. However, for Medbery, the problem with education today lies not in instrumental accountability and standardized testing *per se*, but that schools have been focused on "measuring the wrong things." In order to ensure student subjectivities capable of producing future economic value in the "global knowledge economy," schools require a new generation of data analysis tools and digitized systems of accountability and standardized assessment that measure students' cognitive and non-cognitive capacities for creativity and invention. This value can only be realized, Medbery argues, through the commodification of the common of the school itself. She states that this entails nothing less than a "revolution" in educational purpose and content wherein "entrepreneurs see a disruptive opportunity to 'democratize' education" by providing new data and assessment platforms designed to "increase the efficiency of the learning market by lowering barriers to knowledge acquisition."

The entrepreneur-led revolution that Medbery envisions posits a new instrumental vision of *experiential learning* where teachers are reduced to facilitators, record keepers, and analysts of data, while students "discover" knowledge supplied by computer algorithms designed to transform them into "leaders, problem-finders, and rule breakers." Medbery suggests that this unlocks both "the art and science within teaching" where "art is the relationship you build with kids, and the science is purposeful assessment that generates real evidence of student growth." "Accountability is a good thing," she argues, "but only when you measure what matters." Schools "should be producing students who tinker, make, experiment, collaborate, question, and embrace failure as an opportunity to learn." This can be realized, of course, by purchasing her company's products which are designed to convert the common of educational production into a site for the production of present and future economic value for capital.

The economistic and technocratic view of education embraced by Medbery is widely shared by a new generation of corporate education reformers and educational entrepreneurs. On the one hand, there is a broad *affirmation* of *non-instrumental* capacities typically associated with progressive approaches to schooling and arts-based education. On the other hand, there is a profound *negation* of the development and dynamic potentiality of these capacities as public education is radically defunded and its value and substance is reconceived in purely *instrumental* terms (human capital development, measurement, testing etc.). In a 2011 report by for the National Education Association titled *Starving America's Public Schools*, Jeff Bryant observes the depth of this contradiction. He identifies how new federal and state austerity measures are currently decimating public education across the United States. This includes:

- Massive cuts to early childhood education programs (pre-K and kindergarten);
- Huge class sizes in many subjects, reaching levels that are upsetting parents and potentially damaging students' education;
- An end to art, music, physical education, and other subjects considered to be part of a well-rounded education;
- Cuts in specialized programs and/or hefty fees for them. Some of these programs serve students with developmental issues or those who need more individualized attention. They also include extra-curricular activities such as band and sports as well as academic offerings in science, foreign language, technology, and Advanced Placement subjects.

Alongside severe budget cuts, public funding for schools is being shifted to for-profit corporations like Medbery's Kickboard to support a new generation of privatization and instrumental curriculum. For example, Florida has cut more than $1 billion from its yearly education budget while redirecting $229 million to corporate interests; Ohio has cut $800 million while redirecting $107 million; and Pennsylvania $851 million while redirecting $52 million. According to Bryant, "children everywhere are losing essential learning opportunities when schools lay off staff, cut back programs, reduce course offerings, and charge families, already being hit hard financially, extra fees to cover school expenses" (p. 7). Moreover, "the tax dollars that could be used to restore these direct services to children and families are being transferred. . .to private concerns that are of questionable value to the public" (p. 7). This suggests that there is in fact little concrete support for nurturing the general intellect and the creative capacities of all young people (the exception of course is that children of the elite can still expect a well-funded and enriching education that includes exploratory learning and ample time and resources for creativity and the arts). Instead, public schools for the majority are being redefined within a procedural and profit-driven notion of educational value and creativity that captures and degrades the educational common rather than nurturing and enhancing it.[3]

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[3] It is important to clarify and differentiate at this point the relationship between public schooling and the educational common. For Hardt and Negri, the common is considered an immanent site that includes shared resources and the coproduction of ideas, knowledge, relationships, and subjectivities. Hardt and Negri are often inconsistent in the way they define the relationship between the public and the common. They argue that the common is or should be considered a distinct third space beyond capital (private property) and the state (public property) with its own epistemological, ontological, and political make-up. At points in their book *Commonwealth* (2009), however, they include aspects of the "public" as part of the common. They describe public education, for instance, as a "basis for biopolitical production" and that its privatization and defunding serves to "drain the common" (p. 144). Moreover, Hardt and Negri conclude by arguing for strengthening the public as one specific way of enlarging the transformative and democratic potentiality of the common (as one example, they advocate for a guaranteed basic income). My own position is that the educational common includes certain elements of the "public" dimensions of public schooling while always exceeding these elements. Public schools are a province of the state and are subject to economic and technocratic rationalities and forms of control. However, public schools are also contested social resources that are, in ideal terms, supposed to be

10.2 Towards an Aesthetic Revalorization of the Educational Common

As Massimo De Angelis (2007) points out, struggles over the common are centrally struggles over value. As the self-representation and immanent capacity for ethical judgment and action, value practices and their accordant value systems are always embedded within, yet have the potential to push beyond given orders of perception and organization. If neoliberal rationalities have attempted to reorient educational experience and creative value within the educational context, they have done so in ways that work to capture and enclose the educational common itself within a narrow field of exchange value. To resist the creativity deadening impulse of the neoliberal drive for economic value thus requires enlarging and inventing alternative value practices and systems that imagine a common educational life other than endless commodification and enclosure.

There are myriad examples of such resistant value systems already in formation today such as in the various movements associated with Occupy Wall Street that erupted in 2011 against the ongoing looting of collective futures by predatory financialization. In the educational context, they can be seen in movements that directly oppose corporate school reform such as mass demonstrations against privatization in Chicago and emergent standardized test boycotts from Seattle to Brooklyn. Cesare Casarino (2008) has suggested that such struggles over value and the common always turn centrally on an axis of subjectivity and desire. He argues that we cannot simply assume that the desire to produce different values and senses of the common exists *a priori*. However, as Casarino points out, while capital attempts to expropriate aspects of human experience and cannot imagine a common *beyond* its own value program, there are elements of the common (values, ideas, ways of being, and affects) that always remain *outside* its reach. Put differently, aspects of creativity, imagination, and communication can never be fully enclosed. For Casarino, radical politics today entails thinking about how to enhance those aspects of the common that remain as *surplus* to capital and to state domination. This requires nothing less than a revolution in desire and subjectivity. He states:

> To claim back and seize the common as production entails a drastic reorientation of subjectivity such that one might begin to distinguish between, on the one hand, the common as its own foundation, and, on the other hand, the common as the foundation of its own negation in capital. It entails the production of a form of subjectivity constitutionally unable any longer to be interpellated by and to identify with the capitalist desire to posit itself as indistinguishable from the common. It entails the production of a form of subjectivity constituted by a counterdesire. Such a counterdesire is *the desire to be in common—*as

democratically responsive to the needs of diverse localities. At the same time, public schools are also a powerful site in the production of ideas, values, relationships, and possibilities. As contested sites of biopolitical production, public schools serve as a basis for the coproduction of an educational common that does not always simply fall in line with the either the demands of the state or capitalism. Quite often, the educational common stands in direct confrontation with them. This position is developed further in De Lissovoy et al. (2013).

opposed to the desire to be for the common as-captured-by-capital, the desire to be for the common-as-negated-by capital, the desire to be captive of one's own negation—in short, as opposed to *the desire not to be*. (p. 17)

I think it is important to be clear here that the production of a counterdesire *to be in common* is in fact the production of a desire that resists *all determinations*. It is thus a form of desire constituted *not as an absence or lack* within a negative ontological foundation, as in the Hegelian and Freudian traditions, but a form of desire as a *creative constituent force*. To posit such a constituent desire that resists determinations is not to reject ethical judgments. Nor is it an effort to *prescribe* a new reality *ex nihilo*. Rather it is an affirmation of those aspects of experience and imagination generative of alternative value practices and systems that might enhance a common life beyond its negation through endless commodification. We cannot prescribe the valences of such a common life in advance because it is something that can only arise through a process of social cooperation and radical democratic action. Fortunately, the counterdesire to be in common is all around us. It occurs whenever human beings engage in value practices and communication other to capital and forms of external control. It is immanently present when teachers and students construct new and different senses of the world and the common together in the course of everyday life in schools and classrooms (De Lissovoy 2011). I want to suggest here that one element in enhancing a broader educational common against neoliberal enclosure is to recover and reimagine creativity and imagination in schooling through a form of *aesthetic education* that takes seriously a desire that resists determinations and works to affirm and construct new forms of value rooted in our fundamental commonality and equality. Here I take aesthetic education to include the "arts" as a field of visual and aural experimentation and production. However, I want to suggest that aesthetic education has a much broader meaning implicated in the articulation and delimitation of the full range of human experience. Such an approach is offered not in the spirit of an all-encompassing "aestheticization of education" in the sense conveyed by Walter Benjamin's warning of the "aestheticization of politics," but rather as a way of defending non-instrumental experience, values, and capacities within and against an increasingly dominant emphasis on narrow economic and instrumental values and value practices that serve to imprison educational desire and imagination.

An initial point of departure for this discussion can be found in Friedrich Schiller's seminal statement on aesthetic education in his *Letters on the Aesthetic Education of Man*. Written in reaction to the failure of the French revolution to realize its abstract ideals of equality in concrete form, Schiller's letters set the stage for a long line of philosophical criticisms of modernity that have attempted to reconcile tensions between freedom and necessity, bureaucratic science and spirituality, rationality and sensuality, and that ever elusive relational gap between the universal and the particular. In the second letter, Schiller calls to mind observations later made by Max Weber and the Frankfurt School, by lamenting that a "spirit of freedom" (that for Schiller was embodied in art) is everywhere under assault by an unremitting march of instrumental reason. According to Schiller, this insurgent

force, which he refers to as "the business spirit," leaves a "degraded humanity under its iron yoke" as "the frontiers of art are narrowed while the limits of science are enlarged" (Letter II). "Utility is the great idol of the time," Schiller observes, "to which all powers do homage, and all subjects are subservient". Within this "great balance on utility, the spiritual service of art has no weight, and, deprived of all encouragement, it vanishes from the noisy Vanity Fair of our time" (Ibid). For Schiller, aesthetic education (*Bildung*) is imagined as a means to not only free human creativity from its subordination to calculative and instrumental utility, but a force capable of realizing a fundamentally different art of living and being together in common.

Schiller's aesthetic education was derived expressly from Kant's notion of aesthetic judgment in the *Critique of Judgment*. For Kant, aesthetic experience of beauty elicits a temporary free-play of the senses that produces a momentary suspension of the intellectual faculties prior to rational conceptualization. This affective suspension produces a moment of indeterminacy or disinterestedness. For Kant, this reflects a *singular* expression of a *universal* principle. As reflective and rational beings capable of producing and apprehending aesthetic representations, individuals possess the universal capacity to experience beauty and, in turn, translate and transform these moments of suspended affectivity into rational judgments concerning value, taste, and form. Kant's aesthetic judgment thus presents a unity of sensual imagination and rational understanding. Schiller's innovation was to suggest that rather than confined to the Kantian synthesis of subjective experience and the transcendental categories of the mind, such a unity between universal reason and affective imagination could be objectively extended to every aspect of social life. In this sense, the universal experience of freedom unleashed through aesthetic encounters and artistic creations could become a medium for a historical-educational process whereby the antimonies immanent to modern life could be overcome and new forms of community could emerge. Jurgen Habermas (1990) has argued that Schiller's aesthetic education positions art as a "communicative, community-building and solidarity giving force" capable of overcoming the solipsism of "the business spirit" and its collapse of human experience into instrumental reason (p. 46). Aesthetic education paves the way for a dialectical understanding of emancipation encompassing both consciousness and sensuality. Importantly, art here is aimed precisely not at the total "aestheticization of living conditions, but at revolutionizing the conditions of mutual understanding" (pp. 46 & 49). Habermas states:

> For Schiller an aestheticization of the lifeworld is legitimate only in the sense that art operates a catalyst, as a form of communication, as a medium within which separated moments are rejoined into an uncoerced totality. The social character of the beautiful and of taste are to be confirmed by the fact that art "leads" everything dissociated in modernity—the system of unleashed needs, the bureaucratic state, the abstractions of rational morality and science for experts—'out under the open sky of common sense'. (p. 50)

Like Habermas, Jacques Rancière has suggested that Schiller represents an "unsurpassable reference point" for understanding the revolutionary implications of modern aesthetic life. According to Rancière, Schiller's central insight is that

"there exists a specific sensory experience—the aesthetic—that holds the promise of both a new world of Art and a new life for individuals and the community" (2002, p. 133). Implied within this formulation is a recognition that freedom turns on an ontological distribution whereby "the activity of thought and sensible receptivity become a single entity" which constitute a "new region of being—the region of free play and appearance" (2004, p. 27). It is thus the role of *aesthetic education* to develop this mode of life toward the concrete realization of a common humanity. Rancière argues that Schiller's "aesthetic revolution" forged a new idea of "political revolution" whereby the freedom embodied in artistic creation becomes an *educational medium* for a new art of living together. This notion of revolution informed German Romanticism, as articulated in the founding document of Hegel, Schelling, and Holderlin. It was subsequently rearticulated in a variety of Marxist revolutionary aspirations for an emancipated common life in both form and content—the classic debates between Bertolt Brecht's "aesthetic estrangement" and Georg Lukac's "aesthetic realism" are a touchstone in efforts to map the educational force of Marxist revolutionary aesthetics (Adorno et al. 2002). However, the hope that characterized this program for uniting intellectual and sensual freedom eventually gave way to despair embodied by the later critical analysis of the Frankfurt School and surrealism in the arts. Modernity was thus to become a kind of "fatal destiny" where Nietzsche and Heidegger culminate in the development of the postmodern "reversal," which Rancière describes as a kind of "grand threnody of the unrepresentable" and denouncement of "the modern madness of the idea of self-emancipation. . .and its inevitable and interminable culmination in the death camps" (2004, p. 29). Rancière states that perhaps one can say "we have experienced the reality of that 'art of living' and of that 'play', as much in totalitarian attempts at making the community into a work of art as in the everyday aestheticized life of a liberal society and its commercial entertainment" (2002, p. 133).

Rancière's conception of what he calls the *aesthetic regime* is based on an acceptance that modern aesthetic life is ineluctably characterized by historical tendencies toward both domination and liberation. Thus, for Rancière, the pedagogical and revolutionary potential of the aesthetic regime is radically contingent and internally differentiated. Perceptions, judgments, and desires are always already constructed in relation to the vast web of values, images, and affects that constitute and divide a community. Drawing on Schiller, Rancière argues that aesthetics frame human experience. They are concerned "with time and space as configurations of our 'place' in society, forms of distribution of the common and private, and of assignation to everybody of his or her part" (2005, p. 13). In Kantian terms, aesthetics refer to the *a priori* fields of visibility and sayability that organize sensible experience and delimit perceptual value. It is in this field of legibility where the parts of the common are arranged, where material shares and allotments are apportioned, and distributions of rights and commitments are normalized and legitimated. Rancière refers to this as the "distribution of the sensible," by which he means "the system of self-evident facts of sense perception that discloses the existence of the common and the delimitations that define the respective parts and positions within it" (2004, p. 12). This aesthetic distribution is governed by

what Rancière refers to as the *police*. According the Rancière, police logic represents the Platonic tradition of defining for the *demos* the "proper" division of the common. It does so by taking the rich heterogeneity of the common and reducing it to a static perceptual consensus. For example, neoliberalism thrives on the incorporation of difference—market niches, lifestyle distinctions, and celebrations of multiculturalism. Similarly, within educational policy, a neoliberal consensus operates through the language of "social justice," "inclusion," "diversity," and "leaving no child behind." These incorporations serve largely to flatten meaningful differences and obscure growing inequalities through a monochromatic universality that, in effect, denies plurality and serves to foreclose the political by defining the limits of what is given to sensible legibility. This signifies, for Rancière, "the reduction of politics to the police...it is the 'end of politics' and not the accomplishment of its ends...the return of the 'normal' state of things which is that of politics non-existence" (Rancière 2001, Thesis 10).

Rancière thus contends that while aesthetics are fundamental to politics, politics as such are a rare occurrence. This is one of the significant distinctions between Rancière and other theorists of his generation such as Michel Foucault and Gilles Deleuze. Rather than situate politics as inherent expressions of everyday power relations, Rancière situates politics as singular moments of possibility. For Rancière, "nothing is political in and of itself for the political only happens by means of a principle that does not belong to it: equality" (1999, p. 33). The political at the heart of the aesthetic is here imagined as a disruption and reconstruction of given orders of perception through imaginative and creative acts. According to Rancière, this notion of politics as *dissensus*, is actualized when universal equality—the fundamental right and ability to make a claim on the division of the common—is pressed into service in a singularized form. Politics is thus a process of *subjectification*—a contingent moment when those occluded from full recognition and participation in the community (the "supernumerary" element or "part with no part") constitute themselves as equals through creative acts and in turn disarticulate and reconfigure the sensible partitions of the common. Rancière states that "politics exists because those who have no right to be counted as speaking beings make themselves of some account, setting up a community by the fact of placing in common a wrong that is nothing more than this confrontation, the contradiction of two worlds in a single world: the world where they are and the world where they are not" (1999, p. 27).[4]

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[4] There are some important differences in the way that Hardt and Negri and Rancière frame the relationship between politics and the common. Michael Hardt (2009) has argued that Rancière's conception of the common as the site of social distribution of parts and roles finds great affinity with the conception of the common that he and Negri defend. However, Hardt argues they differ on two specific fronts. First, he argues that that the common is not simply a natural fixture or condition of the social as Rancière sometimes seems to suggest, but that it is always being produced and reproduced. The issue at stake here for Hardt is that radical politics should not just be concerned with a disruption that rearranges the parts of the common, but should be engaged with how the common is currently produced and how it might be produced in the future in ways that are more

The insights of Schiller and Rancière allow us to consider a unique vision of aesthetic education with the potential for imagining different senses and possibilities for revaluing the educational common. "The entire question of the 'politics of aesthetics'", Rancière, argues, turns on Schiller's conjunction "that aesthetic experience will bear the edifice of the art of the beautiful *and* of the art of living" (2002, p. 134). This conjunction offers a notion of aesthetic education as a form of experience and social production that attempts to bridge the gap between consciousness, beauty, and a common life in both form and content. However, drawing on Rancière's insights, Tyson E. Lewis (2012) has argued that while education contains an inherent aesthetic dimension, it is by itself neither an art nor is it a form of politics. Education is aesthetic in so far as it sets the scene for a specific form of experience that is always framed within a perceptual distribution. This is a perceptual distribution that serves to police the horizon of educational desire and value. Simultaneously, a police logic that attempts to instantiate a "proper" partition of educational life implies the possibility of its radical other—the eruption of an "improper" universal equality that might reframe the educational common within a more democratic register. Thus while education is situated within a given logic and partition of sensibility, it is also a space of relative autonomy and diverse value practices and struggles where human beings might recreate their relationship to one another and the world in profoundly unimagined ways. In short, education may not itself constitute a form of politics, however, it always threatens to generate politics emergence.

Aesthetic education, as drawn from Schiller and Rancière, thus becomes a kind of ethical and normative injunction to think alternative ways of organizing and articulating creative educational experience and value. This would first mean taking as foundational the relative autonomy and radical egalitarian capacity of communities, teachers and students to collaboratively engage in acts of the imagination and dissensual self-constitution. Such constituent acts contain the potential for generating new value practices and ways of seeing and being together that might both deconstruct and reconfigure the partitions of the sensible order in schools and communities. This universal capacity for ethical judgment and creative coproduction, that aesthetic education seeks to name and affirm, can never be fully enclosed within a prescriptive value program, although it can be tamed, distorted and/or subverted. While it thus cannot offer institutional blueprints or

radically democratic. Hardt states that "when politics and aesthetics begin, according to his [Rancière's] notion, the common already exists and thus the central question is how its parts are to be shared, divided and distributed. No longer today, however, can we consider the common as quasi-natural or given. The common is dynamic and artificial, produced through a wide variety of social circuits and encounters. This recognition does not negate the importance of Rancière's notion of partage and the common, but rather extends it further to account also for the production of the common" (p. 23). Second, Hardt argues that Rancière does not adequately account for the way capital and economic production and distribution have increasingly become biopolitical, and in the process, have made the common itself a central aspect of valorization and economic command. Hardt thus argues, as I have intimated in this chapter, that we thus must "consider the economic realm along with the political and the aesthetic" (p. 23).

guarantees, aesthetic education would seek to make room for and avow those value practices and constituent desires that remain outside and/or resistant to instrumental determinations and forms of economic and political capture within contemporary struggles over schooling. These are surplus values and surplus desires to capital and calculative rationality that are already present in varying degrees within the everyday experiences of students and teachers in even the most disenfranchised and authoritarian institutional contexts (Means 2013). A defense of genuine creativity and the radical imagination in public schooling should take seriously the need to develop and affirm these surplus values and desires through an ethical fidelity to *beauty and equality* in the realization of a form of educational flourishing aimed at the full development of human capacities and aspirations in common. This would necessarily require an engagement in diverse value struggles and creative acts of dissensus that make claims on and work to reconfigure an educational common beyond its enclosure under neoliberalism. The sad passions animating corporate school reform only recognize one form of value as the mad pursuit of capital accumulation without end. Such a distorted sense of learning and living together *can never fully succeed* as human experience is always generative of other value practices and possibilities. Aesthetic education names this impossibility at the same time that it names the actuality of alternatives.

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Chapter 11
The Primacy of Movement in Research-Creation: New Materialist Approaches to Art Research and Pedagogy

Sarah E. Truman and Stephanie Springgay

11.1 Introduction

Artist residencies no longer only occur in specialized studio venues dedicated to artistic production, but take shape in schools, farms, campgrounds, airplanes, restaurants, hotels, hospitals, and even incorporate mobile devices such as vans or bicycles. Typically residencies provided living space, work facilities, and occasionally financial support, recent residencies operate within existing activities and routines and thus, offer artists unique opportunities to engage specific sites and/or audiences (Morrell 2013). These residencies materialize what Pablo Helguera (2011) calls transpedagogy, a term used to describe projects that "blend educational processes and art-making in works that offer an experience that is clearly different from conventional art academies or formal art education" (p. 77). In transpedagogy the pedagogical value is not the transfer of art skills or techniques but rather the pedagogical process becomes the artwork.

A further characterization of such residencies is their relationship to 'movement.' While in some cases the residencies are literally in motion, existing as a bicycle or as a long walk in a forest, residencies that take on more permanent structures are still attuned to movement. This is not movement between two points, but what Manning (2011) refers to as "absolute movement" (p. 15). In "absolute movement" a body in movement exists *in* and is created through movement, differentiating endlessly. This movement is intensive, flowing, and affective.

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In this paper we examine the primacy of movement as a proposition of research-creation through a 'case study' of an artist-residency in a secondary school. In using the term 'case study' we envision an aberrant case as an ecology of inhabitation. As such, the case is not a sum of parts but a conjunctive, itself an interstitial space of movement. Propositions differ from instructions. They are not pre-determined, rather they emerge out of the event. Thus, in thinking about movement as a proposition of research-creation it should not be construed as a criteria, but rather that which co-composes research-creation in the act of research-creation. The residency *Walls to the Ball* was a collaborative project between artist Hazel Meyer, a grade 10 and grade 11/12 art class that interrogated sport, movement, textiles, gender and collaboration. Meyer had executed the project in a number of exhibition venues and through various artist residencies over the past 5 years, however this was Meyer's first residency within a public school. For 14 weeks Meyer worked with two classes at a Toronto secondary school. The residency enacted what Garoian (2012) calls "a processual art education where its research and practice does not end with a project, a lesson, a course, or at its disciplinary boundary, but coexist spatially and coextends temporally to enable ways of saying and doing, teaching and learning through art that is caring and compassionate, empathic and boundless" (p. 286).

In the first section of the paper we briefly outline new materialist orientations to qualitative research and situate research-creation's affinity with this methodological turn. We then begin our exploration of movement-sensation. Expanding our arguments about movement-sensation we turn to social choreography in order to explore the relationship between movement and community. We consider how recent discussions of zootechnologies or *swarms*, while resisting methods of analytical investigation, can offer new ways of thinking about collectivity and political subjectivity that is ontogenetic, indeterminate, and of an 'ecology' in co-composition. Movement, we will argue, is germane to emerging post-humanist explorations within educational research, and a crucial component for re-imagining research-creation methodologies. Through affective thinking about movement and political-tendings, this paper highlights the productive connections and mattering available in artist-residency projects in schools, and queries how we might think materially about research-creation as a "speculative (future-event-oriented)" practice and a "pragmatic (technique-based-practice)" (Manning and Massumi 2014, p. 89).

11.2 Materialist Methodologies of Research-Creation

Research-creation can be described as the complex intersection of art, theory, and research. According to Manning and Massumi (2014) it is an "experimental practice" that "embodies technique toward catalyzing an event of emergence" (p. 89) that cannot be predicted or determined in advance. Although many scholars, particularly Manning and Massumi, would argue that there is a danger in

articulating research-creation as methodology or method, it has been configured as such in some literature. As a methodology, it is multi-disciplinary and is used by artists and designers who incorporate a hybrid form of artistic practice between the arts and science, or social science research; scholars attuned to the role of the arts and creativity in their own areas of expertise; and educators interested in developing curriculum and pedagogy grounded in cultural production where there is a "mutual interpenetration of processes rather than a communication of product" (Manning and Massumi 2014, pp. 88–89). While research-creation shares some similarities with what has commonly become understood as arts-based research, we contend there are a few distinguishing features. First, research-creation places creative activity at the core of its practice. As Erin Manning (2013) notes, often arts-based approaches simply fold art into the midst of other qualitative research methodologies. For example, typical qualitative methodologies are used to 'collect' *data* and then an art form is used to *represent* the research findings. This perpetuates an idea of art as separate from thinking whereas the hyphenation of research-creation engenders "concepts in-the-making" which is a process of "thinking-with and across techniques of creative practice" (Manning and Massumi 2014, pp. 88–89). Second, and intricately tied to the first feature, are the theoretical propositions of research-creation. Although research-creation is not aligned with any one theoretical framework, it has a strong affinity to what is currently being defined as 'new materialist' research, which calls for a renewed emphasis on materiality in research. Materialism abandons the idea of matter as inert and subject to predictable forces, instead positing matter as indeterminate, constantly forming and reforming in unexpected ways. Thus, a materialist ontology recognizes the interconnections of all phenomena (human and non-human). At its broadest, new materialism can be said to concern a series of questions and potentialities that revolve round the idea of active, agential and morphogenetic, self-differing and affective-affected matter (Barad 2007).

In contemporary art criticism, new materialist frameworks have shifted the focus from representationalism and discursive interpretations of 'art,' to examining how matter *matters* to understandings of cultural production (Barrett and Bolt 2013; Cull 2009; Zepke and O'Sullivan 2010). Barrett and Bolt (2013) have argued that dominant methodologies in the arts privilege textual, linguistic and discursive understandings. Art, they contend, has been "constructed in and through language" (p. 4). In contrast, materialism re-thinks cultural production as a material practice that exceeds its interpretive frameworks.

Within qualitative inquiry the turn to materialism has marked a number of different methodological approaches including diffractive readings (Barad 2007), schizoanalysis (Coleman and Ringrose 2013), affective methods (Hickey-Moody 2013), and our own work on diagramming (Zaliwska and Springgay 2015). Here we attend to research-creation as a materialist practice by thinking through the concepts of movement-sensation and swarming. Alecia Jackson and Lisa Mazzei (2013) argue that in thinking with theory, researchers need to put "philosophical concepts to work" by showing how theory and practice "constitute or make one another" (p. 5). This resonates with Springgay's (2008) arguments that

contemporary art does not simply reflect or represent reality, but rather art instantiates thought.

