RECONSTRUCTIVE POSTMODERNISM:

ALTERNATIVE PATHS FOR ART EDUCATION

by

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Reconstructive Postmodernism: Alternative Paths for Art Education

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ABSTRACT

I argue for the inclusion of reconstructive postmodernist art practices into the art education curriculum. These recognize and negotiate the differences and unifying similarities of lived and artistic practices and establish a shifting inbetweenness that permits significant exchange and circulation of information and experience. The result of the inclusion yields a differential commonality, a collective, interconnected cross-referencing of alternative and diverse ideas and artistic practices.

A literature-based, 'postmodern' or 'intertextual' style of writing is employed, one that permeates the entire thesis with a polyvocal accumulation of quotes and artworks. This style, in combination with fieldwork methodologically indicative of a post-positivist position and form of inquiry, led me to investigate the works of a variety of artists and cultural critics concerned with negating theories that serve to legitimize existing hegemonic practices, revealing the need for and possibility of a deconstruction of power relations that marginalize those outside the prescribed 'centre'. Counter-hegemonic art movements, moments, narratives, memories, and ideas, conveying a lived experience of how art, attitudes towards art, and art education can be constructed differently were discovered.

A number of foci emerge, but the sustaining and consistent themes revolve around silence, naming/unnaming, borders/border crossings and a critical consideration of alternative histories/narratives. The official History of the 'centre' understates resistance and the power of alternative practices, and the stories that inform those artistic practices. The inclusion of alternative artistic practices and life stories in an art education forum serves to remind us that there is an underside to History: that which is remembered and practiced but often denied official voice and venue.

As colonization, official histories and artistic practices disallowing interdisciplinary work and approaches become rigorously contested in an art education forum, deterritorialized spaces open up wherein rigidly defined and demarcated territories of difference and borders become blurred. There are many implications for the art education curriculum and I posit that through this blurring, students can come to believe in the possibility of a variety of experiences, a variety of ways of understanding and articulating art, without constantly imposing notions of a singular, exclusionary and paralytic 'norm'.

DEDICATION

In memory of my mother
Patricia Weggler
whose unending love and support propelled me forward
and led me to adventures and people that changed my world.

She taught me to seek out, listen to and respect the stories of others.
Her belief in me helped me to believe in myself.
Her voice resonates throughout this work.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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CHAPTER 1

BEGINNINGS AND ASKINGS: MOVING TOWARDS A RECONSTRUCTIVE POSTMODERN ART EDUCATION

The Asking

> I was asked whether I thought art mattered, if it really made a
> difference in our lives...It occurred to me...that if one could make a
> people lose touch with their capacity to create, lose sight of their
> will and their power to make art, then the work of subjugation, of
> colonization, is complete. Such work can only be undone by acts
> of concrete reclamation (hooks, 1995:xv).

> This is a good time
> This is the best time
> This is the only time to come together
> > Fractious
> > Kicking
> > Spilling
> > Burly
> > Whirling
> > Raucous
> > Messy
> >
> > Free

> Exploding like the seeds of a natural disorder (Jordan, 1980:11-20).

Many things prompted me to write this thesis. A passion for and commitment to art and art education. A belief in the need for change, in consciousness and in art education. A desire to contribute to the existing body of literature from a perspective that

will hopefully aid in and encourage change. And a need to participate in the development of a theory of hybridization or multiplicity "that is neither assimilative nor separative - one that is, above all, relational" (Lippard, 1990:21). All this and more...things that affect me now and affected me as a student of art education and art. One of the prime motivations was a realization that during my time in high school and most of my time spent in the post-secondary system getting my Bachelor of Applied Arts Degree no one asked me questions that really got me thinking about art...about what it meant to me, my world and the way I thought about things. Not until quite late into my post-secondary education did a truly critical questioning begin.

Yet as an artist and art educator I realized that there are so many questions that can be asked such as, "What do you see? How do you know? How do you make meaning out of images that you look at? What do you define as 'good' art? What are the criteria? Why art? When is there art? What is the difference between art and craft? What constitutes good taste and why is there seemingly only one accepted version of this? What type of sensibility is the image indicative of and what values are ascribed to the piece? How do you know this in relation to what is made present to you? What is the role of language in the arts? What are the fundamental terms and definitions required to fully engage a work of art and how do the terms operate differently in various contexts? Why is art in an institutional setting not fully contextualized? What relationships exist between art and society? Why do people resist recognizing that all art is political? What impact does public indifference have on art? How are the results manifest? What is the work of art for? What purpose does it serve? Can you look beyond the subject matter into the work, at its surface?" This can tell you as much as what it is depicted. Many of these questions, if answerable at all, obviously demand subjective answers. And there are no definitives. Horacio Zabala notes that

just as the term 'art' cannot be rigorously defined, neither can other basic terms such as 'aesthetic judgment', 'originality', 'artistic creation', 'authenticity', etc.. Consequently, there [can be no universal] common denominator of art and no [logical, exact, definitive] science of art. We must make do with interpretations and experiences which we communicate by means of narration and conjecture, analogy and metaphor. There are hundreds of definitions of art, but none is [totally] convincing, since the error lies in applying the concept of definition to the field of art. Say what you will, a definition must always involve a limitation, a diminution of art, whose most obvious attributes are heterogeneity and complexity (Zabala, 1995: 25).

But, in an educational forum, some criteria must be arrived at and it is obvious that any consideration and "discussion of art...presupposes definitions of art, explicit or implicit" (23). The difficulty lies in the fact that no singular, universal definition can ever be arrived at that satisfactorily answers the questions posed in the previous couple of pages. So then, why ask them at all? And this question in itself is two fold. Firstly, in asking these questions we might encourage students to arrive at a place through critical looking, experiencing and examining that permits multiple answers that are context dependent, inclusive, diverse and, perhaps most importantly, that are flexible. I, as an art educator, believe that it is important to encourage multiple viewpoints and establish that the introduction and holding of these polyvocal viewpoints is acceptable: that there does not always have to be a singular answer, practice, norm or way of doing/thinking about art. This recognition is one of my goals. Through this recognition students might come to realize that there can be interaction between and among viewpoints. An extraction of particular ideas held within certain theories or practices can also occur. One can cut and paste, collage òr montage if you will, until something emerges that makes sense for an individual student, artist, or anybody who has an interest in the development of a way of looking at, accessing and thinking about art that is diverse, polyvocal, and collective. Then perhaps those concerned with collective practice might stop playing by the existing

antiquated rules and start participating critically in the establishment of new alternatives, as some socially responsible art educators have already (28).

Secondly, it must be emphasized that the asking of some of the questions posited at the beginning of this chapter is important because in asking them, one challenges people to think critically about art, how it is made present and important to them and, often, to recognize that they might not have as many ideas about things when located in this context as they perhaps previously thought. It also locates people in an arena wherein they can come to recognize that they have biases and that these biases and ideas come from somewhere. Looking at and asking questions of art reveals that within artistic production an ideological position is sedulously foregrounded and the work, while not reducible to, cannot be understood in isolation from its social context. In fact, one could argue "against the possibility of a non-ideological aesthetic; any response to an image is inevitably [although not merely][1] rooted in [some form of] social knowledge - specifically in social understanding [and reading] of cultural products" (Rosler, 1989:306). In this way then, it is revealed that our responses to works of art are always informed by a number of processes, many of which have to do with where (position) and how (ideologically, socially, etc..) we have been located. These processes to which I refer include: education, how art is spoken about, exposure to and experience of what art we do see and in what context it appears, and what is held up in esteem by teachers, art historians, systems of patronage, the media, parents, etc...

One of the most important questions that could be asked in this particular context is, "What is the job that art has to do for you?" or "What is the task that you ask of your art?" All art has to perform some function or task for us, otherwise we lose interest

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[1]The use of square brackets within the context of a quote is indicative of my personal interjections. These are included to make certain ideas more clear for the reader in this particular context.

(Laskarin, lecture, 1994). How are our ideas about this 'task' informed and influenced? When this question was posed in a number of my FPA-111 (Issues in the Fine and Performing Arts) tutorials in the Fall ('95) and Winter ('96), a course I taught as a Teaching Assistant for two years at Simon Fraser University, almost universally the answer was, "to remove me from/place me differently in the world". Yet, these same people wanted the work to remain firmly and recognizably rooted in the familiar. In the everyday. These responses initially frustrated me because being placed "differently" is not equatable with "the familiar" or "the everyday". My frustration dissipated when someone encouraged me to challenge people to work through those contradictory responses...to think about why they needed art to do this for them: ie, to effectively afford them with an escape. An escape from the world. But when the question is then posed, "if it is an escape...what is it an escape to?" things become far more interesting and involved. It is easy for most people to mark out what they want to escape from, but the question becomes far more engaging when they have to pin down the 'to what'. My tutorial responses were varied, but many people decided that it was not so much about an escape *from* the world; instead, it was about arriving at a space, or a state of consciousness that helped them. It either helped them to be in the world, or showed them how to be in the world differently; at the very least, it opened up the possibility that one can be in the world differently. When people begin locating themselves in that place, a location realizing that there are and need to be multiple places and sites from which a work of art emerges and hence these works are indicative of many ways of being in this world and thinking about things that are different from a Eurocentred location, you might encourage them to start looking at their own experiences and how these experiences fit into this polyvocal perspective. This approach does not negate personal experience; rather, it insists that individual personal experience is important. It also recognizes that because individual experience is important, all individual experience, both like and unlike our own, is equally

important to the development of collective, reconstructive postmodern art practices. Uniting and fusing personal experiences with theory is important for looking and learning despite the fact that the "academy has encouraged us to believe that knowledge is possible only if we set our looking outside of the context of our lived realities" (Lewis, 1993:5). While examining and accepting practices that are like and unlike our own is imperative, looking at and incorporating our own experiences into the experience of and engagement with art in a broader context is critical in the construction of an alternative history because, "the stor(ies) generated by theory can only be evaluated in the discourse that recalls experience" (Brodkey in Lewis, 1993:10). Conversely, not only is 'experience' that through which our language and subjectivity are constructed, but it is also the substance of theory - that on which we hang the meanings we make of the world" (Lewis, 1993:10). These ideas will be more rigorously unpacked as this chapter progresses.

In considering the fact that while some art educators are asking questions such as those posited in previous pages - art educators like Elizabeth Garber (1990, 1992, 1995), Patricia Stuhr (1994), Laurie Hicks (1994), Tom Anderson (1995), Kenn Honeychurch (1995), and Dennis Fehr (1994) - I wondered, "why then does practical, critical address of these questions, in many of the EuroNorth American contexts I have encountered, seem so limited?" and "why does there appear to be a resistance on the part of other art educators to the asking of these questions?" In positing these questions I believe that a discussion of power, and what it means in this context must be included. Because one possible answer to the aforementioned questions might be that when you ask these questions you effectively relinquish some, if not all, of the educator's traditional, narrowly conceptualized sense of power as uni-directional. This traditional notion of power reveals that power is, above all, "that which represses...the instincts, a class, individuals [and is manifest in] the way...relations of force are deployed and given concrete expression" (Foucault in Dirks, Eley, Ortner, 1994:208). In Foucault's examination of what he

describes as the 'how' of power, he attempts to "relate its mechanisms to two points of reference, two limits: on the one hand, to the rules of right that provide a formal delimitation of power, on the other, to the effects of truth that this power produces and transmits, and which in turn reproduce this power. Hence we have a triangle: power, right, truth" (210). Education, in its reproduction of desired, existing, hegemonic, officially sanctioned truths and histories co-opts and exerts power. It seeks to disseminate 'truth' as articulated by an official History via an individual empowered with the authority to do so, excluding those histories and practices which are not "economically advantageous and politically useful" in a given historical and cultural moment (216). While this simplifies the theory somewhat, in the traditional, "banking model" (Freire 1983, 1986) of education, educators have been able to assert legitimacy of power whereby "[p]ower is employed and exercised through a net-like organization" (Foucault in Dirks, Eley, Ortner, 1994:214) In this way then, power must be "analyzed as something which circulates, or rather as something which functions only in the form of a chain" which is where the analysis necessitates an awareness of the omnipresent institution as opposed to merely the individual [because]...individuals are the vehicles of power, not its points of application" (214).

By opening up the notion of power in an educational forum, having a dialogic inquiry as opposed to monosemantic or unidirectional form of information transmission take place, power becomes more widely dispersed, revealing the possibility of what Foucault terms "a non-disciplinary form of power" (221). In this model a struggle against disciplines and disciplinary power is evidenced, as is a liberation from the principle of sovereignty. For the art education curriculum this opening up of power necessitates that definitions informing the way art educators practice, think and speak about art become dependent upon an inquiry and dialogue *between* and *among* diverse artists, critics, students and instructors that deviates from the unidirectional model favored by education

and most social institutions in general. In this way, the one-way control gets compromised. By reformulating a traditionally-defined educational sense of 'authority' or 'sovereignty' art education moves into a redefined, polyvocal, collective arena; this more dynamic place is unfamiliar to both teachers and students, and certainly to the institutional apparatus. This arena recognizes the importance of what Paulo Freire refers to as the need for liberating educators, ones who "do not keep students controlled in their hands" (Freire in Shor, 1990:102).[2] Many, if not most, students have never had the onus placed on them to take ownership and responsibility for thinking and learning. They have become consumers of information as opposed to meaning-makers who play an active role in the construction of theories and practices. They have been conditioned not to because society has shaped and manipulated education according to the interests of those in power. "The fact is that the relationships between the subsystem of education and the global system of society are not mechanical relationships. They are historical (ones). They are dialectical and contradictory. It then means that from the point of view of the ruling class, of the people in power, the main task for systematic education is to reproduce dominant ideology" (99-100). The art and questions that concern me challenge this ideology and like the liberatory educator and classroom, the criticism is not only directed at the subsystem of education but also beyond the walls of the institution becoming a criticism of society and the capitalist system in general (99).

Getting back to the issue of asking these questions, even the liberating art educator must acknowledge that it is very difficult not to fall into a precarious position where

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[2]In this discussion of liberatory education, one must acknowledge that limits still exist. Liberatory education in its most utopian sense is not possible in the current educational system as an instructor still holds a position of authority: grades are still awarded and these are arrived at by the instructor and usually the instructor alone. Even in more 'democratic' instances where the student and teacher supposedly work on the evaluation in partnership, the final decision still rests with the 'educator'.

rampant relativistic subjectivism is the norm, another symptom of a dysfunctional system accustomed to passive consumption and not assuming a well thought out and thorough argument. (For example, one might get responses like, "I see what I see because that's how I want to see it"). But this does not have to be the case and the gain is worth the risk.

What I am advocating is the recognition that "transformation has to be accomplished by those [of us] who dream about the reinvention of society, the recreation or restructuring of society. Then [one] needs to fill up the space of the schools, the institutional space, in order to unveil the reality which is being hidden by the dominant ideology, the dominant curriculum" (Freire in Shor, 1990:100). Reconstructive postmodern art practices, and this questioning that I am suggesting can contribute to realizing this goal.

Dominant Representational Works of Art: Why are they Safe?

It has been my experience that people are drawn to dominant representational works of art while disturbed or repelled by more abstract, conceptually based works of art (although this is not to say that in their alienation they do not actually understand these types of pieces to some degree), and overtly political or activist-based artworks[3]. A good deal of this has to do with legibility and politics. Dominant representational types of art are legible. They are what students are and have been taught and at this time and in this

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[3]In assigning particular works the category of 'dominant representational works of art' I stipulate that overtly political, activist or feminist-based artworks, as well as most socially-based works that are critical of the host society, are excluded from this classification in this specific context. I do this stipulatively because they are not indicative of the 'representational' works that have permeated the curriculum and large artistic institutions for the last few decades. In short, they are not what people have been exposed to and come to know.

context they are fundamentally conservative, although they may not have been so at the time of their creation. If we were exposed to and taught about other types of art, we would learn to know them in the same way, to feel safe and confident with them. We would learn to read them. But non-representational or overtly political works are indicative of radicalism and antagonism. They tend to be critical of dominant values venerated by the existing social system, including the specific and acceptable ways people are taught to communicate in and through. Dominant types of representational works of art are about learning the accepted language of the ruling class, and this is where the political agenda seeps into the equation.

Another reason many people tend to be drawn to these types of works is partly because representational works fulfill perhaps the easiest function of art: that being, to make them safe. We tend to be socialized to need to fix things in our minds, to make them knowable and familiar...to construct for ourselves a relatively definitive cognitive map, and representational works are one of the easiest ways to get at this "stability" in a highly visual society. At the same time, dominant representations work because they validate a way of passively consuming, and esteeming that which we already know including values predicated upon what Freire would refer to as a manipulative, non-liberating type of education that gets modeled in most North American classrooms.

Based on my experience, in the classroom as student and teacher, in the world as artist or consumer, it seems that many people in a EuroNorth American context continue to esteem many of the Impressionist works of the late nineteenth century such as Monet. One reason for this affinity and engagement with these artworks has to do with a relationship that has developed with them through institutional exposure. It might also be attributed to the fact that these types of works do validate this passive engagement with the world and how we arrive at knowing about it. There can be a limited engagement with the work while at the same time deriving some sense of pleasure from it (e.g.: the colours

are soothing and the objects quickly situated and identifiable). Impressionism offers an idea about art that reaffirms the things many people like to believe in. There is an effortlessness in its enjoyability. It is easy. And at the same time it offers up the promise of knowing the world, or thinking that we know it. The fact is that many people - again, in a EuroNorth American context - never look at much in any kind of sharp, critical, engaged way, because they are not educated towards being critically conscious. The contemplation remains minimal, and minimally engaged. This is a huge generality, but I maintain that it tends to be the case. Ironically, many people do not understand that Impressionism was about light and how light makes possible, affects and alters our perceptions of the world and the things in it, constantly. Thus, the problem lies not with the Impressionists per se but rather with people's inability to look deeply or critically at the work. Monet's 'Rouen Cathedrals' and 'Haystack' series, indicative of others, were about this play of light and shadow on seemingly fixed stable monuments that change and colour our whole perception of these things and how we see them, and to lead us to consider that nothing is actually fixed; rather, things are ever changing and mutable...always.

Often, we expect to find 'truth' in works of art, and I believe that this also serves to mark out one of the reasons why many people are drawn to representational works, because they situate us in a familiar place, a 'truthful', naturalized, verifiable-to-some-degree place. This affords us an access that, to some extent, is desired and needed. It is a mimetic re-presentation of the character of something that we already feel familiar with, or have had some experience with. And here History comes into play because these are works that have been included in many conventional art curriculums at the secondary and post-secondary levels. They have been seen and people have formed associations with them; they have come to know them. The works seen, these choices, were made on the audience's behalf. My point is that had other things been included and seen, a comfort

level would also have developed and a relationship between the works and viewers would have evolved.

It is my contention that many works were and continue to be excluded because they were/are categorized as being 'difficult' - in terms of the comments made about or the criticisms directed at certain privileged sectors of the population - by those who have had the power to choose. These works were not excluded because associations could not be formed with them. As has been evidenced, relationships with and associations to artworks develop through time and contact. These works were excluded and kept unknown because it was politically or economically advantageous for the ruling class of the moment to keep them on the margins (Foucault, 1978, 1980, 1983).

Dissolution of a Logocentric Truth

The first thing that I learned about approaching art from a more critically informed perspective was that one had to accept a dissolution of the idea of a logocentric truth, because truth in art, as in life, is located differently...in different times, places, etc... In fact, truth is malleable and much more liquid than we are comfortable with. In actuality, 'truth' is applicable only to realms of knowledge, and even then must be carefully contextualized. Truth is a value we ascribe to certain things and is never absolute. In art, as elsewhere, one learns that the grand meta-narrative is actually the grand deceit. There are multiple truths and each is important. This realization is difficult for many to grasp, especially because education does not prepare us to think critically. Most of us are taught to believe that the best answers are always arrived at through a series of tests that produce verifiable information. But as Suzanne Langer notes, "the answer[s] [are] not found by taking measurements or by making experiments or in any way discovering *facts* (my

emphasis). ['Answers'] can only be found by thinking - by reflecting upon [what we see] and what we mean" (Langer, 1957:2).

All too often, we are subjected to a monosemantic, unidirectional style of learning that prepares us to listen, internalize and regurgitate information that is fed to us. While this is slowly changing, recognizing that disruptions have always occurred - these initiated by a few as opposed to a majority - many of us are still unprepared to engage material and formulate our own ideas and conclusions in a critical and informed manner. One of the goals in looking for, is to look for critically - to think about how works of art sustain and come from their individual contexts, to accept that they cannot be completely removed from their particular context, and that they are all representative of an agenda. They involve linked sources, materials, conditions of making, and the context of ideas. During the course of this thesis much of what I will discuss revolves around the social contingency of art.

The minute we call something art, or even think it, we become located in a social and collective arena. The moment that we employ a material, an instrument, a brush, etc... that speaks of modes of production and of a history - a history that saw these inventions come into being - again we locate ourselves in a sphere that is socially demarcated and contingent. Moreover, when we consider the politics of looking or seeing, we might also be aware that how we "perceive the visual, how we write and talk about it" is a perspective from which we approach art and it is overdetermined by location (hooks, 1995:2). By our situatedness. This understanding, in this context, should not be diminished. However, at the same time, the products of art are irreducible to social environments. They are bound to and by these environments and conditions (Wolff, 1981, 1993), but they are not simply reduced to these. In the process of attempting to encourage a critical engagement with works I maintain that in an art education context this

irreducibility should sedulously be acknowledged. This is what I mean when I speak of getting at a critical art history and education.

How We See and How We Might See Differently

As an artist and art educator, it is my hope that we might become able to experience a wide range of artworks and to come to some sort of understanding about them and the things that they speak of and make present to us. I want to question and examine how works have some measure of social power, while at the same time are capable of maintaining an aesthetic sensibility simultaneously. As previously stated, art does not exist separate from society; rather, it exists in 'social suit' patterns of relationships which may embrace, locate, work through and then move away from these relationships.

Someone once showed me a slide and asked me, "What do you see?" (Laskarin, lecture, 1994) I thought about it for a minute and then began to provide an inventory of the identifiable objects present before me. I was stopped and pointedly asked again, "No...what do you actually see?" What came out of this questioning was a number of realizations. The first being that what I was actually seeing was coloured light bouncing off a reflective surface. This enabled me to see and in fact, that is what I was actually viewing. But that is not what we talk about when we discuss, "What do you see". What happens for most of us is that we move from raw perception to an almost instantaneous understanding of the objects or subjects that actually appear before us as enabled via this manifestation of light. And it impacted upon me hugely because I began to become fully cognizant of the fact that what we see and how we interpret it is an incredible process. We are never just looking; rather, we are *looking for*. Looking is never objective, neutral, detached or disinterested. When we look we make meaning out of what we are looking at. Or we desperately attempt to. And this recognition can be seen as an act of, "critical

resistance that [has the potential to] actively introduce change[s] within existing visual politics. As we critically imagine new ways to think and write about visual art, as we make spaces for dialogue across boundaries, we engage a process of cultural transformation that will ultimately create a revolution in vision" (hooks, 1995:xvi).

The other very important thing that I learned about looking at and making meaning of art is that, to some degree, whether the work is representational or not, it is about stories and story-telling. Each tells us something about the world and how to be in it. The visual arts inform us about the world around us, how others think and feel, and what to expect. These stories define us in a sense. Every history and sub-history shapes the ways in which we are going to think about the past, present and the future in some small way. The histories and sub-histories to which I refer can liberate or constrain us. And both have to be approached carefully. It may seem that liberation is the goal, and it is; however, one must recognize that, "[l]iberation opens up new relationships of power, which have to be controlled by practices of liberty. Displacement involves the invention of new forms of subjectivities, of pleasures, of intensities, of relations, which also implies the continuous renewal of a critical work that looks carefully and intensively at the very system of values to which one refers in fabricating the tools of resistance (Trinh, 1991:19). That is why what gets included and excluded, in art education curriculums, galleries, and museums is so important...because it shapes the way we think and feel.

As a student of art and aspiring artist, I, like many young artists, and many young women, was extremely distressed not to see myself in art. Where were the women artists? It seemed to me that women only appeared in art, objectified. My search through many art history texts during my high school years seemed to confirm this. And, what art I was shown that was deemed 'good art', did not look like anything I made or wanted to make. Moreover, the art that was set out to inform my consciousness and sensibilities was, almost without exception, the art of white male artists. And this would have been fine had

J been critically educated, equipped and prepared to "embrace [the work of individual white male artists] wholeheartedly, [while] simultaneously subject[ing] to rigorous critique the institutional framework through which work of this group is more valued than that of any group of people in this society" (hooks, 1995:xii).

It is unfortunate that the educational apparatus, in conjunction with "conservative white male artists and critics who control the cultural production of writing [and educating] about art seem to have the greatest difficulty accepting that one can be critically aware of visual politics - the way race, gender and class shape art practices [who makes art, how it sells, who values it, who writes about it] - without abandoning a fierce commitment to aesthetics" (hooks, 1995:xii). It appears that traditional, ultra-conservative institutional frameworks do not seem confident that students of art, at almost any level, are capable of subjecting 'good art' to a rigorous and necessary social and cultural critique without sacrificing an understanding and sensibility of, and response to, the aesthetics involved.

What concerns me today is that many students confront a situation that has changed very little from the place that I found myself in ten years ago, and this is especially disturbing when one is talking about the later secondary and post-secondary years. Why is this? While an ever-increasing number of art educators - as some of those noted earlier in this chapter such as Garber (1990, 1992, 1995), Patricia Stuhr (1994), Laurie Hicks (1994), Tom Anderson (1995), Kenn Honeychurch (1995), and Dennis Fehr (1994), among others - are asking such questions why aren't more art educators asking these questions? Why are there so few exemplars of art from non-EuroNorth American contexts, from women, from peoples of colour? Why is craft still relegated to a position deemed 'less' than 'high' art? Many art educators like to think that the gap has been collapsed, but this is not evident in our everyday world. It is largely not evident in our Canadian school system, for very particular reasons - the primary of these being that

schools are firmly entrenched in the practice of reproducing a petrified, conservative ideology that discourages "reading the world" in a critical and engaged way.

For the purposes of this thesis, I am primarily concerned with the way students of art and art education at the post-secondary levels, and, to an extent the secondary levels, are being taught and encouraged to think about art and the things that they see and do not see. The exclusionary practices continue, as they must when our society and the institutions caring for, choosing and promoting art advocate and perpetuate these practices in an effort to sustain the dominant ideology and discourse.

Our responsibility as art educators is to actively, willfully and committedly assist in the establishment of conditions for critical learning that enable students to rigorously and critically unpack works of art, to be able to locate them in history and to then interrogate the adequacy of that assigned location as both a pedagogical and political question (Giroux and Simon in Giroux, 1994:103). In concurrence with bell hooks I maintain that there needs to be a "revolution in the way we see, the way we look. Such a revolution necessarily begin[s] with diverse programs of critical education both within and outside of institutional frameworks that [might] stimulate collective awareness that the creation and public sharing of art is essential to any practice of freedom" (hooks, 1995:4).

A Reader's Guide for What Follows

This thesis is about marking out beginnings, or alternative paths for art education. What follows throughout this thesis is a series of investigations, propositions and ways of looking differently at art, art education, alternative narratives, histories and lifestories. Looking differently will be accomplished through the lens of reconstructive postmodernism as it will be stipulatively defined.

Chapter 2 forwards accounts of the various methodological approaches assumed in this thesis. The chapter attends to my use of what I, in accordance with Lather (1991) and Hutcheon (1988a), have called a "postmodern", "Latheresque" or "intertextual" style of writing that is evidenced throughout this text. Chapter 2 also addresses my theoretical concerns, affiliations and alignments regarding my approach to the reading and use of the literature employed and the fieldwork undertaken. Ethical issues, questions regarding misrepresentation and appropriation are discussed, as are questions of community, assumed ideas regarding gender alliance via a woman-identified methodology, and notions of tactical silence.

Chapter 3 stipulatively defines and contextualizes reconstructive postmodernism as it is used throughout this text and marks out some implications for an arts education community. The chapter discusses the differences between "deconstructive" and "reconstructive" postmodernism, revealing that postmodernism in an arts context can and does have a mandate (something that tends to be associated with modernism) committed to positive critical advance (Lather, 1991:2). It is important for the reader to note that I, in accordance with Lather (1991) and Hutcheon (1988), maintain throughout this thesis that reconstructive postmodernism remains *postmodern* rather than *modern* in character in its attempts to create a cultural, adversarial and reconstructive as opposed to merely deconstructive postmodernism. What emerges is a postmodernism of resistance. This text articulates and evidences a "critical appropriation of postmodernism" (Hutcheon, 1988), which, while committed to emancipatory discourses and modernist strategies (ie: consciousness raising) (Lather, 1991;Hutcheon, 1988) remains engendered in and engaged by postmodernism and its simultaneous deconstructive and reconstructive possibilities. Reconstructive postmodernism in its "critical appropriation of postmodernism" employs the deconstructive character of postmodernism in a "tactical" way, attempting to use it in the interests of emancipation and reconstructive methodologies in an arts-based forum. In

the context of this writing I align my use of "tactic" or "tactical" with de Certeau. "In short, it will refer to an "everyday practice" which enables marginalized people or groups of people (and here marginalized refers to people who lack [or have lacked] a proper place [in an art and art education context]) to "make the most of their situations"" (Eichhorn, 1996:2). Chapter 3 also argues against hegemony and the legitimization of existing, exclusionary, racist and sexist practices manifest in the art education curriculum that serve to limit access to and representation of the work of many artists, especially women and men and women of colour. This chapter advocates for a realization of an art education community that interrogates and challenges regimes of visuality that enforce racism and sexism through tolerance. It asserts that art educators are accountable when critical interventions towards the creation of a more inclusive, interconnected system and arts community are not made.

Chapter 4 evolves as a pastiche of interviews, texts, and articles, interwoven amongst my thoughts on artists' works and cultural critics' comments. A number of foci emerge throughout this chapter including: 1) the changing role of the gallery, 2) the importance of contextualization for artworks, 3) the necessity of deconstructing and working against categorizations that serve to limit and constrain artists and artistic practices, 4) resistances by artists in the 'centre' to exclusionary institutional practices. These resistances are evidenced through works by Daniel Buren and Barbara Kruger. 5) the importance of allegory, 6) what can be accomplished by ungluing the patriarchal structure of language and looking, and 7) how coalition work has implications for art and art education.

Chapter 5 explores alternative narratives, ruptures and hybridizations, the import of "unnaming", and artistic practices which could serve as alternative paths for art education. As the chapter investigates the alternative exhibition strategies evidenced in the Johannesburg Biennale, the importance and possibility of diverse and divergent voices

and artistic practices coming together to deterritorialize borders comes to the fore. In this chapter the "incertitude of identity - the [polyvocal] subject, the division of the author, and the alteration [and destabilization] of [familiar] place[s]" (de Certeau, 1986:154) - is uncovered through an examination of "borderline artworks", hybridities, interdisciplinary practices and approaches to making and looking at art and artistic practices.

Finally, Chapter 6 exists as a culmination of thoughts, reflections, postmodern repetitions and remembrances. While this chapter marks the end of my investigations in the context of this thesis it is not a conclusion, but rather a recognition of some of the beginnings and alternatives advocated throughout this thesis.

CHAPTER 2

A RECONSTRUCTIVE POSTMODERNIST'S INTERTEXTUAL,
METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH TO TEXT AND FIELDWORK

Theoretical Concerns, Affiliation and Alignment

Methodologically, I have assumed a post-positivist position and form of inquiry for the writing of this thesis. This stance dictated the material chosen, the ways in which I approached the choosing, why I made those choices, and how I went about choosing. For me post-positivism "is indicative of a proliferation of multitudinous avenues and types of inquiry as opposed to the employment of a single paradigm" (Lather, 1991:12). The process of discovery through which new theories are issued is one of the important aspects indicative of post-positivist paradigms and I feel that this approach works well as a form of qualitative, methodological inquiry in conjunction with the literature-based research and the ideas and beliefs included in and advocated throughout this thesis (Merriam, 1988:3).

Through readings and research I opted to embrace and emulate a 'postmodern' or 'intertextual' style of writing as I felt it was extremely well suited to the exploratory, somewhat unconventional nature of this thesis. "To write 'postmodern' [or "Latheresque"] is to simultaneously use and call into question a discourse, to both challenge and inscribe dominant meaning systems in ways that construct our own categories and frameworks as contingent, positioned, partial" (Lather, 1991:1). I, in accordance with Hutcheon (1988a) and Lather (1991), have assumed an 'intertextual' or 'postmodern textual practice' whereby, "the function of the creating subject gives way to frank quotation, excerptation, accumulation of already existing (words and) images" (Hutcheon, 1988a:11). I maintain

that through this de-centring of the author as logocentric purveyor or voice via 'intertextuality' it becomes possible for the text to be inscribed, literally and metaphorically, with the notion that the author is inevitably and invariably inscribed in "discourses created by others, preceded and surrounded by other texts, some of which are evoked, some not. In my own writing, [this] accumulation of quotes, excerpts and repetitions is also an effort to be "multivoiced", to weave varied speaking voices together as opposed to putting forth a singular "authoritative" voice" (Lather, 1991:9). Accordingly, varied speaking voices assume multiple forms throughout this text and for the reader these multiple voices may, at times, seem contradictory in ways that language is presented and framed. A case in point may be evidenced when certain chapters assume a voice seemingly clear and precise while other chapters manifest a language that is complex and perhaps contradictory as it falls back on itself in "endless repetition" or becomes increasingly divergent, abandoning linearity for multiplicity. Such is the character of postmodern or intertextual writing in its denial of singularity and its displacement of binary notions of "clarity" as "the speaking voice uses its authority to disperse authority" (Lather, 1991:10). The postmodern text refuses the notion that there is one way to write or present language preferring to have differing presentations of the same language "cross each other and give rise to something else, some other site" (Derrida, quoted in Kearney 1984:122). In some ways this is not especially "readerly" (Lather's term) to those disinterested in the exposure of language as a terrain "where differently privileged discourses struggle via confrontation and/or displacement" (Lather, 1991:8). In this context the postmodern text is one that "produces a language of its own, in itself, which while continuing to work through tradition emerges at a given moment" (Derrida, in Lather, 1991:10) as "a much messier form of bricolage [oblique collage of juxtapositions] that moves back and forth" (Grosz, in Lather 1991:10) from and across multiple sites, discourses and disciplines. I am indebted to Lather as well as to a great deal of literature which has served to inform my ideas and practices in this

forum. Contingently, when it is not otherwise stated, the ideas presented are my own yet these ideas have been greatly informed by the literature included, the stylistic approach assumed throughout this thesis, and may at times be couched in a language I associate with academe.

For the purposes of this thesis I find myself in alignment "with those attempting to create a cultural...adversarial and reconstructive as opposed to merely deconstructive postmodernism, a postmodernism of resistance (Foster, 1985, Huyssen, 1987, Lather, 1991). This "critical appropriation of postmodernism" (Hutcheon, 1988b) grows out of the dilemma of those...who, while committed to emancipatory discourses and modernist strategies (ie: consciousness raising), [are] yet engaged by postmodernism to try to use it in the interests of emancipation" and reconstructive tactics and practices in an art-based forum. (Lather, 1991:1-2). In and through my writing it has been my ambition and desire to "write my way to some understanding of the deeply unsettling discourses of postmodernism [specifically those situated in art-based disciplines, education and movements] in a way that doesn't totalize, that doesn't present, multiply-sited, contradictory movements as fixed and monolithic" (Lather, 1991:1). For this reason, "[t]he text is marked by disaffections, ruptures" (Visweswaren, 1994:20) and the juxtaposing of seemingly disparate, contradictory sources, images, and writings. This recognizes that "[t]he contributions of...different disciplines often overlap, [thus] revealing the artificiality of the academic division of knowledge" (Gluck and Patai, 1991:3).