The Pedagogical Impulse was a 3-year research-creation project that initiated a series of artist-residencies that took place across a variety of educational sites in Toronto (www.thepedagogicalimpulse.com). Meyer met with the grade 10 and 11/12 classes twice a week during her residency and used slide shows and a workshop-format to introduce the students to a range of contemporary artists. As the classes unfolded, Meyer had the students rip fabric into long 1-in. strips, de-thread the outer edges of the torn fabric, knot and braid the strips, and attach the braids to two wire basket ball hoops set up in the art classroom. She showed the students a number of macramé and boating-style knots. There was a basketball in the space, and students enjoyed shooting hoops during class. The art teacher commented that many non-art students liked to drop by the art room where the basketball net penetrated the otherwise coded learning space, which was traditionally separated from movement and sport.

After weeks of braiding labor in the art classroom the students hung the two expansive nets in the gym (each approximately 40 f. long), and tied the two netted-constructions together in the middle. The sprawling, organic net form spanned the length of the gym. The class invited the school community during lunch hour to interact and engage with the net. Participants jumped over the yellow tangled net, skipped and slapped the net, and dribbled the 15 basketballs that were in play, while one student used a drum kit to create a rhythmic beat in the gym space. As research-creation project these activities constituted one of the many entanglements of the larger research project.

In addition to research-creation, corresponding qualitative methods were used to record the *Walls to the Ball* project. The research team conducted interviews with Meyer and the classroom teacher, used digital video and still images to document the cultural production in the art room, facilitated open forum class discussions and a blog with the participating students. All of these 'methods' were brought together using a materialist orientation to qualitative research through a process of diagramming (Zaliwska and Springgay 2015).

11.3   Thinking in Movement

> Cleave the notion of the body beyond the human. Connect it to all that co-combines with it to create a movement of thought (Manning 2013, p. 31).

In the opening pages of his book *Parables for the Virtual*, Brian Massumi (2002) contends that a body moves and feels simultaneously, "It does both at the same time," he argues, [i]t moves as it feels, and it feels itself moving" (Massumi 2002, p. 1). This corporeal connection between movement and sensation, he continues, is a matter of change, or more precisely variation and difference. Every movement invokes a change in feeling, which simultaneously invokes a change in movement

so that movement and feeling "have a way of folding into each other, resonating together, interfering with each other, mutually intensifying, all in unquantifiable ways apt to unfold again in action, often unpredictably" (p. 1). The moving-sensing body is indeterminate, open to an elsewhere and an otherwise. It is conjunctive and co-composing, and as such is concerned with issues of collectivity or relationality – a swarming of sorts, we will argue.

According to Erin Manning (2011) movement can be thought of as "relative movement" and "absolute movement." *Relative movement* borrows from a humanist framework. The body is described as active or moving, while the room is viewed as inert and in stasis. Manning (2011) notes that relative movement is where: "form preexists matter. The matter—my body—enters into the form—the room;" body and room are pre-given and ontologically distinct (p. 15). In the case of a classroom or school, the pre-determined space consisting of walls, desks, books, blackboards, and hallways defines the limits of the students' bodies.

In relative movement, human bodies and objects are understood separately from the space in which they reside and movement is something that happens in-between, designating an interim between two points that maintains and respects the individuality of these points. In other words, movement that passes between such points (or bodies) does not transform the bodies themselves. When a student enters the classroom and sits on a chair, the classroom, chair, and student all pre-exist each other and movement exists independent of each point, consequently, each entity retains its own self-sameness. Deleuze (1986) relates this type of movement to the fixed camera, which pans between immobile sections in a shot. Movement is created in the panning or the movement of the camera between the two "fixed" points of reference.

In the instance of *absolute movement*, a body in movement does not simply move between points, rather it exists *in* movement. A body *is* movement, differentiating endlessly. In absolute movement bodies do not precede the classroom nor the net-art work, but are in a "ceaseless process of interactive metamorphosis: becoming" (Tianinen and Parikka 2013, p. 209). In absolute movement the room and net reconfigure as the students' bodies recompose as ". . .a field of relations rather than a stability, a force taking-form rather than simply a form" (Manning 2013, p. 31).

Take for example, the project *Walls to the Ball*. Relative movement would describe the basketballs moving between student' hands, net and floor. Movement would exist between objects. Relative movement would perceive of bodies moving around in the classroom and the various independent movements needed to braid, knot, and construct the net. And while all of these movements might be considered interconnected, each movement would be understood as discrete and individual, and privilege movement as human-organized and human-controlled. This means that objects in the art room move because of the actions of the students' bodies. Movement is causal. What sets an object in motion is a body acting upon that object. The body throws the ball. The fabric is torn and braided by bodies.

Absolute movement shifts this humanist orientation to conceive of all matter as moving, vital and agential. If bodies (human and non-human) are *in* movement,

differentiating and intra-acting then they are always active, self-creating, productive and intensive (Barad 2003). Matter becomes "indeterminate, constantly forming and reforming in unexpected ways" (Coole and Frost 2010, p. 10).

While describing the research-creation, Meyer noted that the installation "...became this absurd and yet wonderful weird growth." Manning (2013) would explain that rather than thinking of bodies/objects as 'having a form,' movement-sensation is "taking-form' or a 'bodying' (p. 10). Similarly, for Deleuze and Guattari "there are no longer any forms or developments of forms...There are only relations of movement and rest, speed and slowness between unformed elements, or at least between elements that are relatively unformed, molecules and particles of all kinds. There are only haecceities, affects, subjectless individuations that constitute collective assemblages" (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p. 266). As an example of bodying, consider the net in the gym. As opposed to a net installed in the gym that students act upon as agents, the body-net-gym co-composition shaped an emergent ecology.

When movement becomes habitual, Manning (2013) notes, when it is reduced to an endpoint (to school, to work, to net) it becomes "...compacted, overarticulations muted by overarching directionality and predimensionalizing" (p. 39). Body-net-gym as an ecology of practice cannot be choreographed in advance. Thus, the net in the gym cannot be understood as enhancing student engagement, or as relational, participatory art, for this would suggest that students and net approach each other already formed. Rather the encounter of body-gym-net-movement-sensation are immanent to its unfolding.

In the classroom documentation, we see another instance of ecologies of practice. In these images, students' bodies, desks, stools, fabric, braids, balls, the sound of ripping and swelling conversations, are vibratory and in motion. They are no longer points or objects between which movement happens, rather they are all bodying in movement-sensation. This movement, endlessly differentiating, is what Deleuze and Guattari call *becoming*. It is not simply the bodies of the students that are in movement, but all matter in the classroom is vital, and in movement.

Deleuze and Guattari write, "a line of becoming is not defined by points that it connects, or by points that compose it; on the contrary, it passes between points, it come up through the middle, it runs perpendicular to the points first perceived, transversally to the localizable relation to distant or contiguous points" (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p. 293). And it is this middle, that they speak of, that is "fast motion, it is the absolute speed of movement" (p. 293). This has enormous implications for thinking about 'thought' as ontogenetic and material. Shifting from the Cartesian model of a body coming to thought through consciousness, and the mind, severed from or in absence of a moving body, absolute movement underscores 'thinking as movement' or as Manning (2013) writes: "To move is to think-with a bodying in act" (p. 15).

This movement of thought is affective; it is intensive. Intensity is felt and manifested in the skin, at the interface of the body with other bodies/things. This intensity Massumi (2002) notes, is non-linear and unassimilable. Affect, in a Deleuze and Guattari framework, is not congruent with emotions. Emotions,

Massumi would argue are qualified intensities. Once a body has taken in and formed or shaped an 'intensity,' and named it so to speak, it becomes an "emotion." "It is intensity owned and recognized" (Massumi 2002, p. 28). Moreover, affect is not individual, it does not belong to a body/object. Take for example the yellowness of the net. The intensity of yellow is already and immediately co-composing with previous and subsequent affects of yellowness (luminosity, warmth, or bitterness). There is a complexity to its intra-actions, an ecology, or a field of relation. "There is no 'body itself' here because the body is always more than 'itself,' always reaching toward that which it is not yet" (Manning 2011, p. 15).

The yellowness of the net reminds us that every event is intensively relational and collective; it is "pastnesses opening directly onto a future, but with no present to speak of" (Massumi 2002, p. 30). Movement-sensation then concerns the very dynamism of change or "the being of becoming" (Deleuze 2006, p. 23). This is pure difference – a difference that does not emanate from end points but keeps on differentiating from within itself.

In research-creation we need to challenge the idea of movement being a move from one position to another, to a movement that opens up possibilities and experimentation. In her work on early childhood education, Olsson (2009) notes that education needs to re-think 'positioning;' she writes, "Any time positioning comes first, one is allowed to see movement only as intermediate stops on the way towards the goal. In other words, the focus on positions does not allow for movement preceding positions. It creates a grid that permits only the stop-over moments to be seen" (Olsson 2009, p. 49). Absolute movement, pure difference, enables pedagogy to become ontogentic – emergent, vital, and mattering.

On the class blog one student wrote:

> A big yellow, awkward looking thing sprawled across the middle of the gym, dividing it horizontally. It suspended slightly, bouncing to the rhythm of basketballs thumping on the group. As I went closer, it became clear was it was: a giant braid. Not just one, but also many? Many braids forming a tube from one net to another.

Manning (2011) suggests that the intensity of movement can be felt in the in-between or the interval created by the movement of bodies: "This interval is ephemeral, impossible to grasp" (p. 30). The interval is the fold around which the bodies, fabric, room and net began to take shape. "Movement is the qualitative multiplicity that folds, bends, extends the body-becoming toward a potential future that will always remain not yet" (p. 17). The bodies of the students didn't so much as move each other, rather their bodies were recomposed out of the interval; improvised and relational. Olsson (2009) states, "thinking proceeds by laying out its ground at the same time as it thinks" (p. 51). When we move beyond viewing object positions as preceding movement, thinking shifts from an epistemological formation towards a thinking-in-movement, a thinking-as-bodying. In movement-sensation thinking and knowing are not predetermined but fueled by the pedagogy of infinite variations.

In a thinking-as-movement, posthuman classroom configuration, the bodying procedure of participants and emergent pedagogical ecology can be thought of as

activating through a kind of *swarm intelligence*. Swarm intelligence is theorized as "...natural and artificial systems composed of many individuals that coordinate their activities using decentralized control and self-organization" (Lewis 2010, p. 205). While theorists across varied disciplines draw on swarm theory to contextualize cultural phenomena, we want to think about swarm intelligence and its relationship to movement-sensation and research-creation.

11.4 Swarming as Politicality

> Transindividuations remind us that every event is a node of activity that is intensively relational (Manning 2013, p. 25).

In the past decade, swarming has become recognized both technologically and socially as a method for understanding collective organization (Lewis 2010). Scholars have used the concept of the swarm to think about the relations between insect ecologies and media ecologies, where vibration, variation and movement are primary techniques. Swarm turns technology "from a human cultural enterprise into a folding of intensive forces in environmental relations. It signals a creative tension between life and matter as intertwined" (Parikka 2008, p. 344). We draw from recent discussions of swarm intelligence to further understand the movement-sensation within the *Walls to the Ball* residency. In connecting absolute movement with swarming, we want to think about the residency, and research-creation, more generally, politically. However, we want to deviate from the typical discussions of political art, which operate through a set of assumptions about emancipatory or humanist politics, and focus instead on movement as a 'tending' political. This is a politics of flows and unpredictable unfoldings (Rotas and Springgay 2013, p. 281). Countering the perception that an artist 'brings-into' a classroom political art, which might 'rescue' the students, we argue that body-net-gym swarming is ontogenetic and processual, and is about politicality as intensity, as immanent, and as bodying.

Swarm theory suggests that 'intelligence' isn't located in a single subject but that it emerges from the collective. Moreover, this collective is distributed and without a centralized control structure. The movement or intra-actions within the swarm, while random, are self-organizing and emergent. Lewis (2010) writes, "the swarm has an embodied, collective and de-centralised intelligence that surpasses any one singularity within the swarm" (231). Furthermore, Vehlken (2013) argues that swarms should be viewed as 'zootechnologies' rather than 'biotechnologies' because swarms are not derived from 'animated' life (bios) they manifest from the unanimated (zoé) entanglements of the swarm: "Zoé manifests itself as a particular type of 'vivacity', for instance as the dynamic flurry of swarming individuals" (p. 113). This is inline with feminist materialist scholarship, such as the work of Braidotti (2005) who insists that the Deleuzian body/media is an ecology; a collective entity that is "an embodied, affective and intelligent entity

that captures, processes and transforms energies and forces" (p. 211). In the instance of the gym sequence of *Walls to the Ball,* the students, sounds, and net created a vivacity and flurry in the normally ordered space of the school that hinted at the swarm's inherent ability to adapt to changing circumstances and environments and in turn, affect that environment. A student commented:

> While the installation was happening, I saw a lot of people playing with the net we made, in the middle, and others playing ball games. I was amazed to see people playing ball while jamming with the beats I was playing [on the drum set].

The installation was a rhythmic dance of bodying. The reverberating sharp thudding of 15 orange basketballs bouncing on the polished wooden gym floor, rubber-bottomed shoes screeching, the swooshing of the net, the laboured breathing of students panting, sweating bodies, sweating floor, screams reverberating, all this, played in time with the clatter of beats of the drummer. The body-net-gym sequence becomes a process of materializing and responding to propositions posed by matter.

In swarm theory, rather than the view that technology (art), is based on the 'human' hand, cultural production becomes a radical and intensive potential, and as such becomes central to a politics that is non-anthropomorphic. The capacities of bodies swarming with net-gym-drum-braids-balls becomes unlimited and proliferates. As the movement of balls, bodies, nets, and beating drum folded into another movement, we felt the potential of the event, the opening of movement to the virtual. These folds of movement cannot be repeated. Rather they morph, coagulate and disperse from fold to fold, not point to point. In *Walls to the Ball* each movement toward created infinite variation of folds. These folds are, "...a traveling node along a fluctuating line that has not beginning or end" which envelop "a world infinitely spongy and cavernous, constituting more than a line and less than a surface" (Deleuze cited in Manning 2011, p. 23, 36). In the gym the nets were tied together, extending the full length of the space. Balls could be tossed into, over, and around the nets. Rather than functioning as a measurable point, the net became a folding point, a "circumvolution" that became movement itself. Deleuze (1987) states, "we are made up of lines" (p. 124) in moving relationships carrying us "across many thresholds towards a destination which is unpredictable" (Semetsky 2013, p. 17). The tangled lines and folds of the net, bodies, balls and rooms were not pre-existent to the event, and not independent of the whole.

As Thacker (2004) states:

> A swarm is an organization of multiple, individuated units with some relation to one another. That is, a swarm is a particular kind of collectivity or group phenomenon that may be dependent upon a condition of connectivity...that is defined by relationality. This pertains as much to the level of the individual unit as it does to the overall organization of the swarm. Relation is the rule in swarms...A swarm is a dynamic phenomenon (following from its relationality). (unpaged)

The use of swarming as a cultural technique can change the way educational researchers view student movements, however swarms are "are problematic objects of knowledge: they disrupt the scientific processes of objectification by means of their dynamics in space and time" (Vehlken 2013, p. 112). Through the act of

swarming, the swarm "baffles our view of the 'swarm' as an object of knowledge; as a chaos of spatial, temporal, and intereactional information" (Vehlken 2013, p. 115). In order to view body-net-gym as a swarm requires researchers to set aside the Cartesian procedure of segmenting problems into sub-problems and/or "individual movements" (Vehlken 2013, p. 119) because such an approach will fail to make sense of the swarm as an ecology.

So what are we to make of absolute movement and swarming for research-creation? What does this movement-thought do? Rather than a perspective that understands the bodies and net as separate, one acting on the other as predetermined structures, movement-sensation conceptualizes the body-net-gym as ontogenetic and produced through ecologies. Understanding an artist-residency not as a summation of parts but as the "dynamic relations among component parts of the system" (Vehlken 2013, p. 120) or what Deleuze and Guattari (1994) call a "vast plane of composition" (p. 173). This composing produces itself through movement-sensation, "opening, mixing, dismantling, and reassembling increasingly unlimited compounds" (p. 177). The task for research-creation then is to move beyond the reliance on meaning and information to think about research via compositions and ecologies, which in turn are political.

11.5 A (k) not Conclusion

> On the nexus of being and becoming, a body is more expressivity than form (Manning 2011, p. 22).

Returning to Massumi's (2011) work on movement-sensation we want to think about our conjectures of *Walls to the Ball* as a political. However, this is not to convey as sense that the 'art' is political art or that Meyer's residency could measurably account for student empowerment. While student interviews, blogs and classroom discussions pointed at their excitement and enjoyment in working with Meyer, when the residency was over, the balls were returned to their cupboards, the desks and stools in the art room were put back in straight rows, and the students returned to conte line drawings of lemons. What we want to think about is the politicality of movement-sensation, or what Massumi calls a "potential politics...forms of life in the making" (2011, p. 169). If *Walls to the Ball* is ontogenetic – emerging through movement-sensation – and politics is about the potential of animating forms of life, then the body-net-gym politicality becomes "creative [rather] than regulative, inventive more than interpretive" (p. 170). Massumi contends that political vocabulary needs to expand in order to consider movement-thought, how swarms of non-local relations compose ecologies that are always in flux, affective, and relational. Rather than the individual as a political subject, politicality concerns itself with the:

> intensity with which a process lives itself out. It is not concerned with how the process measures up to a prefixed frame of correct judgment applied to it from without. It concerns

the intensity of a form of life's appetite to live qualitative-relational abstraction creatively, as an immanent measure of its changing power of existence: forces for becoming. (p. 171)

The politicality of *Walls to the Ball*, or artist-residencies as research-creation in general, lie in movement-sensation and the swarm. As Vehlken (2013) argues, "Collectives possess certain abilities that are lacking in their component parts. Whereas an individual member of a swarm commands only a limited understanding of its environment, the collective as a whole is able to adapt nearly flawlessly to the changing conditions of its surroundings. Without recourse to an overriding authority or hierarchy, such collectives organize themselves quickly, adaptively, and uniquely" (p. 112). From this extended understanding of swarming we might begin to reshape a posthumanist, materialist, and ontogenetic future for educational research.

Much art education research remains embedded in the theoretical and pedagogical clutches of Eurocentric humanism that views students as autonomous and self-determining and classroom spaces as static. Taking a decidedly materialist, posthumanist and affective approach to theorizing research-creation in pedagogical spaces, we reject the unitary human subject and replace it with what Braidotti (2013) calls a more ". . .complex relational subject framed by embodiment [and] affectivity and empathy," (p. 26) and what Manning (2013) calls a "field of relations," or a "force taking form rather than simply a form" (p. 31). Movement-sensation, we argue, is crucial for challenging humanist orientations to research, where its not so much a matter of "anything" can happen, but that "so much can happen that we do not know about" (May 116). Furthermore, in thinking about research-creation as an ecology of propositions, rather than a set of pre-determined instructions or criteria, art becomes less about something (form) we make (directed) and instead instantiates, potentializes, and becomes thought.

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Part II
Teaching's Arts

Chapter 12
Suspending the Ontology of Effectiveness in Education: Reclaiming the Theatrical Gestures of the Ineffective Teacher

Tyson E. Lewis

12.1 Introduction

In his book *The Beautiful Risk of Education* (2014), Gert Biesta attempts to salvage education from what he refers to as learnification. The discourses and practices of learning have come to dominate our discussions of education and of teaching, transforming teaching into a practice that is managed, systematized, and regulated by a series of quantifiable measurements related to student learning outcomes. Just as education is now reduced to the question of measuring learning progress, so too teaching is reduced to the mere facilitation of learning. The whole process is predicated on an educational version of an economic exchange of goods and services, with the final product being the increase of human capital stored in the student for future marketability.

As an alternative, Biesta proposes to interrupt the learnification of teaching in order to return teaching to its intrinsic risks, difficulties, and aporias. While learnification hopes to further streamline teaching through the design of "teacher-proof" curricular materials, the emphasis on professional competencies, and the dominance of functionalist ideology, Biesta claims that teaching is ungrounded and uncertain. But these very uncertainties make teaching *teaching* rather than mere economic exchange or the systematic delivery of goods.

To invent a new language of teaching, Biesta therefore returns to the essential, ontological question of teaching itself. Inspired by Aristotle, he proposes that teaching could be conceptualized as either *poiesis* (making action) or *praxis* (doing action). *Poiesis* is the creation of something through technical skill. *Praxis* on the other hand does not concern itself with creating something so much as with promoting *eudemonia* or human flourishing. For Biesta, teaching cannot be thought

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of as the making of a product. Certainly teachers make material things such as curricular materials, and extending the idea of making beyond the realm of material things, we also might want to produce effective citizens or effective thinkers. Key here is the connection that Biesta (2014) draws between *poiesis* and "effectiveness" (p. 133). When effectiveness is extended to the social realm or to educational relations between teachers and students, teaching becomes reduced to a version of learning, teaching to instrumental practice that meets predetermined goals through predetermined, effective techniques. In light of these dangers, Biesta turns toward teaching as a *praxis*. *Praxis* affords him the opportunity to move beyond teaching as a merely technical endeavor concerned with the relationship between inputs and outputs. If teaching is a hermeneutical, communicative, and political act, then what is needed is not competencies so much as virtues of judgment. Education becomes a virtuous practice and the teacher a *phronimos*. Biesta (2014) summarizes as follows, "Educational judgments are, after all, judgments about what needs to be done, not with the aim to produce something in the technical sense but with the aim to bring about what is considered to be educationally desireable..." (p. 134). Teacher education should concern itself less with acquisition of technical skills and knowledge and more with existential, political, and ethical questions concerning the purposes of teaching that are essential components in any act of judgment. Teachers make a multitude of judgments everyday in their practices, and such judging is hermeneutical in nature. Thus the good life of teaching is found in the moments when teachers *risk something of themselves* in their judgments. Such risks are beautiful.

It is the beauty of these risks that link Biesta's ontological question with aesthetic questions. As with a virtues-approach to teaching, so too an aesthetic approach cannot be quantified or verified through empirically tested data. It is rather intersubjective, hermeneutical, and thus open to judgment. Indeed, for Biesta (2014), the question of teaching is not whether it is an art, but "*what kind of an art* teaching actually is" (p. 132).

In this essay, I want to pick up on this line of inquiry. Biesta is to be given credit for his on-going polemic against the reduction of education to learning and teaching to facilitation. He is also to be commended for foregrounding the ontological questions that lie at the heart of educational practices and relationships. And finally, he is to be acknowledged for connecting the ontological and the aesthetic as pressing and urgent considerations for educators. Yet what I would like to do is problematize Biesta's turn toward teaching as a *praxis*. I agree in full that we cannot simply state that teaching is about making action, but his wholesale emphasis on teaching as a doing action does not actually solve the central problem: the problem of aligning teaching with effectiveness. As the concluding chapter of his book reveals, a virtues approach to teacher education does not escape the lure of effectiveness so much as substitute one form of effectiveness for another. Teacher education should aim to produce "virtuosity" through the study of "wise educational judgments" (Biesta 2014, p. 136). Instead of competencies we have virtues, instead of empirical tests we have hermeneutical judgments. In both cases, what is emphasized is the *operativity of teaching*. Granted, one mode of operativity is

"strong" and the other "weak," but even weak operativity is still oriented toward realizing some latent potentiality in the form of virtuosity and wisdom.

Using Giorgio Agamben's genealogies of operativity, duty, command, and efficacy, I will argue that Biesta's rehabilitation of teacher education from learnification remains trapped within the very same ontology of efficacy from which he is trying to escape. To move beyond the ontology of operativity and command, we need to see how *praxical* readings of teacher education miss what is essentially *inoperative* about teaching. It is my conclusion that teacher education should be reconceptualized as a studious practice (rather than a virtuous one). Opening up a space and time for the study of being a teacher (and here the word being as opposed to practicing should be given its full weight) means that teacher education should remain ontologically inoperative, and thus safeguard a new possibility for educational beauty that is not envisioned by either learnification or its most ardent of critics.

12.2 The Ontology of Effectiveness

Agamben (2013) defines the modern world as a world dominated by an ontology of operativity, effectiveness, and command. But to understand the importance of this statement and its full philosophical as well as historical weight we have to return to an essential distinction found in Aristotle between potentiality (*dynamis*) and actuality (*energeia*). When one is in potential, one has the capability to do something yet withholds from this doing. Without such privation of potentiality, then all potentiality would merely coincide with actuality. Yet such a coincidence does not account for figures such as Aristotle's architect who can build a house yet prefers not to. By withholding his potentiality to build, the architect example demonstrates how all potentiality to do something is *equally* the potentiality not to do something. As Agamben (1999, 2013) repeatedly argues, all potentiality is therefore *impotentiality*. But this division of being into potentiality and actuality causes a problem: How is it that potentiality can overcome impotentiality in order to act? Habits both join together and separate potentiality and actuality and thus form a kind of hinge concept underlying the dicotomy. They are the form in which the potentiality can endure even in a state of privation. Agamben (2013) summarizes, "Something like a subject of *hexis* [habit] is constituted only through this possibility of not using it" (p. 94).

Although providing the spacing/separation necessary for us to think the aporia of potentiality as such, Aristotle repeatedly emphasizes the supremacy of the act over potentiality and habit. Agamben (2013) observes the following, "In this sense the potential-act distinction in Aristotle is certainly ontological (*dynamis* and *energeia* are 'two ways in which being is said'): nevertheless, precisely because it introduces a division into being and afterward affirms the primacy of *energia* over *dynamis*, it implicitly contains an orientation of being toward operativity" (p. 57). Aristotle in other words orients being toward what is done or realized by an agent. This is a

decisive step that opens up the door for a sea change in Western metaphysics from being as what exists to *being as what is done* through a *praxis*. From the perspective of *praxis*, impotentiality becomes an increasing problem that must be solved so that potentiality can be put to work. To overcome the inoperativity of habit (impotentiality), Aristotle develops a theory of the virtues. As Agamben (2013) writes, the virtues are precisely an attempt to "render governable" (p. 96) the potentiality-not-to-act. They ensure the passage from potentiality to acting at the right time, in the right way, with the right feeling, toward the right things and people. Virtue is the becoming operative of potentiality in relation to a particular *ethos* or set of customs.

The virtues put habit to work by separating it from impotentiality. They govern that which would otherwise be undecidable. They make potentiality operative and thus *effective*. Christian scholastics from Cicero to Aquinas to Ambrose develop this latent strand of Aristotle's ontology until impotentiality is, as Agamben (2013) argues, "bracketed" (p. 99) completely. Being is replaced by doing. Or rather being *is* doing without remainder. "The good (virtuous)," summarizes Agamben (2013), "is such because it acts well and acts well because it is good (virtuous)" (p. 100). The categorical distinction in classical ontology between potentiality and act, being and *praxis* are rendered indistinct, collapsing into one another until being is only an acting. And in the course of this transformation, *energeia* is replaced with effectiveness. Here lies the root of modern ontologies of *praxis* in which impotentiality is only included as an exclusion.

If virtue is the apparatus that pushes potentiality toward good action, then the will gains a new privileged position within the modern ontology of effectiveness. From the seventeenth century Spanish theologian Francisco Suárez up through Kant, Agamben charts the connections between effectiveness and will. In Kant, Agamben (2013) finds the culmination of a new ontology which equates being with the "duty-to-be" (p. 107). The transformation of being into having-to-be means that duty becomes an ethical and ontological category guiding Western metaphysics. One has to be what one does, and is what one has to be. Through this formulation, being and *praxis* enter into a threshold of total indistinction. Instead of being or acting, one's being is determined through one's acting. Because being has to be realized, it must be put to work (it must self-realize itself), hence the essential role that the will plays in this ontology. The will not only makes possible the conflation of potentiality and act but ensures the effective passage between the two. The will orients us toward the proper under the command of the law to "be!"