Like postmodern art, 'postmodern intertextual writing' is characterized by "pastiche, montage, collage, bricolage, and the deliberate conglomerizing of purposes" (Lather, 1991:10).[1] It is my hope that as a result of collaging at times seemingly disparate and contradictory quotes, passages and artworks, that this will prevent the reader from

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[1]This approach is employed only with published writings.

"consuming them [in] a [single] gulp and throwing them away" (Bannett, 1989:8). Rather, it is my desire that the reader become able to actively participate in the construction of meaning, continually returning to the images and text "again and again, [to] brood on [them]" (Bannett, 1989:9;Lather, 1991:11).

Advocating emancipatory, reciprocal and dialogic methodologies in which a respect-based, interactive relationship evolves between the a priori theory inevitably held by the researcher and the grass-roots knowledge and lived experiences of those of the subjects, Lather (1991) suggests that 'change-enhancing' inquiry and results become possible for all parties (52-56). In accordance with this it is my belief that "investigation should be structured in ways that privilege reciprocity and mutual "returns" among [participating] community members and researchers" (Benmayor, 1991:160). Acknowledging that in the process of attempting to advocate a more reciprocal fieldwork relationship power differentials between myself and the participants will not and arguably cannot disappear completely, it is my hope to proceed in an arena of alternative ethnographic practice based on "relationship rather than detached observation...on accountability, commonality and difference, "insider-" and "outsidership", and collective rather than individual work practices" (160). While I found not all of this to be possible in the situations I confronted during my time in the field, I hope that any research material dependent upon human subjects for knowledge is, in this context, indicative of "a respect for the integrity of difference, replac[ing] the ethnographic goal of total understanding and representation" (Heron in Lather, 1991:21) and reflects the subjects' rights to "participate [or not to, as the case may be] in decisions that claim to generate knowledge about them. Such a right...protects them...from being managed and manipulated" (34)[2]. Having

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[2]In consideration of this a researcher might also address whether subjects, especially in a non-First World context, fully understand what is at stake, what is bound up in research and how the process works.

stated this, it is important for the reader to know that through my research I once again, albeit in a very different context from the one previously alluded to in this thesis, came to realize that what gets excluded is as important as what gets included. By this I mean that the voices who chose not to speak to me, and the silences incorporated in the interviews of those who did, revealed that "[a]cts of omission are as important to read as the acts of commission [when] constructing [an] analysis" (Visweswaren, 1994:48) In this way, "[w]e can begin to shape a notion of agency [and ideas regarding reciprocal fieldwork methodologies reflecting] that, while [they] privilege speaking, [they] are not reducible to it. My aim is to theorize a kind of agency in which resistance can be framed by silence, a refusal to speak. ...If we do not know how to "hear" [and "read"] silence, we cannot apprehend what is being [or has been] spoken, how speech is framed" (51).

The Questions

As previously stated, many of the questions propelling my thesis and related fieldwork have been included in the first chapter and I am primarily interested in these types of questions. Additionally I decided that, through fieldwork, I wanted and needed to explore how different people, exposed to different contexts, places, ways of learning and being, look at and think differently about works of art. What kinds of histories are invested in differing artistic practices in other contexts? What are the impetuses for artmaking?

In interviews conducted with artists I wanted to delve into issues of representation, personal and otherwise, subjectivity, identity, hybridization, looking at the differing perspectives that would inevitably emerge and what implications these might possibly have for the construction of an alternative art education curriculum. Additionally, because I

believe that the *art* in *art* education needs to be focused upon more intently, this idea was very important in the context of interviews conducted at the University of Arizona.

I am also committed to contextualizing more concretely a variety of ways to *differently* look at and think about art. And when this "looking at differently" begins, a more inclusive art curriculum, community and interconnected, polyvocal ways of creating and looking at art might take shape that could actually revolutionize the way people, especially those in art education communities, see and think about being in and visually representing this world.

How It Fits Together

This thesis has not assumed a conventional structure. Due to the fact that literature formed the basis of a good deal of my research and is interspersed throughout the entire text, a Literature Review Chapter was not separated from the rest of the text.

Moreover, the writing of this thesis was not about imposing a dogma to replace the existing one. Accordingly, I attempted to be cautious in my use of language and words such as "needs", "should", "must", preferring instead to recognize the importance of context and location and the fact that "meaning [can] be understood as plural and shifting, since a single text can engender diverse meanings given diverse contexts" (Alcoff, 1991:12). Consequently, what has been forwarded throughout this text are a series of beginnings which I feel might benefit art education and art educators in particular contexts and under particular circumstances. I may not always succeed in this endeavor, especially evidenced in particular places where I feel very strongly about the implementation of certain tactics such as contextualization which I feel could benefit many people in multiple locations and contexts. However, for the most part I believe that my desire to avoid

imposing a singularity of vision and practice, in accordance with the multiplicity and polyvocal divergencies that mark this text, is manifest.

But what of the impetus to do fieldwork?

The question might be, and has been asked, why am I doing this type of work? Celia has asked it many times, more than I can count. I believe that because my work is so much about counter-moments and narratives coming to the foreground...because it is about people, lived realities and shared experiences coming into the art education classroom in a real and tangible way that extends beyond the stultified texts, it is important, critical in fact, to include the words of others and their thoughts on and beliefs about this subject in a specific way.

I have been employing a postmodern, "Latheresque" approach to my writing. It is one that works well for me and I enjoy piecing together fractured, seemingly disparate, things in such a way that contextualizes my ideas about how art could be made present to students. This approach brings different ideas, subjectivities, thoughts, writings, and images together in ways perhaps not previously or originally intended. Yet, these offer alternatives: alternatives that reveal a variety of different viewpoints and fissures, fractured and then collaged together differently so that they may speak in a reconstructive, recontextualized, interdisciplinary way.

Simultaneously, it is very important to me to have aspects of the work speak as "authentically" as they are able to, meaning that I have been committed to the work become specifically and ethically contextualized for the reader. For me this was especially important considering how in the past, and to some extent, the present, much of the works and words of people of colour have been appropriated and used in ways unacceptable to their creators. This is a great concern because the claims made within this thesis are of genuine concern to me, and, perhaps, other art educators. I believe that it is important to have speaking subjects voicing their views from a particular, informed perspective, one

that is not my reality but theirs and theirs alone, be included. The subjects to whom I refer could then be asked questions, questions posited throughout the first chapter, in a concrete, personalized and contextualized way.

If the work is to speak of an interdisciplinary approach, if the ideas are to be meaningful, then voices need to speak in and to this specific arena...not merely appear to be "spoken for", having been transposed from a very different location. While the weaving together of disparate sources and quotes is evident throughout this thesis, I recognize that this "Latheresque" practice to which I have subscribed needs to work in conjunction with specific, contextualized voices.

Many of the ideas and words I have employed come from places that have little or nothing to do with art education, and may not even have to do with art. What ties them together is a committment to change and ensuring that people are working together, even if, at present, it is just some people and not all of them. The intent has been to reveal and maintain the importance and existence of differing visions, voices, and ideas, giving them room to breathe, to be heard, to be seen. I feel that my thesis is incomplete without the inclusion of very specifically contextualized views regarding what I am trying to do and what it might mean, not only for art and art education, but for looking at and being in our world differently. This will be explored more fully throughout this chapter.

Thoughts on Work and Research in the Field

Because of my "growing awareness of how research values permeate inquiry" (Lather, 1991:2), one of my primary concerns while undertaking fieldwork was how to approach the task of acquiring information, sharing experiences, generating knowledge, information and the ensuing research product in such a way that is reciprocal. I was concerned with finding an approach where the traditional power relationships between

subject and interviewer are re-negotiated so that the researcher assumes the role of a cultural worker affording her subjects with the space required to speak on their own behalf and recognizing that ways of knowing and being in this world, mine and my subjects', "are inherently culture-bound and perspectival" (2) and necessarily contextually value-laden. While in the field I realized, as have many other fieldworkers, that I needed to possess an "awareness that a person's self-reflection is not just a private, subjective act: [that] the categories and concepts we use for reflecting upon and evaluating ourselves [and the words and works of our subjects] come from a cultural context" (Anderson and Jack, 1991:18). Moreover, I was also aware that it would be critical for me to recognize whose story I was asking to be told in the interview, who was to interpret the words spoken, and within what theoretical frameworks this interpretation was to occur and be informed (11). These considerations were especially important because I knew that all of these factors and my ability, or lack thereof, to negotiate and respond to these concerns would indicate and impact the outcome of the interview, what was told and how it was heard.

Never having taken a research methodology course and not having had much previous experience conducting fieldwork I found myself treading on very tenuous, confusing ground when considering what method would be best suited to the goals of my thesis and how I was to go about critically choosing methods that I wanted to employ or model my investigations after. I considered feminist ethnographic practices, experimental ethnography, among others, but finally decided, in accordance with my writings, to choose bits and pieces of what made sense to me out of the available 'categories'. I was eventually directed to a group of writers whose approaches to fieldwork inspired, frightened, enlightened, discouraged, disappointed, confused and equipped me with some sense of how to proceed.   Among these writers are Patti Lather, Daphne Patai, Kamala Visweswaren, Barbara Herrnstein Smith, Rina Benmayor, Kathryn Anderson, Dana C. Jack, and Katherine Borland.

Approach to Fieldwork

Originally I had intended to do over-the-phone interviews only. This proved to be very difficult, especially in attempting to contact people in countries other than Canada and the United States. Moreover, as I was to discover, over-the-phone interviews proved to be a less than ideal way to talk with people. The difficulties associated with such a methodology will become manifest in my discussion of those interviews that were conducted over the phone. Unfortunately, due to a lack of financial support, this interviewing methodology appeared the only option available to me. This situation changed when I was a awarded a NACER scholarship - North American Consortium for Educational Restructuring - through Simon Fraser University. Suddenly avenues opened up to me that I had not previously thought possible. These avenues served as invaluable vehicles for obtaining information that was contextualized. Moreover, the information and feelings shared and derived from research and interviews conducted in Tucson, Arizona and throughout parts of Mexico informed my thesis in innumerable ways, which will be examined throughout the course of this chapter.

Deciding who to interview was a difficult proposition. There were many individuals with whom I wished to have the opportunity to speak. There were a number of authors and artists I sought, people who I felt would be able to deepen and broaden my beliefs and suppositions and who I felt would add an important dimension to my thesis.

Trinh T. Minh-Ha and Lucy Lippard were two individuals with whom I had a tremendous desire to speak as they are published authors and authors who have affected my life and beliefs about art. Their words had greatly impacted upon me and on the development of my work. Getting in touch with these people proved to be one of my greatest challenges. Trinh T. Minh-Ha was impossible to get in touch with. Publishers were no help, nor was the Internet. After many attempts I chose to pursue other avenues.

I had anticipated that my attempts to speak with Lucy Lippard would end in the same way. Others with whom I spoke shared this thought. Ironically, I did manage to speak with her but it was no easy task and it took many attempts and over a year to accomplish.

I found Lucy Lippard to be incredibly approachable. She was very interested in what I was doing and supportive of transposing ideas presented in her books, Mixed Blessings in particular, into an art education context. In fact, she noted that over the past couple of years, more and more Universities in parts of the U.S. have been using it as a required text. I would liked to have had the opportunity to speak with her in person. I conducted three interviews with her. These interviews were the only ones done over the phone and I tape recorded the conversations using the 'memo' option on my answering machine. In contrast to the other in-person interviews that I did, this approach to interviewing had a much more detached feeling to it for a variety of reasons. First, the phone proved to be a very sterile way to talk to someone. It is difficult to establish any intimacy and much harder to read the pauses, the silences and tones incorporated into speech. Throughout my time in the field I had discovered the importance of body gestures and how these gestures work in conjunction with words to inform what I hear and take away with me almost as much as what is actually said. I realized that missing these gestures may have caused me to miss a lot. Perhaps this is just the nature of over-the-phone interviews, or perhaps this feeling of 'missing out' was compounded by my inexperience. In addition, I was simultaneously excited and intimidated by actually speaking with one of the people whose work I respect most.

Lucy Lippard has been interviewed a great deal. This is evident in her demeanor. She is interested, responds enthusiastically to what is asked, and is open to most questions. However, like most individuals who have become accustomed to the process of interviewing, she waited for me to ask questions and then she responded to them. There was no dialogue outside of this. I was thankful for the fact that I had prepared far

more questions than I had anticipated that I would have the time to actually ask. As it turned out, I was able to ask them all. The conversations did not go off on tangents as did the other interviews I conducted and once again I believe this can be attributed to factors previously mentioned, including the more sterile, less-intimate environment created by a phone-based interview, Lucy Lippard's experience in being interviewed, and my inexperience in interviewing. But having the opportunity to speak with her and to have her confirm many of my beliefs and concur with ideas that I have for transposing the ideas and methodologies discussed throughout this thesis into an art education context was an incredibly important experience for me.

The in-person interviews conducted in Arizona were the antithesis of the interviews with Lucy Lippard in terms of the development of intimacy and the incorporation of a more dialogic approach to the interviews themselves. I had been especially interested in the work of Elizabeth Garber. I had read a number of her published articles and had heard good things with regards to her approach to art education. The information that I had gathered led me to believe that she shared a number of my beliefs regarding how art education might become more based in reconstructive postmodernist beliefs and practices as advocated throughout this thesis. I also knew from my research that the University of Arizona's art education department was housed in the Art Department. I thought that perhaps such a location might encourage art education to focus more intently on the importance of art. I believe that focusing more specifically on the *art* in *art* education is important in the development of sites of education indicative of reconstructive postmodernism. Discussions with Garber confirmed many of my beliefs.

I interviewed Elizabeth Garber four times at her home in Tucson. Two interviews were tape recorded, the other two were not. During our interviews I came to know her family to a degree and a level of intimacy was immediately established. The fact that I was able to meet with her a number of times gave me the opportunity to develop a deeper level

of intimacy than one interview would have allowed and to establish a dialogic connection between us. Repeat encounters also enabled me to listen to what she had to say, reflect on it and then clarify or discuss further things that interested me or were not as clear as they could have been. The dialogic approach to the interviews also carried them places that I had not originally intended, yet these divergencies afforded me with some of the most important information.

Prior to researching at the University of Arizona I had not really known who Alfred Quiroz was. I had seen a couple of his pieces before, but I was not to discover this until I actually met with him. Elizabeth Garber actually pointed me in the direction of Quiroz. It turned out to be one of the most important interviews that I conducted because not only is Alfred Quiroz an artist but he is also a trained art educator. One of the most wonderful things about the interview stemmed from the fact that as it progressed I felt as though the academy and language couched in academia became far less important.

I interviewed him at his studio in downtown Tucson and immediately felt comfortable and at ease. There was no clever talk, no need to impress him with the amount that I had read and researched. I have arrived at a place where I feel fairly comfortable with the language I have come to associate with most of my reading. I have immersed myself in this language to the point where it is part of my repertoire, where I understand it, and where it has come to occupy a fairly central place in the way I think about art. But in the end, for me, the making of art and a committment to making art the most fundamental part of art education is what is of primary importance. For him and me during the course of our interview art emerged as the imperative. Absolutely. And I felt at home in his studio, with the material presence of art, in the same way I feel at home in my own studio.

I met Alfred Quiroz at night. It was hot beyond belief and we were in the midst of a thunderstorm. As we talked in his studio the door was open and what was going on

outside became a part of our interview. Fans were desperately attempting to circulate stifling air. The noise of the fan and the thunder have become an integral component of my memory of our talk and that is reaffirmed as I listen to the tapes I made during our interview. (The noise also made transcription even more difficult than it usually is) Quiroz impressed me as being a very open individual and we arrived at a level of intimacy quickly. He was very interested in my thoughts about what I have called reconstructive postmodern art education and what changing role I saw art playing in the sphere of art education. As we talked, he painted. He showed me his work. He went off on all kinds of tangents. For a period of five hours I felt as if he had invited me into a corner of his world. I met his family. We talked of the past and the present. And through our interview I came to understand that what I envision for art education is not only possible but probable. I came to believe that others share my beliefs and convictions and a number of thoughts become firmly situated in my life. I believe that in Quiroz I met someone who was, for all intents and purposes, practicing many of the methodologies I advocate. The only difference is he does it in an art department as opposed to an art education department. But evidence of what is possible is there and it propelled me forward.

Subsequent to my time in Arizona, I proceeded on to Mexico, where I spent time in Mexico City, Oaxaca, San Cristóbal de las Casas, and Mérida. While there I had an opportunity to speak with a number of indigenous artists and group members, including people from the following groups: the Mazateco, Cuicateco and Mixe in Oaxaca, Tzotzil, Tzeltal and Chol in Chiapis, and Mayan in Mérida. While I feel that perhaps more was "academically" accomplished in relation to the generation of usable, concrete material that appears in my thesis during my stay in Arizona, my time in Mexico researching art communities, people and culture definitely impacted upon me profoundly and influenced how I think about the research I have been doing, the texts I have read, the suppositions and propositions I am forwarding, and the importance of ethical fieldwork.

The interviews conducted in Mexico were the most challenging. The challenge came from the disappearance of most familiar ground and being confronted with cultural, economic, and language differences. The experience of speaking with individuals in Mexico was incredibly informative and I believe that it was very much indicative of the goals and mandate of the NACER program as I understand them, those including to develop and implement innovative, flexible models for higher education development through trilateral exchanges, and to establish a system for cross-cultural exchange of students and educators. Yet, it was also interesting to discover that in the same way that the NACER scholarship enabled me, it also disabled me. To clarify, many people with whom I attempted to speak associated NACER with NAFTA. As NAFTA was not supported by any of the individuals I came in contact with, compounded with the fact that from what I saw during my time there I don't believe that it is good for Mexican people or their economy, this perceived association added yet another difficulty - and an impossibility in some circumstances - to be overcome and difference to be negotiated. A number of people with whom I attempted to speak refused my interview based solely on the fact that, despite my efforts to explain to the contrary, they believed that NACER and NAFTA were one and the same. And the privilege that I inevitably have, most obvious here in my ability to travel and conduct research as a student while being fully funded, was then increased threefold as people also came to associate that privilege with oppression.

Having been unable to make contact with any University officials prior to my departure despite many attempts, I found myself relatively on my own in terms of contacts. While in some ways this was a deterrent to getting access to the material and people that I wanted quickly, it also meant that alternatives had to be found: I made contacts through students as opposed to faculty and spent much more time in art communities. The flexibility of the situation worked very well, in accordance with

postmodern practice, and I found myself experiencing situations and people that I might otherwise not have had the opportunity to encounter.

With the help of an interpreter that I located, I investigated art-based programs offered at Universidad Autónoma Benito Juárez de Oaxaca, in Oaxaca City, which really gave me some insight into the impetus for artmaking in this particular culture, the import of art in Mexican society, and the ways in which artistic production and the theories differ in various contexts, both in terms of the calibrations of sameness and difference between Canada and Mexico, but also in terms of how these operate differently in different states, particularly Oaxaca and the Yucatán, and Oaxaca and Chiapis.

I also did some research and interviewing at the University of the Yucatán, in Mérida. Again, this exposure made a tremendous impact upon me, challenging some of my beliefs and ideas and reaffirming others. These challenges and reaffirmations are evidenced throughout this chapter. I also gained insight into the histories invested in many of the artworks coming out of the Yucatán, very much influenced and informed by what might be called 'traditional' Mayan beliefs: these beliefs are bound up in very contemporary pieces of art indicative of both modern and postmodern art-making practices and the Mayan beliefs to which I refer may not be evident.

In Mexico when individuals refused to be interviewed I came to understand the importance of 'tactical silence' and the strength invested in its use as such. I also learned, contextually, how cultural differences can divide and unite and the import of according respect to difference. While many of the words and ideas imparted to me while in Mexico may seem absent from this text, they are not. They resonate throughout the text's entirety. Perhaps more than any other single experience, my time in Mexico afforded me with a lens which I used and continue to use to focus the texts that appear throughout this thesis. The time spent in Mexico and my encounters with people there helped to make ideas presented

in readings real for me. In effect, the experience gave the readings much needed contextualization helping to make clear for me how the literature was important and why.

Personal Motivations and Concerns

I, like many writers, find myself hesitant at times to write about the inclusion of artists of colour into the arts education curriculum because I do not desire to 'speak for' another. Yet I realize that even "when one is speaking about others, or...trying to describe their situation or some aspect of it, one may also be speaking in place of them, that is, speaking for them" (Alcoff, 1991:9). With this in mind, it is my hope and intention to instead write or 'speak to'. I use 'speaking to' in the Spivak and Trinh sense. In short, in accordance with these authors I prefer a 'speaking to' "in which an intellectual neither abnegates...her discursive role nor presumes an authenticity of the oppressed but [rather] allows for the possibility that the oppressed will produce a "countersentence" that can then suggest a new historical narrative" as evidenced in alternative narratives, histories and artistic practices (23). Alcoff notes that 'speaking to' in an attempt to lessen the dangers associated with speaking in this way involves "a resolve to speak [as opposed to retreating into a non-speaking position] despite existing obstacles" (11). This in itself is representative of a privileged position that affords me with the luxury of *choosing* to speak or to retreat from speaking. "[I] have to acknowledge that the very decision to...retreat can occur only from a position of privilege. Those who are not in a position of speaking at all cannot retreat from an action they do not employ" (24). For me, in the context of this endeavor, it is also important to acknowledge that despite attempts that resist a "speaking for" "there is no neutral place to stand free and clean in which one's words do not prescriptively affect or mediate the experience of others" (20). I do not wish to speak *for* another in the context of this thesis. But not to attempt to 'speak to'

proposes a very grim alternative, arriving at a place where we cannot speak of anyone but ourselves. This is obviously paralyzing for if we cannot speak about anybody unless we belong to specific ethnic and cultural backgrounds then this disallows hybridity and commonalities and reinforces ethnicity in its worst, separatist form.

I believe that it is possible for 'speaking to' and 'speaking for' to be different if I remain aware of a number of key things: (1) "there is no possibility of rendering positionality, location or context irrelevant to content" (14), (2) I need to remain aware of my location and the fact that location is immensely complex and always mutable. As such I am compelled to "interrogate the bearing of [my] location and context on what it is [I] am saying, (3) I am accountable and responsible for what I say and write, and (4) through the very act of 'speaking for myself' "I am participating in the creation and reproduction of discourses through which my own and other selves are constituted" and affected which should serve as a poignant reminder of the responsibility I have to the words, artworks, needs and experiences of those included in this text (21).

It is my hope that this text is indicative of a 'speaking to' realized through a postmodern, intertextual style of writing that believes that "all cultural formations...[are] complexly constructed out of diverse elements - intellectual, psychological, institutional and sociological. Arising not from monolithic design but from an interplay of factors and forces, [this writing]...is best understood...as an emerging coherence which is being led by a variety of [divergent voices and] currents, sometimes overlapping, sometimes quite distinct" (Bordo in Alcoff, 1991:31) but always indebted to the multiple voices and perspectives interwoven throughout. Through this tactic of 'postmodern writing' I am attempting to "lessen the dangers" implicit in the writing of this text

Having said this I want it to be clear to the reader that I am well aware of my culturally privileged positioning and the fact that many of those who will ever read or come into contact with this work are similarly positioned. Additionally, I remain

cognizant that this is not an emancipatory endeavor - as I am benefiting - although it is my hope that this might serve as a beginning towards a practice which might prove to possess an emancipatory character. I also understand that the mere act of acknowledging these circumstances cannot serve as a blanket statement or "disclaimer" which, once articulated, affords me with an open avenue to continue and assume that I have stated my position and fulfilled my accountability requirement, hence am permitted to make use of whatever words, stories and experiences I encounter that serve to further my goal. On the contrary, I am very conscious of the fact that the issue of the appropriation and subsuming of voice has to be a primary concern for those in a privileged position employing or including the works of people who may not be, and that this has been the focus of many writers and critics in the recent past.

Celia Haig-Brown (1994) notes that, "increasingly, critical academics acknowledge that a person's social location, where one speaks from in terms of ethnicity, class, gender for example, "affects the meaning and truth of what one says" (Alcoff, 1991:6). Not only that, but speaking from certain privileged locations for an "other" may actually increase or reinforce "the oppression of the group spoken for" (7). Lee Maracle's (1989) eloquent plea to Anne Cameron to "move over" and let First Nation's authors speak for themselves is now commonly accepted as a landmark statement in these interrelations (Emberly, 1992; Alcoff, 1991)" (187).

I am aware that all too many writers and critics "claim and colonize...work within a theoretical apparatus of appropriation that can diffuse its power by making it always and only spectacle" (hooks, 1995:46). This is not and never would be my intention. But evidence illustrates that good intentions are not always enough and one must constantly be vigilant with regards to how material is being used and that it is being used respectfully and 'appropriately', a dangerously over-used, not-clearly-enough-defined word. And this is difficult enough to do when including the work of published writers emerging from a

context similar to one's own in a project, let alone including the words of individuals whose context and reality may be very different from that of the person incorporating them. A case in point becomes manifest when Audre Lorde inquires of Mary Daly, a white, feminist author,

> So the question arises in my mind, Mary, do you ever read the work of black women? Did you ever read my words, or did you merely finger through them for quotations which you thought might valuably support an already-conceived idea concerning some old and distorted connection between us? This is not a rhetorical question. To me this feels like another instance of the knowledge crone-logy and work of women of color being ghettoized by a white woman dealing only out of a patriarchal western-European frame of reference (Lorde, 1983:94).

These words, and that particular piece of writing in general, have affected me deeply. The words and ideas seep in and kick at me. They remind me of the responsibility I have towards the artworks, words and ideas when using them, as well as the history behind and invested in them. And in response to the questioned posited by Lorde, I hope that there are more writers out there, like myself, who do try to understand the works and words of women of colour and all the complexities embodied within them, keeping in mind that such an understanding is dependent and predicated upon a positioning that is bourgeois. And the loci for the reading of the works needs to be understood as a process. That is how I have understood it for some time now. Further reading, writing and experiencing brings some of the nuances closer to me, some of the ideas more into focus. For me, because the words, ideas and convictions behind them are so strong, they cannot be reduced to mere "purveyors of resource lists" as Anzaldúa asserted has happened to many writers of colour, such as Nellie Wong who has served as a resource for "white women wanting a list of Asian American women writers who can give readings or workshops".

Along this line, Lorde also questions the motivations behind white women choosing to use the words of black women and to what end. In the same "Open Letter"

she further inquires of Daly whether her work and the writings of other black female authors have been read "for what it could give you? Or did you hunt through only to find words that would legitimize your chapter...in the eyes of black women? And if so, then why not use our words to legitimize or illustrate the other places where we connect in our being and becoming? If, on the other hand, it was not black women you were attempting to reach, in what way did our words illustrate your point for white women?" (96). These words issued a challenge to me to think about and clarify my motivations in choosing the words and artworks of non-white individuals, particularly women of colour.

In reflecting upon the aforementioned question I recognized that my intended audience is comprised of those individuals interested in the artistic and art education community; who wish to broaden and deepen our understanding of art and art education. For my purposes within the context of this piece of writing, community is

> not restricted to geographic location or national homogeneity. Rather, community consists of collective formations of individuals tied together through common bonds of interests and solidarity. What they lay claim to will vary according to the specific community, but includes such things as...beliefs, language(s), artistic expression, traditional or newly emerging practice, or anything else which is seen by them as defining qualities of who they are, what they want, and what they seek to be as a community (Benmayor, 1991:165)

Through this definition of "community" there is a focus on the dynamics of struggle towards a more hybrid, collective and inclusive idea and practice of what art can be and mean rather than on static characteristics bringing together a variety of identities and diverse art-related interests, sometimes complementary, sometimes conflicting (165).

This thesis is obviously directed towards those who have an established and undeniably privileged economic position, one that permits access to documents of this nature. But that aside, it is not directed to any singular colour or gender of people. The writers I have chosen to include afford a critical component and point of view to my work

because they offer perspectives indicative of collaborative knowledge. I also understand that my readings of their work come from my particular position, situated as it is. As to why I made the choices that I did, I came across the writings of Trinh T. Minh-Ha, Audre Lorde, Faith Ringgold, among others, when I was about 12 or 13. This in itself is indicative of my privileged positioning in terms of my access to and understanding of these writings. That notwithstanding, the words of these women influenced the way I thought about human, social relations, how I felt I should be in this world, how I thought about and made art, and their works have continued to impact upon me for more than 10 years. It was about that time during my early teens that I also encountered the writings of Lucy Lippard, a woman with whom I identified to a certain degree who was writing about the necessity for the inclusion of other types of art beyond those held in esteem as being representative of the Eurocentric ideal. I have continued to follow her work, primarily because of her commitment to hybridization and inclusive art practices, but also because, on some level, I have felt an affinity for the struggles she has experienced in finding a position from which to write about the artworks and artists that she does. And she too recognizes that, "being a white middle-class woman is not the same as being a woman of colour or a woman from a working-class background, but there are enough crossbeams to build some bridges....(yet) I've been criticized for being white and writing Mixed Blessings at all. While all this interrogation can be painful, it is also illuminating, forcing me to scrutinize all choices of focus and personal motivation. It has also been helpful and humbling to compare my position in regard to artists of colour with that of well-meaning men in regards to women's art" (Lippard, 1995:14).

The writings of these and other women, many of whom are quoted within this text, confirmed my opinion that "art has always meant, and will continue to mean, many things to many different kinds of people - as determined by tribe, nation, location, class, race, gender, social organization, religious beliefs and individual idiosyncrasies - over the years

and throughout the world" (Wallace, 1995:8). The words and art of these women helped me to conclude that, in the words of Wallace (1995), "[i]n the process of including peoples of colour and their myriad art practices within the notion of the artist (and we need not necessarily have only one European notion of the artist), it would be more helpful if [the notion] of aesthetics [and the artworks seen and writings read by art students] were viewed as flexible, freewheeling, indeterminate and polyvocal" (8). These were and remain my beliefs and the words of the women mentioned above, in addition to those of many others, strengthened and deepened these convictions. It is my desire, this informed by a great deal of reading and consideration, that perhaps if I am aware of my positioning and attempt to be respectful of the words, works and motivations of those deemed to be an "other" then perhaps I can serve as one of those bridges Lippard talks of.

I have also been encouraged, both literally and metaphorically, by the words of a number of writers, including Celia Haig-Brown who writes of a similar dilemma as she considered how to write about Natives from a non-Native perspective. In her work "Remembrances of Secwepemc Life" she states, "[w]hen considering my responsibility to Sophie's words, I worried about the issue of usurping her voice" (Haig-Brown, 1994:188). Having read her article I asked Celia how she had resolved the problem. She directed me to an article by Lee Maracle (1992) which had given her, and gave me, "what I needed to make sense of this dilemma. Recognizing the power of her own particular voice "and the inability of anyone to steal it," [Maracle] said, "I am neither that simple nor that victimized" (p. D9)" (Haig-Brown, 1994:188). I began to realize what Celia had meant when she wrote,

> no one could "steal" Sophie's voice - she's much too strong for that - and I certainly could not steal what had been given to me. I do recognize the importance of being careful with what Sophie has given me and made - and make - every effort to use her words only in ways acceptable to her. I also realize the absurdity of considering to speak for Sophie. Her words are eloquent. I have been useful in getting the words to print. I have been

careful to distinguish between her words and mine so that readers may read one or the other or both and draw their own conclusions (188).

These thoughts and words give me hope - hope that ethical and respectful fieldwork is possible. This propels my thoughts, fieldwork and writings forward.

Inspiration Behind the Belief in the Importance of Artists' Narratives/Life Histories

One of the things that inspired me to write at all was thinking about stories - stories that are all around us. Stories that inspire and are invested in all forms of art and artmaking practices. The stories are verbal and visual. These 'narratives' are the things that help me to be in the world...to make sense of what is around me. So I decided to write about narratives or life stories, because these narratives to which I refer, be they visual, verbal, or a combination of the two, "help us to represent the world...They help share our social reality as much by what they exclude as what they include. They provide the discursive vehicles for transforming the burden of knowing to the act of telling. Translating an experience [in this way]...is perhaps the most fundamental act of human understanding" and expression (McLaren, 1995:92). Moreover, as Rina Benmayor (1991) notes, they contribute to transformation and are indicative of the reconstructive postmodernism that this thesis advocates for. In fact it is my belief, in accordance with McLaren, that "[n]arrative provides us with a framework that helps us hold our gaze, that brings an economy of movement to the way we survey our surroundings and the way we suture disparate images and readings of the world into a coherent story, one that partakes of continuity, of a function of stasis in a world that is always in motion" (McLaren, 1995:92).

I felt that positioning narrative in ways employed by Guattari and Deleuze was important because, as discussed in Chapter 5, it depends on a participatory community and it is affected with a high coefficient of deterritorialization, revealing the possibility of

hybridization and collective ideologies. I believe that these ideas desperately need to be transposed into art education because

> [n]arrative is a way of knowing, a search for meaning, that privileges experience, process, [and] action...Knowledge is not stored in storytelling so much as it is enacted, reconfigured, tested and engaged by imaginative summonings and interpretive replays of past events in the light of present situations and struggles. Active and emergent, instead of abstract and inert, narrative knowing recalls and recasts experience into meaningful signposts and supports for ongoing action. The recontal is always an encounter, often full of risk (Conquergood, 1993:337).

Accordingly, one imperative that obviously needs to be addressed is the fact that "we need to be able to read critically the narratives *that are already reading us* ....Do narratives speak us or are we spoken through narratives? We use different kinds of narratives to tell different kinds of stories, but we also sanction certain narratives and discount others for ideological and political reasons" (McLaren, 1995:89) as is evidenced in what gets privileged and held in esteem by the academy and mainstream art critics and institutions. For education this is especially important because, "[t]o a large extent, our narrative identities determine our social action as agents of history and the constraints we put on the identities of others. [Consequently], narratives can become politically enabling of social transformation or can serve as strategies of containment (89). For this thesis, this is an important construct because it serves as a lens - one that permits the focus to become clearer as to why it is so important to seriously consider the messages being sent when decisions are made regarding what will and will not be seen by students of art. When, how, and in what context artworks are represented and are not represented demands an investigation of the ways in which narrative and the *cultural* politics of difference can become a closed circle of interpretation if we allow them to be positioned in such a way (Bhabha, 1988:16).

Ethical Issues: Exploitation, Misrepresentation and Appropriation

Daphne Patai writes, "ethics is a matter not of abstractly correct behavior, but of relations between people" (Patai, 1991:145). This became fully focused for me when I was awarded a NACER scholarship (North American Consortium for Educational Restructuring) and had the opportunity to spend time in Arizona and Mexico conducting fieldwork for the completion of my thesis.