Being is not something that exists but is something that *must* be brought about through willful acting. Operativity is thus a conflation of being and having-to-be, and as such has the linguistic structure of an imperative. As Agamben (2013) points out, the imperative is predicated on the ontology of willing. Indeed, what the imperative presupposes is not being but willing—a special virtue that orients and ensures according to a command. In short, Kant's real Copernican Revolution, writes Agamben, was not the typical story of centralizing the subject but rather of substituting an ontology of the command for an ontology of substance.

The problem here is that, according to Agamben, freedom is to be found precisely in our ontological relationship to our impotentiality. Freedom is found in the privation of potentiality. Agamben (1999) writes, "Here it is possible to see how the root of freedom is to be found in the abyss of potentiality. . .. To be free is, in the sense we have seen, *to be capable of one's own impotentiality*. . ." (p. 183). What makes us human, on this view, is precisely the capability to *not* be, to remain impotent. It is this paradoxical existence of that which is otherwise than what is actual that opens history to contingency—to the potential to act otherwise or to be otherwise. Evil in this sense is derivative of a flight from an undecidable impotentiality into the logic of pure or complete actualization for a predetermined end (complete necessity). Citing Agamben (1993): "Evil is only our inadequate reaction when faced with this demonic element [our impotential], our fearful retreat from it in order to exercise—founding ourselves in this flight some power of being" (pp. 31–32). What is lost in the ontology of efficiency wherein potentiality and act are rendered indistinct is the possibility of freedom *to be*.

12.3 The Ontology of Effectiveness and Teaching

Effectiveness is now an absolutely key concept in educational policy and reform. In 2013, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation released a policy brief titled "Ensuring Fair and Reliable Measures Effective Teaching." As the culmination of a 3-year study conducted by the Measures of Effective Teaching Project, the study combined classroom observation of teachers with student perception surveys and student achievement gains in order to propose a new understanding of effectiveness in the classroom. To begin, the brief defines effectiveness as "enabl[ing] students to learn" (2013, p. 6). The problem of course is that students widely differ in life histories, aptitudes, and behaviors. Thus what might be considered the result of teacher effectiveness in one classroom might actually be the result of student variables beyond the teacher's impact. To correct for this, the study randomized students from year to year thus eliminating certain "tracks" that might give an advantage to some teachers rather than others. One of the central findings was that effectiveness can be measured and used to predict student learning. In this sense, effectiveness is the instrumentalized form of "good" teaching. Whereas the former can be measured and quantified, the later is too amorphous, too vague, and too subjective to be a reliable measure of what goes on in classrooms.

Indeed, the claim is somewhat stronger. To be a teacher, one must actualize one's potential for excellence, otherwise one is not a teacher at all. In 2010, former chancellor Michelle A. Rhee fired 5 % of Washington D.C.'s teachers after low performance scores in the evaluation program known as IMPACT. Rhee is cited as saying, "Every child in a District of Columbia public school has a right to a highly effective teacher—in every classroom of every school, of every neighborhood of every ward, in this city." My interest here is not to debate the legality of this unprecedented decision to fire over 200 teachers, nor is it to describe the debate

over the measurement of effectiveness, nor is it enter into the complexities of protecting children's rights versus teacher's rights. What I am interested is in how effectiveness has become more than a mere measure of what it means to be a teacher. It has become the definition of teaching as such. In other words, to be a teacher means that one must actualize one's potentiality for effectiveness or else one is put on probation and/or fired for negligence. In this sense, what Rhee's gesture indicates is that effectiveness is an *ontological category* defining the very essence of teaching as teaching.

The teacher must carry out his or her duty insofar as he/she is a teacher. The only teacher is the effective teacher who has-to-be effective in order to be a teacher at all. Being a teacher thus is *indistinct* from having-to-be effective. Duty to one's professional *ethos* demands willful actualization of one's being a teacher in and through effective actions. Such effectiveness is then measured in relation to student learning. In this sense, an ontology of effectiveness underlies what Biesta has referred to as learnification. Learnification cannot be a pervasive logic in education without a strong foundation of effectiveness that draws together potentiality and act, being and doing, command and duty into a single ontological system without remainder. What Rhee's example illustrates is how effectiveness has come to replace any notion of potentiality, and effects have come to replace actualization. When critics respond to Rhee that the "solution" to low test scores is more professional development, such claims remain within the ontology of effectiveness in that such potentiality can only be verified through increasing returns on investment, otherwise it ceases to be an operative factor in determining one's being a teacher. Either one practices effectively or one practices becoming effective—either way effectiveness is the operative *telos* that pushes potentiality toward the actualization of definable learning outcomes. In both cases, one cannot be a teacher in potential but must be a teacher in practice—meaning *one must be one's effects*, one must be one's effectiveness. Teaching and learning become indistinguishable. There is no outside from which one can determine what counts as being a teacher beyond the assessment of learning. If there is some impotential remnant that pulls back from and thus interrupts the interweaving of being and acting, then one is under threat of being abandoned (in this case, fired).

Given such emphasis on performance, teacher education has also attempted to make itself relevant by focusing on the effective teaching of pre-service teachers as well as the efficiency of its own standards of practice. Even a general overview of the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) finds the term "effectiveness and efficiency" peppered throughout their standards for principles, superintendents, curriculum directors, supervisors, and teachers. With an assault on college teacher preparation programs, NCATE deploys the language of effectiveness to protect its own institutional standing as an accreditation agency. Thus, on their website (ncate.org) we find the following argument posted:

1. Teacher preparation helps candidates develop the knowledge and skill they need in the classroom
2. Well prepared teachers are more likely to remain in teaching

3. Well prepared teachers produce higher student achievement
4. Leading industrialized nations invest heavily in pre-service teacher preparation
5. NCATE makes a difference in teacher preparation

This five-point argument answers the question "What makes a teacher effective?" Skills, knowledge, and training through NCATE accredited teacher preparation programs increase efficiency and effectiveness of teachers. But what is most interesting here is how the language of effectiveness is omnipresent, becoming a catch-all category for ensuring high educational standards of practice. While critical policy analysts would unpack the various ways in which the term forms a part of a large neo-liberal apparatus of management, what I would like to argue is that the presence of effectiveness in such documents and practices indicates the *pervasive ontological structure* of effectiveness for defining the field of education, and teacher education in particular, and that this ontology is a manifestation of a modern condition with roots leading all the way back to Aristotle. In this sense, the problem of effectiveness is not new but is systemic and defining. And it is only from this ontological perceptive that we can adequately understand how effectiveness works as a ground to bolster the hubris of a system that thinks all educational problems boil down to nothing more than fully actualizing the potentiality of the teacher, thus removing emphasis on larger structural/institutional issues, effects of poverty, urban trauma, student access to health care and social services, and so forth (Kumashiro 2012).

In opposition to the reductive view of teacher education as the acquisition of knowledge and skills for efficient and effective teaching practices (measured in terms of student learning), we can support and further Biesta's critique of learnification as a symptom of our modern ontology. As Agamben (2013) writes, "The coming philosophy is that of thinking an ontology beyond operativity and command and an ethics and a politics entirely liberated from the concepts of duty and will" (p. 129). We can perhaps read Biesta's desire to think education "beyond learning" (2006) as a first attempt to define a *coming philosophy* of education. Yet his discussion of education, and of teacher education in particular, as a virtuous *praxis* misses its mark precisely because it does not fully situate itself within the modern ontology of effectiveness. Although Biesta is keen on linking *poiesis* with effectiveness (and thus separating himself from this terminology), he misses how a certain form of effectiveness is intrinsic to his description of *praxis* as well. While in one sense he argues for a redefinition of learning as risky exposure to that which is beyond one's personal identity and for a redefinition of teaching as a vulnerable and precarious practice beyond measure, in another sense, his turn toward virtuosity still remains firmly within the very same lineage of effectiveness that goes back to Aristotle's privileging of acting over potentiality. For Biesta, to be a teacher means that one must be virtuous and this virtuosity must be effectuated, must be actualized in wise judgment. Virtuosity is the threshold of indistinction through which being and acting, potentiality and act converge.

Hence Biesta's privileging of practice. Biesta argues that teacher education should be oriented around virtues instead of competencies. These virtues, as Aristotle would argue, only develop through practice. He suggests that a major component of teacher education should be "that we develop our virtuosity for wise educational judgment only by *practicing* judgment, that is, by being engaged in making such judgment in the widest range of educational situations possible" (Biesta 2014, p. 135). In the field, preservice teachers can observe "the ways in which teachers make embodied and situated wise educational judgments" (Biesta 2014, p. 136). As such, observing the virtuosity of others emphasizes what teachers do. Who teachers are is observed in how they judge. In this subtle way *praxis* is decisively circular in nature: the teacher's being defines the practice but only in-so-far as the practice defines such being. While the difference between virtues and competencies, value judgments and technical application, learning from and being taught by are interesting distinctions that bear educationally relevant fruit, what is most important in my account is how the same ontology of effectiveness underlies both in subtle ways missed by Biesta. The virtues, as portrayed in Agamben's genealogy, are an apparatus of government: they break the link between potentiality and impotentiality so as to ensure the actualization of wise judgment. In this sense, they are the specific habits that enforce the duty to act in the best way, "be wise!" Biesta's imperative to teachers and to teacher educators is thus an ontological injunction to be what one has-to-be in order to flourish as a teacher. Simply stated, virtuosity is not simply potential or actual but rather that which is manifest only through its operation (through judgment). To be a teacher is to coincide with the effectiveness of one's potentiality to judge wisely.

Biesta's (2010, 2014) on-going interest in Jacques Rancière can now be cast in a new light. First and foremost, Biesta uses Rancière to rethink the logic of emancipation in education. Traditionally, critical pedagogues have a view of emancipation that always assumes a gap in the knowledge of the oppressed that must be overcome from the outside by a teacher who has the correct political orientation, knowledge, skills, and insight into the "way things really are." Thus the teacher facilitates a process of critical-consciousness raising. According to this model, emancipation is something that is achieved. Yet Biesta finds this view of emancipation highly problematic. To begin with, it always views those being emancipated as suffering from a deficit in their knowledge/intelligence. Because of this deficit, the emancipator should be suspicious of any knowledge claims held by the oppressed (consciousness becomes false consciousness). But perhaps even worse, the deferral of emancipation merely reproduces the logic of stultification which critical pedagogical practice is intended to overcome. Rancière intervenes at this point by arguing that equality is not something that is achieved in the future but something that is to be verified in the present. Equality is therefore a starting point, not a finishing point. In terms of student and teacher relationships, Rancière argues that emancipation appears (and can thus be verified) only if the inequality of intelligences is replaced by an equality of wills between student and teacher. The equality of intelligences is

verified every time a teacher directs his or her will toward a student, commanding that the student to "learn!" The teacher then reviews the attempt. Such a relationship has less to do with achieving specific learning outcomes and more to do with allowing intelligence to reveal itself to itself.

Given Agamben's genealogy, Rancière's emphasis on command and will become instantiations of a much larger ontological problematic. As Agamben argues, when being collapses into acting/producing, the faculty that seals up the gap is precisely the will. The will ensures that potentiality is not simply oriented toward its realization, but rather that being itself becomes the "duty-to-be" or a "having-to-be."[1] For Biesta, the teacher educator issues the imperative "be wise!" and the will of the pre-service teacher acts in such a way as to verify the *effectiveness* of the judgment. Stated differently, the teacher educator is a will directed toward another will with the intent to maximize the goodness of virtue by pushing potential toward its perfection. Biesta needs Rancière for his theory of education precisely because without the introduction of will and command, there would be a remainder of impotentiality at work that would perpetually cleave potentiality from act thus inserting an indeterminacy into teacher education that could not be accounted for within what counts as virtuous.

What is at stake here is confronting education with the aporia of impotentiality, of the remainder that resists becoming operative, that withdraws from praxis, that interrupts any measure of what it means to be a "good" or effective teacher. It is my contention that a coming philosophy of education should begin with the aporia of impotentiality and potentiality—an aporia that renders "good teacher" versus "bad teacher" or "wise teacher" versus "ignorant teacher" indifferent. Instead of repressing its existence (as we see in even the most ardent critics of learnification), impotentiality should be embraced as the secrete key to the question of freedom in education (even for teachers!). Otherwise, attempts to think beyond learning will merely reiterate an unacknowledged ontological inheritance. In this sense, the real risk of teaching is to confront the *impotentiality* of the teacher who prefers not to be a virtuosity. The real risk is the risk to be inoperative, to interrupt attempts to govern potentiality according to the virtues, the will, and the command. On Beista's view, teacher education is the subjectification of the teacher through virtuous habituation according to a command. Yet if impotentiality is taken seriously, then we realize that the operativity of education to promote subjectification, socialization, and quantification is not the whole story. Just as important is to think through inoperative dimensions of education—moments when the teacher's will is left idle, where students lose predetermined orientations and destinations, where teachers prefer not to act as scapegoats for social, economic, and political problems. This means thinking education beyond governmentality.

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[1] It is for this very reason that in my own work on Rancière and education (Lewis 2014) I focus on the aesthetics of curiosity in educational relationships rather than the will.

12.4   The Aesthetics of Education Beyond Learning: The Performer as Studier

Here we can return to Biesta's question: what kind of art is teaching? To answer such a question we cannot rely on ontologies of efficiency that only include impotentiality as an exclusion. In other words, we need to understand the connections between the art of teaching and a certain form of *inoperativity*. Even a virtues approach to teaching (and teacher education) is predicated on the governmentality of potentiality, the privileging of acting over being. What is at stake here is defining teaching beyond either *poiesis* (making action) or *praxis* (doing action). The freedom of teaching rests in this redemption of inoperativity, and thus a lifting of the imperative that teachers "solve" larger, more systematic educational problems through a reduction of impotentiality to effective acting.

In my former work on Agamben and education (Lewis 2013), I have emphasized how study is a unique educational logic that resists reduction to either making action or doing action, and thus produces a new notion of freedom as indifference/inoperativity. Briefly summarized, studying is an "interminable" and "rhythmic" activity that not only loses a sense of its own end but, more importantly, "does not even desire one" (Agamben 1995, p. 64). The rhythm of studying separates it from learning. Whereas learning collapses being into acting, here we find a privileging of moments of inoperativity where possible acts and products of study are suspended and the activity de-creates itself. In this state, the studier oscillates between sadness and inspiration, moving forward and withdrawing. Thus, studying emerges as a kind of impotential state of educational being that interrupts any notion of educational "growth" or educational "realization" of latent potentialities. Studying is most properly understood as a *remnant of education*, and the life of the studier is a *precarious* life of one who is neither the learner (who produces evidence of learning) nor the student (who, as Biesta might argue, practices the virtues in order to be wise). The paradoxical freedom (a freedom of indetermination) found in study is a challenge to conceptualize precisely because it interrupts the ontology of efficiency and thus always appears on the horizon of education as an anomaly or as a simple irritant to be done away with so that we can get on with real education growth.

In his book *Benjamin's-abilities*, Samuel Weber (2008) highlights the centrality of studying in the works of Walter Benjamin and Giorgio Agamben. Like Benjamin's other –abilities, study is a "capacity rather than to an actually existing reality" or a "possibility that is structurally necessary without being necessarily real" (Weber 2008, p. 116). The repetitions of study, which Weber highlights, are neither the mere transmission of pre-established meanings nor the nihilistic abandonment of all meanings nor the production of new meaning. Rather through repetitions, the studier transmits *transmissibility* as a pure potentiality found within repetition itself. Studying is precisely inoperative in that it does not act nor does it produce.

The uniqueness of study, in short, is that it interrupts transmission/actualization of x, y, or z, but through this interruption, study does not abandon what is idle so much as open it up for new potential uses without predetermined ends.

For teacher education beyond learnification, this would mean that study transmits the potentiality to be a teacher without knowing in advance what being a teacher means or what the good life of teaching looks like. If we reconceptualize teacher education as a form of studious life, then a separation between potentiality and actuality opens up, enabling a space and time for freedom to emerge—freedom to prefer not to be effective, to measure up, to be wise, to be the solution to education's systemic problems. Study is precisely beyond learning, or, better yet, is the inoperative and inefficient withdrawing of learning from production and acting learning. There is always something that remains in surplus of the evidence of one's willful pursuits. The risk in such studious teacher education is that preservice teachers retain the impotential freedom to withdraw from having-to-be this or that, withdraw from actualizing their being in the practice of judgment. This is a risk that Biesta does not create a space for. One could summarize this point differently: there is no possibility for desubjectification in teacher education for Biesta.

And unlike learning and its alternatives, studying lets idle the will. As I have argued elsewhere (Lewis 2013), studying is not about producing evidence of the self through a will. Indeed, study interrupts any goal-directed action of a subject—including the goals of learning or the goals of wise judgment. Instead of willfulness, the studier is characterized by willingness to allow him or herself to study without end. This means giving one's self over to the interminable rhythms of a process that does not listen to the commands of the will, to the call of duty, or to the effectiveness of one's professional life. In this sense, there is a clear danger in studying. As Weber's analysis of the students in Benjamin's reading of Kafka, we find individuals who do not provide help, who cannot sleep, who seem out-of-sorts, and thus are constantly in an exceptional state. Reflecting on his own experience of studying at the Aby Warburg's library, Agamben (1995) writes, "Those who are acquainted with long hours spent roaming among books, when every fragment, every codex, every initial encounter seems to open a new path, immediately left aside at the next encounter, or who have experienced the labyrinthine allusiveness of that 'law of good neighbors' whereby Warburg arranged his library, know that not only can study have no rightful end, but does not even desire one" (p. 64). In this description, the endless activity of study is emphasized, producing an image of study as the perpetually open-ended, and an image of the studier as willingly lost in the repetitious spirals of reading, thinking, searching, re-reading, re-thinking, re-searching and so on and so forth.

Teacher education is therefore not a confrontation of a will and a will so much as the confrontation between an impotentiality and an impotentiality. This is a non-relational relation, or a relation that is mediated through a suspension of predefined roles, or a mutual withdrawing from roles of teaching and learning. The teacher of teachers is the one who is most impotential, most unwilling, most inoperative. His or her gestures are those that are least conclusive, judgments most

paradoxical, virtues most obscure. This is a teacher who—*being* a teacher—prefers not to act as a teacher, thus interrupting any measure of operativity and effectiveness codified by accreditation agencies such as NCATE and measured by standardization. The studious teacher of teachers teaches by preferring not to teach, thus transmitting nothing more than a pure impotentiality for teaching.

But what is most important to note in Weber's analysis of Benjaminian –abilities and Agambenian potentialities is the connection between study and theatrical performance. In both studying and performing, the gesture of suspension "accomplishes nothing that can be separated from its own repetition" (Weber 2008, p. 205). When one studies or performs, there is a recitation of roles and actions. This recitation remains fully immanent to the roles and actions recited while at the same time inserting a gap between the roles and actions and their productive ends, goals, and meanings. The result is an action *as not* an action, a production that produces nothing beyond itself, nothing beyond its own gestures. Hence the difficulty of categorizing the performing arts in terms of either *poiesis* or *praxis*. Summarizing, Weber (2008) writes that such gestures "subvert the very notion of 'act' as 'actualization': *acting* is not *action* but *reaction* and *response* which is why the 'actor' is as far removed from the man of action as the stage is from the sage. Or as far removed as are the students' 'gestures' from any from of self-expression" (p. 206). Studying is not an act of educational subjectification—as Biesta would argue—but is a kind of desubjectification, or an acting that withdraws the subject from any recognizable and determinant identity as this or that kind of person. Weber (2008) summarizes, "The gestures of actors or students do not express their selves but rather expose and undo those selves irremediably" (p. 206) that is theatrically. The actor, after all, does something with total commitment, but this thing that is done is also a nothing. The gestures never completely arrive at their destinations for if they did, theatrical acting would be no different from that which it pretends to be and there would be a collapse of potentiality into actuality, of being into doing/producing. We can think here of the minor difference between the gesture of picking up a cup of water to drink and the same gesture this time performed by a mime. In the second case, the gesture is de-completed or suspended. It is fully present yet in such a way that it never reaches its end.

We read a text over and over; we recite lines of a play with various intonations over and over again; we repeat the gestures of study in the company of students—in all cases, the very execution of such recursive gestures de-completes the gestures, suspending them, pushing them further away from any product or act. These gestures therefore poetically fold back on themselves indefinitely, sustaining a gap between potentiality and actuality between being and doing. In each case, what is made visible is the pure potentiality of transmissibility itself, or the making visible of a means (study) as such without reference to any particular act (wise judgment) or product (lesson plan, lecture, and measurable learning outcomes). *And in this way studiers and actors are ineffective, inoperative, unwise, yet also free, and in that freedom, beautiful.* The most theatrical teacher of all would thus be Bartleby the Scrivener who, in his gesture to not act/produce, transmits nothing more than his (in)ability to write this or that.

12.5 The Promise of a Coming Philosophy of Education

In a strange way, I have attempted to complete Biesta's opening gesture—to theorize an education beyond learnification—precisely by *decompleting* this gesture. My decompletion amounts to the insertion of a gap between potentiality and act/product that he unwittingly fills in with an unacknowledged repetition of the modern ontology of efficiency. If Biesta (2010) has commanded us to "Mind the gap!" when it comes to teacher-student relationships, then here I would argue the same holds true for Biesta's ontological presuppositions—he should remember to mine the gap of impotentiality.

A new aesthetic paradigm underlies studious teacher education as a performance of one's impotentiality. The ontology of having-to-do is replaced with an ontology of potentiality-to-be-otherwise-than-what-is-commanded (otherwise than one's duty). The being of the teacher is therefore no longer reducible to its effects (effectiveness as measured through learning outcomes). When teacher education is oriented through the virtues toward wise judgment, the teleological structure of such a curriculum excludes the impotentiality of the pre-service teacher, and thus his or her freedom to be rather than. The space of theatrical performance is not a space wherein the learner appears (so as to be measured up and accredited). Nor is it the space for the subjectification of the newcomer, as Biesta desires. Rather it is the space of desubjectification through the rhythms of study which suspend the coordinates of the subject to act virtuously or to produce evidence of x, y, or z. Such teacher education as aesthetic performance is not about creating new teachers at all but rather about de-creating teaching as such, so that the very concept and practice of teaching is inoperative, like a toy. The teacher's role in such an education is not to transmit this or that lesson about what good teaching is but rather to be an example of the impotentiality of teaching. Thus, his or her gestures become theatrical gestures that de-create/suspend themselves. And this is precisely the moment of beauty. As Agamben (2014) writes, "It is as if every ascension has been inverted and broken, almost thresholds between doing and not doing: beauty that falls" (p. 283).

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Chapter 13
Learning by *Jamming*

Eduardo Duarte

> *The virtues on the other hand we acquire by first having
> actually practiced them, just as we do the arts. We learn an
> art or craft by doing the things that we shall have to do when
> we have learnt it...*For things we have to learn to do,
> we learn by doing them.

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(Aristotle, *Ethics*, bk 2, ch 1)

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Threshold of Excitation Before beginning, I invite my reader to take a moment
and cue up the performances of John Coltrane et al recorded at the Van Gelder
Studio, Englewood Cliffs, NJ on November 23, 1965. Released under the album
title, *Meditations*, the performances are named, respectively, "The Father And The
Son And The Holy Ghost," "Compassion," "Love," "Consequences," and "Seren-
ity." (Coltrane 1966) These performances are dialogic encounters in the *ek-static*
sense I indicate below: an exceptional case of collective improvisational music
making. The musicians are taken 'outside' and 'beyond' the 'normal' or 'tradi-
tional' manner of making music. They are *jamming*: making music together '*ex
nihilio*,' in the sense that the performances are not following a score or even
rehearsed arrangement but are moving freely behind the charismatic spirit of
Coltrane whose saxophone playing set the melodic mood and tonality of each
performance. Granted, the recordings can only indicate (point to) but not fully
capture the experience of the performance as it was happening *en vivo*. Yet, like the
writings of Plotinus, which offer a phenomenology of contemplation (descriptions
after the mystical experience), these recordings of Coltrane et al allow the listener
to become re-collected with their *jamming* in an manner akin to the Augustine of
Hippo's experiments in memory: listening to the recordings places us *back into* the
event by bringing it forward into the present. In sum, I invite you to listen to
Coltrane et al from November, 1965, and hope your are prompted to reach the
threshold of excitation where you might be *taken over* into the proper modality
where my writing can be 'heard.'

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My "Introduction to Philosophy of Education" course is organized under a re-arrangement of the words that form the title: Introduction to Philosophy of Education. The semantic shift produces the thematic banner for the course of study, which is an exploration of the introduction to the education *offered* by philosophy. The course begins by asking: what is happening when we are introduced to philosophy's education, when we are introduced to the *way* philosophy educates? In my course students are asked to think about the difference between a course that introduces them to the way philosophy educates, in contrast to a course that is introducing them to the philosophy of education. The latter falls under applied philosophy, while the former remains close to the original intent of *theoria*: philosophy as a spiritual exercise that teaches us the meaning of human freedom.

My grad students encounter the important semantic shift in my preliminary lecture, which they listen to prior to the first seminar, one of a dozen 'podcasts' that I record for my courses. (Each week they listen to a lecture, take up an assigned reading, and then write a short paper that they contribute to each seminar). In that first lecture I inform my students that our exploration of philosophical education will be an experiment in experiential learning, which I qualify, using the language of existential and phenomenology, as an *enactment* of these ideas. (I gather my understanding of experiential learning, first and foremost, from Aristotle (1926), who offers me the epigram for this chapter with his oft quoted assertion from his *Ethics*: "*For the things we have to learn to do, we learn by doing them.*") Learning by doing is the maxim of our course of study. And, what's more, I inform them in the opening lecture, and reiterate when they arrive, our *enactment* of philosophical education will be carried out in the form of an ongoing philosophical dialogue that will flow freely and spontaneously, often seeming to go around in circles and generally feeling like a stream of consciousness, which will at time seem like a bubbling brook and at times like a cascading series of rapids. I end my setting of the scene of our seminar by saying, "And, finally, I want every one of you to arrive each week with the presentiment that you are about to enter a music recording studio, understanding that the work we have done in the past week will begin again and with fresh energy but following the same free flowing format with high energy inquiry. We will allow ourselves to be taken away by the spirit of experimentation as we undertake a semester of philosophical speculation that teaches us what the power of a learning community feels like. In sum, I expect each of you to arrive at seminar, our studio of learning, reading and willing to *jam*."

If the work of my course in philosophy of education happens under the Aristotelian adage 'learning by doing,' then our translation of this maxim is 'learning by *jamming*.'

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In this chapter, I want to explore further what is happening when a philosophical education is underway by focusing on the philosophical educator as one who is 'making music' with their students. 'Music making' is a figurative category used to describe the dynamic learning that enacts a philosophical education. For reasons

that will become clear below, the 'music making educator' and the 'philosophical educator' are, for me, synonyms. Put differently, one who educates philosophically is 'making music' with their students, and doing so in particular way. Hence, the aim of this chapter is to offer a phenomenology of the 'music making philosophical educator.' What counts as significant for me in this chapter is the *way* the 'music' is made by the philosophical educator. One can imagine different types of music making educators, and it is my hope this chapter will inspire others to describe their own musical-philosophical educators. However, my attention will be exclusively focused on describing the philosophical educator who puts into motion an improvisational jam session, i.e., one who understands that a philosophical education, or learning the meaning of human freedom, happens through jamming.