Having read quite a number of writings regarding the ethics of research, Patai's article, "Is Ethical Research Possible?", of all the writings that I had come into contact with, impacted upon me most. Perhaps this can be attributed to the fact that I found it to be alternately moving and appalling, which, as I was to discover, formed the emotional pendulum I found myself consumed by. Her words challenged me to confront my intentions and the implications of the agenda that I undeniably have. How is it possible to realize my goal of getting the information I want/need to finish my thesis and inform my views and life while simultaneously conducting ethical research that affords the subjects the respect and consideration that they deserve and minimizes the pain that research seems to invariably reproduce? I realized that these are questions that constantly confront even the most experienced fieldworker each time they enter into the business of fieldwork and research involving human subjects. In retrospect, I realize that prior to entering 'the field' I had very idealistic views regarding fieldwork and the potential it has to work across difference, this informed by my inexperience and a desire for it to be so. But despite this idealism, which has not been lost only more contextually situated, I have always been aware that we are often if not always unable to predict the impact of the work we do on the lives of our subjects and the texts or 'research products' that result.

One of the disturbing questions that Patai posits is whether or not it is possible, "to write about the oppressed without becoming one of the oppressors?" Her response is rather nihilistic, although it is probably true. She writes that, "[in] the absolute sense...I

think not. ...In addition to the characteristic privileges of race and class, the existential or psychological dilemmas of the split between subject and object on which all research depends (even that of the most intense "participant observer") imply the objectification, the utilization of others for one's own purposes (which may or may not coincide with their own ends) and the possibility of exploitation, are built into almost all research projects with live human beings" (Patai, 1991:139). Her article reveals the plethora of dilemmas and concerns that must be worked through - these include: recognizing that people, especially those in a non-First World context are relying on you - if only in a small way - to change their circumstances, directly or indirectly; that many subjects have expectations regarding how the material will be used; that many participants have concerns regarding how the research product will affect visible positive change; that many subjects hold post-interview expectations; should a researcher choose to do research only with those subjects whom one anticipates keeping in touch with and, as Patai puts it, "is it even honest to suggest that all research subjects are or need to be potential intimates" (144); what of the question of manipulative distance?; "whose words, at the most basic level, are granted authority in representing others?"; how can one determine what is 'empowerment', a colonial-based word if ever there was one, and what is merely appropriation?; and the list of concerns goes on.

These questions and observations combined with arguments made by Bernice Johnson Reagon cautioned me to remain aware of my agenda, and how its impositions onto those interviewed and the words they would speak, the stories they would tell, would influence the ways I would listen, hear and ultimately think about what was being told to me. Reagon (1983) writes of those "people who prioritize the cutting line of the struggle. And they say the cutting line is the issue and more than anything we must move on this issue" (363) and this makes me aware that the things I might find or deem important are

not necessarily what others will, and that being aware of this is one of the most fundamental steps that was needed in order to accord people and their words respect.

Articles in the book Women's Words (1991) reminded me of the omnipresent danger in making assumptions, of relying on a unifying, shared commonality or sameness that permits interaction on a mutually understood grounding. One notion that comes to the fore in many of the writings revolves around what happens when a listener hears a seemingly familiar perspective or practice. I recognize that if this occurs, "I am already appropriating what [is being said] to an existing schema, and therefore I am no longer listening to [the person speaking]" (Anderson and Jack, 1991:19). Too often I have found myself led to a place where I have aligned myself with an experience or emotion, casting my thoughts to a place I believe that I know[3]. Then, what effectively has happened is that I believe that the speaker is articulating what I feel or have felt, and this serves to negate their experience which is most certainly different from mine in terms of feelings, perspective, lived reality and experience, and, more often that not, context. The fieldwork reaffirmed that as a fieldworker I have a responsibility to remain ever vigilant to what is being said, not just assuming that that which sounds familiar is known. I tried to attend to what was not articulated - to "what literary critics call the "presence of the absence" in women's texts--the "hollows, centres, caverns within the [language] ..where [ideas, feelings and activities] that one might expect [are] missing...or deceptively decoded"" (19). I knew that if that turned out to be the case, if I was to fail in my attempt to listen to what was absent as well as what was said, then I would run the risk of missing what might be most important thereby diminishing the experience of the speaker to an already-found commodity. This is echoed in one of my notes, dated August 6, 1996:

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[3]Although, at the same time, it is important for me to acknowledge that to a certain degree all understanding is - to some extent - predicated in this (Laskarin, lecture, 1993).

It is difficult to listen...not to assume that that experience is mine or has been, but it is really hard. I get excited and I think I've found a way in, an access that I so desperately want and need. Sometimes the language barrier is frustrating beyond belief. It denies me access to the nuances, the slang, the stuff I haven't mastered. Then I begin to think that the experiential access is what will tie it together. But I want to hear what is actually being said, or not said, as the case may be. I will miss so much if I don't listen really closely, miss that important word, sentence, pause, hand gesture, tone. I feel a lot of pressure. It overwhelms me sometimes. What is most difficult for me is not to 'get onto' the next question in my mind. I don't want to listen more to myself than to who is speaking to me. Back home I often found myself listening to that interior agenda, making my thoughts and points coherent, strong, convincing, persuasive. Ironically, here those things don't seem to matter much. What counts is the hearing, the sharing...perhaps this is what Apthekar was talking about when she wrote of centring in another experience.

Contextualizing the Words of Others and Avoiding the Use of 'Universals'

Katherine Borland's "That's Not What I Said: Interpretive Conflict in Oral Narrative Research" (1991) is an article that has been instrumental in informing my ideas about research, fieldwork, and what these things mean for me and my subjects. The emphasis on the need for a recognition of the fact that the way I listen, the ways in which I understand what I hear and ultimately what I write and how I respond to it is framed and, more accurately and importantly, it is contextually framed and informed by a set of ideas, beliefs and circumstances. These are all contemporarily based, and I must recognize that others may not share this framing. She insists upon the need to understand that "when we do interpretations, we bring our own knowledge, experience and concerns to our material, and the result, we hope, is a richer, more textured understanding of its meaning" (Borland, 1991:73).

Borland advocates breaking down the unidirectional model by negotiating issues of interpretive authority and collection of data. She suggests that fieldworkers should work

harder to "discern more clearly when we speak in unison and when we disagree" and to identify "our field collaborators as an important first audience for our work" when this is possible and appropriate, because in some cases, it is not (73).

I, not unlike Borland, have a tendency to assume a likeness of mind when in fact differences are always, or certainly more often than not, present. As the article noted, "[t]he fieldwork exchange [traditionally] fosters a tendency to downplay differences, as both investigator and source seek to establish a footing with one another and find a common ground from which to proceed with the work of collecting and recording oral materials. Additionally, as we are forever constructing our own identities through social interaction, we similarly construct our notions of others" (72).

In Chapter 4 of this thesis I write about the importance of looking at and deconstructing the way women have been constructed in the world, in written and visual works. However, I also make note that many women have used the term 'woman' as an access point, as a code, assuming that this word is a universal and in doing so there is the implication that its use affords access to women who have been situated in a place on the margins because of their gender. But out of the use of this term in this way what happens is that there is an assumption that all women are "woman-identified". The women's movement "has perpetuated a myth that there is some common experience that comes just cause you're women" (Reagon, 1983:360). In the end this strategy is exclusionary and restrictive because the word 'woman' and all that it is 'supposed' to embody and represent is **not** universal and to think of it as such is just another means of categorization, because what of the women who do not see themselves in this term 'woman' whether because of sexuality, economic, political or physical situatedness? In the recent past

> lesbians and [women of color] pushed feminism away from the assumption
> that there is a generalizable female experience (and, of course,
> generalizable "lesbians" and ["women of color"]). Such women well knew
> the experience of being positioned in the midst of multiple and

contradictory discourses. For example, rising out of "the paralyzing position of being spoken" (Gwin, 1988:23), women of color have confronted white women "with what black women have learned as a result of their experience in this country, that the noun 'Woman' cannot stand alone. All people, female or male, belong to one racial group or another. In other words, neither gender nor racial categories are pure ones; instead they are always interactive [and often tactical] (Christian, in Lather, 1991:28).

Daphne Patai also makes reference to the danger of researchers and fieldworkers assuming that common ground can be arrived at via the 'woman-identified' methodology. She points out the difficulties which ensue when feminist researchers believe that being of the same sex offers enough commonality and solidarity to transcend differences - in race, situation, context, economics. She further cautions that the inherent inequalities, materially and psychologically, cannot and must not be underestimated. Patai writes of good-intentioned (there's that word again) feminist researchers who, under this guise of commonality, strain to "disregard ethnic, racial, class, and other distinctions that, in societies built on inequality, unavoidably divide people from one another" (Patai, 1991:144). Gluck and Patai (1991) note that in terms of their own fieldwork research one of the things that struck them most "were the innocent assumptions [they had held] that gender united women more powerfully than race and class divided them" (Gluck and Patai, 1991:2). And as I read account after account of failed and missed research efforts that have made an attempt to collapse the space via this 'woman-identified' methodology that exists between same-gender individuals because of language, social, economic, political, and a plethora of other constrictions, I must admit that Patai's question of whether ethical research is actually possible under these unavoidable constraints and in these conditions comes back to me once again. But I believe that working across difference recognizes and negotiates the difference...it does not negate its existence or settle for a fix-all solution such as, we are all the same gender so difference disappears. In Chapter 5 I discuss this in greater detail but at this point I feel it is necessary to note that it

is necessary always, but especially in a non-First World context, to avoid universalizing this word 'woman' and employing it as a sanctuary. To operate under the assumption that anything is universal. As Audre Lorde (1983) notes. "[t]he oppression of women knows no ethical nor racial boundaries, true, but that does not mean it is identical within those boundaries...To deal with one without even alluding to the other is to distort our commonality as well as our difference. For then beyond sisterhood, is still racism" (97).

This, along with the writings of Kamala Visweswaren (1994), was one of the things that influenced me to extract certain workable-for-me ideas from feminist ethnographic practices, rejecting those I considered to be a "betrayal" (Visweswaren) of my objective, that being hybridizations and the belief that in the recognition and acceptance of difference the art education curriculum might become more about collectivity.

One of the advocacies of feminist ethnographic practice that I chose to embrace was that while all the varied strands of feminism can be categorized in many ways, the most committed of feminist practice appeals to the powers of agency and subjectivity as necessary components of social transformation and struggle (Lather, 1991:28). Moreover, feminist ethnography is capable of considering "how identities are multiple, contradictory, partial and strategic. [This is based on the] assumption...that the subject...represents a constellation of conflicting social, linguistic and political forces. Individual narratives can [thus] be seen as both expressive and ideological in nature" (Visweswaren, 1994:50)

I chose to reject the production of grand social theories, all too often evidenced in feminist writings I encountered, which by definition attempt to speak for *all* women. Feminist theorizations and investigations adhering to this notion of gender alliance and universal identification have in the recent past been

disrupted by the political pressures put upon such theorizing by those left out of it - poor and working class women, women of color, lesbians, differently-abled women, fat women, older women. For example, the work of women of colour documents resistance to the universalizing tendencies of feminist theorizing, resistance that grew out of desire not for better theory but for survival (eg, Lorde, 1984; Smith, 1983, hooks, 1984; Moraga and Anzaldúa, 1983; Lugones and Spellman, 1983; Lugones, 1987) (Lather, 1991:27).

This idea follows those held by Visweswaren who advocates that while epistemological categories of feminism have traditionally placed gender as the locus, initiating the introduction of additive categories such as race, class and sexuality to the central focus of gender, there must be the recognition that this strategy is insufficient. Visweswaren, in alliance with Alarcon, suggests that gender needs to be displaced from the centre of feminist theory. Instead, a starting place might be a "consideration of how race, class, or sexuality determines the positioning of a subject - not with being "women", but how women are different. [In effect], a critical reworking of Simone de Beauvoir's phrase "One is not born, one becomes a woman"" (Visweswaren, 1994:75) which "underscores what it means to be "at times a woman"" (50).

It is my contention, in accordance with those ideas expressed in the aforementioned paragraphs, that we embark on a dangerous path if we continue to categorize and isolate in reaction to an exclusionary system that has kept people out of the meaning making process because of gender, race, sexuality, or other categorizations. We need to focus more on breaking down the system that excluded as opposed to offering up more categorizations that effectively continue to dichotomize, reproducing the same problematic situation as the one that already exists.

Another aspect of the research that I did on the ethics of fieldwork that impacted me, in conjunction with an experience I had prior to leaving, was the way in which we portray people and how they might feel about that portrayal which gets "served up to

readers" and audiences in ways that the subject may or may not have imagined. The experience to which I refer was the viewing of an exhibition of contemporary Mexican art at the Contemporary Art Gallery in Vancouver. The exhibition dealt with notions of how Mexicans have been socially, historically and culturally constructed and the ideas and stereotypes which tend to get put upon them. The images confront the viewer with alternative views of Mexico...alternatives to the ideas revolving around rural life...revealing contemporary, international Mexico where affluence, influence and all that accompanies such privileges are portrayed. The works challenge the viewer, asking, "Is this what you were expecting? Can you believe that this too is Mexico?" The images reveal many of the contradictions of a Mexico today, ones that confronted me first hand time and time again during the course of my research, and forced me to consider the fact that too much research in non-First World countries tends to "present fascinating portraits of the exotic "Others"" (Patai, 1991:143) while simultaneously reinforcing the centre.

The exhibition and my first hand experience challenged me to realize that when doing research in a non-First World country, notions regarding development and how First World peoples constrict people and groups of people in developing nations are fundamentally important and must be thought through carefully before putting these stereotypes onto subjects and the ensuing research products. "Development" and 'Developed Definitions' are loaded words. The interpretation and implication of these words are broad and seriously impact what we hear when we are listening, what we see when we are looking, and what we assume.

On Silence

In Mexico, especially in areas of Chiapis and the Yucatán, Anderson and Jack's (1991) observation that "[a] woman's discussion of her [art and] life may combine two

separate, often conflicting, perspectives: ...[w]here experience does not "fit" dominant meanings, alternative concepts may not be readily available" (11) became clearly manifest for me. As a result, whether it occurred intentionally or otherwise, I discovered, as had others before me, that "women often mute their own thoughts and feeling when they try to describe their [work and] lives in the familiar and publicly acceptable terms of prevailing concepts and conventions" (11). In many cases the silence was tactical. This was where notions of being able to, or at least attempting to, read the silences and how and of what they were speaking became essential. It also reminded me of Visweswaren's advisement that being "attentive to silence as a marker of women's agency" is essential. As Adrienne Rich wrote, "Silence can be a plan   rigorously executed   the blueprint to a life   It is a presence   it has history   a for   Do not confuse it   with any kind of absence" (Rich in Dehil, 1980:539). As I thought of these words, I began to understand the need to learn how to plot or map silences as tactics of resistance in texts and research products (Visweswaren, 1994:31).

Never was this clearer to me than during an encounter I had with a Oaxacan artist, a woman who chooses to be identified only as Mónica (not her real name). This encounter is recalled in one of my fieldnotes, August 8, 1996.

> I went to see Mónica today. Her work is incredible. It speaks of so many things, some identifiably to me, many I have no associations for or ways to locate what I am seeing. I see some of the thematic concerns that I have come to associate with particular type of expression by Mexican artists; however, many of her works which are mixed-media are abstract and leave me in an unstable position. I was very excited at the prospect of speaking with her. Cláudia, my translator and I approached her at her studio. I gave her a copy of the information letter I had written in Spanish, describing the nature of what I was doing and what I hoped to accomplish. She read the letter, allowing me to elaborate in what Spanish I had mastered, as Cláudia filled in the gaps for me. After we were done she smiled and said she could not speak to me at this time. I was really surprised and thought I might have misunderstood. Cláudia assured me that I had not. Mónica had in fact declined the interview.

Now this had happened to me a great deal during my time in Oaxaca. I'm not sure why I was so surprised. Perhaps because her demeanor had seemed open to me and I had decided that that must be an indicator of her interest in my project. Many others who had refused had not been as patient and attentive to me. They had not patiently allowed me to bumble my way through their language. Rather, I had been cut me off when my efforts became too stultified or awkward. I asked Mónica if she would explain why. My response to her answer is documented in the same fieldnote.

> In the space of ten minutes I learned more than reading 10 books, on the subject of employing silence in a tactical way, could possibly have taught me. Mónica said that my project did indeed sound interesting and that in the future she would be happy to speak with me. But she gently insisted that the playing field would have to be leveled in as much as that was possible. She articulated that our experiences were so far apart, our lived realities, beliefs, concerns were necessarily different based on our economic, social and educational locations. As she said to Cláudia, "even if we spoke the same language fluently, understandings would be difficult to arrive at". And she was right. It reminded me of a passage written by Diane Brown and Norbert Ruebsaat in Territories of Difference (ed. Renee Baert, 1993). In the passage they write of a recognition that translation involves more than the translating of one language to another; rather, there are always differential meanings of culture enmeshed in any translation. Consequently, I am aware of some of the potential difficulties in translating - from one culture to another, from Spanish to English, from indigenous to EuroNorth American, from one economic location to another, from a woman in one context to a woman in another - and these difficulties mark my consciousness in this endeavor. Yet Mónica encouraged me to come back and speak with her if I had any interest in doing so when I was bilingual. She made the distinction that by "bilingual" she literally meant my fluently speaking the Spanish language, saying that, "in my experience, cultural bilingualism is not possible" (Fieldnote, Oaxaca, City of Oaxaca: August 8, 1996).

Field Observations

As I undertook the fieldwork portion of this project I sought to deconstruct or challenge traditional disciplinary paradigms of social research via what I had hoped would

be more collectively-oriented investigations recognizing that "[t]he concern to develop socially responsible research [necessitates the continual questioning of] ...the relationship between investigation and the needs and rights of people, ...rethink[ing]...research practices and [the] motives for engaging in this activity" (Benmayor, 1991:159).

Rina Benmayor, who writes of life histories in a similar way to my writings about narrative, suggests that through the investigation of life histories we might "establish a closer relationship between scholarship and community...thus shifting the traditional locus of power and voice in research away from an exclusively academic base" which was my hope and intent, through practices indicative of 'collective investigation' (159).

Going into the field-portion of my research I was well aware that

> [d]espite good intentions, many attempts to conduct culturally sensitive research still perpetuate the same subject position for the researched and the same individualistic, authoritative stance for the researcher. One important reason is that even "committed" scholarship is often initiated from academic rather than community contexts, and the objectives are more heavily, if not exclusively, weighted towards [document production] ...rather than towards community agendas (Benmayor, 1991:169).

Yet I had believed that I might somehow transcend that methodology, being that I personally have a great deal invested in the acceptance of art practices and an art curriculum more indicative of the idea of 'collective', as used stipulatively throughout this thesis, and hybridization, as I consider myself to be a producer of art first and a scholar second. I believed that my subjects and I had a common objective of moving forward as a community in an effort to change the way many people think and write about, and teach art. And to some extent, this was true. But in writing this chapter, I realized that despite my efforts to the contrary, the linear paradigm of 'appropriation/return' has prevailed as I have effectively gone out and collected or extracted the information from my subjects, interpreted it, and then returned it to those who had an interest in its return, and this has occurred in a linear sequence. Perhaps more importantly, I realized that while this idea of

moving forward was so important to me, it was not always important in the same way to my subjects, especially those in Mexico. They were understandably far more interested in local change, as opposed to change in a sphere which would likely have very little impact on their immediate lives and ways of making, thinking about, and seeing art. This is evidenced in my August 10, 1996 fieldnote:

> Readings and ideas keep hitting me time and time again. I keep thinking about the Patai article and how nihilistic it all seemed when I read it. Yet there seems to be truth in it, a truth I suppose I have known all along but it took being here feeling it in myself and others to realize just how important it is. While I can intellectualize and experience things, the art, the motivations, I cannot fully understand them, as much as I might try to. This is not my lived reality or experience on a day to day basis. What seems so desperately important to me, my struggles are just that: mine. They are not others, and here in Mexico, they are not those of my subjects. Not in the same way. The history Juan, Cláudia and Ernesto speak of is not mine and my access is through words and emotional responses to particular situations, readings and works of art. But there are many collective lifetimes invested in these works, histories, stories, images. These experiences are so far removed from me and the access is difficult to find. It is especially true in the paintings of Ernesto. They don't look like 'traditional' works, things that one might 'expect' to see coming out of Mexico, or those influenced by the Mayan culture and history. And they aren't overtly political, visually I mean. Yet to listen to him speak about why he makes art[4], why it is important, what they are inscribed with and how they are informed, the motivations echo those of artists whose works do look shaped and influenced by the traditional cultural, historical and political upheaval that most of us in the artworld have come to associate with traditional Chicano imagery, as in the works of the triad, the muralists. What originally frustrated me most was the fact that in speaking to those mentioned above, I tried to implement what the writings call 'collective' methods of investigation...where I try to have my subjects involved significantly in the final research product. Yet they are not interested. They don't want to edit...don't want to see the words written, in Spanish or English. ˇ Despite the fact many have attended art school, they are not concerned with the art education curriculum, certainly not a North American one. And while they are somewhat more concerned about

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[4]I would have liked to included Ernesto's story more specifically. However, for his own reasons he asked not to have his words included in this thesis.

changing the way people think about art, how it gets seen and categorized - by gender, class, and race - they are only interested in how it might influence or impact them in a local or national context, which of course makes sense. The seeming lack of involvement confused me, frustrated me. At first. But it doesn't anymore. Just as the silence I have confronted has led me to a more informed place, where I can honestly understand things I could only theorize before, their seeming disinterest has only served to make clearer for me where their interests and concerns lie.

While I learned a great deal from the fieldwork undertaken during the course of this thesis I discovered what it means to really be at the beginning of something. Despite my attempts at ethical research, and I maintain that on a one-on-one basis this was accomplished in as far as it can be, research cannot be conducted ethically in a non-First World context without becoming more a part of the community being researched and contributing more specifically in ways context dependent to that community.[5] That is one of my goals for future research.

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[5]I believe that this might offer some hope towards more ethical research practice. However, as I have not had the opportunity to test this in the field this remains a theory that I have no practical, field-based experience to back it up with. One day it is my hope that I will be able to write further about this from a more informed perspective.

CHAPTER 3

IS "RECONSTRUCTIVE POSTMODERNISM" POSTMODERN?

This thesis argues for the inclusion of what I will call reconstructive postmodernist art practices into an art education curriculum. This inclusion involves the advent of a reconstructive postmodernism, one that may not actually be 'postmodern' by all people's definitions due to the unfixed nature of the term. This chapter seeks to outline for the reader the character of reconstructive postmodernism, the possibilities it affords the art community with, some of the problems associated with the term postmodernism, how sexism and racism in art education are evidenced in notions of Eurocentric quality, how art can operate as a site of education, and implications that reconstructive postmodernism has for arts education.

Introduction to Reconstructive Postmodernism

Reconstructive postmodernism is in part characterized by its ability to extract some of postmodernism's important and potentially inclusive ideologies, applying them to art-making practices, theories and investigations which are socially responsible, reconstructive, inclusive and interconnected. These practices recognize and negotiate the differences and unifying similarities of lived and artistic practices and establish a shifting inbetweenness that permits significant exchange and circulation of information and experience. The result of the inclusion yields a differential commonality, a collective, interconnected cross-referencing of alternative and diverse ideas and artistic practices.

What becomes problematic for most people when discussing these issues in this particular, seemingly contradictory, context is that postmodernism has been viewed, especially in a literature-based forum, as being deconstructive. While this is true, critics and artists recognize that in an art forum, "two postmodernisms [are on the loose], one "deconstructive" and one "reconstructive"" in structure (Gablik 1991:21). Suzi Gablik characterizes this deconstructive postmodernism as "representing, an absolute terminus in the 'disenchanted' modern worldview; the self-checking of a now dysfunctional but apparently immovable dominant social structure. Deconstructive postmodernism does not ward off the truth of this reality, but tries to come to terms with its inevitability, in what are often parodic modes" (Gablik in Hoppe, 1995:15). Gablik goes on to assert, in accordance with my own beliefs, that reconstructivists "are trying to make the transition from Eurocentric, patriarchal thinking and the 'dominator' model of culture towards an aesthetics of interconnectedness [and] social responsibility" (15).

It is my belief that art educators might also acknowledge the fact that we do not and have not, had an inclusive, non-marginalized curriculum. As educators we could realize that far too many well-meaning educators believe that they are ultra-sensitive and end up "idealizing and romanticizing different cultures on one hand, and proceed to force them into a Western hegemonic analysis on the other hand, and there is not [to date, and perhaps not ever] a response by white artists and [educators] that does not leave something out" (Lippard, 1990:9). As Euro-North American artists, critics, curators, art consumers, and art educators, situated in a privileged and biased position, we might attempt humility, developing an awareness of other cultures' boundaries and contexts, realizing that

> the so-called cultural relativism of the First-World art that encourages
> difference is in reality a type of ethnocentrism, for while the value system
> of the other is acknowledged as different, it is never allowed to function in
> a way that would challenge the dominant culture's values... Difference is

constructed almost exclusively on a binary model and is therefore bound up
with the West's internal dialogue and is a manifestation of its crises and
anxieties (T. Fry and A.M. Willis, in Lippard, 1990:9).

This ethnocentrism must change and in its place a curriculum might emerge
indicative of a new function, or even mission, for art that could represent a more socially
empathetic and responsible way of looking at shared, interwoven experience.   If we can
concur that

> art is a practice wedding individual vision to community consciousness and
> that the school is the logical arena where the first stages of this learning of
> practice should take place, then a great deal becomes possible - for the arts
> and for our understanding of education.   The process intrinsic to art-
> making - personal discipline, trial and error, contextualization, and
> adaptation to changing circumstances [and an acceptance of practices like
> and unlike our own] - might allow us to grow beyond conventional
> education's temporal fixation on work-force training and stereotypical
> socialization.   Schools might become a place where learning is built; in
> short, where students learn how to learn (Hoppe 1995:18).

In addition, we could also examine our own location in the "dynamic of centres
and margins...as any other strategy merely consolidates the illusion of marginality while
glossing over or refusing to acknowledge centralities" (9).

With this new agenda in mind, I maintain that it is important for reconstructive
postmodernist art practices, as stipulatively defined within the confines of this thesis, to be
transposed into and implemented in the classroom.   I believe, in accordance with others
(Gablik, 1991, Lippard, 1990, 1996), that they can afford students with "the negation of a
single idea in favour of multiple viewpoints and the establishment of a flexible approach to
both theory and practice in the arts" (Lippard 1990:14).

The ideas advocated in this thesis purport the negation of theories that serve to
legitimize our existing practices, and emphasize the need for a deconstruction of power
relations that serve to marginalize those outside of the Eurocentric tradition of patriarchy,
colonization and exclusionism.   What I am suggesting is the creation of an art-based

pedagogy that attempts to link art, knowledge, "social responsibilities, and collective struggle. It does so by emphasizing that...teaching about "difference" in relation to power is...extremely complicated and involves not only rethinking questions of learning and authority, but also questions of centre and margin" (Mohanty, 1989/90:192). With this stipulated I align my use of the word 'pedagogy' with the idea purported by David Lusted; that being, that pedagogy is "the transformation of consciousness that takes place in the intersection of three agencies - the teacher, the learner and the knowledge they produce *together*" (Lusted, 1986:3). Insofar as this transformative pedagogy is possible, it echoes ideas of a liberatory educator (Freire, 1983, Freire and Shor 1986), one who attempts to re-negotiate the flow of information from teacher to student, creating instead a more dynamic educational forum wherein there exist more reciprocal interactions *between* students and teachers. And while, as Patti Lather (1991) points out, Lusted's theory seems incomplete in its failure to include/recognize the more radical pedagogy being written about and practiced in some locations in North America, it nonetheless "brings to the centre stage of cultural [and educational] studies, the interactive productivity as opposed to merely transmissive nature of what [is possible] in the pedagogical act" (Lather, 1991:15).

The issue of existing standards of quality, and the mechanisms that inform these standards and beliefs, will be examined and redefined. The people and institutions previously and, for the most part, currently doing the "caring" for art and art education are, "overwhelmingly white, middle-class, and-in the upper echelons-usually male. Ethnocentrism in the arts is based on a notion of quality that "transcends boundaries" - and is identifiable only to those in power" (Lippard, 1990:7). A number of these institutions will be examined and subjected to critique.

This thesis maintains that the art teacher's "attempts to insert minority and women artists retrospectively into a visual art canon constructed by white males is not enough"

(Fehr, 1994:214). An investigation and subsequent deconstruction of existing canons, systems of patronage, and mechanisms of power, and access to such mechanisms, that serve to inform responses will follow and alternate systems will be forwarded. The latter point, that being the issue of "access to the power lines that crisscross the artworld, connecting [or excluding particular types of] art production, criticism, history and aesthetic theory" (215) requires immediate and critical address in the context of the art education curriculum. This address is imperative if one is to acknowledge the fact that more than half of all North American school children, "if we combine females and [peoples of colour], belong to the groups to whom this access is denied. One might suggest that this circumstance yields a mandate for art educators - the melting down and recasting of the cultural engines that power this discrimination. One only pretends to teach students how to make art part of their lives if the mechanisms that limit their access to the artworld are not exposed in one's classes" (215).

In the context of a relational, world-view of attachment, art can be explored as a site of education - a way of looking at society and all the things that it embraces, denounces, ignores, negates, marginalizes, and discards. For education this relational world-view, along with the recognition that art has its own intrinsic propensities that permit learning and expression in a context like no others, is critical. The investigation of art embracing and concerned with social situations is important to pedagogy because subject matter matters to students, and the world and what goes on in it could be explored in ways indicative of a reconstructive postmodernism as advocated for in this thesis. It seems to me that

> art oriented toward dynamic participation rather than toward passive, anonymous spectatorship will have to deal with [interconnectedness in a cross-cultural forum and] living contexts; and that once an awareness of [this] is actively cultivated, the audience is no longer separate. Then meaning is no longer in the observer, nor in the observed, but in the relationship between the two. Interaction is the key that moves art beyond

the [consideration of the aesthetics alone]; letting the audience intersect with, and perhaps even form part of, the process, recognizing that when observer and observed merge, the vision of static autonomy is undermined. (Gablik, 1991:151).

An imperative notion is that aesthetic activity can become free from everything except one inherent and dynamic feature: rendering meaning to life, at least in some sense. It is within this intermezzo that postmodernism affords us some hope, specifically for the art-making practices of students. I feel that socially responsible art serves to promote

[a] world-view of attachment [that] serves to open us up to our radical relatedness. To see our interdependence and interconnectedness is the feminine perspective that has been missing, not only in our scientific thinking and policy-making, but in our aesthetic and social philosophies as well. A recognition of kinship and solidarity between the individual and the world - a cultural context of empathy - cannot arise, however, until there has been an integration of the masculine and feminine into a more creative partnership as the very ground of our whole culture; that synthesis is what can change the power and quality of human consciousness at this time (Gablik, 1991:176).

Art educators might recognize that "artists often act in the interstices between old and new, in the possibility of spaces that are as yet socially unrealizable" (Lippard 1990:8). Many artists struggle, working both within and against imposed parameters of acceptable, existing social and art-making practices, and the works that are created are often critical of the host society. "They often refuse not only the images and values imposed on them, but also the limitations of a 'high art' that disallows communication among certain mediums and contexts" (6). Fehr notes that "as the disquieting messages of today's politicized art enter everyday life, they jolt our comfortable prejudices. Such art, unlike the art of modernism, prods a complacent society's fat belly. Its angry agenda encourages oppressed groups to disclaim their unworthy inheritance by generating positive images of themselves and making truthful images of their lived experience - no matter how painful" (Fehr, 1994:213). Due to the oppositional nature of political and socially-concerned works, and

the narrow field defined as being representative of the existing standards of quality, a great deal of art and the people producing it remain unknown and inaccessible. This exclusion is especially true in the arts education curriculum. However, some hope is being evidenced in certain limited spheres of the art community which I support transposing to the art education realm as

> [r]ecent cracks in the bastions of high culture now permit a certain [amount of] seepage - the trickle up presence of a different kind of authenticity that is for the moment fundamentally unfamiliar and therefore, genuinely disturbing. Advocates of cultural democracy, of respect of differences and a wider definition of art, are often taunted with the specter of "the lowest common denominator". But art does not become "worse" as it spreads out and becomes accessible to more people, [revealing other cultures, beliefs, values, materials, contexts, and traditions]. In fact, the real low ground lies in the falsely beneficent notion of a "universal" art that smoothes over all the rough edges, all differences, but remains detached from the lives of most people. The surprises lie along the bumps, curving side roads, bypassing highways so straight and so fast that we can't see where we are or where we are going (Lippard 1990:8).

I believe that art educators, "can be among the leaders of [a] resistance against the status quo, beginning with preschool teachers on one end, and university art education professors on the other" (Fehr, 1994:214).

The employment of some of the ideologies, methodologies and motivations evidenced in the Johannesburg Biennale will be advocated for throughout this thesis. The Biennale served as a radical departure from traditional exhibition methodology, allowing seemingly contradictory (aesthetically, ideologically and politically) and divergent images to blend, clash, and dialogue. In doing so, it forged and revealed the possibility of artistic hybridizations to emerge and speak simultaneously in an international forum. In its accomplishment of this, it might serve as a starting point or model for the creation of a curriculum indicative of the inclusive, interconnected, anti-racist beliefs that I am purporting are necessary for arts education and the "reenchantment of art". At its most

ambitious the pedagogy which will be suggested "is an attempt to get students to think critically [about art, 'anotherness' and] their place in relation to the knowledge they gain and to transform their worldview fundamentally" (Mohanty, 1989/90:192).

An examination of the implications of the existing sexist and racist curriculum, which fails to include exemplars of art from most marginalized groups, specifically, women and peoples of colour, will be a particular point of focus for this thesis. To accomplish this I will, in addition to the aforementioned, explore the writings of critics and theorists, such as Linda Alcoff, bell hooks, Lucy Lippard, and Trinh T. Minh-Ha, who examine the reproduction of patriarchy via language, education and existing power relations.

One of the imperatives that will be explored throughout this thesis is the notion of 'voice', and the import of, not so much according marginalized artists a voice (because to suggest that anyone can afford another with a voice necessitates a position of power, paternalistic and exclusionary by nature), but rather, opening up a cultural, social and educational space wherein a polyphony of voices emerge. In this "space" there exists a position whereby students, and people in general, can come to believe in the "possibility of a variety of experiences, a variety of ways of understanding [and articulating] the world, a variety of frameworks of operation, [and a variety of art-making practices] without [constantly imposing] a notion of a [singular] norm" (Brown, 1989:921). My goal is to map out a place where art education students can "pivot the centre: to centre in another experience", (Apthekar in Brown, 1989:921) one that is indicative of reciprocal and participative interactions.

Postmodernism and Its Uncertainties

Postmodernism is a term that is widely used, in multitudinous contexts. Its definition tends to remain unfixed and mutable, dependent upon the discipline in which it is being used at a given time. For my purposes, I will stipulatively define postmodernism in a reconstructive arts context as a genre that opens up a social and cultural space wherein a polyphony of voices can be heard and dialogue with one another. Postmodernist art practices examine and challenge the traditional notions of artists as problematic presences (ie: operating outside of, rather than in relation to, the world at large, as advocated by modernism) and attempt to purge artistic production of its celebratory character. In doing so, these practices move art from the realm of mere essence to one that represents and demands discursive, social participation.