Generally speaking let's presume the jam session is an example of experiential learning, where participants encounter themselves as 'beginners' in the Augustinian sense. If this is the case, then we might say it is possible that a dialogic 'class' or 'seminar' will discover itself to be gathered into congregational *experience* of human freedom. When this happens the teacher and students alike are gathered together by and participate in the free flow of thinking, and a philosophical jam session is happening. The aim of this chapter is to offer a phenomenology of dialogic education as a form of jamming. In writing my phenomenology I am drawing upon three resources: first, my scholarship in philosophy, specifically my three decades of writing on Socrates; second, my two decades of using dialogue as the modus operandi for teaching philosophy in an improvisational and experiential manner; third, my documentary research in improvisational musical performance, which I have presented for fifteen years in the radio production of a weekly program devoted to the exploration of so-called 'jam band' music. All three resources are implied and give shape to the phenomenology I am offering. As for the writing itself, the language I am using here is an attempt to describe my teaching experience. For some, my language will impress them as abstract, and appears distant from the kind of narrative I offered in the beginning. Indeed, the kind of phenomenology I am writing is 'abstract' in the sense of being 'extracted' (released) from my teaching experiences. Hence, the writing is an expression of 'speculative' philosophy that arises *from* experience, which is not unlike the dialectical phenomenology developed by Hegel (1977). Unlike Hegel, however, I do not understand the speculative moment to be 'completing' the experience in the sense of fulfilling it or rendering it truthful. Rather, I understand the experience, as a specific event happening in a unique time, to be *generative* of ideas that arise as speculation and take linguistic shape. In turn, the phenomenology I am offering is a speculative abstraction from my experiences with jamming.

In my earlier work I described the perceived opening or break in time, *kairos*, as the educational opportunity of thinking differently and thereby enacting our encounter with freedom: "Understood as occurring in the time of radical possibility, thinking happens in the temporality of *kairos*, when the linear flow of time, *kronos*, is interrupted by an opening that allows for something wholly different to emerge." (Duarte 2009) Here, my exploration of jamming is an extension of my project that has slowly but steadily moved along under the influence of Arendt's depiction of the human capacity to initiate or originate. Indeed, my project of *originary thinking* (Duarte 2012a, c) continues to draw inspiration from the Arendt's Augustinian

inflected aphorism: "Because he is a beginning man can begin, to be human and to be free are one and the same." (Arendt 1993b, 167) I want to expand my earlier work here, in this chapter, by re-placing thinking into its congregational setting where it appears and dwells in the *movement* of philosophical dialogue, which I now want to place under the category of jamming.

Jamming is a term used to describe the improvisational performance of music. Based on my own documentary research and experiments (Duarte 2005–2013) I understand jamming as a special case of collective human experience expressed in the performance of music that is exemplified by free jazz ensembles (cf. Coleman 1961; Coltrane 1966; MMW 2001) as well as others (e.g., the Grateful Dead 1965–1995) Like the experience of grace for St. Augustine, jamming is organized and carried forward by a force that takes the performers *beyond* themselves. The jam is akin to a Pentecostal event when the Holy Spirit pours into and infuses a congregation. Akin, even equivalent, because similar in character; indeed, jamming unfolds when a meeting of musicians (not unlike the meeting of a teacher with their students, e.g., in a seminar) is gathered into a *congregational* event where a religious community is formed. Hegel described well this gathering of the congregation by the infusion of a spirit when he wrote about religion: "if it is to be studied as issuing from the subject and having its home in the subject, it must no less be regarded as objectively issuing from the absolute spirit which as spirit is in community." (Hegel 1971, 554)

To summarize, jamming is an exceptional case of collective improvisational music making; exceptional in terms of the intensity of the interaction between those undertaking the work, and also exceptional in terms of peculiarity, unusualness, or even strangeness of the temporality of the event. Understood, temporally, the jam is an *ek-static* experience in the sense that the musicians are taken 'outside' and 'beyond' themselves. In this sense, it can be said that jamming is an experience of a 'threshold' (a commencement, or beginning) we move *through* and thereby encounter ourselves and others as 'strangers.' (Duarte 2011)

Paradoxically, we can use the word *immanence* to account for the jam as an experience with the inherent potentiality of freedom that is always already *with us*. Hence the jam makes music 'ex nihilio' in the sense that it arrives from what is 'not' actual, or pure potency. In this case, 'potentiality' stands for 'human freedom' in the more general existential-aesthetic sense of a capacity to *jam* (i.e., freedom defined as the capacity to express ourselves 'culturally' by 'saying something' *together* that has not yet been said). The jam is an encounter *with* potentiality as potency, or the power to make or form. The encounter is an enactment of a perception of possibility that is perceived in recognition of a future that remains 'not yet' and 'undecided.' Thus, the jam is an ongoing 'response' to the perceived possibility, and thus a realization or actualization of freedom. Furthermore, the aforementioned 'external' power or force of the jam is precisely the potentiality that *arrives* from 'beyond' in the sense of being 'from' the future. In other words, jamming is transcendental in the sense of being connected to a present that is always arriving from the future. When we are jamming we have leapt ahead, so to speak, into *our* future, and because we are moving *in* the future present, or present future, we are, in essence, *learning* because we are encountering ourselves as different. Elsewhere I have

called this dynamic of being and learning, the "ceaseless nativity of Being." (Duarte 2012a) Because it enables us to move beyond the present as 'determined' by the past, *jamming* is an example of learning happening under the guidance of the 'threshold scholar.' (Duarte 2012d) The threshold scholar taps into our capacity to initiate or begin anew, in the Augustinian sense described by Arendt. Moving through the 'threshold' designates the possibility of taking a leap (a sudden, abrupt change; swerve). When a dialogue is jamming each member of the group has 'leaped at' accepting the opportunity to learn. In this way, jamming is a leap 'beyond' the everyday or 'normal' configuration of education; a break from the teleological historical 'fatalism' of conventional teaching and learning What is 'abnormal' about jamming is not just that it intensifies learning as an experimental undertaking, which it always is, but also connects us with the unique power of learning together with others. When we are jamming we attain an acute awareness of the power of working in concert. And, perhaps, more than anything else, feeling this power of communal learning through what I call the congregation experience is the *educational outcome* of jamming.

The *jam* allows for the difference between past and future to come into being; it allows for us to experience our *potentiality* to make something different; to learn what it *means* to express a different way of understanding ourselves. Jamming is deeply existential insofar as it allows us to tap into and actualize what Augustine calls our *being a beginning*: to be human/free.

The jam session is defined by a 'congregational' experience of time, which appears both to be 'moving' in a non-linear fashion and not moving at all. Time is the perceived 'force' or 'power' that organizes the jam. The time of the jam is 'measured' qualitatively as the 'time of opportunity' or the 'time of making something happen' or what Heidegger (2013) called the time of 'the event.' The time of the jam happens when the linear tick-tocking of chronological time is interrupted and suspended. Because it is otherwise than the 'ordinary' way we experience time in the everyday sense of moving from one task to another, the experience of time during the *jam* places us 'beyond' ourselves.

When a *jam* is happening, musicians are experiencing a non-intentional, free flowing relational interaction mediated by the perception of a *kairological* time of opportunity, the *ecstatic* opening, where they capable of performing 'beyond themselves.' The 'perception' is lead by the 'conductor' of the jam, who bears all of the qualities of the dialogic sage, whom I have developed at length in *Being and Learning* (Duarte 2012a). The sage, who gathers and directs the learning community, teaches Socratically, but also with a Taoist inflection. Unlike the 'conductor' of a symphonic orchestra who is tethered to a composed score of music, the 'conductor' of a jam session is connected to and 'transmits' to the students the dynamic power of *human freedom*. This occurs because the educator qua 'conductor' of the *jam* is 'out-in-front' of the students – both in terms of being-present-before, and ahead in moving through the threshold. Being out-in-front enables the jamming educator to 'conduct' the dialogical experience with freedom, which is nothing short of what, following Nietzsche (1974), we might call an experiment in joyful science. In short, the music-making philosopher conducts experiment in experiential learning.

§

The music-making jam leading philosophical educator is, like the charismatic leader of a band of musicians, capable of transporting a learning community into dynamic flow of thinking where they are with their students emancipated into the reserve of their freedom. For me, the exemplar of this practice is Socrates. He is the quintessential philosophical educator, and it his practice of dialogue that exemplifies what I am referring to the music-making jamming educational philosopher. It is Socrates, in the multitude of forms he has taken in the history of philosophy, who is the exemplary figure for my students and I when we are jamming together. In the remainder of this chapter I will turn to Socrates in my attempt to explicate further what is happening when a educational jam session is underway.

While there are any number of portraits one can make of the 'music making Socrates,' especially when focusing Plato's dialogues where he is the central figure, the portrait that I am offering of Socrates in this context is inspired by the cryptic if not prophetic statements made by the young Nietzsche (1995a) in *The Birth of Tragedy* (*BT*). Briefly, readers of *BT* remember that Nietzsche begins by recalling the "charms" of Dionysius under whose spirit a congregation of celebrants can experience the "highest gratification" of "the mysterious Primordial Unity," which renders each one of them "no longer an artists, [but] a work of art." (*BT*, 4) An effacement with "nature's art-impulses are satisfied in the most immediate and direct way….*without the mediation of the human artist*." (*BT*, 5, emphasis in original) But, alas, the Dionysian celebration came to a sudden end: enter the philosopher, that "mystagogue of science," Socrates, "the opponent of Dionysus" (*BT*, 45) who introduced the "fatal principle": separation. First, the separation of the human from the immediate encounter (immersion) with nature, next, each person separated from the next. Such is the story of the 'first' Socrates. Re-enter the poetic philosopher, the 'music making Socrates,' who returns as figure of redemption. The birth of this figure, this 'new' Socrates, indicates a renewal of an *aporetic* philosophy that always remains in need of being formed and worked out:

> And though there can be no doubt that the most immediate effect of the Socratic impulse tended to the dissolution of Dionysian tragedy, yet a profound experience in Socrates' own life impels us to ask where there is *necessarily* only an antagonistic relation between Socratism and art, and whether the birth of an 'artistic Socrates' is in general a contradiction in terms….As he tells his friends in prison, there often came to him one and the same dream-apparition, which kept constantly repeating to him: 'Socrates, practice music.'…The voice of the Socratic dream-vision is the only sign of doubt as to the limits of logic. 'Perhaps' – thus he must have asked himself – 'what is not intelligible to me is not therefore unintelligible? Perhaps there is a realm of wisdom from which the logician is shut out? Perhaps art is even a necessary correlative of, and supplement to, science?' (*BT*, 55)

It is Nietzsche who has inspired me to think of the contemporary dialogic teacher, this conductor of the educational jam, as a realization of the 'music-making Socrates' whose arrival the young Nietzsche prognosticated when, like many of us today, he yearned and had a profound desire for a transformation in philosophy that would fulfill his need for art, or for a musical philosophy, what he later called a

gay science. "Here then, in a mood for agitation, we knock at the gates of the present and future: will that 'transforming' lead to ever-new configurations of genius, and especially of the *music-practicing* Socrates?" (*BT*, 55) The young Nietzsche expresses well my own desire, designated under the heading of *originary thinking*, to annunciate, in both word and deed, the practice of an elevated and fore-standing dialogic teacher who may represent the figure fore-cast by Nietzsche.

Turning, now, to Socrates, and to a further articulation of dialogic teaching practice that is an *art* in the sense that it takes us *beyond* the realm of logic, and, thereby, into a realm of learning that has been all but eclipsed in our age of quantified 'education.' I have taken up Socrates elsewhere (Duarte 2002, 2008, 2010, 2012a, e), and have focused on his unique capacity to orchestrate dialogue; specifically, his unique ability to sustain perplexity, uncertainty, and, thus, to remain steadfast "in the draft," as Heidegger (1976, 17), or in what I call *the flow of thinking*. Here, I want to explore further the *aporetic* quality of Socrates' style of dialogue as the distinguishing characteristic of *jam* leading philosophical educator.

As Arendt reminds us, the mark of the Socratic dialogue is its *aporetic* quality, which is not to say it takes us to a dead end, or "leads nowhere," but, rather, indicates how the conversation he leads "goes around in circles." (Arendt 1978, 169) It is precisely this circular 'movement' that interests me, because it indicates the non-linear quality of Socratic dialogue. Emphasizing the non-linear is important for understanding the philosophical dialogue as an experience with freedom, and for understanding this experience of freedom as 'music making' in the form of jamming. In a moment I'll say more about how I have arrived at the Socratic educator as a 'music maker.' First, I want to say a bit more about why the circular or non-linear description of dialogue helps us to understand why the teacher who conducts the jam, by stepping out in front and leaping ahead, is not 'controlling' or 'directing' the outcome.

As I have discussed elsewhere (Duarte 2008), dialogue is the disclosure of 'thinking,' which must be understood in the holistic sense that includes both rational and emotional components of a person. In order to understand why the jam is an encounter and experience with freedom, it must be emphasized that 'disclosure' denotes manner in which thinking becomes public or revealed and is thereby liberated or unbound from the authority of the thinker. And here 'authority' denotes 'control over,' which is precisely what dialogue is interrupting with its *aporetic*, circular movement. 'Authority' in the Arendt's (1993) sense of 'taking responsibility,' is retained at the inception of disclosure, but is also relinquished when expressed 'voices' begin to jam. In dialogue thinking is no longer the 'thoughts' of an individual. On the contrary, such individual 'thoughts' are released from sovereignty of the individual and emancipated into a shared world:

> We might call this the disclosure of plurality: the appearance of uniqueness embodied with each 'who' that is disclosed, not simply as distinct from each other, but as distinct from [each] self, from the will to sovereignty, which manifests itself externally as the will to control the movement of ideas. To disclose a 'who' and embody plurality is to be liberated from identity, from the sovereignty of the self over itself, from the oppression of the inner dialogue where thinking is held captive. Disclosure delivered dialogically reveals the

> plurality of thought by freeing it into the dynamic movement of publicity. Understood in this way, disclosure actualizes the plurality inherent in each voice. (Duarte 2008, 374)

Disclosure is first the *annunciation* (announcement of a self that is ready to be 'born' into the world), and next *enunciation* (the process of this 'newly' arrived 'self' being received and taken up or heard by others; responded to). Hence, dialogue understood as an educational event, is the movement between *annunciation* and *enunciation*, when the 'voices' of people are expressed and disclosed. If 'self' implies the 'subjectivity' of a person, or what remains with them, then the expression of 'voice' is the move away from subjectivity toward the inter-subjective, or shared experience of personhood. The jam is happening when the inter-action between 'voices' is approximating the expression of a collective 'voice,' which, in essence, is something akin to an *intra-subjective* dialogue: the interacting group of voices together speaking and responding *beyond* themselves. Put otherwise, the *jam* is the culmination of a process of de-subjectivication, or what Nietzsche (1995b) called 'self-overcoming,' whereby subjectivity evolves from an existential situation of being-with myself to being-with others. (cf. *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, Part II, 8–18)

'Voice' here is the figurative denotation of the 'expression' of a person's *doxa*, which Arendt translates as one's "own opening to the world." (Arendt 1990, 81) We enter into the world (*koinon*, what is shared or common or public) through the portal or opening that is our *doxa*. Expression is a *doxa*, or the unique way a self is disclosed or revealed. For Arendt this entry is a kind of 'second birth' in the sense that each of us is singular or unique because we exist under the primary condition of natality, but are 'born again' (and again) each time we are revealed or, through philosophical dialogue, offer a distinct expression of self. In this way, difference, or human plurality, is guaranteed by the expression of 'voice.' Understood in its dialogical form, a 'voice' is expressed after being prompted or called out, or, to be more precisely Socratic, questioned into being. Learners join the philosophical jam after they have been 'questioned into being.' Indeed, Socrates himself, as a leader of dialogue, came into being as such by being 'called out' by the Delphic Oracle (cf. *Apology*) and by his Muse, who appeared to him throughout his life and called on him to 'Make music!' (*Phaedo*)

Expressed by a 'voice,' *annunciation* is the announcement of the entry of self into the world. Here it is important to remember we are describing the dialogic *jam* as an educational event. And we need to recall this so that we don't confuse the expressed 'voice' that arrives through a *doxa* as fully formed or completed. If *doxa* is a unique opening to the world, then it is a 'perspective' or 'point of view' that is always partial, relative (to others), and momentary, which is to say that a 'voice' represents the unfinished/just beginning 'self.' Learning is the occasion of 'voice' modulation, 'expressions' becoming otherwise via dialogue. A dialogue is underway when the spontaneous and unpredictable interaction of multiple 'voices' are moving in coordinated relation. When this is happening we are *jamming*, which is to say, being *formed* by the experience of 'making music' together *e pluribus unum*.

Philosophical dialogue is educational by having the existential implication of enabling the disclosed 'self' to be further 'shaped' or 'formed' through the experience of being expressed. To *be* expressed, then, is to be 'pulled out' by the force of the dialogic teacher who has stepped in front and who leap 'ahead' has the force of a gravitational pull that 'extracts' the *dokoi moi* of each participant. Indeed, the use of the term 'expression' is important, because in my understanding of it as an 'artistic' practice dialogue is an inter-subjectively performed 'work' of expressionism. The 'work' is *made* by the jam in a manner that is like the free jazz form I most closely associate it with.

In dialogue the 'self' is expressed, both in the sense of a person communicating him- or her-self (*annunciation*), but also in the sense of *being* communicated by the dialogue (*enunciation*). To *be* expressed is to be 'pressed out' and 'extracted' by the dialogue the sense that, for example, Socrates' claimed to be practicing *maieutics*, or the work of the midwife, when he was leading a dialogue. Indeed, according to Arendt, it is Plato who coined the term *dialegesthai*, from which our word 'dialogue' comes, but Socrates who described his work as "the *art* of midwifery: he wanted to help others give birth to what they themselves thought anyhow to find the truth in their own *doxa*." (Arendt 1990, 81) This is 'art' as denoted by *poiein*, which defines art *work* as the act of 'making' or 'doing.' In this sense, dialogue is the art *work* of self *formation*: becoming a person *in relation* to and *with* others. The jam enables the 'self' of a person to be 'expressed' and then to be made different 'through' (*dia*) 'spoken words' (*logos*). In this sense, dialogue is the art work of difference, the ongoing formation of difference. This is one way of understanding the *aporetic* or 'inconclusive' character of Socratic dialogue. Epistemologically, the dialogue never produces a final truth. Yet, existentially, the work of dialogue makes and keeps us different from ourselves and from one another. And, aesthetically we feel the experience to be held together, sustained and carried through to a terminal point that does not designate and end, but, rather, a suspension of a learning to be continued.

A dialogic jam is initiated by a calling (*vocare*) made by the teacher. The call is made to contribute: show up with something to share/to say and be prepared to engage. For example, the short seminar papers my students submit are made available to the entire group beforehand with the understanding that we will not simply discuss the papers individually. When responding to the call, students understand that I will make an 'arrangement' of selected moments from each piece, which, together will form a 'composite' or 'composition' of their expressed voices that will be the basis of our jam. In essence, the jam gets underway through a re-arrangement of their work, which is now organized together into a collective piece. But this 'composition' is only a primary point of reference and serves as the launch pad for the dialogue. Indeed, the jam gets underway when students hear their words come back at them in ways they hadn't intended or anticipated. This is what I describe as 'rehearsing,' which is a category intended to emphasize the experiential *form* of the learning as a *practice* (rehearsal as training, studying, exercising) and as an *experiment* (rehearsal as rehearing, interpretation, speculation). The second denotation of 'rehearsing' brings to mind the Three R's of educational jamming,

expressed in the Latin phrase: *Respondeo*, *Respondi*, *Responsum* (answer, reply, respond).

The second denotation of rehearsing indicates that participating in a dialogic learning jam entails one's contribution is not simply 'heard' or 'received' passively, but 'questioned' into being. Jamming is, after all, an improvisational event, and when it is your turn to step-out in front and take the lead, the soloist (e.g., the student whose words have been highlighted in a particular moment in the group's 'composition') will be encouraged and pushed forward by open-ended structure of the encounter. And this happens in the 'formal' education setting when a teacher is conducting an *aporetic* movement, which is to say, motivating the dialogue by questions that have no preconceived or pre-given answers. Hence, Socrates "must always begin with questions." (Arendt 1990, 81) Indeed, improvisation is only possible when there are no answers but only interpretations, speculation, and when the shift is made from 'knowing' to 'making.' To make a further *enunciation* entails questioning original *annunciation* (contribution), without requiring *renunciation* of the original. Learning via dialogue is a building of a learning community that happens because each contribution it accepted as an offering from which something further is made.

As we know from reading Plato, Socrates' spirit (*daimon*) may be the source of the *aporetic* circular/non-linear movement of his dialogic practice. Indeed the source of his inspiration to take up dialogue with others by *calling* upon them with questions is a "divine and daimonic" voice that *calls* him and thereby interrupts the flow of his everyday life, and turns him around into the time and place of thinking: "A voice…This is something which began for me in childhood: *a sort of voice* comes, and whenever it comes, it always *turns me away* from whatever I am about to do, but *never turns me forward*." (*Apology*, 40 a-c) Like his Muse that called upon him to 'make music,' his *daimon* compels him to take up what always remains beyond obvious and commonsensical, and to take up *ultimate questions*: the proverbial meaning of life and death questions! Such questions, Arendt reminds us, "have in common that they cannot be answered scientifically. Socrates' statement 'I know that I do not know'… left behind in the mind of the person who has endured the *pathos* of wonder can only be expressed as: Now I know what it means not to know; *now* I know that I do not know….In asking the ultimate, unanswerable questions, man establishes himself as the question-asking being….As far as philosophy is concerned, if it is true that it begins with *thaumadzein* [state of wonder] and ends with speechlessness, then it ends exactly where it began." (Arendt 1990, 98–99)

§

"I expect each of you to arrive at seminar, our studio of learning, reading and willing to *jam*." By the middle of the semester grad students in my philosophy of education seminar have come to appreciate that jamming is enactment of education as an *art* in the sense of *making* something. And the 'something' being made is the very community of inquiry where they have been jamming. Learning by jamming is an experiential education in the making of a learning community. And because the

jam consists of our intense interactions over ideas generated by their response to my recorded lectures and assigned readings, we are building by way of a dialogic hermeneutic circle, where each expressed voice contributes to the making of the whole, and the emerging whole, as a wider context of meaning, adds another possible interpretation and speculation to the individual contributions. The jam is both a many forming a one, and a one that forms a many. Through the jam we rediscover an alternative way of thinking the classic problem of the one and the many, where neither is subsumed or reduced to the other but co-arise together.

Difference is the crux of the learning happening in dialogue. All *doxai* are distinct, in the sense different each *from the other*, but also in the sense of being *made* different *from itself* after expressed into the dynamic of the dialogic jam. When jamming turns our expressed voice into something different than we had originally understood it to be we encounter the insight of the Sophists, a school that Socrates was often associated with: "If the quintessence of the Sophists' teaching consisted in the *dyo logoi*, in the insistence that each matter can be talked about in two different ways, then Socrates was the greatest Sophist of them all. For he thought that there are, or should be, as many different *logoi* as there are [people], and that all these *logoi* together form the human world." (Arendt 1990, 85) But to understand Socratic dialogue as a music-making jam, we must not simply recognize this important assumption he held with respect to humanity being composed of plurality. In addition, we must place this insight within the originary experience with the ineffability of *thaumadzein*, which puts the dialogue underway because it inspires us into questioning and talking *about* the experience of wonder. Furthermore, when we recall the originary experience with *thaumadzein* we can understand how *this* experience orients us philosophically, which is another way of saying the experience with *thaumadzein* is the first moment in our philosophical education. And what we immediately learn is that our inability to 'say' anything when we are experiencing *thaumadzein* leaves us with no other choice than to accept that whatever we say *after* the experience will always fall short. Yet, rather than producing despair, the post-*thaumadzein* experience empowers us with the opportunity to *play* with our descriptions, which no are long burdened with the expectation that they are closer or farther from hitting the target of 'truth.' In other words, the experience with *thaumadzein* empowers us to *jam* because it emancipates us from the 'logic' of scientific rationality and into the dynamic logic of the *logoi*: "None of the *logoi*…ever stays put; they move around. And because Socrates, asking questions to which he does *not* know the answers, sets them in motion, once the statements have come full circle, it is usually Socrates who cheerfully proposes to start all over again…" (Arendt 1978, 170) Below, I want to return to this 'other' logic offered by the dynamic movement of the *logoi*, suggesting that an 'alternative' logic may be what we are 'inventing' by way of experimentation when we are *jamming*. If we are *learning by jamming* then learning here, as Aristotle insists, is formative (making *us* into 'freer' people), but it is also forming (making an alternative culture of teaching and learning).

Finally, the philosophic dialogue is put underway and sustained by a *questioning spirit*. It is the work of mutual exploration, not interrogation, inquiry as opposed to

deposition. A disclosed self is questioned into being by dialogic teacher's *agonism*, which is not to be mistaken for antagonism. Akin to the pharmacological usage, a teacher's agonism sets the dialogue *into action* by allowing for and insisting upon the necessary contrasts between voices. As an agonist, the dialogic teacher conducts a jam session by bringing together a group of learners, binding them in a common effort, while, at the same time insisting that there is a movement or exchange, an interplay that 'alters' the perspective of each one. By contrast, educational work of dialogue is put off course when the dynamic unfolding of voices is stalled and stultified by antagonism. When this occurs dialogue participants revert back to the sovereign self, and the situation shifts from one of learning to a battle of wills.

§

As I move towards the coda of this piece I am motivated by a critique offered by Irigaray, which, in effect, accuses contemporary educators of squandering our Socratic inheritance. She writes, "Most of the time our way of teaching remains close to that of Socrates, with the difference that Socrates was constructing a new culture whereas we are obeying a tradition that already exists." (Irigaray 2008, 231) For me, Irigaray's critique is illuminating insofar as it reminds us that 'remaining close' to Socrates *implies* that we are in fact constructing or building a new culture. The preceding has been an attempt to describe why my experience and practice in dialogic teaching is akin to the productive art-*work* happening with improvisational music making. On the one hand, there is a sense in which I am 'obeying' a tradition because I recognize myself as working within a tradition of improvisation, which I inherit from philosophy and music. But 'obeying' the tradition of jamming demands that we recognize ourselves as 'constructing a new culture' insofar as the 'new culture' is translated as 'learning community.' Here what is 'new' is what is 'learned.' And what is 'learned,' in the case of experiential learning that is *formative*, is what is 'made.' And what is 'made' in the dialogic learning jam is the learning community, formed and reformed, again and again with each *jam*. This should be understood from the foregoing. However, what has not necessarily been understood is the sense in which the *formative* education happening with dialogic jamming is not only 'forming' a learning community, but also 'making' an alternative educational logic; thereby responding to the imperative, issued by Irigaray in the wake of her critique that "we have no alternative but to invent another logic." (Irigaray 2008, 238) I want to conjecture the possibility that the *aporetic* character of the Socratic dialogic jam session reveals an 'other' or alternative 'logic' for education, one that responds to the growing desire for equilibrium in the field, especially amongst teachers like those who enrolled in my graduate seminars.

Currently, there is an imbalance with regard to process versus product. Where once upon a time there was recognition of the value of *process* as an *end* in-and-for-itself, today the only proper 'end' of education is the one that can be designed, tested and measured as the necessary and inevitable 'result' of 'best' practices. Any talk of *process* that cannot be 'evaluated' under the rubric of quantifiable metrics is de-valued, or, worse, deemed value-less. The irony, of course, is that *process*

oriented approaches and experiential learning are ultimately concerned with the question of 'values,' which, after Aristotle, we call 'virtues.' And this begs a series of questions: are the 'virtues' learned/formed by dialogic jamming ones that can they be 'measured,' and, if so, would that demand a different form of 'measuring'? In turn, might jamming allow us to revisit *process* qua 'product'? Or does the unpredictability and inconclusiveness of improvisational dialogic learning implode the expectations that have been established in the time of high-stakes testing, standardized education, and the hegemony of outcomes based teaching? While I am open to the possibility of jamming being recognized in the contemporary educational scene as legitimate, such 'legitimacy' could only come from within the practice itself, and on its terms, or what I call its 'other' logic.