There are numerous problems inherent in the term postmodernism and I believe that these must be acknowledged if one is to examine the genre in any detail. One of the most problematic aspects surrounding the term stems from the fact that it operates from a "negative self definition, understanding itself in terms of what it has come after rather than in terms of what it is. This constellation shows a marked difference to the emergence of modernism" which, for all its shortcomings - in my opinion, attempting to completely remove art from the social realm is most definitely a shortcoming - was totally committed to its mandate. This mandate focused on a belief in the transcendent nature of art, the artist-as-isolated-genius myth, and radical inventiveness and endeavor (Feher, 1991:87).

Dick Hebdige bears witness to the problem laid out in the previous paragraph when he recognizes that, "the success, or lack thereof, of the term postmodernism - its currency and varied use within a range of critical and descriptive discourses both within the academy and outside in the broader streams of 'informed' cultural commentary - has generated a multitude of problems" (Hebdige, 1988:181). He identifies one of the major

crises surrounding the term as the fact that it becomes more and more difficult to "specify exactly what it is the term is supposed to refer to as the term gets stretched in all directions across different debates, different disciplinary and discursive boundaries, as different factions seek to make it their own, using it to designate a plethora of incommensurable objects, tendencies, emergencies" (181).

Hebdige (1988) goes on to examine the more positive and promising aspects embraced by the term "postmodernism", forwarding assertions made by Hal Foster. Foster purports ideologies relating to the ways in which postmodernism serves to open up a more inclusive artistic arena, capable of hearing a plethora of voices, and viewing it as a movement operating in

> a spirit of critical pluralism, endeavoring to open new discursive spaces and subject positions outside the confines of established practices, the art market, and the modernist orthodoxy. In this latter 'critical' alternative.. postmodernism is defined as a positive critical advance which fractures [albeit] through negation, the petrified hegemony of an earlier corpus of 'radical aesthetic' strategies and proscriptions as...[advocated by modernism] (Foster in Hebdige, 1988:185).

For the purposes of this thesis, what I am referring to when our discussion revolves around hegemony is the "spontaneous" consent dispensed by the vast masses of the population to the general direction imposed on social life by the dominant fundamental group. This consent is "historically" dispersed as a direct result of the prestige (and consequent assurance) which the dominant group enjoys because of its position and function in the world of production (Gramsci, 1971:12).

Any inquiry centring itself around postmodernism demands, at the very least, a cursory examination of modernism and what that term embraces. Modernism, preoccupied with a 'purity' which is supposedly disengaged from extrinsic phenomena concerns itself with the artist's dialects of the subconscious and intuition. It is also important to recognize that historically, "modernity applied its civilizing program by

beginning with an image of the Centre that could serve as a universal foundation for its

dominant Western rationality. At the same time [modernism][1]...patented its formula for

reason and progressing as a *metropolitan* formula, transforming the Centre into a post for

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[1] I situate my use of the term in ideas of formalist modernism - "which attend[ed] to formal and aesthetic criteria as the heart of criticism" (Anderson, 1995:199) - as advocated by Greenberg (1961) and most obviously manifest during Abstract Expressionism and moments marking the beginning of Avant-Gardism. As Greenberg notes, modernism sought to detach itself from society and retire from the public altogether. It purported to be disinvolved with its own motivations and interests (Laskarin, lecture, 1993). "Art for art's sake" marked this time "and subject matter or content [became] something to be avoided like the plague...[as] the artist trie[d] in effect to imitate God by creating something valid solely on its own terms in the way nature itself is valid, in the way a landscape - not its picture - is aesthetically valid; something *given*, increate, independent of meanings, similars or originals" (Greenberg, 1985:23). In keeping with this "content [was] to be dissolved so completely into form that the work of art...[could not] be reduced in whole or in part to anything not itself" (23). Yet simultaneously, it is important to note that modernism was marked by its own dissonances and it can be said that there were a number of factions - some of which were in opposition to Greenbergian formalism - that emerged within modernism. In this way a reader might consider my claims regarding modernism to be somewhat reductive in their lack of in-depth attention to the complexities that definitely emerged within the period named modernism. In response to this I would like to note that my opposition to the term stems from the fact that while there was a plurality of modernism's various channels, these pluralities can be understood as a competition for dominance - each claiming sovereignty over the others - rather than an attempt by the pluralities to which I refer seeking any sort of dialogic coexistence. Additionally, as noted by Anderson (1995) modernism purported that "certain forms and relationships of forms [held] a cross-cultural, universal appeal, and that it [was a] "universal form" that [was] to be sought and valued" regardless of what type of work a viewer was confronted with or from what context it emerged (Anderson, 1995:199). Because all cultures are ethnocentric to some extent - and EuroNorth American culture is no different in this respect - very few formalist modernists considered or questioned "who was defining universal forms and by whose standards. It was largely unrecognized that these universal forms, these global paradigms of excellence, were so decreed based on a Eurocentric value base" (199). As reconstructive postmodernism is concerned - in concurrence with postmodernism - with reframing, deterritorializing and, I argue, contextualization my opposition to the term modernism in this context is also located in postmodernism's concern with cultural capital over modernism's formal capital (Marxist in its reference) (199).

control and decision that could geographically regulate the exchanges of value and power" (Richard, 1992:57).

By definition, postmodernism posits a break with modernist practices: practices which advocated the artist-as-isolated-genius-myth, autonomous and removed from the world around him/her. I will assume this historical link, but to rely too heavily on History would be to deny postmodernism its prime directive: that being, to articulate meaning not merely through an artistic medium, but in relation to social and/or cultural terms and narratives, many of which were excluded by the official History. If we locate our understanding of postmodernism as being "a problematic of the crisis of centred modernity, then [it] becomes the theoretical and discursive code that today speculates on totalities and fragmentations; on the fragmentation of the Centre as a totality; and on the *decentralization* of its axes under the semantic and territorial pressures of the *margins* that proliferate within it" (Richards, 1992:57).

Foster, in concurrence with the postmodern idea of considering art in a socially and culturally contingent arena, concerned and preoccupied with realizing a dissolution of the centre/margin dichotomy, maintains that

> the postmodernists challenge the validity of a kind of...unilinear version of artistic development which a term like modernism implies, and to concentrate instead, on what gets left out, marginalized, repressed or buried underneath that term [and the ideologies it supports and purports]. What is recommended in the place of modernism is an inversion of the modernist hierarchy - [a hierarchy which] consistently has placed the 'metropolitan' centre over the 'underdeveloped' periphery, Western art forms over Third World ones, and men's art over women's art (Foster, 1984:185)

In this way then, the postmodern is employed to cover all those tactics which set out to challenge and, more importantly, "dismantle the power of the white, male author, as the privileged source of meaning and value" (185).

Art as a Site of Education

In accordance with Wolff (1981, 1993) and others, I believe that all art emerges from a social context. We live in a world with other human beings and everything that is created necessarily emerges from it. As such, it can be used as a vehicle for examining social constructs, and the issues, feelings and ideas that such constructs embody. Contemporary critical art practices may examine devices of repression and are capable of raising doubts regarding mechanisms of power (for example, do they work in conjunction with oppression), deconstructing the meta-narrative, or monolithic discourse which traditionally promoted a singular viewpoint and failed to include or recognize differences. The theory and practice to which I refer has marginalized that which was/is not in accordance with a Eurocentric mandate. The artistic practices that I am focusing on here recognize, in accordance with Foucault, that "as soon as there is a power relation, there is a possibility of resistance. We can never be [completely] ensnared by power: we can always modify its grip in determinate conditions and according to precise strategy" (Foucault, 1988:123). It is imperative to situate and contextualize the use of the word power for the purposes of this thesis, as it is a construct that will be employed and referred to in a stipulative context throughout the course of this investigation.

Much of the artwork created and operating within the confines of a postmodern genre evidences a questioning - questioning the way the world operates, challenging preconceived perceptions relating to how things should be or work. One of the goals of reconstructive postmodern art practices is to create a sense of counter-hegemony witnessed in the work itself, the philosophy behind it, and employed in the creation of the artwork. The task of this counter-hegemonic movement is the development of counter-moments, memories, ideologies and practices, within the artwork and our cultural attitudes, that afford us with an 'ethical' alternative to the dominant hegemony (in this

case, the advocacies of modernism and non socially-contingent practices). The results convey a lived experience of how the world and our attitudes can be different (Weiler, 1988:54).

As a case in point I will examine the ways in which the artworks of Barbara Kruger, Alfred Quiroz, Theresa Hak Kyung Cha, among others, in conjunction with the writings of Trinh T. Minh-Ha, negate the notion of a unitary subject. In doing so, these artists challenge ideas of unitary, unidirectional, hegemonic development, thereby relocating attention to margins that were previously oppressed, such as the rights of women, non-First World peoples and people of colour.

Notions of Quality: Sexism and Racism in Art Education

I believe that perceptions surrounding quality demand reconsideration in an reconstructive postmodern art and art education forum. In a reconstructive postmodern, inclusive pedagogy, notions of quality that could be promoted should attempt to remove themselves, in so far as this is possible, from their ethnocentric positionings. According to Lucy Lippard (1990), ethnocentrism in the arts is predicated upon,

> the notion of quality that 'transcends boundaries' - and this is identifiable only to those that are in power. According to this lofty view, racism has nothing to do with art; quality will prevail; so-called minorities just haven't got it yet. This notion of quality has been the most effective bludgeon on the side of homogeneity in the modernist periods, despite twenty five years of attempted revisionism (7).

Lippard goes on to assert, and I concur, that we, as artists and art educators, could deconstruct or dismantle the conventional notion of quality and good taste with which "many of us were raised [because it is] based on an illusion of [a particular] social order that is no longer possible [or desirable] to believe in" (7). The new criteria for the quality of artworks in the classroom could be based in more contemporary, inclusive, re-defined

ideas. These ideas are not reliant upon antiquated notions situated solely in a tradition of Eurocentrism and colonization. Instead new criteria are reflective of a non-racist, cross- or transcultural environment and employ the use of exemplars created in all, or, at the very least, a variety of cultures and traditions. In doing so, education in a reconstructive postmodern arts context can construct a 'popular memory' - redefining memory and history in terms of one another, making material what Wittgenstein has called a 'memory reaction' which animates both past recollections as well as the feelings, memories and recollections of those in the present that do not advocate a preordained centre (Cheetham, Hutcheon, 1991:4) - which does not allow for centres (white patriarchy) to subordinate margins (such as women, all non-First World peoples, and peoples of colour).

In this thesis I will examine this lack of inclusion in art education as being reflective of institutional and intrinsic sexism and racism. Here I believe we must briefly examine multicultural education in contrast to anti-racist pedagogy as I feel, in accordance with Neil Bissoondath (1994) and Laurie Hicks (1994), that many types of Multicultural Education (MCE) - as previously defined (for example recognizing difference yet, at the same time, failing to afford marginalized cultures the opportunity or arena to challenge Eurocentric ideals) - fail to directly confront the issue of institutional racism. I believe that the lack of significant inclusion of works of art from women and marginalized cultures is indicative of institutional, as well as intrinsic (displaying a personal bias on the part of teachers and policy-makers) racism.

According to Patricia Stuhr (1994), an art educator at Ohio State University, "[t]here are many versions and understandings of what multicultural education becomes in practice, dependent upon decisions concerning curriculum design, teaching methods, content, goals, and objectives" (171). In this discussion of MCE it should be noted that according to Sleeter and Grant (1988) "there are at least five approaches to multicultural education...and art education" (Sleeter and Grant in Stuhr, 1994:177). Some approaches

are better than others in terms of their abilities to address issues this thesis is exploring. Stuhr identifies one approach which she calls an "education that is multicultural and social[ly] reconstructionist" (176) which shares some alignment with the advocacies of reconstructive postmodernism. This approach is designed to prepare "students to challenge social, structural inequality and to promote the goal of social and cultural diversity (Grant and Sleeter, 1987). The reconstructionist approach educates students to become critical thinkers capable of examining their life experiences and the social divisions that keep them and their group from fully enjoying...social and economic rewards" (Stuhr, 1994:176). Stuhr suggests that such a methodology would witness curricula "dependent on social, political, and economic conditions of the community, state and nation, rather than based on a sequential, mandated, uniform, national, or state curriculum. The curriculum would always be in a state of flux" (177). Despite my concerns regarding MCE - because at the present time I feel, in accordance with others like Hicks (1994), it to be an inadequate approach to the problem of a racist, exclusionary, undemocratic art curriculum - this approach initially appealed to me because it seemed to address several of the concerns I discuss throughout this thesis. And according to Stuhr such an approach would be interdisciplinary. Ironically, for me, in the context referred to by Stuhr this is precisely where the difficulty lies. While I advocate for interdisciplinary practices, I do so stipulatively and contingently as the interdisciplinary practices to which I refer remain art based although they are informed by a multitude of artistic *and* cultural methodologies, beliefs and criticisms. The approach forwarded by Stuhr teaches art "in relation to other school subjects" (176) and this ultimately takes the focus away from art - a practice which is and has been done to the point where art curricula in a EuroNorth American context has become significantly compromised in terms of time allocated to its study and the value

and status accorded it as a subject in and of itself.[2] While this particular MCE methodology is most certainly a step towards some of the mandates of reconstructive postmodernism, as it has been stipulatively defined and employed, I don't feel that it goes far enough. Further reasons for this belief in accordance with other art educators such as Garber (1990, 1992, 1995), Fehr (1994), and Hicks (1994) will be explored further in chapters to follow.

In addition, as previously stated, I would suggest that at the present time, for my purposes in this particular context, anti-racist pedagogy is a strong alternative approach to MCE being implemented in an attempt to more directly confront and challenge existing power relations (Troyna, 1987:91). Also, primary goals of anti-racist pedagogy include making the invisible visible, addressing the inequalities bound up in many EuroNorth American educational practices and institutions, and recognizing the politics invested in various artistic, cultural and institutional methodologies (Amster, 1994:21). These considerations are most definitely focuses of artistic practice and theory in a "reconstructive" art education classroom. Moreover, anti-racist pedagogy suggests that it is important to recognize that "regimes of visuality enforce racism...literally [holding] it in place. The system of white-supremacist capitalist patriarchy [and exclusionism] is maintained by all...who internalize and enforce the values of this regime. This means that [everyone] must be held accountable when we do not make needed critical interventions that would create" a more inclusive system indicative of a "revolution in vision" (hooks, 1995:xii). Through inclusionary, anti-racist practices students might come to realize that, at this time, in this particular context, we all have a responsibility to come to know and to

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[2]Again, for the reader it should be noted that while interdisciplinary art practices and alternative approaches to art education as advocated within this writing include alternative histories and tellings and cultural critics' comments, the focus remains on art. In this way then I advocate against art being subsumed by other subject areas.

use one another - respectfully - as sources. Artworks and people creating and writing about artworks can only come to be known through inclusion and a relationship of respect can only be developed through contact. "Because the sources of artmaking in particular have been commandeered into the service of the dominant culture, [a focus on singularity and Eurocentric values and ideas has led us to pay] homage to that culture [alone excluding most others]" (Baca, radio interview, 1989). Through anti-racist pedagogy implemented in a reconstructive postmodern art education forum, "[w]e are forging a new way, reasserting our voices, redefining language [and ideas about art] to make ourselves [and in accordance with Reagon (1983) that 'our' in ourselves needs to be kept as big as possible] present. We have to use other sources - and we are those sources. If my first references in the classroom [do not include] black artist[s], Cambodian artist[s], Native [Canadian] artists [as a result of racist, exclusionary practices], then I am not educated" (Baca, interview, 1989).

[3]My thesis also addresses the importance of examining narratives, counter-moments or alternative histories/life histories to be included, (see Chapters 4, 5) as ideas embodied within these narratives serve to personify ideas regarding making the invisible visible through a deconstruction of the patriarchal, meta-narrative, and the reclamation of a 'popular memory'. Linda Hutcheon and Mark Cheetham discuss postmodern memory, for our purposes a manifestation or subcategory of 'popular memory', where "an exploration of the way in which images structure how we see ourselves and how we construct our notions of the self in the present and in the past [is undertaken]. This is how postmodern memory works" (114).

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[3]When such a spacing occurs between paragraphs it is done so in an attempt to encourage the reader to pause. While what follows is not unrelated to what came before the spacing marks a slight shift in style, thought, focus or direction which, in my opinion, makes such a pause desirable.

"Artists are the mneumonists of culture. Their work is memory work, both personal and social, based in (feeling, intellect and materiality)" (Cheetham, 1991:1) Memory, with its "evanescent yet specific inflections of meaning is history in a postmodern culture" (7).[4] The issues concerning the arts' preservation of 'popular memory' in opposition to a Eurocentric 'official history' are pivotal to the arguments raised in Teshome Gabriel's Third Cinema as Guardian of Popular Memory: Towards a Third Aesthetic. Gabriel (1989) purports that folklore forms the narrative tradition of the Third Cinema, and defines its battle as one against the official history...one steeped in oppression.

> [A]s popular memory is the oral historiography of the Third World,
> folklore is an account of memories passed from generation to generation.
> Because the promise of freedom, and recovery of identity lingers in
> memory, folklore offers an emancipatory 'horizon' - a liberated and
> alternative future. ...In this sense, folkloric traditions of popular memory
> have a rescue mission (as) they wage battle against false consciousness and
> against the official version of history that legitimate and glorify it (54).

An exploration of these ideas as manifest in artworks, writings, stories and life histories reveals that popular memory and the counter-hegemonic moments manifest in memory affords us with a, "vision that is truly engaged with the world ..(one that is not) purely cognitive or purely aesthetic, but is opened up to the [world] as a whole and issue forth in social practices that 'take to heart' what is seen and felt in terms that acknowledge the interconnectedness of all life and our world" (Levin, 1988:122).

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[4]Yet this is not a statement rooted in the absolute. Rather, I would suggest that such a location of artists in this way can be situated in the context of the present and recent past.