"None of the *logoi*...ever stay put." I want to conclude this piece by returning to the strangeness of the logic offered by the dynamic movement of the *logoi*, suggesting that an 'alternative' logic, an other way of 'measuring,' may be what we are 'inventing' by way of experimentation when we are *jamming*, and one that is an important alternative to the aforementioned instrumental and technocratic rationality that predominates in contemporary educational policy making. To reiterate and expand upon a claim I made above: if we are *learning by jamming* then learning, as Aristotle insists, is formative insofar as it is forming us into improvisational kinds of people. This is the onto-logical implication: jamming *makes us* 'freer' people, and to riff on Nietzsche, we are no longer the artists but the artwork: "the noblest clay, the most costly marble, man, is here kneaded and cut, [by] the chisel strokes of the Dionysian world-artist..." (*BT*, 4) Yet, because jamming is an inter-subjective experience (happening *between* subjects) it is also formative in the sense of making an alternative culture of teaching and learning. And it is in this way that we can begin to perceive the experiential learning happening in dialogic jamming as expressing an 'other' logic, one that is *aporetic* – inconclusive and circular – non-teleological, and thereby producing 'outcomes' of a different order/kind. The *aporetic* character of jamming also means that it not only operates under an inconclusive logic, but also under the logic of the unexpected and spontaneous, which is at the heart of this improvisational practice. The educational implication of this is pedagogy of experimentation that anticipates novelty. Finally, the other quality of the logic of jamming, and perhaps its most important is the strange time that gathers or organizes the *jam*. In turn, my outgoing thesis builds upon the central premise of this chapter, which asserts that when a jam is happening, musicians are experiencing a non-intentional, free flowing relational interaction mediated by the perception of a *kairological* time of opportunity; a 'perception' lead by the 'conductor' of the jam, who bears the qualities of the sage, the teacher whose hallmark is "spontaneity, not planning (scheming..." (Duarte 2012a, 63). The 'conductor,' or the sage on the stage, seizes the opportunity that offers the conditions for the possibility of the jam by way of a 'logic' of the 'threshold': a (*dia*) 'through' (*logos*) 'logic.' The *dia-logos* of jamming moves 'through' the *aporetic* threshold logic of *kairos*, and the dialogic teacher who 'conducts' this movement is called the 'threshold scholar.' (Duarte 2012d)

Irigaray insist that we have to "quickly adopt another logic...[and] relinquish a certain way of being molded by our past logic, in order to reach another way of Being." (Irigaray 2008, 238) I wholeheartedly concur with her assertion, but, as I have suggested, 'being molded by our past logic' and 'adopting' or 'inventing' an *other logic* in education are not mutually exclusive. Indeed, it depends on what 'past' or tradition we are talking about, and, in the case of improvisational music-making philosophy we move *through* (dia) the time of the threshold, 'beyond' ourselves, molded by a logic of experimentation and spontaneity that is warranted by the gathering presence of the 'unknown.' *Jamming through* (into and out of) this time of possibility, we encounter ourselves as different, both as individuals and as a community of learning. Jamming through this 'other' logic we encounter what Irigaray envisions our "reaching" upon our "entering into multiculturalism." In conclusion, beyond the deep affinity some of feel for it, the dialogic practice of improvisational music-making philosophy remains an important alternative today for educators who recognize, with Irigaray, how "the consideration and the respect for the otherness of the other introduce us to another relation to transcendence. And this is a crucial step for reaching another logic and entering into multiculturalism" (Irigaray 2008, 238).

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Chapter 14
The Blue Soul of Jazz: Lessons on Waves of Anguish

Samuel D. Rocha

> *Anybody*
> *Better than*
> *Nobody*
>
> *In the barren dusk*
> *Even the snake*
> *That spirals*
> *Terror on the sand—*
>
> *Better than nobody*
> *In this lonely*
> *Land*
>
> Langston Hughes, "Desert" (1990, p. 93).

14.1 Track 1 – Facile Difficulties

Refrain: "Love me, companion. Don't abandon me. Follow me. / Follow me, companion, on that wave of anguish" (Neruda 2010, p. 8)

It has become terribly difficult—perhaps 'impossible' is a better word for it— to write about jazz without, on the one hand, extensive knowledge of the technical ways that jazz historians, critics, and academicians map and make sense of it. On the other, non-technical hand, the term 'jazz' is misused as a cheap, popular adjective, thrown around willy-nilly, without the slightest clue or concern for the performative craft, histories, and developments of jazz. Trapped. Between rigorists and sentimentalists. In both cases, the art and artist are lost. This chapter will attempt to think and improvise about this vexing "state of jazz" in the widest possible sense, extending to the perils embedded in the fading understanding of the teacher as artist and teaching as art. By contrast, I will advocate for a notion of the teacher as a tragic companion and teaching as very specific, folk form of soulcraft, on display in the blue spiritual song of the broad spectrum of jazz. In

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other words, I will treat teaching as a literal and not figurative form of jazz, rooted in a capacity for agony that can support and sustain a radical form of solidarity and tears. This is not just about music and teaching, tethered together in some loose, allegorical way of speaking. This is to take art seriously enough to listen to what it has to say. This is to speak as a philosopher, a musician, a writer, and a teacher: a single-voiced, improvisational use of art to inform aesthetics. A folkloric reversal (Rocha 2015). This is not what the critic has to say *about* the performance; this is the performance speaking, in a voice that the critic may not be willing or able to hear or understand.

The general thrust and motivation of the ideas to flow and follow will go something like this: just as the blue spiritual folk music of musical jazz cannot be lost to overly technical dogmatisms or flippant truisms, so too with teaching: the *art* of teaching—which is cannot be opposed to the *science* of teaching, since that is nothing at all—has been ignored and abused in the same two directions: the *via rigorosa* of the neoliberal technocrats and classroom managers or the other extreme of saccharine altruisms and soft platitudes, the *via remedia*. Sometimes both. The sterile choice is not a choice at all. This is to say that there is no room to accept or offer the gift of becoming a teacher when the options presented are a series of alternatives oscillating between a serious joke or a joke that is serious.

Today's teacher, then, is out of options—literally, she is outside the place where options exist—and instead faces an empty choice between depraved, disenchanted, and graven mirror images: either to become a member of the jazz police, vigilantly excluding and asserting strict standards that have no standards, or succumb to becoming elevator music, a Kenny G caricature meant to fill the time with melodies that are as easy as they are contrived and nice. Too hard or too soft, with no justification, rationale, or life. Empty rigor. Senseless sentimentalist syrup. Between such lifeless options there are no alternatives or reforms. None except the exception that is not an exception, a measure that has no distance, a zone of misrecognition that remains outside the eventual site of recognition because it is a slave to a correspondence that can only, philosophically, be called "metaphysical" in the worst possible sense. Irrelevance, then, interrupts. Interruption: order them wings *extra* spicy next time, fried hard as shit. Intruding with tri-toned, salacious dissonance, ringing out in the middle of things with no ready companions nearby, irrelevance is an *event*. Willie Nelson (1975) sings of blue eyes that cry in the rain, entering and exiting between the melodic lines, freeing the time as Bob Dylan disrupts a melody with the fierce grace of Nina Simone. No wonder there is so much soul. This is the quarantined, exiled, irrelevant space of the desert where the teacher and the teaching that are today nearly impossible wonder and wander, and carry their blue song: the possibility and promise of revival. Here we hear the voice of music that is neither too hard nor too soft. Just right and just enough wrong to know that it is real and warm. Distortion tight enough to hold the note together, humming through class A tubes while an ungrounded power cord supplies the juice. The sound breaks up, a pause, a break, a departure.

14.2   Track 2 – Jazzhop, Soundscapes, Dwelling

We depart now to a more concrete, less defensive description. *Jazzhop*. Here we find an expression of jazz that inhabits a sonic and spiritual space: the *soundscape*. Consider the following terms and meditations.

Soundscape: the space sound inhabits; a dwelling-place; the place where sounds dwell and dance. The sound is musical: a very particular kind of noise. Art-noise. Ja*zzzzz* sizzles like a swinging cymbal (tsts-*chh*, tsts-*chh*, tsts-*chh*) and sputters like the spittle-laced decay of the last note of *Body and Soul* (Hawkins 1939), blowing Spirit through flesh and bone and teeth and lips, into a Selmer VI. Hip-hop flows, syncopates, hips and hops, storytelling over a thick, funky groove. Put them together and call it. . . call it whatever you want, baby. Today we'll call it jazzhop, nujazz, neosoul.

JazzHop: Rahsaan Roland Kirk over Clyde Stubblefield, narrated by Gil Scott Heron with the soft, sultry whispers of Erykah Badu recalling the kemetic symbols of Egypt and the wombdom of Mother Earth, arranged by the young, churchy cats of Snarky Puppy, Cory Henry.

Presence is crucial. To be *present* is more than "showing up" at the gig, being on time and well prepared, getting all the points for class participation. "Showing up" is not enough. Attendance is not enough. Without presence, sound is absent and invisible. Empty. Not there. Presence is not generically "there," it is attuned and balanced. Tuned for tone, attack, volume, texture, and shape. Presence dwells in a dynamic, situated place: it moves when it needs to go elsewhere, it expands and retreats when it needs to cover more or less ground in the soundscape. This is a presence that knows how to inhabit *in absentia* and full-throttle saturation.

Love is supreme. Not sentimental. It's a gritty, tragic supremacy. Giving a wonderful student an F and hoping they recover. Telling one's beloved the deadly truth. Love isn't sentimental or moralistic in the same way that something beautiful isn't just pretty or nice. John Coltrane built four suites for one of his soundscapes: "Acknowledgement,"   "Resolution,"   "Pursuance"   and   "Psalm"—*A   LOVE SUPREME, A Love Supreme, a love supreme. . .* (1965).

Prayer. Eyes are closed. Sweat trickles, pours, gathers, and folds, saturated into a kerchief. Prayers, invocations, intonations. Enter, exit, dwell. Ghosts. This is sacred space. Holy, wholly ground. Remove your shoes. There is no escape—no moving outside—the religious here. Sometimes calm meditation, a contemplative hymn, ballads. Other times wild, bloody *Voodoo* (D'Angelo 2000): from *Transition* (Coltrane 1970) to *Bitches Brew* (Davis 1970), there are no secular solos or grooves. The sweetness is the funky aroma of Mary Jane. D'Angelo craves her under the pseudonym, *Brown Sugar* (1995). A solo lying and massaging atop a thick groove is prayer; a prayer told in parable. Tell me, scholar: Where are *your* parables and paradoxes and creation myths? Tell me, professor: What do *you* profess? Where can the children pray?

Story. "Once upon a time, there was man named Pythagoras who lived in Greece. . . a real, religious man, a person, a man of flesh and bone. . . for tomorrow,

be sure to finish your geometry worksheets, they are due at the beginning of class."
The exile of story, myth, parable, and fable makes everything square—even squares
and triangles. Jazzhop is geometric, and stories all have their sense of shape, size,
proportion, and width, with one condition: story only happens within the perfor-
mance, dwelling inside the soundscape. Saying is not enough. SHOW. One must
show, show like the cutting, outrageous images from the menacing emcee or the
moaning blues of a stretching, bending, and distressed blue note. Buddy Guy.

Time lives in the geometric space of the story and parses that space out through
phrasing. Like Coltrane's suites (1965), time carves out the space of and for the
soundscape. Duration—7:47; 7:22; 17:53—is not time. Numbers and counting do
not keep time. Time is kept and measured by *feel*, by the heart. Pulse is a sign of life.
Time is beat, feel, groove: the sensual, spatial, somatic skeleton that anchors the
passing, inflected language of the stories. Time is not built on propriety or pleas-
antries. Showing up "on time" and not being tardy are not the signs of a feel for
time. Time is not measured in clocks, bells, calendars, or spring break. Timing is all
about knowing when to speak and when to be silent and when to mix and match—
and doing it perfectly, without forcing the issue. Surprise! Louis Armstrong, Ray
Charles, and Lauren Hill are all masters of timing, principally in their phrasing. And
they are all good friends with the metronome.

Phrasing. PHRA*singgg*. Phrases sing. Phr – ray – sang. PhrrrAYsen. ....
Phrasing. Fa – fa – fa – phraz – phraz – phrazin – phra. . . zing! Pu – hu – ray –
sigh – ing. Phray. Sigh. Pharoah Sanders. Fraysin', raisin, craysin crayola lemon
drops drizzled over singing frays, fraying in the sins of their phrases, mazes, messin
around while the white boys act too serious, to bound up—cold peanut butter,
gringodemia—trying to loosen things up and get this fucking geometry assignment
right.

STOP. Back to the head.

Phrasing, time, story, prayer, love, presence: all of this and more within a
soundscape, a strangely ordinary ecology—an educational space that is behind
and beyond learning or knowing. The standard here is to dwell, to inhabit the
soundscape by participating, accompanying, and never leaving too soon.

Teachers—good teachers, beautiful teachers, real teachers; *artists* in other
words—are fundamentally embedded in the same constitutive condition as the
jazzhop artist. For both the risks are great, the rewards are all-too-often anti-
climatic and fleeting, and the pay comes and goes, but goes more than it comes.
We know the stories of many great struggling musicians and emcees, but surely not
enough, and we need more stories of great struggling teachers, too. The players
teach as the teachers play. Companions. After all, they—emcee, saxophonist,
vocalist, teacher—are not mutually exclusive categories or persons. This is the
descriptive, imaginative work ahead. The result might be suites, essays, memoires,
novels, tracks, curricula, *sanging*, answering the same refrain: "Love me, compan-
ion. Don't abandon me. Follow me. / Follow me, companion, on that wave of
anguish" (Neruda 2010, p. 8).

14.3   Track 3 – Songs of Despair, James Picks Blues

As with other forms of jazz, perhaps teaching is fading—although not nearly as dead as the zombie cynics, critics, and posers like to threaten and echo—because the blue soul of the teacher, the teacher's *canción desesperada* (song of despair) has been put in serious jeopardy. Or, perhaps, the song has itself been occluded, hidden from sight, ear, and voice. This loss of soul and song in teaching is kin to divorcing the blues from jazz in certain, cerebral forms of so-called jazz music. (I sometimes call this head-jazz: a purely intellectual exercise that takes an exclusively cerebral approach.) All that is left is the "sophisticated" technical shell, a mental exercise, perfectly predictable and measurable and redeemed. Without soul, a teacher may still teach, but her lessons will lack capacity for folk music, for song, for companionship—*companionship on waves of anguish*. Neruda's depiction of the lover, the one who asks for nothing more but to never be abandoned, is as much an invitation to live and love as it is a realization that in life and love there will be death and suffering. Tragedy. Neruda sings the blues, the dark Latin Gospel of hope, the *felix culpa* of redemption: "Love me, companion. Don't abandon me. Follow me. / Follow me, companion, on that wave of anguish" (Neruda 2010, p. 8).

This song can be readily found in many places, but it is important to provide an example that can be heard and understood by the audience to whom one speaks. In a book such as this, a book primarily written to, for, and by academics, perhaps we ought to look at two men of letters: William James and Leo Tolstoy. But do not be fooled: the objective will not be dogmatic or expository, pure and simple, so be on guard.

We find them together in Edinburgh, Scotland in 1901, in James' Gifford Lectures on Natural Religion, later published as *The Varieties of Religious Experience* (1936), where James at serious length looks to Tolstoy's suicidal contemplations in "The Sick Soul." In the preceding chapter, "The Religion of Healthy-Mindedness," James offers a generous defense of the religious disposition of optimism, especially as practiced in the "mind-cure" trends of his time. James, however, is not totally impartial. In the final analysis he says the following about the power of the "Sick Soul"—and the impotence of the "Religion of Healthy Mindedness."

> The method of averting one's attention from evil, and living simply in the light of good is splendid as long as it will work. It will work with many persons; it will work far more generally than most of us are ready to suppose; and within the sphere of its successful operation there is nothing to be said against it as a religious solution. But it breaks down impotently as soon as melancholy comes; and even though one be quite free from melancholy one's self, there is no doubt that healthy-mindedness is inadequate as a philosophical doctrine, because evil facts which it refuses positively to account are a genuine portion of reality; and they may after all be the best key to life's significance, and possibly the only openers of our eyes to the deepest levels of truth. (p. 160)

A few lines later, James (1936) ends that passage with the following description and exhortation: "Our civilization is founded on the shambles, and every individual existence goes out in a lonely spasm of helpless agony. If you protest, my friend,

wait till you arrive there yourself!" (p. 160) Unlike Neruda, however, James' blues seem less hopeful about companionship. Dissonance.

In another set of lectures, given to students at women's colleges between 1892 and 1899, a few years before the aforementioned Gifford Lectures, James clarifies and adds context and flavor to the distinction we have just read. Published as an epilogue to the *Talks to Teachers*, James' final essay of the *Talks to Students*, "What Makes Life Significant," tells this classic, homiletic story about a visit to Chautauqua (2001):

> A few summers ago I spent a happy week at the famous Assembly Grounds on the borders of Chautauqua Lake. The moment one treads that sacred enclosure, one feels one's self in an atmosphere of success. Sobriety and industry, intelligence and goodness, orderliness and ideality, prosperity and cheerfulness, pervade the air. It is a serious and studious picnic on a gigantic scale. Here you have a town of many thousands of inhabitants, beautifully laid out in the forest and drained, and equipped with means for satisfying all the necessary lower and most of the superfluous higher wants of man. You have a first-class college in full blast. You have magnificent music-a chorus of seven hundred voices, with possibly the most perfect open-air auditorium in the world. You have every sort of athletic exercise from sailing, rowing, swimming, bicycling, to the ball-field and the more artificial doings which the gymnasium affords. You have kindergartens and model secondary schools. You have general religious services and special club-houses for the several sects. You have perpetually running soda-water fountains, and daily popular lectures by distinguished men. You have the best of company, and yet no effort. You have no zymotic diseases, no poverty, no drunkenness, no crime, no police. You have culture, you have kindness, you have cheapness, you have equality, you have the best fruits of what mankind has fought and bled and striven for under the name of civilization for centuries. You have, in short, a foretaste of what human society might be, were it all in the light, with no suffering and no dark corners. I went in curiosity for a day. I stayed for a week, held spell-bound by the charm and ease of everything, by the middle-class paradise, without a sin, without a victim, without a blot, without a tear. And yet what was my own astonishment, on emerging into the dark and wicked world again, to catch myself quite unexpectedly and involuntarily saying: "Ouf! what a relief! Now for something primordial and savage, even though it were as bad as an Armenian massacre, to set the balance straight again. This order is too tame, this culture too second-rate, this goodness too uninspiring. This human drama without a villain or a pang; this community so refined that ice-cream soda-water is the utmost offering it can make to the brute animal in man; this city simmering in the tepid lakeside sun; this atrocious harmlessness of all things, I cannot abide with them. Let me take my chances again in the big outside worldly wilderness with all its sins and sufferings. There are the heights and depths, the precipices and the steep ideals, the gleams of the awful and the infinite; and there is more hope and help a thousand times than in this dead level and quintessence of every mediocrity." (James 2001, p. 172)

Together, these lectures highlight the tragic strength of the blues sung by James, told with verve and story, immune to moral piety, unafraid of evil, verifiable only in the direct, folk impact of the experience itself. James' style of blues offers a resilient spirit, capable of rendering a fuller account of reality and human experience than other, more optimistic songs, and, because of this richer account, forms a more capacious philosophical doctrine. What we might call James' "doctrine of blues" is more succinctly stated in *Some Problems of Philosophy* (1940), where he James notes the musical ontogenesis of philosophy: "...philosophy begins with a minor chord" (p. 39). In blues guitar playing, the pentatonic scale that predominates

the single-noted solo is always played in a minor position—even when the song is in a major key.

In other words, when we take into account the sum and spirit of these Jamesian passages, the blue song of despair has a wider *capacity* than its more cheerful counterparts. More room. This points to the pragmatic and philosophical import of the blues: even if one is not attracted to the companionship of Neruda and the sources past and to follow, there is still a wideness, a breadth and depth, that the blues can contain and withstand that renders other options incomplete. This reveals the primal fecundity of darkness: it can hold the light, and here we find the companion. Return. The actuality of joy is preserved in the radical potentiality of suffering. Excess is concealed, preserved, and revealed within the barren desert.

This "capacity" to be a tragic companion, a companion on waves of anguish and even total absence, then, is a crucial mark of all the folk forms of jazz: forms of artistic expression capable of more than itself. In this sense, jazz is, quite literally and simply, folk music, companionship music, music that may not change the world or bring an end to all miseries or right all wrongs, but will never abandon us to suffer them alone. Music that we can dance to while we burn to the ground. Music that will never redeem us through solitary confinement. Music that reaches out to God and the dead and children and fiction, music of a strange and sometimes unwelcome origin, a nomad from a dark and melancholic place, a place of suffering and sometimes wine and blood, but, first and foremost, a tragic and tricky genesis, anguishing without redemption but always hopeful for companionship. A love supreme, *theosis* without condition: "Love me, companion. Don't abandon me. Follow me. / Follow me, companion, on that wave of anguish" (Neruda 2010, p. 8).

14.4 Track 4 – What To Do? (When *The Thrill Is Gone*)

In *Jazz*, Toni Morrison (1992) opens by describing a love that may not have the supreme inflections of Coltrane, but communicates the capacity just as powerfully and, for us, perhaps more clearly, since her notes are captured in the medium of written prose. Observe, listen, bend your eyes.

> Sth, I know that woman. She used to live with a flock of birds on Lennox Avenue. Know her husband, too. He fell for an eighteen-year-old girl with one of those deepdown, spooky loves that made him so sad and happy he shot her just to keep the feeling going. When the woman, her name is Violet, went to the funeral to see the girl and to cut her dead face they threw her to the floor and out the church. She ran, then, though all that snow, and when she got back to her apartment she took the birds from their cages and set them out the windows to freeze or fly, including the parrot that said, "I love you." (p. 3)

Ninety pages later, we return to the church, in the same scene Violet was banished from, before she let loose her birds, and find her fighting usher boys trying to disarm her and prevent the postmortem assault of her rival lover's corpse. When she returns the parrot, again, continues his refrain, on the windowsill, it

sangs, repeats, and tortures her with its love offering. This is the same love offered that she can neither accept nor renounce to the beautiful, bitter end of the novel.

Morrison's *Jazz* (1992) takes us to Lennox Avenue, that iconic place of urban Black culture, the description of which Morrison so wildly succeeds. It is here, in the same geographic location, that Gil Scott Heron offered his *Small Talk at 125th and Lenox,* released in 1970. A prophetic prototype for hip-hop, in sync with the posthumously released *Transition* (1970) of the late Coltrane, Heron recites, emcees, and sangs. He plays guitar and piano, too. Congas play throughout. We hear of "Plastic Pattern People" on track eight, a veritable feast of jazz genealogy. Read it in the rhythm.

> Glad to get high and see the slow motion world.
> Just to reach, and touch, the half notes floating.
> Worlds spinning orbit quicker than 9/8ths Dave Brubeck.
> We come now, frantically searching for Thomas Moore, rainbow villages.
> Up on suddenly, Charlie Mingus and our man Abdul Malik,
> to add bass, to a bottomless pit of insecurity.
>
> You may be plastic because you never meditate,
> about the bottom of glasses, The third side of your universe.
>
> Add on Alice Coltrane and her cosmic strains.
> Still no vocal on blue black horizons.
>
> Your plasticity is tested by a formless assault.
> The sun can answer questions in tune, to all your sacrifices.
>
> But why would our new jazz age give us no more mind-expanding puzzles?
>
> Enter John.
>
> Blow from under, always, and never, so that the morning, the sun,
> may scream of brain bending saxophones.
>
> The third world arrives, with Yusef Lateef, and Pharaoh Saunders.
> With oboes straining to touch the core of your unknown soul.
> Ravi Shankar comes, with strings attached, prepared to stabilize your seventh sense,
> Your black rhythm.
>
> Up and down a silly ladder run the notes, without the words.
> Words are important for the mind, but the notes are for the soul.
> Miles Davis, So what?
> Cannonball, Fiddler, Mercy.
> Dexter Gordon, One Flight Up.
> Donald Byrd, playing Cristo, but what about words?
>
> Would you like to survive on sadness? Call on Ella and Jose Happiness.
> Drift with Smokey, Bill Medley, Bobby Taylor, and Otis Redding.
> Soul music where frustrations are washed by drums, Nina and Miriam.
>
> Congo, Mongo, Beat me, senseless, bongo, Tonto.
> Flash through dream worlds of STP and LSD.
> Speed kills and sometimes musics call, is frustrated.
> And the black man is confused.

Our speed is our life pace, much too fast, not good.
I beg you to escape, and live, and hear all of the real.
Until a call comes for you to cry elsewhere.
We must all cry, but tell me.

Must our tears be white? (No. 8)

It is precisely *this* question—the question of whether our tears must be white—that brings us back to Neruda's refrain, offering a very direct, apophatic reply. No. Our tears must not be white. While this answer may be direct, it also assumes a great deal on the part of the reader. It is spoken to a lover who *understands*. These lovers are rare today, which is why Morrison, Heron, and Neruda's notes ring and resonate so strongly. What they share are words, but these words do not lack *notes*, which, as Heron (1970) teaches us, are for the soul. Again: "Words are important for the mind, but the notes are for the soul" (No. 8).

There is a common distinction in Gospel and soul music: the difference between singing and *sanging*. Singing is insufficient and "white." It is correct, but merely so. So what? You can sing on key. Who cares? It lacks funk and personality. And sincerity. The passion that soul brings. This is a perhaps surprising aspect of *soul* music to the uninitiated: it is not a Platonic caricature of a pure or heavenly note, unscented by temporality, death, or suffering. Soul growls and moans and messes around. Soul cries and whispers, tainted and redeemed by the blue notes that spark into the spirited, ensouled, fiery, and Pentecostal biblical tongues of Acts, the dark love language of the Cross, the African root that recalls Moses and all that was lost before and thereafter. The "Wednesday Night Prayer Meeting" where Mingus and friends play and clap in *Blues and Roots* (1970). The concept of love in a context such as this is—again, *unlike* Plato's taxonomy—univocal, inescapable, and tragic. Love without distinctions or frog dissections.

The question is not whether one can sing or not, it is not a question of mere external attunement. The deeper and darker question is whether or not one can *sang*, and this song is itself a form of accompaniment. Companionship. Consider a poem by Langston Hughes (1990): "Prayer Meeting."

Glory! Hallelujah!
The dawn's a-comin'!
Glory! Hallelujah!
The dawn's a-comin'!
A black old woman croons
In the amen-corner of the
Ebecaneezer Baptist Church
A black old woman croons—
The dawn's a-comin'! (p. 27)

The subversive potential of spiritual *sanging* such as this is the following: it can recuperate what may be found lacking in singing. It is, again, a question of *capacity*. And it also need not be excluded from joy or glory. The blue soul of jazz refers to a place that is soulful, but not ethereal nor detached, nor afraid of devotion or reverence and even kindness. Embrace. This is the aesthetic difference between William James and John Dewey: James *sangs*, Dewey sings. This is also the flaw of

Nel Nodding's ethical theory of care (2003), one of the most influential concepts to emerge from the philosophy of education in decades. It is not a question of whether or not care and caring is exegetically or technically correct or even true. It is not only the obvious problem with Noddings' dispassionate and unerotic notion of "engrossment." No. The problem is much deeper, almost hidden from sight in plain view. Caring is not love. It is too careful. Care lacks the tragic *capacity* of love: "Love me, companion. Don't abandon me. Follow me. / Follow me, companion, on that wave of anguish" (Neruda 2010, p. 8).

14.5   Track 5 – Those Who *Sang* (Interlude)

In this track we take a necessary departure, an interlude. We hear from one of undisputed giants of jazz, Miles Davis, interviewed by Quincy Troupe, taken from *Miles: The Autobiography* (1990). We also listen to a contemporary tenor saxophonist, Edwin "Eddie" Bayard, whom I interviewed at the Malcolm X Institute of Black Studies at Wabash College on February 24, 2012. What is crucial about these passages is not only their rich musical and pedagogical content, but, also, their *voice*. Unlike the literary and poetic letters we have seen, here we listen to the words of those voices who speak to the ears more than to the eyes, but who also evoke imagery and life. I have added italicized emphasis on passages where I see them teaching us about teaching in a particular way.

We begin with Davis (1990), reflecting on the genius and lessons of his teacher Charlie Parker ("Bird").

> There are painters and then there are painters among great painters. In this century, in my opinion, you had Picasso, Dali. Bird for me was like Dali, my favorite painter. I liked Dali because of his imagination when he painted death. See, I was into that kind of imagery and I liked the surrealism in his paintings. The way Dali used surrealism always had a wrinkle in it—at least for me—it was so different; you know, like a man's head in a breast. And Dali's paintings had a slick finish about them. But Picasso, besides his cubist work, had that African influence in his paintings, and I already *knew* what that was all about. So Dali was just more interesting to me, *taught me* a new way of looking at things. Bird was like that with music. (p. 79, former emphasis in original, latter added)

Then Bayard (2012) on what jazz is (and has been in this chapter).

> Jazz, to me, is creativity. You know… uh… I don't look at jazz as the swing "ting, tingy ting, tinky ting, tinky ting." That's part of it, you know? That's there. But there's others… Like I said: John Coltrane's nephew is making beats. He's using an MPC. But he's making creative music. That's jazz to me. You know? In the sense of he's creating. He's progressing. He's thinking forward. He's being himself. And a host of other people. I look at rappers, you know, as jazz. *I look at anything that's creative. That's creative, creative expression. I look at it as jazz. I could look at a painting and see jazz*. So, if you're talking about the sense of the standards, of the, the, you talk about the music that Charlie Parker and all of these cats created, is it gonna continue? Uh, I think so. You know, I just think we as the jazz, and I'm not talking about the musicians, the artists, but the critics. One thing I do notice about he critics is that the critics try to pigeonhole people. And that creates for a bad kind of thing for me, because, you know, an artist is supposed to create and keep

moving. So, uhm, I think that jazz creativity will go on, forever, as long as it's here. (2012, emphasis added)

Davis (1990) interjects, again, on what Bird did and didn't teach him.

The first two weeks with Bird was a motherfucker, but it helped me grow up real fast. I was nineteen years old and playing with the baddest alto saxophone player in the history of music. This made me feel real good inside. I might have been scared as a motherfucker, but I was getting more confident too, even thought I didn't know it at the time. But *Bird didn't teach me much as far as music goes*. I loved playing with him, but you couldn't copy the shit he did because it was so original. (p. 69, emphasis added)

Davis (1990) continues, on Bird's arrangements and style.

Bird would play the melody he wanted. The other musicians had to remember what he played. He was real spontaneous, went on his instinct. He didn't conform to Western ways of musical group interplay by organizing everything. Bird was a great improviser and that's where he thought great music came from and what great musicians were about. His concept was "fuck what's written down." *Play what you know and play that well and everything will come together*—I loved the way Bird did that. *I learned a lot from him that way*. It would later help me with my own musical concepts. When that shit works, man, it's a mother-fucker. (p. 89, emphasis added)

Bayard (2012) now responds to this question, from the faceless audience: "When you play with some of the older guys in these various groups and combos, how do you learn from the players? I mean, do you just learn by listening to 'em? Or do they actually sit down with you, maybe after you play a tune, and say, 'Do you understand what I just did?' I mean, how is that, how is that transmitted?"

For me, I—for me, personally: when they say "oral," "oral tradition," jazz is an oral tradition, uh, I think it's the, it's the magic that, I guess that's the only way to describe it: is "the magic"?—I'll just put that word on to it. *Being around those guys, uh, for me, it was the magic*. You know, it was like, uh, I remember there was a tenor player, uh, lived around my way, uh, Tim Warfield, Jr.—he played with Marlin Jordan, Nicolas Payton and a couple other guys. I used to just go watch him. I remember when I was in high school, I remember they were doing this thing, and I was listening to and playing, and I said, "Wow, that's what Wynton and them guys are doing, so, I'm gonna go watch this dude." And I befriended him and we were friends. But *he never technically showed me anything*. You know? But I would go into a club, when I was in high school. . . I would just. . . skip—I know this is bad, but you know? I probably wouldn't go to school the next day, from, you know, if he had a gig on Thursday, you know, Fridays I'd probably miss school cause I would be out all night, you know? And it would probably just be two people in the club. And to me that was the greatest. . . I remember hearing him when I went to Berkley [School of Music in Boston, MA], you know, and it'd be a packed audience, he'd be playing with Chris McBride or, you know, playing with Nicholas Payton or whoever, and it's a packed house and everything; but for me the greatest point of listening to him was when it was in that little club with just two people because he just was working all this stuff out. And I got to see it, and experience it. Not just go on YouTube and Google it and look at it, but I'm actually there and to me there's an energy that transfers. The only way I can describe it is "the magic." You know, and I mean, I tried it on YouTube but it's just, I mean, it's more uncut than the record, but it's still not the same feeling like *being* there. I mean being right there. I sat next to Bennie Maupin—I did a gig with Bennie Maupin and Billy Harper, two of Lee Morgan's ex tenors players before *he* died, and I just remember just sitting next. . . you know, I'm sandwiched between the middle of these cats (and both of them, I idol them as well), and listening to

those guys, and, just, in that experience of the gig, you know… I learnt so much, and then me and Bennie Maupin stayed in touch with each other, and I talked to him, just talking to him on the phone… it's the magic. (2012, emphasis added in former, original in latter)

And, lastly, Davis (1990) ends on the "blues" of the Julliard School of Music, from which he dropped out.

I remember one day being in music history class and a white woman was the teacher. She was up in front of the class saying that the reason black people played the blues was because they were poor and had to pick cotton. So they were sad and that's where the blues came from, their sadness. My hand went up in a flash and I stood up and said, "I'm from East St. Louis and my father is rich, he's a dentist, and I play the blues. My father didn't never pick no cotton and I didn't wake up this morning sad and start playing the blues. There's more to it than that." Well, the bitch turned green and didn't say nothing after that. Man, *she was teaching that shit from out of a book written by someone who didn't know what he was talking about*. That's the kind of shit that was happening at Julliard and after a while I got tired of it. (p. 59, emphasis added)

14.6 Track 6 – To the Bitter, Afro-Cuban End

Liviu Librescu was a professor emeritus at Virginia Tech who was shot while bracing his body against the door to allow his classroom to escape from a murderous gunman. He was Holocaust survivor, shot to death on Holocaust Remembrance Day, April 16, 2007 (Birman et al. 2009). He escaped from senseless violence, only to die in an act of senseless violence. He was a teacher who did not flee. His story, a teaching story, needs to be told and retold.

What was this? Was this "care"? Can his blues be sung without *sanging*? Shall we flee with his students? Must we mourn him with white tears? Or should we instead fantasize and imagine his escape, our escape, into a liberal paradise of ethics and equality and democracy? Or, perhaps, can we dwell and love his sacrifice as one of true, simple, and tragic companionship.

Librescu would not leave his students. That is all. He remained. He refused to retire. He was willing to accompany them to the most radical extreme, dwelling on the wave of anguish that approached and, ultimately, separated them from each other. In this sense we was wholly present and refused to exchange *that* presence for anything but everything. He did the impossible. He died for his students, even though they did not die with him. He offered them life, his own life, in the most literal sense. His love transcended the embrace and left them to live in the embrace of his sacrifice, his absence was his presence made real by his love.

Public school teachers are today asked to do the impossible. They, too, are asked to *accompany* their students, especially in urban, rural, and poor schools. As the shootings at Newtown and elsewhere continue to show and remind us, it is not absurd to consider the extent to which teachers are asked to die.

It is one thing to protest the absolutely grave and serious problem of what teaching has become—or, to be more direct, what is has ceased to be in the face of the well-known neoliberal and technocratic forces of today—but it is another

thing even more great and terrible to ask *them* to do it. Especially when so many of us, the academics, escaped that exact situation, many times for not unrelated reasons. As a university professor, I must ask myself whether I enter my classroom as a morbid, beautiful place or, rather, as an empty safe place secluded from the menacing dysfunctions of schools out there. (My answer to this question is rarely, if ever, honest or consoling.)

Furthermore, we might ask whether teachers are the worthy companions of their students in every sense and at every time. Within a schooling environment, students matriculate as their teachers remain. Must the teacher always accompany her students alone, as they move on? Is *this* the tragedy of teaching? Or does it go deeper, into the isolation of the scholar. The lone, ornamental philosopher of education in a school of educational social scientists. Is this why we go to conferences? Are we there to seek companionship? What does this tell us about our tiny universities?

Education, in and out of schools, is full of questions and anxiety. Will caring be the cure? Will reform and policy analysis? Ethics? Critique? Critique of the critique? What about today and tomorrow? What about the children and the adults and the teacher who is willing to love but finds herself with James' loneliness more than Neruda's companionship? What will their consolation be? For whom shall they wait? A messiah? A savior? A rabbi? A companion? A philosopher? A prescription? A doctor? A (social) scientist? STEM? A teacher? A person? Human or animal? Technology? Exactly *what* sort of teacher? And where do we search? The desert?

Moses did not enter the Promise Land. He freed the Hebrews from Egypt and stayed with them throughout their Exodus to the end—an end he did not enjoy. Moses is exalted as a liberator, a blue liberator who never enjoys the freedom and promise foretold. When Jesus Christ—the major character throughout the Black prophetic Gospel tradition that informs so much of jazz music—declares "the Kingdom of God is at hand" throughout the Gospels of the Christian Bible, he fails to produce the political Kingdom that Moses and David and Solomon created but were unable to sustain. Christ's failure crescendos on the Cross, yet even after the glory of Resurrection we see his wounds, and the instructions seems wanting and anti-climatic. The apostles are told by their rabbi to *wait*. Wait on the Spirit, the Holy Ghost. Go to a room and pray—a speakeasy or a basement somewhere, where prayers rise, oil, thicken and brew with Mary, Herbie, and John McLaughlin (Davis 1970). The Pentecostal promise is itself another deferral of the promise; the Paraclete is a unique manifestation of God Spirit. This is the God who first came in the genetic form of breath, blown through the Creator in the poetry of Genesis, the same breath that passed through reeds and flesh and copper and steel, the breathe that returned as fire, the same fire that burns hot and makes jazz cool.

This is the God who not only suffers, but suffers-with. A companion. For this reason, the lesson we learn when we are attuned and attentive to the radical demands of the wave of anguish is that teaching is blue: silent and resistant to instruction manuals and how-to books and tests that test nothing but the failing test. This is the teaching and teacher who offer and never give without offering, and

often never give at all. The offering is the only condition of beauty. This teacher is not a technician or a popular and easy hero, her lessons do not come as standards without standards, but, instead, as the true exception: the event of teaching, never too far from suffering and death and joy and living. Always in love. Be in love. Do not abandon me. These are not exciting or fun or innovative lessons. Classrooms may not flip and sometimes the artist will turn his back or die too soon. We find this lesson in the Rabbi who departs and leaves room for ghosts and spirits and song. The challenge of freedom is daunting and haunting and risky. Ornette Colman takes a chance, sometimes.

From this blue origin, we hear the soulful songs of the past, the collective voices of ancestors and nostalgia for a home we've never had. Nostalgia for nostalgia. Promises, lies, jokes, myths, sacred mysteries and the paradox. A home, a dwelling place, rest that has never been before, only in a dream foretold, hoped for, but never realized. Kept in secret. A home of pure potentiality, spilled on the floor. This is what white tears cannot mourn for. *These* crying eyes are not saturated with white tears because white tears make no sense to them and have no resting place for their sorrow. They are nostalgic for a future, not a past. How can I know that the economy is bad when I was broke when times was good (Rocha 2014)? Perhaps these tears mourn for a past, but it is a past that never came to pass. Companionship is all there was, is, and will be. These blue eyes rest, instead, on whatever is lying around.

Afro-Cuban wooden boxes are picked up, substituting for exiled conga drums. Rhythm flows, spirits rise, and they *sang*: "Love me, companion. Don't abandon me. Follow me. / Follow me, companion, on that wave of anguish" (Neruda 2010, p. 8).

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Chapter 15
Funny Vibe: Towards a Somaesthetic Approach to Anti-racist Education

David A. Granger

> *No, I'm not gonna rob you (rob you)*
> *No, I'm not gonna beat you (beat you)*
> *No, I'm not gonna rape you (rape you)*
> *So why you want to give me that*
> *Funny vibe!*
>
> Vernon Reid, *Living Colour*
> (These lyrics come from the song "Funny Vibe," which appears
> on the CD *Vivid* by the popular African-American funk-rock
> band Living Colour (1990, Sony). They were largely inspired by
> the band members' experiences of face-to-face encounters with
> racial "others" (i.e., nonAfrican-Americans) while walking the
> streets of New York City.)

15.1 Introduction

The revolutionary philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein once famously remarked that, "The human body is the best picture of the human soul" (Wittgenstein 1953, 178[1]). Though slightly cryptic at first blush, this comment also seems to contain a degree of truth, perhaps bringing to mind the common (if commonly condemned) tendency to "judge a book by its cover." Trying to determine the extent to which the idea is true, however, much less explain it, are different matters altogether. We know that the human mind (or soul) and body must somehow be connected, like the mysterious "ghost in the machine" popularized by Rene Descartes over three centuries ago (Ryle 1949, 15–16). Yet interest in the so-called mind-body problem extends

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[1] Here, Wittgenstein is trying to refute a kind of "other minds" skepticism by insisting that the body is not something which *possesses* or *has* a soul. It is essentially a critique of the dualistic Cartesian view that when I encounter other bodies I have to infer that other souls or minds are located "inside" them, such that the bodily behavior of human beings is merely a fallible external indicator of hidden mental processes. As we will see shortly, John Dewey is also very critical of this kind of dualistic "inside/outside" language for representing and discussing the mind-body relationship.

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back even further. That mind and body are in some way and measure interdependent was actually a commonplace in the intellectual culture of ancient Greece, most famously, perhaps, among Socrates and his philosophical descendents (e.g., in the belief that a healthy mind depends on a healthy body). It can also be found at the core of the ideals of self-knowledge and self-cultivation promoted in much East-Asian philosophy (e.g., in yoga and t'ai chi ch'uan). Still, the notion that the body exists, in some sense, in the mind, while, simultaneously, the mind exists in the body—*such that mind and body inform and shape one another in very deep and profound ways*—is relatively new and of increasing interest in many fields of study today, ranging all the way from cognitive science and linguistics to feminism, philosophy, and of most importance here, education (see, e.g., Abram 1997; Bordo 1995; Gallagher 2005; Goldberg 1990; Johnson 1987, 1993, 2007; Lakoff and Johnson 1999; McLaren 1986; Sullivan 2001 and 2006; Shusterman 2008).[2]

My central reason for underscoring the relative newness of this idea is that canonical Western thought has a long and storied history of rejecting, ignoring, or otherwise degrading the human body. (Consider, as a simple example, the way traditional classroom environments and practices look to isolate the mind within the head and train it through focused rote activity, while effectively stifling the body and bodily movement.) This might seem rather odd on the surface, given that our bodies and their agencies make up the basic substance of our physical being and are the primary means through which we connect with our everyday surroundings. To understand why the body has nonetheless been so often marginalized and maligned it is useful to turn briefly to the thinking of the later Plato. For his view of the relationship between mind and body helped set the tone for much Christian theology on the subject[3] as well as the more modern philosophical (and later psychological) tradition of mind/body dualism popularized by Descartes.

The historic writings of Plato and his adherents routinely convey a strong desire—one could even say fantasy—somehow to escape our bodies. This escape is viewed as a critical necessity for humans if they are to achieve an idealized state of perfection as purely intellectual beings, extolling, as it does, a quasi-godlike existence that effectively separates us from the irrational brutes of the earthly

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[2] It is useful here to distinguish between *mind* and *brain*. Though there are many different ways to do this, for our purposes *brain* will refer to the physical matter existing essentially within the head. *Mind*, on the contrary, is the system of meanings, relationships, understandings, ideas, processes and so on typically associated with the neural networks of the brain, but that might also be said to extend to our bodies, such that knowledge can become embodied (e.g., knowing how to operate the controls on an automobile or how to knit a sweater). For more on this topic see Granger (2006). Dewey also offers an instructive distinction between *mind* and *consciousness*. While *consciousness* refers to our direct, immediate awareness of objects, people and events (or meanings) at any one point in time, *mind* extends beyond this to taken-for-granted meanings of which we are not currently directly aware but that "determine the habitual direction of our conscious thoughts" (Dewey 1988b, 231). Again, it is the embodied dimension of the latter that is our chief concern here.

[3] See, for instance, the disparaging way the body is viewed in Paul's Letter to the Romans from the *New Testament* of the *Holy Bible*.

animal world.[4] Perceived in this disparaging way, our bodies become a limiting factor in our growth and development rather than an enabler. They are a kind of adversary that we need either to be freed from or subdue. For experience teaches us that our sense organs can give us deceptive information about our surroundings (inducing various degrees of skepticism about our knowledge of the world), while our irrational passions and desires, and the associated base pleasures said to be rooted in the body, interfere with our objectivity and ability to achieve intellectual detachment. With their myriad pains and infirmities, our bodies are also a constant reminder of the aging process and, in the end, our ultimate mortality. Thus treated as at best (i.e., when "tamed") a servant of the mind, it is not surprising that the human body has often been characterized by both philosophers and theologians as a veritable prison of deception, temptation and suffering. What is more, this kind of thinking has been particularly pernicious in light of the historical identification of women and other socially marginalized groups with their variously enfeebled, depraved or uncivilized bodies (see, e.g., Bordo 1995).

All of this, I think, helps to explain why it is only recently that the human body, and the profound significance of our lives as embodied beings, have begun to receive sustained *positive* attention by mainstream writers and researchers. Approaching the subject with diverse scholarly purposes and perspectives, these thinkers do not all praise the body as the benevolent equal of the mind. Nor do they all insist, as I will shortly, that a life well lived requires that our bodies be thoughtfully and proactively attended to and cultivated. They do, however, acknowledge that the body plays an integral role in all acts of perception and cognition, a necessary agent of our intellectual growth and development. In short, they seek to use the tools of their various disciplines to try to understand the many dimensions of our full embodied intelligence as human beings.

Working from this point of departure, this chapter examines several critical facets of the structure and functioning of the human body as described by three major thinkers from very different, but in ways also complementary, philosophical traditions, all of whom had a deep and enduring interest in education. These figures, in order of appearance, are John Dewey, Michel Foucault, and Ludwig Wittgenstein. Building on their work, the chapter uses a framework for conceptualizing the body developed recently by philosopher Richard Shusterman and termed "analytic somaesthetics." Analytic somaesthetics examines the aesthetics, or directly felt, experiential dimensions, of the lived body (or "soma"), paying particular attention to the role played by what Dewey called embodied habits. Again, this is not the body as a "mere physical corpus of flesh and blood," but rather the "living, feeling, sentient, purposive body" inseparable from the life of the mind (Shusterman 2008, xxi).

Following this analysis, Shusterman's somaesthetics is combined with several pivotal insights from Foucault and Wittgenstein to expose the way various

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[4] Even today, many academics attempt to reduce the human body to a text of some kind through the supposed intellectual purity of sophisticated forms of linguistic analysis. For more on this discursive *logos* see Shusterman (1997) and Scarry (1988).

ideologies of domination (e.g., racism, sexism, classism, ableism, heterosexism, ageism, etc.) can be covertly (and at times overtly) materialized and maintained by being encoded, through the medium of habit, in norms of somatic (or bodily) behavior. Given their great social and educational significance, along with their relative intransigence, racist somatic norms are the central focus here, with racism defined rather broadly as any practice of racial discrimination or segregation, conscious or subconscious, traceable to the idea of the superiority of one race over another.[5] Since they operate at the level of habit, these racist norms are generally taken for granted and consequently elude critical attention. However, to the extent that our bodily habits incorporate elements of racist ideology, they are inseparable from our habits of mind and thus can trigger, reinforce, and perhaps heighten oppressive or discriminatory behaviors in how we think, feel, and act in our encounters with racial "others," like the "funny vibe" so deftly depicted in the popular song by Living Colour.

Having examined this largely neglected challenge to combating the visceral grip of racism, the chapter culminates in a discussion of the potential role of what Shusterman calls "practical somaesthetics" in exposing and modifying these bodily habits, once again emphasizing their directly felt, aesthetic dimensions. This includes an initial, exploratory look at the possible use of practical somaesthetics by educators, especially given the limitations of conventional rationalist "right thinking" (i.e., "it's all in the mind") forms of anti-racist education and multiculturalism. My goal then is to suggest one possible approach to using somaesthetics to combat racist bodily habits (their development and continuance) and its potential merits, while encouraging the reader to consider, through his or her own insights and experiences, how this approach might be further developed or augmented to make manifest (or, literally, flesh out) its full pedagogical potential. Following Dewey's aesthetics, this might provide both a new type of aesthetic education, making us more aware of and informed about the aesthetics of our lived bodies, and, through this firsthand, lived experience, a form of education that itself provides a kind of aesthetic experience.

15.2   Mind and the Habitual Body

As a card-carrying Darwinian, John Dewey was fond of reminding us that, even after eons of evolutionary development and the emergence of mind, we remain fundamentally embodied, biological creatures. (Indeed, it's hard to think of Dewey-the-educator without the notion of "hands-on learning" coming immediately to mind.) As noted earlier, our bodies are our principal means of interacting with our

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[5] In the interests of time and space, this chapter looks only at the racist somatic norms of the oppressor, though it is ultimately necessary to examine those of the oppressed as well, since these norms might often be said to exist, to some degree, in a kind of reciprocal, mutually enforcing relationship.

everyday surroundings. (Think, for instance, of something as basic as breathing or as complex as driving an automobile.) Moreover, our continual interaction with the world of people and things makes the body the primary medium or instrument of habit, which suggests to Dewey that it is also the primary medium of meaning in experience. Habits then, he tells us, are really embodied meanings. They are purposeful ways of acting in the world. This implies that finding or making meaning in things is never just a function of the operations of some sort of self-contained, pure mind in the manner Plato envisioned. Rather, meaning becomes a part of how we experience the world first and foremost in and through our bodies. So how does Dewey think this occurs?

Put most simply, the "habitual body"[6] functions as a kind of conduit, actively structuring and coordinating the biological (conventionally identified with the body) and sociocultural (conventionally identified with the mind) contents of human experience. It is this content that, through the agencies of the habitual body, effectively shapes and defines the world that we in-habit. In other words, the habitual body helps us make sense of the different situational contexts, and the potential meanings experienced within them, that we encounter in our daily lives. And, most importantly, it assists us in navigating successfully through them. This is by any standard a marvelously complex process that the habitual body enables us to carry out, in most cases, with a remarkable degree of efficiency and fluidity, as we move almost seamlessly from one situation and activity to another—from our many day-to-day endeavors at home, at work, in the classroom, at the store, and so on.

Of course, learning to navigate these environments effectively requires considerable time and life experience. For starters, as Swiss psychologist Jean Piaget[7] famously observed, we must be able to make sense of the things we encounter in terms of the basic concepts of space and time. The manner in which the habitual body assists us here will sound familiar to those acquainted with Dewey's writings on education. By experimenting with the world, moving in and around things—in-habiting them—we gradually become predisposed to, for example,

> See a wheel as part of [a] car rather than as part of the ground, and we see space itself as having depth and direction because of habit. We also see things temporally as processes: we see the car's movement as part of one process, the growth of a child as another. We may interpret the process in terms of its [imagined] future outcome, 'going home,' 'growing vegetables,' 'discovering a solution,' etc. (Alexander 1987, 147)

In this way, the habitual body helps to make our experiences intelligible by lending them a narrative, almost story-like quality, as we continually build on the past and project from the present, with varying degrees of uncertainty, into the future.

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[6] This term comes largely from Maurice Merleau-Ponty (1962 and 1964), but, as a number of writers have pointed out, it works equally as well with Dewey's conception of habit. See, for example, Alexander (1987). Unfortunately, Merleau-Ponty's somatic theorizing, unlike Dewey's, failed to affirm reflective body consciousness as a means of self-improvement. See Shusterman (2008).

[7] See, for example, Piaget (1969).

Dewey understands as well that, thanks to the adaptive processes of evolution, human beings have an innate predisposition to organize our experience in accord with certain basic features of our world. Though we might begin life as infants in what William James famously called a "blooming, buzzing confusion," the evolution of our sense organs, in concert with our cognitive agencies, enables us to begin immediately discriminating between and ordering the elements of our experience (James 1981, 462). This predisposition no doubt plays a significant role in the vital process of sense-making and assists immeasurably in habit formation. It means as well that the sophisticated contextual frameworks for experiencing meaning that we depend upon both for our survival and a life well lived do not come fully formed from birth; they are in significant part human constructions, developed within particular sociocultural frameworks as we acquire habitual ways of interpreting and responding to different life situations (Granger 2006, 220–221). *In sum, then, habits for Dewey are expressions of culture rooted in the lived body and mediated by social interaction. They are essential tools of everyday living.* Consequently, the creation of intelligent and responsive habits is for Dewey the *sine qua non* of a high quality learning experience and in any province of human life.

This also means that we can never get beyond the influence of embodied habit. As a product of previous experience and problem-solving activity of all kinds, the habitual body continually shapes everything that we apprehend through our senses. Most importantly, it makes the experienced world immediately intelligible by assisting us in selecting which elements of our experiences to attend to, and how, based on our particular activities and purposes. This is as much the case for touching, tasting, and smelling as for seeing and hearing. For instance, we automatically perceive the sun as a distant (not a near) object because of habit, and we hear the voice of a friend as immediately agreeable and that of an adversary as disagreeable (which speaks to the survival function of habits). In this way also habits both shape and reflect our attitudes, desires, and goals, our responsiveness to our environment, and our abilities to care, perceive, and think. More specifically, they tell us what procedures to execute when driving an automobile, balancing a checkbook, conducting searches on the internet, or even what vocabulary and forms of expression are appropriate to a given communicative setting (e.g., at home, at work, at a sports event, etc.). When acquired under favorable conditions and working properly, such habits are preeminently enabling or assistive in their functioning; they are, again, crucial tools of everyday living. Just as importantly, however, embodied habits can clearly be harmful or destructive as well, for example with such diverse things as overeating, poor posture, general carelessness, or our central concern here, subconsciously racist feelings, attitudes, and behaviors (see Granger 2006, 34).

A further noteworthy aspect of embodied habits for Dewey is that they can be usefully viewed as a kind of "art." When developed intelligently and flexibly adaptable to the environment, they enhance our ability to function successfully within diverse life situations. Habit is a "vital art," as Dewey puts it, a "kind of human activity which is influenced by prior activity and in that sense acquired; which contains within itself a certain ordering or systemization of minor elements

of action; which is projective, dynamic in quality, ready for overt manifestation; and which is operative in some subdued subordinate form [e.g., as predispositions] even when not obviously dominating activity" (Dewey 1988a, 31). This suggests that art, or a kind of practical artfulness, is fundamental to embodied habit, and consequently to our most basic mode of meaningful interaction with the world.

The last critical aspect of habits for Dewey, and something that begins moving him away from Piaget and towards Soviet psychologist Lev Vygotsky, is that they are largely a product of social life and consequently deeply suffused with social meaning and significance.[8] Habits, in other words, are not formed by discrete individuals acting in an experiential vacuum of some sort; they are instead part and parcel of the larger physical and sociocultural world in which we live, learn, grow, and ultimately perish. (Note that we typically call habits that are widely shared within particular sociocultural groups *customs*.) This means that embodied habits and the situational contexts of experience are really constituted by one another. They are inseparable. Moreover, it is ultimately impossible to tell exactly where one begins and the other ends. Just as the lived world would forever be, in James' words, a "blooming, buzzing confusion" without the structuring agency of embodied habits, the habitual body would be a great, unintelligible mystery apart from the everyday lived world. As Dewey puts it, "Habits incorporate an environment within themselves. They are adjustments *of* the environment, not merely *to* it" (Dewey 1988a, 38).

This brief overview of Dewey's theory of habit has hopefully established that our embodiedness as human beings ultimately pervades every critical facet of our being, including, most notably, our mental lives. Simply put, the mind can neither function nor exist independently from the body. In addition, every modification of the mind is accompanied by some sort of bodily change, and vice versa. This is why Dewey in fact rarely refers to "the body," preferring to speak in more Darwinian fashion of "the organism" or, depending on the particular context, resorting to the hyphenated terms "body-mind" or "mind-body" (see Sullivan 2001, 24). What is more, Shusterman points out that scientific research now affirms the intimate relationship between mind and body that Dewey argued for over a century ago; for instance, "that particular bodily postures both reflect and reciprocally induce certain related mental attitudes" (Shusterman 2008, 89). This suggests, for example, that a student's physical orientation towards and interaction with her environment as she sits at her desk will invariably condition her ability to draw inferences and to think creatively. A certain habitual pattern of bodily experience becomes gradually linked with a certain habitual pattern of intellectual activity or procedures. So, let us say, working independently at her desk might, with time, automatically elicit adherence to the linear either/or logic of conventional paper-and-pencil worksheets

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[8] While Piaget tends to give individualistic accounts of human learning, Vygotsky, like Dewey, places great stress on its inherent social nature, both in what we learn from each other (directly and indirectly) and through sociocultural tools like human language, as well as the preeminence of social development more generally. See, for example, Vygotsky (1978).

and tests. As a result, a potentially liberated, growing self is easily stifled and constrained physically as well as mentally—a lamentably miseducative outcome, by Dewey's lights (Dewey 1938, 33–50).

This seemingly mundane example also highlights what for our purposes is a crucial fact about human embodiedness, though Dewey appears not to have fully grasped its extent or potency as an instrument of what Foucault would later call "disciplinary power": In the process of structuring and synthesizing our everyday activities through flexible adaptation to the environment, embodied habits are highly exposed and subject to the embedded ideological agencies of our cultural surroundings. This is because culture, with its complex assortment of socially constructed meanings, ideals, values, beliefs, customs, and the related physical components (e.g., school and office spaces and their technologies), is in effect rooted in the lived body. And as Foucault forcefully argues, this makes the body a malleable site for inscribing social power, that is, for the internalization, via habits, of external forces of control, or what Foucault more precisely terms, "biopower." Through this relentless process, social meanings of normalcy compel us to attempt to conform to dominant views of socially acceptable attitudes, interests, behaviors and so on, such that, in time, we begin to police our own behavior internally, while other views are effectively marginalized. Such forces shape and discipline our sense of personhood, our identities, our behaviors, and our physical being in very powerful, and sometimes very destructive and confining, ways. For example, white people learn to accept and depend upon (i.e., take for granted) the many privileges associated with the mere contingency of being born white, while certain behaviors and conditions associated with being black are marginalized and seen as deviant or threatening. Moreover, Foucault's writings compellingly demonstrate that the normalization of mind and body that occurs through this process of inscribing social power is just as potent in the formation of self as the modifications that occur through more conscious processes of habituation on which Dewey tends to focus. In fact, it is arguably more potent in that it is often acquired subliminally and deeply pervasive, much like the inevitable "collateral learning" that takes place through what educators frequently call the "hidden curriculum."

15.3   Embodied Habits, Biopower, and Racism

As we have just seen, the human body for Foucault is inevitably subject to the ubiquitous forces of social power through the ongoing process of normalization. As a result, it is an important, and at times violently contested, site of social and political struggle. In other words, our bodies are an extension or expression of the prevailing ideology in society regarding, race, gender, sexuality, and to a somewhat lesser degree, manifestations of any competing ideologies. Drawing then on Foucault's insights regarding somatically-based social domination and joining them to Dewey's psycho-physical body-mind, Shusterman contends that embodied habits are a critical entry point for effectively addressing issues of social (in)equity

and (in)justice. They offer, he says, "a way of understanding how complex hierarchies of power [e.g., racism] can be widely exercised and reproduced without any need to make them explicit in laws or enforce them officially [e.g., through Jim Crow laws]; they are implicitly observed and enforced simply through our bodily habits, including habits of feeling that have bodily roots" (Shusterman 2008, 21–22). This form of control or biopower, which shapes and disciplines our experiences as embodied beings in profound ways—for example, by inducing perceptual habits that are deeply racialized[9]—is very difficult to counteract due to its inscription in our bodies. In addition, its so-called internal dimension is coupled to and mirrored by institutional structures and practices—including, of course, those related to schooling—that are at some level designed and function to maintain these habits. Consequently, Shusterman goes on to say, "any successful challenge of oppression [must] involve...diagnosis of the bodily habits and feelings that express the domination as well as the subtle institutional rules and methods of inculcating them, so they, along with the oppressive social conditions that generate them, can be overcome" (Shusterman 2008, 22). Moreover, a focused concern for somatic improvement along these lines is fully consistent with Foucault's own embodied vision of ongoing care for the self.[10]

This deliberate, methodical excavation of our bodily habits as agencies of biopower does not come easily or without creating some degree of personal discomfort. Nor, of course, is it something we naturally engage in as a regular activity. Yet, counter to conventional wisdom and educational practices built on mind/body dualism, ridding ourselves of destructive habits or behaviors is not simply a matter of rational argumentation leading to "right thinking." In other words, we cannot just think or intellectualize our way out of the problem of racism while excluding attention to the body and development of the necessary somatic sensibility. Nor will our efforts be effective if we continue to conceive of the human body, in the manner of Descartes, as an autonomous, self-governing possession of some kind. As Shusterman explains,

> clearer awareness of one's somatic (or bodily) reactions can...improve
> one's behavior toward others in much wider social and political contexts.
> *Much racial and ethnic hostility is not the product of logical thought but*
> *of deep prejudices that are somatically expressed or embodied in vague*
> *but disagreeable feelings that typically lie beneath the level of explicit*

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[9] See, for example, Sullivan (2001 and 2006) and Blum (2012).

[10] As Shusterman puts it, Foucault, the "analytic genealogist...who showed how 'docile bodies' were systematically yet subtly, secretly shaped by seemingly innocent body disciplines and regimes of biopower so as to advance oppressive sociopolitical agendas and institutions [e.g., regarding heterosexuality], emerges also as the pragmatic methodologist proposing alternative body practices to overcome the repressive ideologies covertly entrenched in our docile bodies" (Shusterman 2008, 29). Foucault's chosen practices, as a gay man of a certain socio-cultural time and place, involved, among other things, consensual homosexual sadomasochism and the use of certain pleasure-inducing drugs as a means to a liberating, non-sexually normed economy of pleasure. Such targeted, purposively transgressive practices are obviously neither applicable nor appropriate to our particular concerns with biopower here.

consciousness. Such prejudices and feelings thus resist correction by mere
[verbal] arguments for tolerance, which can be accepted on the rational
level without changing the visceral grip of prejudice. (Shusterman 2008,
25 emphasis added)

This means that the visceral grip of prejudice routinely goes unattended, if its
often subtle symptoms are recognized at all. Shusterman continues: "We often
deny that we have such prejudices because we do not realize that we feel them,
and the first step to controlling or expunging them is to develop the somatic
awareness to recognize them in ourselves" (Shusterman 2008, 25–26). This might
be thought of as a friendly amendment to the venerable Socratic injunction,
"know thyself."

The type of education that Shusterman has in mind here clearly involves an
enhanced form of self-knowledge, one that gives us the ability to recognize and
respond proactively to the visceral grip of prejudice. It is a kind of self-knowledge
that must necessarily attend to the whole person as in large degree a product of his
or her environment. For if human beings are shaped in deep and significant ways by
their embodiedness, the larger social and cultural world responsible for much of this
shaping must be a part of the process as well. The proverbial notion of the "body
politic," then, is not just a clever metaphor; it must ultimately be taken quite
literally. This is why Shusterman stresses that the various initiatives we pursue
for individual and social betterment be conceived as multifaceted and wholistic in
nature, constituting multiple dimensions of human experience—including, of
course, the somatic dimension—and a wide variety of experiential contexts and
concerns. He additionally observes that Wittgenstein's nascent somaesthetics and
pragmatic philosophy of the everyday evidence significant and fruitful points of
contact with Dewey's and Foucault's somatic theorizing in this regard (Shusterman
2008, 10–11). As such, they prove useful in further developing the idea of enhanced
somatic consciousness as a tool of individual and social betterment, particularly, for
our own purposes, when it comes to recognizing and responding to the visceral
roots of much racial intolerance and discrimination.

15.4   Body-Mind, Self, and Society

Wittgenstein is best known as a philosopher of mind and strong critic of overly
simplistic views of language and human mental life. Instead, he favored a more
pragmatic conception of language use grounded in specific social practices, or what
he called "forms of life." Yet over the years Wittgenstein also came to appreciate
more deeply than most the significance of the human body for a life well lived. In
particular, he believed, like Dewey but unlike many of his contemporaries, that the
experience of meaning in things cannot be effectively reduced to the direct pro-
cesses and functioning of language. Moreover, Shusterman points out that Witt-
genstein was acutely aware of the fact that human embodiedness, including bodily
(or somaesthetic) feelings, is also critical to matters relating to both ethics and

politics; he recognized, that is, that the body contributes significantly to the formation of (body-)mind, self, and society (Shusterman 2008, 112). For present purposes, this is perhaps best seen in Wittgenstein's life-long efforts to understand and come to terms with the irrationality and yet resilience of Anti-Semitism (as a form of racism) in Europe and their theoretical and practical relevance to Dewey's body-mind and Foucault's interpretation of the workings of biopower.

Wittgenstein's understanding of Anti-Semitism, and its destructive impact on mind, self, and society, gives a central place to the human body. It does so by suggesting that Anti-Semitism ultimately follows and obeys a chiefly visceral logic, one keyed to certain repellent, stereotypical images or representations of the body of the Jew as a stigmatized "other." Given the fact that visible bodily features have over time come to assume great social significance, particularly as an artifact of popular culture, such images or representations can evoke deep fears and anxieties about the moral integrity or "purity" of this embodied "other."[11] Moreover, as Foucault points out, in the nineteenth century

> the old religious-type anti-Semitism was reutilized by State racism...at the point when the State had to look like, function, and present itself as the guarantor of the [mythological] integrity and purity of the race, and had to defend it against the race or races that were infiltrating it, introducing harmful elements into its body, and which therefore had to be driven out for both political and biological reasons. (Foucault 1997, 89)

This form of biopower is acutely evident, for example, in Nazi, KKK and anti-immigrant propaganda, among other more formal or legalistic norm-defining disciplinary mechanisms of rejection and exclusion. It makes the impure "other" appear almost like a kind of diseased tumor, thus readily fostering various degrees of resentment and hostility. On the one hand, Foucault argues, we initially have "all those biological-racist discourses of degeneracy, but also all those institutions within the social body which make the discourse of race struggle function as a principle of exclusion [in the US, e.g., the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 and the "scientific" eugenics of IQ testing] and segregation [e.g., Jim Crow laws and school district zoning] and, ultimately, as a way of normalizing society" (Foucault 1997, 61). On the other hand, he continues, we gradually see the emergence of a second discourse of normalization that moves away from issues of race struggle and towards the question of racial purity and biological threats, from within, to this purity (Foucault 1997, 61). This is perhaps why it has often been noted that darker skinned blacks face more racial enmity—even, at times, from other blacks—than those whose skin is lighter. To be fully human, within this normalizing discourse, is to be white (and, incidentally, male) and of a certain Anglo-American heritage.

I would suggest, too, that racialized images and representations are potentially even more efficacious today in light of the power and pervasiveness of modern

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[11] For more on Wittgenstein's account of the bodily dimension of Anti-Semitism, see Shusterman (2008, 127–134). The visceral logic of much racism was compellingly demonstrated in the popular film *Crash* (2004).

media culture and technologies. And, again, this visceral logic is for the most part subconscious, while also being subtly institutionalized, making it difficult to detect in experience and disrupt or counteract effectively. Nor does it help that we usually proceed as though the problem can be solved through mere rational argumentation and persuasion. As Shusterman offers with the parallel example of homophobia: "many people who in principle might recognize that consenting adults should be free to discreetly pursue their alternative sexual preferences, nevertheless are unable to tolerate homosexuality because of the somatic reactions of discomfort and disgust (including the revulsion of repressed guilty desires) that even imagined homosexuality generates" (Shusterman 2008, 131). My guess is that we can all identify some of our own direct encounters with difference where perhaps our bodies did not do what we, from an intellectual or "right thinking" standpoint, wanted them to do.[12]

History suggests strongly that this "rationalist" approach is inadequate and now we can begin to understand why. As Shusterman asserts in the case of Anti-Semitism, "rational arguments for multicultural tolerance always seem to fail...because the hatred is acquired not by rational means but by the captivating aesthetic power of images" (Shusterman 2008, 129). Much racial prejudice, on this interpretation, is fueled by the seductive image of bodily purity and uniformity—that is, of normality, as defined and enforced by the dominant culture—which readily spawns fear and hatred of "alien" groups.[13] As Lawrence Blum points out, this critical part of the moral life is not merely a problem of clarity of vision; it cannot be addressed through the act of seeing alone: "What we subjectively perceive, what is present to us, is formed by a myriad of factors in our lives—personal, social, cultural, and so on. These factors shape the character, quality, and incidence of our lookings" (Blum 2012, 313). This brings us to the socio-cultural source of the distorted images of others that become ingrained, through the process of normalization, in our embodied habits of vision. For example,

> a person of modest but steady income may perceive persons receiving public assistance, but personally unknown to her, as being lazy and undeserving. This image of persons 'on welfare' might be a product of the individual's own personal fears of losing her tenuous grip on financial security, and a consequent need to distance herself psychically from those receiving public assistance....Although

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[12] Though I don't have the space to address her valuable insights directly here, Ann Diller offers several suggestions for how we might recognize our complicity in the perpetuation of racism without getting mired in "self-blaming, self-defending, attacking blameworthy others, or even descending into defeatism and depression" (Diller 2009, 44–45.).

[13] At one level this is understandable, as Shusterman notes, if no less undesirable: "It is a commonplace of anthropology that maintaining the intact boundaries and purity of the body can play an important symbolic and pragmatic role in preserving the unity, strength, and survival of a social group. Thus, for example, in trying to ensure the social identity of the young Hebrew nation, the early books of the Old Testament are full of meticulous injunctions for the Hebrews about bodily purity with respect to diet, sexual behavior, and the cleanliness of intact body boundaries. Bodily 'issues' like bleeding, pus, spit, semen, vomit, and menstrual discharge defile all those who come in contact with them, and the unclean need to be separated and cleansed" (2008, 129).

> [this] description emphasizes the personal and individual sources of the image
> of welfare recipients as lazy and undeserving, the latter image is, independent of
> this, a very culturally salient one in the United States. Moreover, again in the
> United States, that image is deeply racialized and gendered; most White
> Americans think of the paradigm welfare recipient as a Black woman. These
> social categories in turn reinforce the 'lazy and undeserving' image of the
> welfare recipient; they draw on long-standing images of Blacks reaching back
> to the slavery era. Both the character and the salience of these images in a
> society result from an interplay of various social and cultural forces. (Blum 2012, 316)

The normalizing form of identity politics or biopower at work in such potent socio-cultural imagery becomes in varying degrees intolerant of visible differences associated with the body and therefore deeply toxic to society, especially one that trumpets the twin virtues of democracy and diversity. It points graphically to the need for educators to, in Shusterman's words, "make vividly clear and visible the impure and mixed nature of all human bodies, including our own" (Shusterman 2008, 131). If this is to happen, however, our understanding of, and appreciation for, diversity must probe beyond the confines of the Cartesian mind/body dualism and conventional categories and markers of race. Moreover, to address the embodied dimension of racism effectively, Shusterman contends that a kind of aesthetic education is also necessary. For we must somehow learn to heighten our experiential sensitivity to and awareness of our embodiedness by enhancing our "aesthetic feeling for the body and the body politic" (Shusterman 2008, 129). This is where I see practical somaesthetics potentially playing a critical role in how we educate the body for greater tolerance of and respect for the racial "other."

15.5   Somaesthetics as a Tool of Anti-racist Education

In our discussion thus far, we have used Shusterman's analytic somaesthetics to help us examine the general nature of our bodily perceptions and practices. We additionally looked briefly at the ways they contribute significantly to our knowledge and construction of the world. Drawing on the insights of Dewey, Foucault, and Wittgenstein, we were particularly interested in how, in a society where racism seemingly endures despite our best efforts to combat it, racial prejudice and discrimination readily become a part of our bodily habits and norms as a form of biopower. Pragmatic somaesthetics, in Shusterman's formulation, builds on this work "by proposing specific methods of somatic improvement and engaging in their comparative critique," and ideally, as we have seen, for the benefit of both "the body and society" (Shusterman 2008, 23–30). The actual pursuit of somatic improvement, which is our main concern here, might then be called "practical somaesthetics." It is this practical somasthetics that I think might fruitfully become a part of anti-racist education by helping us address the visceral logic and grip of racial prejudice and discrimination. Below we explore some initial ideas on what this might entail.

Because the kind of prejudice and discrimination at issue here functions largely subconsciously, through bodily habits and associated feelings of "otherness," practical somaesthetics deals principally with ways to achieve reflective body consciousness.[14] The basic idea is to bring these bodily habits and feelings into direct consciousness so that they might be reflectively examined. Now, it must be said at the outset that reflective body consciousness does not attempt to eliminate unreflective habitual behavior altogether by attending directly to all of our habits of perception and action. First, we have seen that embodied habits are crucial tools of everyday living; without them (if this were even possible) effective learning would not occur and we would have to stop and think about everything we did, from the very simple to the very complex. Second, it is practically impossible to bring to explicit consciousness the vast number and variety of habits that condition how we perceive and experience things and act in the world. Instead, accordingly, the kind of somatic mindfulness sought here looks to identify and reconstruct only those habits that preemptively disrupt or inhibit our ability to function effectively and meaningfully in different life situations. In the present context, this means bringing defective, racist bodily habits and norms into "conscious critical reflection (if only for a limited time) so [they] can be grasped and worked on more precisely" (Shusterman 2008, 63).[15]

The first step in the process involves identifying the disruptive or inhibitory bodily habits occasioned by encounters with racial "others." To do this, we must learn to attend to the way our particular bodies respond to different situations and activities. Importantly, especially for educators, the results of this somaesthetic reflection will necessarily differ somewhat from person to person based on individual predispositions and the patterns of behavior each of us has developed as a result of past experience and our surrounding environments. Hence this cannot be a

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[14] Shusterman's work over the last decade or so examines many different methods of reflective body consciousness, including the Feldenkrais Method (for which he is a licensed practitioner), Alexander Technique (which Dewey practiced to great effect for much of his life) yoga, Zen meditation, and the martial arts. The most direct comparative discussion can be found in Chap. 8 of Shusterman (2000).

[15] It should be noted here that there is an unavoidable practical dilemma at the core of body consciousness that must be kept in mind. As Shusterman explains, "We must rely on unreflective feelings and habits—because we can't reflect on everything and because such unreflective feelings and habits always ground our very efforts of reflection. But we also cannot entirely rely on them and the judgments they generate, because some of them are considerably flawed and inaccurate. Moreover, how can we discern their flaws and inadequacy when they are concealed by their unreflective, immediate, habitual status; and how can we correct them when our conscious, reflective efforts of correction spontaneously rely on the same inaccurate, habitual mechanisms of perception and action that we are trying to correct?" As there is no easy way out of this dilemma, Shusterman suggests that "[t]he most sensible practical attitude toward our habits and sensory feelings is (to borrow an old Hebrew maxim) 'respect and suspect.' We rely on them until they prove problematic in experience—whether through failures in performance, errors in judgment, feelings of confusion, physical discomfort and pain, or through the dialogical experience of hearing from others that one is doing something awkward, peculiar or detrimental. At that point, we should examine more closely our unreflective behavior" (2008, 212).

"one size fits all" endeavor. Given our similar psychophysiology, however, we might identify some more prevalent (if not necessarily universal) bodily responses to encounters with racial "others"--for instance, avoidance of eye contact, maintenance of physical distance, constriction of muscles and other viscera, and alterations in breathing. These artifacts of biopower are the kinds of prohibitory bodily responses that can often trigger or reinforce (to the extent they are already present) prejudicial or discriminatory behaviors in how we speak, think, and act.

Another critical element of reflective body consciousness is inhibition. Its great importance stems from the fact that being able to neutralize effectively and overcome or transform our undesirable, "intolerant" bodily feelings—those that preserve the visceral logic and grip of racial prejudice and discrimination—requires knowing how to interrupt the cycle of habitual behavior. Interrupting this cycle is necessary to create a space for reflective consciousness and subsequently, through it, enhanced somaesthetic awareness and control. Once this space is created, the bodily habits in question can then be monitored and carefully scrutinized. As Shusterman strongly emphasizes, drawing on Foucault, this needs to follow an educational rather than a pathological model. We are not curing a disease through this practice (giving "therapy sessions" to "patients") but rather learning how to train our bodies to respond differently to encounters with the "other" (giving "lessons" to "students"). We are not expunging a bad habit so much as replacing it with a new, better one. Hence the educator's main task, in a nutshell, is teaching students how to attend closely to the qualitative or aesthetic dimensions of different bodily movements and behaviors by monitoring carefully the different bodily feelings they occasion.[16] Perhaps the greatest challenge here lies in learning to listen to our bodies and their directly "felt," aesthetic dimensions rather than, as we are likely inclined to do, simply commanding them in some dogged, and likely ineffectual, "mind over matter" fashion. We must come to appreciate, in other words, that "feelings [can] reeducate the reasoning mind as much as the mind directs the muscles" (Shusterman 2000, 178). And of course this is true for teachers as well as their students, since teachers need to "pay careful attention to [their] own somatic state in order to pay proper attention to [their students]" and not simply pass on their own somatic tensions or discomfort (Shusterman 2008, 25). With the development of new, less disruptive or inhibitory bodily habits this practice can give students greater somatic awareness and flexibility through a greater, more effective variety of somatic responses to encounters with "otherness" as well as environments whose physical culture encourages or compels such responses (e.g., manifestations of within-school racial segregation fostered and maintained by certain forms of "ability grouping" or tracking). Ideally, the practice of somatic mindfulness itself becomes a habit of healthy living.

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[16] In the educational model of the popular Feldenkrais Method, for example, this typically involves either gentle exercises in different bodily movements and alignments or direct manipulation of the body. See Shusterman (2008, 25).

One potential point of entry for educators might be the form of somaesthetic introspection commonly known as the "body scan." It is jointly an exercise in *proprioception*—learning to feel ourselves through our inner bodily sense—and bodily tactile feeling—the inner and outer, as it were.[17] As Shusterman explains, the purpose of the body scan is to examine how our bodies feel "in an organized way…proceeding systematically from one body area to another, comparing and contrasting felt positions, angles, weights, volumes, etc." (Shusterman 2012, 112). This can be done either seated comfortably, for example in a classroom setting, or lying down (the latter is preferable but not necessary) and with eyes closed to remove visual stimuli that might interfere with proprioceptive attention and awareness. In facilitating the process, the teacher provides instruction on what parts of the body students should attend to in sequence and asks questions to prompt comparison and critique of the felt, aesthetic quality of different body areas and positions. Shusterman also stresses that such guided instruction and questions from the teacher help sustain attention on our bodies longer by introducing elements of change and interest, and consequently contrasts in feeling, as we would otherwise likely "tune out" after a few short minutes:

> It is hard, for example, to keep our attention focused on the feeling of our breathing. But if we ask ourselves a series of questions about it--is our breath deep or shallow, rapid or slow? Is it felt more in the chest or in the diaphragm? What does it feel like in the mouth or in the nose? Does the inhalation or exhalation feel longer?—then we will be able to sustain attention much longer and introspect our feelings more carefully. (Shusterman 2012, 118)

The goal here, again, is self-knowledge—in this case, somatic self-knowledge that makes possible enhanced somaesthetic feeling, perception and acuity, detecting "the range and meaning of our feelings" beyond the limits of language (Shusterman 2012, 122). Learning how to attend to how we feel and experience our bodies through reflective body consciousness can thus help us to better notice when something changes—when, for example, certain muscles become constricted— the degree of felt tension in a clenched fist—or when we no longer feel at ease and natural movement is inhibited.

15.6   Concluding Comments

I noted at the outset that most conventional variants of anti-racist education employ a one-dimensional intellectualist, "right thinking" approach to combating racism and intolerance—through, for example, curriculum and methods designed to engage the world critically and challenge hegemonic power relations. Such approaches rely almost solely on verbal analysis and rational argumentation for their effectiveness. Or, conversely, educators might choose the reverse course through simple appeals to students' sense of right and wrong on a purely emotional

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[17] This general description of the body scan is drawn from Shusterman (2012, 112–122).

level. Unfortunately, both approaches are in their one-sidedness ill-suited to addressing the "funny vibe," and its related deleterious effects, identified in the song by Living Colour. This is the case even when the subtle visceral, "felt" dimensions of racism (as opposed to more overt feelings) are in some way recognized, typically, as mere incidental phenomena. Because of this our very efforts to combat racial enmity often have the unintended consequence of reinforcing a kind of "it's all in the mind" or "self-as-mind" mind/body dualism that likely abets the disciplinary agencies of biopower. Yet in the end we must still learn to face and engage each other as fundamentally embodied beings and co-inhabitors of the same sociocultural spaces. To fail to acknowledge this, I would argue, is inevitably to impede the cause of racial justice and equality.

None of this is to suggest that reflective body consciousness via practical somaesthetics can or should replace more traditional approaches to anti-racist education or that it offers the golden key to racial harmony and tolerance. For it's certainly true that our bodies have been, in Shusterman's words, "significantly shaped and repressively scarred by history's dominant social practices and ideologies, which also means that [they are] not free of linguistic markings." More conventional critical pedagogy clearly has a role to play in helping us transform how we talk and think about race and the body as well as the way representations or images of the "other" are often constructed so as to elicit certain negative visceral responses and other manifestations of biopower. Yet as Shusterman goes on to say,

> the fact that the somatic has been structured by body-punishing ideologies and discourse does not mean that it cannot serve as a source to challenge them through the use of alternative body practices and greater somatic awareness. We may have to read and listen to the body more attentively; we may even have to overcome the language-bound metaphorics of reading and listening, and learn better how to feel it. Working on one's self through one's body is [of course] not itself a very serious challenge to the socio-political structures which shape the self and the language of its description. But it could perhaps instill attitudes and behavioral patterns that would favor and support social transformation. (Shusterman 2008, 260)

I have come to think that such attitudes and behavioral patterns must be earnestly addressed within anti-racist education if it is to support social transformation and attend effectively to the visceral logic and grip of racial prejudice and discrimination. There remains much important work to be done.

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Chapter 16
Toward a Curatorial Turn in Education

Claudia W. Ruitenberg

16.1 Introduction

In the fall of 2010 I joined artist and educator Catherine Pulkinghorn and a group of high school students on a series of educational walks in Vancouver (Ruitenberg 2012). Each of the walks was led by a historian, artist, designer, or other presenter invited by Pulkinghorn. When I heard Pulkinghorn refer to her selection of presenters in this program as "curating," I initially thought it was simply her familiarity with the discourse of the art world that made her choose the term "curating" rather than "curriculum design." However, she explained that she found the curator's particular intermediary role apt for describing her work. A curator of a visual art exhibition, for example, has a relationship with an audience but also "with an artist and a wall and whoever owns that wall," and must be the organizer who has a bigger picture or idea in mind in which each of the curated components have a place (Pulkinghorn, interview February 28, 2011).

I remained interested in the idea of selecting and ordering places and presenters—or, for that matter, topics and authors—in an educational program as "curating" curriculum, and this was reinforced when I read arguments that the art world and, particularly, the work of art curators, had seen an "educational turn." For example, Mick Wilson and Paul O'Neill (2010, p. 183) observe that "curating and art production more broadly increasingly operate directly as expanded educational praxes." Different from the more common and longstanding use of lectures, discussions and other educational events as supplementary to the selection and presentation of works of art, the educational turn refers to the trend that such events "become the main event or 'exhibition'" (Wilson and O'Neill 2010, p. 184; see also O'Neill and Wilson 2010). I wondered what the obverse, a curatorial turn in

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education, would look like. More specifically, I wondered how the discussions in the art world about the role of the curator could help us think about the curatorial tasks of the educator in new ways.

At first glance, it may appear that the role of the curator is not comparable to the role of the teacher. After all, most teachers are required to teach a curriculum mandated by a provincial, state or national government, and the main selection of topics deemed important enough to include in the required curriculum is done at that level. Drawing a schematic parallel between the various roles in the (institutional) art and educational realms, I might say that both realms have people who produce content and who consume it, and in between are people who select and organize that content, and who present it. In the arts, the "content producers" are artists, and their work is selected by curators (for example, in the visual arts) or programmers (for example, in the performing arts). In education, those who select and organize the content are curriculum designers, so while the role of the curator may be relevant to curriculum designers, it does not seem to be a good parallel to that of teachers.

	Art	Education
Producer	Artist	Scientist, literary author
Organizer	Curator, programmer	Curriculum designer
Presenter	Docent	Teacher
Consumer	Viewer, audience	Student

However, this schematic division and comparison of roles is too simplistic. For example, many more viewers see works of art without the intervention of a docent than students read curriculum without the intervention of a teacher. Sometimes a curator guides viewers through an exhibition and thus takes on the role of a docent. And the boundaries are blurring further: consumers of cultural and media products are increasingly also producers, and the lines between curator and artist are harder to draw, with artists making use of curatorial tools and techniques as part of their works themselves, and "star" curators producing new work by their unique vision on works, connections, and contexts (Von Bismarck 2011). Moreover, curriculum designers at national, state, and provincial levels typically design frameworks that leave quite a bit of room—and responsibility—for teachers to design within them. Unit and lesson planning are not merely technical instruments of time management, but opportunities for critical selection, connection, interpretation, and translation—tasks that are central to the role of the curator.

The main difference between a curator and a teacher (at least in the popular image of these roles) seems to be that a curator's focus is on setting the scene for the encounter between a work of art and a viewer or, in the case of a web curator, between online information and a reader. A teacher's focus is on inhabiting that scene, of being present, either physically or virtually, in the encounter, of accompanying the student in that encounter, and forming a bridge between the work and the student—sometimes very prominently, by telling the student about the work, explaining the work, and so forth, sometimes more subtly by being available in the

background as guide and resource in the student's own grappling with the work. I will not argue, therefore, that being a teacher is "just like" being a curator in all aspects, but rather that insofar as selection, ordering, and interpretation of material are part of the role of the teacher, and insofar as the teacher sets the scene of learning, it may be helpful to examine a role where these tasks are at the center.

More specifically, by highlighting the curatorial aspects of teaching I seek to call attention to the ways in which teaching always, inevitably, and necessarily involves the selection—and thus non-selection—of objects, phenomena, bodies of knowledge, and ideas for study, practice, and mastery. Of course teaching is not *only* curating and involves also instruction in specific skills, and the personal modeling of attitudes. However, as Tyson E. Lewis (2013, p, 54) has argued, "all education is . . . an aesthetic experience that teaches us both to see and to unsee, to hear and to unhear, to feel and unfeel in equal measure." For example, the educational walks in Vancouver I mentioned in my opening paragraph were designed specifically to encourage participants to look at aspects of their city that are not ordinarily taught in school curriculum, and easily go unnoticed. "Look up!" Pulkinghorn taught us, so that we would see not only what was at street and eye level, but also the architectural and heritage details higher up on buildings, from the "nine maidens" on the 1912 Sun Tower to the "ghost signs" of painted advertising.

I am not the first to suggest that the curatorial role of the teacher merits more attention. More than 20 years ago, for example, Maryann Eeds and Ralph Peterson (1991, p. 118) wrote: "A curator knows art, collects it, cares for it, and delights in sharing it with others, helping them see it in ways they may not have discovered if left on their own. We choose this term for teachers who do these things with literature, opening this way of knowing the world to their students." Eeds and Peterson's objective was to encourage elementary literature and literacy teachers to take a more active role in guiding students' observations and interpretations. Evidently, by the 1980s, literature circles and the idea that children themselves should be encouraged to discuss and interpret rather had taken root, and some teachers had become hesitant to intervene in the direction of the conversation at all. Eeds and Peterson (p. 119) write:

> Difficulty sometimes arises when we stress the need for teachers to go beyond book sharing and take on the role of good critic—of curator, of literary leader—in order to help their students develop literary insight and aesthetic judgment. . . . [M]any of the teachers with whom we work admit to being unsure about their own literary insights and express fear that they will be unable to recognize a literary teachable moment if it does occur in a literature study group.

Eeds and Peterson's observation raises important questions about the location of expertise and authority, and I will return to these questions later in the paper. Beyond that, however, they refer to the role of the curator as if this role were self-evident. I am interested in examining the role of the curator, and how this role may have changed, as it is discussed in contemporary curatorial scholarship. More specifically, in this chapter I will argue that it would be of value for teachers and educational scholars to think about discussions in the field of curating, for three reasons. The first is that curating involves a set of abilities and understandings

important for navigating the media-saturated environment of the 21st century. The second is that curatorial scholarship explicitly addresses the question of criticality in the role of the curator. The third is that the question of the creation (or "interpellation") of publics is being raised in curatorial scholarship, and shows new potential for this task in education.

My focus will be on contemporary art curating, different from the historical sense of curating (*curare*) as guarding or care-taking. I will not address curating in natural science, anthropology, or other non-art-focused museums, although parts of the argument will likely be relevant to these kinds of curating as well. In some parts I will draw from recent literature on online curating, both because of the rapid growth of curatorial discourse in online contexts, and because of the increasing engagement of the art world with online environments.

16.2 Curating in the 21st Century

Without falling prey to the reductive language of "21st century skills,"[1] I would like to echo Hans Ulrich Obrist's suggestion that the ability to curate is of great value in a world saturated by texts, sounds, and images. Obrist is curator at the Serpentine Gallery in London, an internationally renowned gallery for modern and contemporary art, and curatorial scholar. In response to the question posed by Edge.org, "What scientific concept would improve everybody's cognitive toolkit?" Obrist (2012, p. 118) answered: "to curate." He explained: "the incredible proliferation of ideas, information, images, disciplinary knowledge, and material products that we all witness today … makes the activities of filtering, enabling, synthesizing, framing, and remembering more and more important as basic navigational tools for twenty-first-century life." While filtering, synthesizing, framing and so on are obvious curatorial tasks, Obrist (p. 119) insists that these tasks be taken up more creatively, moving away from objects, "static arrangements and permanent alignments," and toward "conversations and relations." In other words, the art of the curator Obrist wants to highlight resides less in the expertise to select works and decide, once and for all, how they should be displayed, and more in the ability to bring people, experiences, ideas, and works together in thought-provoking ways.

Online learning scholar George Siemens (2008, p. 3) has discussed curating as a helpful way of thinking about how educational practices "change in networked environments, where information is readily accessible." In an earlier piece, Siemens describes the role of the curator as follows—interestingly drawing on the same navigational metaphor as employed by Obrist: "A curatorial teacher acknowledges the autonomy of learners, yet understands the frustration of exploring unknown territories without a map" (Siemens 2007). Siemens emphasizes the educational importance of making connections, so that the many disparate facts,

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[1] For a good critique, see Pring (2004).

images, claims, concepts, and phenomena that students can find in independent exploration are related to each other in ways that lead to knowledge and understanding.

Of course, the importance of making connections between ideas is not a new idea. Alfred North Whitehead (1959, p. 198) stressed it in 1916 in his passionate plea to the Mathematical Association of England "to eradicate the fatal disconnection of subjects which kills the vitality of our modern curriculum." Whitehead (p. 197) argued that what matters in education is "to make the pupil see the wood by means of the trees," or, extending the metaphor, to help students see how trees grow in patterns, how they depend on each other, what differences exist between them, and what role they play in larger ecosystems.

Today, the proliferation and accessibility of texts, images, and sounds has significantly amplified the problem Whitehead identified: it has become very easy to amass disconnected images and tidbits of information (or misinformation), and even to combine them in a novel collage. But novelty in and of itself is a principle of entertainment, not education. To what end, or in the context of what greater idea, are the images and factoids selected and combined? What question do they answer, or what insight do they afford?

Paul Mihailidis and James Cohen (2013, n.p.) point out that, in some sense, students don't need to be taught to curate, since they are already curating: "Curation is what we all do on our laptops, tablets, and phones, and in our social networks and web browsers. . . . From bookmarks and aggregators to Twitter lists and Facebook groups, investigation into all topics involves the user deciding what to keep, what to discard, who to trust, what is credible, and why." The educational challenge is to teach students to curate more thoughtfully, to select, organize and connect the information and materials to which they have easy access in ways that are true, or beautiful, or otherwise meaningful. In order to do so, they need to think about the criteria they use in selecting material, the reasons for ordering material in this or that way, the larger story they want to tell, the questions that are and are not answered by what they find.

It may seem to go against the grain to suggest that students benefit from a teacher who selects and makes connections, who "curates" the curriculum. After all, much has been made of the democratizing force of the web, where access to knowledge is less and less monitored by traditional gatekeepers and the online crowd takes care of its own curation (e.g., Bruns 2005). A pragmatic response is that in the context of a "crowd-curated" internet, people are already demonstrating a desire for curators who do some of the selecting for them, simply because they find they don't have time to sort through the dross (Bharagava 2009; Rusman 2011). A second response is that the curatorial interventions of the teacher should not be covert, based on an assumption of unassailable expertise and authority, but rather overt, as a way of modeling to students how and why certain selections and connections are being made.

One of the fundamental questions is whether the preference of a crowd is a good measure of the worth of the content. In science it may seem a little easier, because the main criterion of worth is not one of value but one of truth. If I put on the web

the claim that the water level of Lake Mead is rising, it makes no scientific difference how many people "like" this claim if the scientific evidence does not support it. Nonetheless, the question of which scientifically true claims, from among the many possible contenders, are worth studying, is a question of value. Importantly, "worth" here signals educational worth, which is not the same as entertainment worth or economic worth. If it seems antidemocratic, a sign of a mistrust of "the people" to argue that popularity is not a good measure of "what is of most worth," I should point out that most of the web shows only sheer aggregated popularity *without any information of the reasons* for that popularity. If we believe that education is still a space for giving reasons to each other, then the number of followers, likes or hits is insufficient as a criterion for the selection of material. Knowing how many times a YouTube video was viewed helps us not be out of the loop of the conversation at the water cooler, but it does not tell us how good the video is aesthetically or morally, or what educational effect it may have.

What matters most for a curator, perhaps, is to see possibilities for how and where an individual work, instance, event or piece of information may fit in a larger context. It is about being able to make connections between the particular and the general, and between the particular and other particulars. Just as a curator of an art exhibition can make different choices in the connections and ordering—chronological, by thematic similarity or thematic contrast, by form, material and technique (charcoal sketches in one room, oil paintings in another), geographical (all the works from the same region together), and so forth—an educational curator also has a range of possible reasons for selecting and ordering material. Curator and curatorial scholar Kate Fowle (2007, p. 16) writes:

> It could be said that role of the curator has shifted from a governing position that presides over taste and ideas to one that lies amongst art (or object), space, and audience. The motivation is closer to the experimentation and inquiry of artists' practices than to the academic or bureaucratic journey of the traditional curator.

Nonetheless, the taste of the curator still plays a role. Curating is never free of taste, of the subjective preference of the curator (nor should it be), but curatorial choices of taste are not arbitrary, even in the fine arts themselves. A work may be selected—at least in part—because it is an iconic crowd pleaser, because the curator wants to give prominence to less known works of a particular movement, or because the work is an interesting anomaly in its period and region. The reasons informing the choices can be made explicit, even if only to acknowledge the incompleteness and limitations of these reasons and the fact that every choice remains open to critical scrutiny and contestation.

Selection and organization are unavoidable in education, and it is of value to make these curatorial tasks an explicit object of reflection in the educational process. Different from the selections made by online curators, whose audiences decide for themselves whether they are amused, provoked, and educated enough by the curators' choices to keep following their blogs, K-12 students cannot opt out of the teacher's selection. Teachers, then, ought to be transparent about the selection they make, the reasons for this selection, and the limitations of those reasons.

16.3   Curating and Criticality

Curating, in the contemporary sense in which I am discussing it here, means selecting and ordering a number of objects, texts, or other elements, and providing an interpretive framework which gives these elements, and their placement in relation to each other, additional meaning. It is in this interpretive framework, which is also the rationale for the selection and ordering of the elements, that the critical role of the curator is expressed most clearly. By "critical" I mean that the role of the curator inevitably involves some form of critique (*kritikè*), a decision or cut (*krinein*) and reasons for that decision or cut.

For example, the essay "The Black Box" (2002) reveals (part of) the interpretive framework that curator Okwui Enwezor used in *Documenta XI*, the international contemporary art exhibition that takes place once every five years in Kassel, Germany.[2] The title "The Black Box" can be seen as a commentary on "the white cube," a term introduced in 1976 for the common Western practice of displaying contemporary art in a minimalist, white exhibition space. As Walter Grasskamp (2011, p. 78) puts it, "the expression 'white cube' has had an unprecedented international career as a synonym for a specific aesthetic formula." Enwezor's title "The Black Box" indicates that he seeks to contest the whiteness of "the white cube." Indeed, the Nigerian-born Enwezor calls our attention to the dominant racial and socio-political arrangements that have structured how art is viewed, and by whom. "Postcoloniality," he writes, "shatters the narrow focus of western global optics and fixes its gaze on the wider sphere of the new political, social, and cultural relations that emerged after World War II" (p. 44). The interpretive framework Enwezor provides for the exhibition is one that contests the asymmetry between those in the center and those on the margin, and between "curating cultures" and "curated cultures" (Mosquera 1994 as cited in Enwezor 2002, p. 46). While the interpretive framework does not exhaust or control the meanings or possible interpretations of the individual works in the exhibition—viewers will bring their own interpretive frameworks based on their prior knowledge, experience, and intentions—it does supplement them.

We might think of the curator's critical decisions as a *parergon*, a concept discussed by Immanuel Kant in *The Critique of Judgement* and taken up again by Jacques Derrida in *The Truth in Painting* (1978/1987). Kant identified clothing on/around statues, columns on/around buildings, and frames on/around paintings as *parerga*, but Derrida examines Kant's discussion of the *parergon* and stretches it, opens it up, interrogates its boundaries—for "where," after all, does a *parergon* begin and end"? (p. 57). Derrida addresses the obvious *parerga* such as frames, titles and signatures of a painting, things are both additional and integral to the painting and straddle the border between what is inside and outside the work, but he also wonders about aspects that are further on the "outskirts" of the work but can

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[2] Enwezor actually turned *Documenta* diasporic, involving Vienna, Berlin, New Delhi, St Lucia, and Lagos.

still be said to frame it in some way: "museum, archive, reproduction, discourse, market …" (Ruitenberg 2005, 2009). Curating functions "parergonally," being external to the work but framing and affecting it or, as Derrida puts it, giving "rise" to it, (p. 9) as a leavening agent that creates certain opportunities for perception of the work.

When I am arguing that teachers could benefit from examining the curatorial aspects of their work, I seek to embolden teachers to take up this critical task. In this, my argument builds on Eeds and Peterson's suggestion that teachers need not hide behind the content, letting it speak for itself, but can play an active intellectual role in framing and calling attention to certain aspects. This is not meant as a backslide to times in which the teacher's authority and the hierarchy between teacher and student were unquestionable, but rather as a recognition of the inevitable supplementary role of the teacher. Charles Bingham (2002) explains very clearly how the teacher acts as a supplement to the curriculum *even if she says nothing about it*; the mere fact of the teacher's selection of the text supplements it with her authority. Regardless of the way I teach, regardless of whether I talk about a text, "I nevertheless have an active role in constructing the way educational texts are read by my students. … [I]t is impossible for a student to read a classroom text without, in some way, reading me" (Bingham 2002, p. 271).

If a curator curates an exhibition, this same logic is at work. Even if the curator did not write an essay in the catalogue—in fact, even if there were no catalogue, no explanatory panels or cartouches at all, the curator's interpretive framework would still supplement the works in the exhibition. This supplement or *parergon* is to be found in how the works are organized: perhaps they are juxtaposed to suggest comparison or contradiction, or perhaps they are arranged so that a theme or pattern is repeated, or so that one work echoes or amplifies another. The viewer's interpretation cannot be controlled by the curatorial choice—and I would say thankfully so—but it is nonetheless affected by it. The challenge for teachers is to do this "affecting" in educative ways that don't become, as Jacques Rancière would put it, "stultifying," that is to say, ways that don't predetermine for students what they should get out of the experience (see Ruitenberg 2011).

16.4 Curating and the Creation of Publics

One of the roles of public schools is to educate not just individuals, but a democratic *public*. John Covaleskie (1997, p. 539) summarizes: "Ideally, the 'public' in public education is a word with multiple meanings: (1) public education is funded by the public, (2) public education serves the public interest, (3) public education is governed by the public, and (4) public education creates a public." Covaleskie believes that "the fourth meaning seems to have been largely lost; there is no longer a sense of any robust public" (p. 539). By a "robust" public he is referring to the kind of public John Dewey discussed in *The Public and Its Problems*. Dewey (1927/ 2012, p. 49) defines the public as consisting "of all those who are affected by the indirect consequences of transactions to such an extent that it is deemed necessary

to have those consequences systematically cared for." Dewey's focus is on the creation of structures to aid in democratic self-governance, and "the state is the organization of the public effected through officials for the protection of the interests shared by its members" (p. 58). By the mid-1920s, however, Dewey was concerned about the functioning of the public, as he observed not a lack of public, or a lack of "a common interest in the consequences of social transactions," but instead "too much public, a public too diffused and scattered and too intricate in composition" (p. 116). In other words, "the" public was fragmented, and Dewey put his faith in improved transparency and communication to restore it: in order for this fragmented "Great Society" to become what he calls a "Great Community," people must be aware of "the ever-expanding and intricately ramifying consequences of associated activities . . . so that an organized, articulate Public comes into being" (p. 141).

Philosopher Alastair Hannay (2005) conceives of the public in strongly Deweyan terms and, like Dewey, he laments the disintegration of the public into smaller audiences concerned with private interests rather than the common good:

> If 'the public' becomes no more than an assemblage of unintegrated publics-as-audiences, so that society is split into established executive authority on the one side and interested spectators on the other, there is little to be said for 'the public' in terms of that expression's origin. (p. 32)

If one remains caught in the dichotomy of having either a unified public or multiple audiences concerned with private interests, perhaps there is not much hope for the public-producing function of public education. But between "the public" and "an audience" hovers the idea of "*a* public." Hannay discusses this idea briefly in relation to conglomerations of art audiences, suggesting that while I may not have been a member of the audience of, say, a particular jazz concert, I may still be a member of the larger "jazz public" (pp. 30–31). However, he does not develop "a public" into a robust, politically significant notion. For that I turn to literary and queer theorist Michael Warner.

Warner (2002, p. 50) is specifically interested in the idea of "*a* public, as distinct from both the public and any bounded audience," and he suggests seven features or characteristics of publics in this sense. I will not discuss all of them here, but some are particularly helpful for understanding how curators engage reflectively with the public-producing effects—and, sometimes, intentions—of art exhibitions. One salient feature is that a public is called into being when people are addressed by discourse: "A public is a space of discourse organized by nothing other than discourse itself. . . . It exists *by virtue of being addressed*" (p. 50). It is not enough for a discourse to be directed at a public; the public is not performatively produced as public until it pays attention to this address. Being addressed as a public need not revolve around "the public good" in the broad, unified sense in which Dewey and Hannay discuss it, but the discourse that addresses a public also cannot remain private in the way in which the members of a club may be addressed. "A public" is open, its boundaries determined solely by who heeds the address, and the reach of the discourse that organizes the public cannot be predicted: "Anything that addresses a public is meant to undergo circulation" (p. 63). As the discourse circulates, the public it addresses may grow, shrink, or disappear: "Publics, by

contrast, lacking any institutional being, commence with the moment of attention, must continually predicate renewed attention, and cease to exist when attention is no longer predicated" (p. 62).

For example, I may or may not have been in the audience of a screening of Al Gore's *An Inconvenient Truth* (Guggenheim 2006), but I am addressed by the larger discourse of which this documentary is part as a member of what I might call an environmentally concerned public. This public is broader than a concrete audience and the discourse that organizes it certainly exceeds private interest. The documentary does not by itself constitute a discourse that effectively calls forth a public; rather, there is a larger discourse of which this documentary is part, as are other films, books, reports, exhibitions, et cetera, which addresses a public. The idea of a public as called into being *by address* is enormously powerful for education. The discourses we do and don't circulate in education create and restrict particular opportunities for students to be addressed and formed into publics. Curatorial scholars are discussing precisely this function. As Ruth Noack and Roger Buergel put it (2011, p. 30), "calling forth an audience, a phrase we deliberate chose for its double meaning of invocating and producing, is one of the most important and most difficult tasks of an exhibition."

When Bruce Grenville curated the Vancouver Art Gallery exhibition *Home and Away*, he included "the work of six international contemporary artists whose art addresses notions of globalization, diaspora, intersection and changing conceptions of home and nation" (Grenville 2003, p. 9). Visitors to the exhibition could be interpellated as a public interested in issues of migration, mobility, and belonging in a globalized context. The discourse of the exhibition were linked to other discourses—perhaps Thomas McCarthy's (2007) film *The Visitor*, perhaps a news media report on changes to immigration law, perhaps a blog. The point is that the exhibition did not produce a public in isolation, but only because of its connections to related texts: "It is not texts themselves that create publics, but the concatenation of texts through time. Only when a previously existing discourse can be supposed, and a responding discourse be postulated, can a text address a public" (Warner 2002, p. 63). Moreover, just as is the case for educators, the production of a public is never a guarantee for curators: visitors are free to attend to or ignore works as they see fit, and may or may not be addressed by them. However, the idea of "a public" means that one does not have to believe in Dewey's "Great Community" in order to believe that people can be addressed as publics and not merely as audiences with private interests.

Austrian artist, academic and curator Marion von Osten draws from Michael Warner's conception of publics to argue that the curator not only plays an inevitable role in the production of publics but can also take up this role in a deliberate political way to try and produce a counterpublic.[3] Von Osten (2011, p. 63) recognizes that "the production of a public always goes hand in hand with specific subject

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[3] A counterpublic is a public that differs from and opposes "the premises that allow the dominant culture to understand itself as a public" (Warner 2002, p. 81).

positions, which are brought about in the process" so if a curator wants to enable subject positions different from the traditional ones brought about by art exhibitions—visitors who adopt a white, male gaze, keep their distance from the art works, speak quietly, and walk calmly—he or she can design an exhibition that subverts or challenges these norms. For example, in 1989 the American artist Martha Rosler organized a series of exhibitions and events under the title *If You Lived Here* at an art gallery in SoHo, New York. The constitution of publics was an explicit theme of the exhibitions, because there was controversy in SoHo about gentrification processes, which had resulted in evictions. The audience of the exhibitions was already involved in these processes, whether as activists, "as the new middle class attempting to move into the neighbourhood or as artists who had their studios there [and] were requested to take a stance on the social conflicts" (von Osten 2011, pp. 63–64).

While both involve selection and assembly, curating, in the sense in which I am discussing it here, should be distinguished from collecting. Jacques Rancière (2009, p. 46) cautions against collection as a current trend in the art world that is "a positive attempt at collecting the traces and testimonies of a common world and a common history." A collection, in this sense, aims to produce or reconstitute a community held together by social bonds and consensus. If curators produce "aesthetic communities," to use Kant's phrase, then these communities become publics only when the aesthetic is taken in the broad sense of perception and affect and not in the narrow sense of "good taste in art." This is the sense in which Luc Boltanski (1993/1999, pp. 53–54) discusses communities of common moral or political sensibilities or even of shared visceral reactions to particular kinds of suffering. Curators may produce publics grounded in a shared distaste for a current state of affairs, or a shared taste for social change.

Work and literature in artistic curatorship is generative for education, in this respect, because it tends to be more centrally concerned with the aesthetic, perceptual, affective aspects of how a public is produced. Moreover, the scholarship and debate on the curatorial production of publics can raise educators' and educational scholars' awareness of both the inevitability of the production of publics and the possibility for deliberate intervention in this process. Neither art audiences nor students are dupes who can be forced into "the public" or into particular publics, but educators can make choices in the kinds of public concerns they present, the kinds of issues to which students might pay attention and by which they might be addressed.

16.5 Conclusion

As the news media have pointed out, everybody "curates" these days, from clothes and food stands (Williams 2009) to grocery baskets (Blight 2013). Advocating a "curatorial turn" in education is not about jumping on the bandwagon of a fashionable term, nor is it about suggesting that art curators do better what educators do less

well. Rather, I believe that serious curatorial practices and scholarly debates about these practices call attention to particular aspects of the work of teachers that are especially important today. The first of these is the need to model the selection, interpretation, and meaningful connection of knowledge and ideas from among the vast amount of texts, images, and sounds that are not only available but often actively launched at us. The second is the criticality involved in making these selections, interpretations, and meaningful connections. I have pointed out that the teacher's work is an inevitable supplement to the curriculum in the same way that a curator's work is supplementary to the art. How can this supplementary or "parergonal" role be taken up critically? The third aspect of the work of teachers that curatorial scholarship can help us rethink is the performative production of publics and counterpublics. Where some despair at education's ability to create a public in the Deweyan sense of a "Great Community," curators are showing the potential in addressing multiple publics that nonetheless exceed the private interests of an audience.

There is no agreement among curators about what defines the curator or curatorial practice today; what matters is the critical debate among curatorial scholars and how we can learn from this debate. This chapter has sought to turn educators' and educational scholars' attention to curatorship, but of course questions remain. One of these questions is the role of expertise and authority in curatorial choices, and how these can be balanced with education's emancipatory role. How can teachers be bold enough to provide a critical interpretative framework for the curriculum they teach, while leaving enough room for students to use their own intelligence in making interpretations and connections? A second question revolves around the idea of calling students into publics, and what it means, precisely, for students to be addressed. Perhaps sometimes what education can achieve, especially with younger students, may not be to create a public, directly, but to foster students' *addressability* so that they may be called into a public later.

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