Reconstructive Postmodernism: Implication for Art Educators

I maintain that the solution to the problem - that being a racist, sexist and exclusionary art education curriculum in a EuroNorth American context - lies in what Suzi Gablik refers to as "The Reenchantment of Art" and that as art educators, it is our responsibility to attempt just that. We might recognize that reconstructive postmodernism, as a socially and culturally contingent phenomenon, affords art students in particular contexts - North American ones certainly and perhaps others - with voices they have previously, in my opinion, been denied.

The work of many contemporary artists illustrates that when one breaks free of the traditional frame, one that is removed from the world, life, and people, there exists the possibility for significant exchange: of ideas, opinions, voices. Such work will be evidenced and examined in greater depth throughout the course of this thesis. The notion of art becoming political and part of the everyday world both as an avenue for deconstructing the reified, modernist myth, as well as emphasizing the need for an audience or receiver, has important pedagogical ramifications. Pedagogically such ideas and tactics encourage students to become part of a dynamic process; a process whereby they are not only creating and producing artwork, but consumers of art. Such ideas will be explored through an examination of works by Barbara Kruger, among others.

In the past art education as a discipline has not, in my opinion, found it easy to reconcile itself to a plethora of fundamental discontinuities and arrhythmic moments and manifestations in art, preferring to ignore these dissonances through the exclusion of works indicative of such moments and practices. Or, it has chosen to define or couch such stories and artworks in familiar, but inadequate terms and concepts. Moreover, there has been a resistance by art educators to recognize that art is political. Yet, as Laurie Hicks (1994), an art educator at the University of Maine, notes "[i]n a society divided along

hierarchical lines of class, gender, race, sexual [identity], ability/disability, religious belief and lifestyle, education in the arts cannot help but be politically constituted" (Hicks, 1994:149). Consequently, it is important for art educators to consider that

> [w]hat and how we choose to teach can either reinforce traditional social patterns of power and submission or bring them into question and loosen their hold. For this reason, art education itself needs to undergo a process of social reconstruction, through which both theorists and practitioners learn to analyze the political dimension of art knowledge and learning. To engage in the social reconstruction of art education, then, is to engage in an on-going process of critical evaluation of the politically informed commitments, inquiries and goals, which are articulated and advanced through art education theory and practice (149).

As manifest in the following chapters, reconstructive postmodernism in an art education sphere attempts to contextually and critically address such concerns and all the complexities bound up in these concerns.

Hybridities

In this thesis I contend that through an acceptance and embracing of interdisciplinary methodologies and ideas in an art education forum, deterritorialized spaces and works reveal themselves. Essentially, hybridities are evidenced. In my use of the term "hybridity" (Bhabba, 1994) I situate the concept as manifesting itself in thought, writing, and artworks often deemed as alternative and located on the margins, or outside the centre. Hybridity serves to interrogate "the condition of the imperialist discourse; it is the space of "neither one nor the other", which refuses the authority of the dominant power. It does this by disfiguring (Entstellung) the difference which maintains and reproduces the value system of identity" (Purdom, 1995:32). The hybridity to which I refer can be understood as "connective tissue" that re-conditions difference, in this way

difference becomes aligned with differánce as articulated by Jacques Derrida (1976, 1978 and Purdom, 1995) as a space of *possibility* rather than one that fixes the "Other" to an outside position *because* of difference. Moreover, this re-locating, or re-conditioning, of difference avoids "replacing one authority with another. It is in that affirmation of possibility that we can start creating a new cartography" for artistic and cultural stories and practices (Purdom, 1995:32). Works of art that represent this notion of hybridity deconstruct the centre's imposed narratives "of identity [or subjectivity] to open the "space of writing" [and visual art]...articulat[ing], not the [official] histories, but the possibility of alternative histories. [These challenge and refuse particular relations of power, value, language and signs which] extol one identity and exclude others" (24). Works created in and influenced by this state of hybridity will be examined in greater detail in the chapters that follow.

Some Conclusions

Emerging from the tissue comprising a multivalent space one witnesses the multiplicity of meaning, a polyphony of voices, and the creation of a site wherein ideologies blend and clash. Through a reconstructive postmodern, culturally and socially contingent ideology we break from the stiff and reified confines of modernism, emerging via a process whereby we are constantly engaged in a continual and regenerative mechanism indicative of growth. Out of this growth a multiplicity is issued: a celebratory, at times even nihilistic, capacity to denigrate monolithic ideas is evidenced. From the abandonment of a single, central meta-narrative, a plethora of discourses are dispersed, disseminating hybrid, polysemous notions of art and culture via an autistic ecstasy of communication.

A reconstructive postmodern construct perceives the artist as

cultural producer and the work of art as a dialectical catalyst, a beginning rather than a monument. Wolff (1981) writes that the replacement of the notion of artistic creation with that of cultural production is not a demotion, but rather a means to discuss art devoid of its baggage of mysticism. Before, as well as after a work is finished, the artist is less central to its production than the Western humanistic concept of the artist implies, even as bearer of the artwork's meaning - the message of the Artist God - but a multidimensional space in which a variety of shapes, none of them original, blend and clash. The image [produced by someone who must not only look in, but also look out] is an amalgam of quotations cobbled together from countless corners of culture (Fehr, 1994:210-211).

Reconstructive postmodernism affords us with the beginnings of paths, ones that we can choose to assume and construct, that are capable of shared and contingent experiences. These paths seek to "venture outside of the previously imposed art contexts, as viewer[s], producer[s] [and consumers] of art, and to live the connections with people like and unlike oneself," (Gablik, 1991:14), thereby permitting art to assume a position in the very fabric of life. I believe that in the creation of a reconstructive postmodern art-based pedagogy reflecting and embracing anti-racist, cross-cultural ideologies (keeping in mind that in this pedagogy we struggle against the Eurocentric ideal that all too often prevents us from practicing and living interconnectedness and inclusionary beliefs) we empower students to assist in the construction of an inclusive, integrated ideology reflected in both theory and practice. With inclusionary practices representative of members of particular classes and their community, in addition to the incorporation of a variety of exemplars from different cultures indicative of redefined standards of quality (as determined within each specific cultural community), students may cultivate "whole systems of thinking; a developed discipline of caring; an individualism that is not purely individual but is grounded in social relationships. [These systems] also promote community and the welfare of the whole; an expanded vision of art as a social practice and

not just a disembodied eye" (Gablik, 1991:181). It will be in this literal and ideological location where there can exist a space witnessing

> [t]he possibility of constellating a self beyond the egocentric one that has risen to power in a modernist genre and is maintained by our social consensus far too often; [this] is of prime importance. We must strive for 'practices of the self' that do not separate the self from society and withdraw it from social responsibility. By redefining the self as relational rather than as self-contained, we could actually bring about a new stage in our social and cultural evolution. The re-structuring of the Cartesian self (characterized by the philosophies that carried us away from a sense of wholeness by focusing only on individual experience), and its rebirth as an inter-connected, socially-contingent, self-plus-other, not only thoroughly transfigures our world-view (and self-view) but...is also the basis for the re-enchantment of art (Levin, 1988:89).

CHAPTER 4

THE GALLERY: WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

The Layout

When one considers a reconstructive postmodern art education, art galleries and museums become a focus of questioning. They serve as venues housing what gets seen and are capable of marking out many and varied artistic practices and terrains. As such, questions surrounding what gets included and excluded and attending notions regarding how works are or are not contextualized are of interest in the context of a reconstructive postmodern art-based pedagogy. The reader might also recognize the link between galleries and schools as they exist as institutions. As institutions they have the ability to frame, include, produce, resist, or negotiate alternative artistic and cultural locations within the dominant culture. They hold a variety of agendas - political, social, artistic, among others - and they can be subjected to interrogation in similar ways being that both are called upon to play a significant role in educating and exposing people to art and artworlds that are out there. And art in this context does not just mean one 'elite', economically and politically advantageous art.

One might also acknowledge that both galleries and educational institutions are either wholly or in part publicly funded and have a responsibility to the public. This 'public' to which I refer is comprised of many people from different locations - physical, social, ideological, and economic. Consequently, these institutions have a responsibility to ensure that diverse representations indicative of a broad, multiply-sited public are witnessed. They are also charged with looking at art "as a vehicle for making society, for creating the future, for activating people" (Avalos in Wallis, 1990:176). These institutions

possess an educatory capacity and in this context they might view artists as "voice[s] [playing an active role] in the shaping of society - a role that people usually aren't willing to concede to artists" (176). Yet galleries, museums of art, and art education communities are precisely the locations responsible for advocating such beliefs. That is what they are capable of and they are the societal arenas that have been designated to accomplish just such a revolution in vision and consciousness.

What follows in this chapter are a series of collages. Assemblages emerge through a pasting together of interviews, texts, and critical commentaries enmeshed with my own thoughts and considerations regarding artistic works, practices, and cultural critics' comments.. This pastiche concerns itself with the following: the role the gallery has played and what role it might play; the importance of contextualizing artworks and what can happen when such a tactic is not evidenced; a disruption of grand metanarratives forwarded by traditional institutional practices; why the abandonment of categorizations is a step towards realizing a curriculum indicative of reconstructive postmodernism; resistances by artists of the 'centre' to exclusionary, racist and sexist institutional practices; deterritorializations of space and language as manifest in works by Barbara Kruger; repositioning the power of a phallocentric gaze; and possibilities arising from coalition work in an arts education forum.

A Statement of the Problem

A number of issues around art museums and galleries come to the fore, ones that in this context are of concern to a North American arts community, a diverse community comprised of artists, art educators, and curators among others. Some of these primary issues to which I refer are: what is the definition of the art gallery or museum of art, what are the roles these institutions should play, and how might they evolve to meet the

changing needs of a more socially-rooted, contingent and inclusive ideology. The asking of these questions is important for artists, art educators, students and consumers of art because things shown to us in this forum play a large role in the formulation of our ideas about what is and is not art, what constitutes 'good art', and because "what the canon is to education, the museum is to the visual arts" (Lippard, 1990:23).

Rudi Fuchs (1995), director of the Stedelijk Art Museum in Amsterdam asserts that galleries and museums of art are not place[s] of worship but, ultimately, ...school[s]" (6). But this is not the role they have played in society in recent years, if ever. I would argue that most European and North American artistic institutions have perpetuated an exclusionary, Eurocentric ideal that maintains and perpetuates a stiff and reified presence, serving to problematize and mystify many works of art. Most contemporary artistic institutions continue to focus attention on the object status as opposed to the relationship the object has with its conditioning and its context, and the factors influencing its conception and production. This practice in itself is reflective of the type of schooling that has been held in esteem. Fuchs (1995) advocates that the mission for art institutions must be seen as being that of caretaker: "guaranteeing that things are not forgotten" (4). But he does not address how one decides what should be included in this process of the prevention of forgetting.

History is hard to fold up. It does not come in a nice, neat package. It spills out of containers and we must realize that the containers are selectively filled. History is a process of selection and omission and all art history forces a legitimacy, is indicative of and predicated upon a linear formality, and has specific purposes, predilections and goals. Yet far too often it attempts to assume a character of innocence and objectivity and, as this "innocence" is impossible, denies that very objective as it purports to be disinterested in its own motivations and interests. As we look at the purposes served by art institutions as purveyors of an official history, artists and art educators are and have been questioning

how and *what* is articulated if these institutions are to serve as inclusively selected indicators of the history of artistic practice in present and past times. We might ask ourselves whether historical repression and exclusionism is evidenced and if so, to what end? Are these institutions merely mechanisms of power and do they work in conjunction with repression? And do the critical discourses that they purport to present actually operate as roadblocks, becoming part of the same construct they are supposedly denouncing?

At its best the art galley or museum of art today might be said to function as a "container...for all that is 'best' in contemporary culture, including its display and validation of the art of the past. Managed by an educational and social meritocracy, [these institutions might be capable of presenting] human artifacts as a stimulus to sustained reflection upon, and aesthetic pleasure in, the life of forms, their references and interrelations" (Taylor, 1995:8). However, based on the fact that what has been and remains seen is precisely the "inverse and antithesis of the idea of participatory and democratic culture" (9) and interactions, one would be hard pressed to be placed in a defensible position if ascribing to the latter view.

The alternate view contrasting the rather utopian ideal of the previous paragraph holds that, being

> perpetually stifled by its domination by an unrepresentative social elite and still managed according to patterns derived from a long-declining European aristocracy, the [gallery/museum of art] abstracts and artificially sanctifies objects by presenting them, fetishized by quasi-religious forms of lighting and display, as objects of veneration and specular fascination to an already alienated audience of passive culture-tourists. Further, the...art museum [or gallery] functions as reactionary support-bases for a continuing phallocentric culture covertly dedicated to Western hegemony in general and the marginalization of the cultures of economically weak or colonized nations in particular (Taylor, 1995:9).

This view is not so very radical when one considers the limited amounts of exposure most people have had to any art by peoples of colour, women, art deemed overtly political, etc...via these institutions. What exposure to such art that may have been gleaned is often arrived at through the auspices of ethnography and the placing of work in 'primitive' or 'craft' contexts. This contention might also assert that as North American and European art galleries increasingly find themselves "propped up...by the investment strategies of dubious multi-national organizations aimed at the final domination and passivisation of populations, [these institutions] find themselves inextricably implicated in patterns of inequality" and the reproduction of hegemony unmatched throughout the globe (Taylor, 1995:9).

Curatorial and Institutional Methodologies: Practices and Implications

It should be noted that a number of curators and institutions are emerging that are not insensitive to the situation as it has been documented in the previous section. I think many are aware of the roles they are playing in fixing, or holding in place, hegemonic norms; at the same time, there is a wave of new curators and curatorial practices seeking to change, albeit slowly, such methodologies. For the past few years I have been particularly interested in the curatorial practices of Daina Augaitis, in part because she offers a Canadian perspective to the questions I pose regarding the role of the gallery and how curatorial practices serve to constrain and exclude the works of certain artists. More importantly however, I have been interested because her work at the Walter Phillips Gallery has consistently appeared to be committed to deconstructing the hegemonic exclusionary gallery norms, challenging traditional institutional art-based practice in terms of what gets seen.

This was evidenced in the mounting of an exhibition of the work created by the Kiss and Tell Collective at The Walter Phillips Gallery, a show which raised such controversy that it was the topic of discussion in the Canadian Legislature. "Drawing the Line", as the show was named, issued a number of challenges: it questioned the role of the viewer, ideas surrounding the sanctity of the gallery space, and how we have been conditioned to view artworks. It was constructed to promote both literal and figurative dialogues regarding representation, the role of the audience and lesbian sexuality.

Women were asked to respond to the issues represented by writing on the gallery walls - in effect, to draw their own lines and actively participate in the show, writing themselves into the representations. This practice challenged the sanctity of the gallery space, deconstructing notions of 'acceptable' distance to be maintained while viewing art. The show removed the viewer from a static position thwarting them into a participatory one. And while some of the images and written comments caused dissent among viewers, the contradictions served to promote dialogue. This interactive, dialogic presence in the show served as a further extension of the Collective's belief in the collaborative process.

Working collaboratively is in itself often seen as an oppositional art practice. The Collective noted that in this culture collective art practice, more often than not, has come to be associated and identified with a loss of control, power and material reward (Kiss and Tell Collective, 1994:41). Moreover, collaboration raises uncomfortable questions for many people with regards to authorship and genius, notions that many of us seem unwilling to part with. This is particularly problematic because collaborative practices are capable of recognizing and revealing the power imbalances created by and articulated through an ideology and history centred in and predicated upon ideas of absolute individualism. This again is a foundational principle upon which our society has been structured and in the show's rejection of this, the work may have become further problematized for some people when they were unable to locate a singular artist.

The power the show possessed manifested itself in a number of interesting ways. First, it revealed the perpetual erasure and denial of lesbian existence that has been supported by the institutional frameworks that render lesbian desire silent or unspeakable. Erasure and denial have also been evidenced by the repeated destruction and/or seizure of the Collective's work. This is further manifested in most institutions' refusals to show the work to a general audience once again silencing it via exclusion. Second, it caused some discomfort among the feminist community, a group one would have thought might have been a strong supporter of the Collective. Conflict arose out of one particular debate in feminist theory, that being the theory concerned with anti-pornography. Some felt that the objectification of the female body and the sexual practices depicted in the works were degrading and could have the effect of promoting violence against women. This created a dichotomy in both feminist and lesbian communities which was evidenced in many of the comments written on the wall such as, "I am a lesbian and I am not into rape and violence. This to me is Bullshit!", "I am a lesbian, not into rape and violence, and this turns me on", and finally, "Just because something turns you on doesn't mean you shouldn't question where it comes from" (Writings from the Kiss and Tell Collective's Book and Exhibition "Her Tongue on My Theory", Banff: Walter Phillips Gallery, 1994). The power in this debate is quite effective in that dialogue is evidenced and more importantly, evidenced in a non-theoretical discourse which affords access to more individuals who refuse to couch language and opinions in that realm. Third, as noted by the Kiss and Tell Collective, one of the most important and critical aspects coming out of this work is a recognition that up until comparatively recently most representations of lesbian sex have been located in straight male porn (1994). (Although it is important to note that the multiplicity of representations of lesbian sexuality evidenced in the show cannot be found in straight male pornography) This has been another tactic that has served to keep work of this nature silent. By making its way into the gallery a measure of this silence has been broken but at

the same time I do not believe that the work's transgressive nature, moving from porn to a location that reveals the reappropriation of culturally degraded images of women as a subversive act, is fully realized. I believe this to be especially true for male members of the audience. Nonetheless as an oppositional practice, the show marks out alternative ways of looking at lesbian experience and sexuality and provides a forum for communication and for the formulation of ways of looking at and interacting with art differently.

It was Augaitis' committment to the mounting of this provocative and challenging show that really got my attention focused on her curatorial practice. She has also been involved, as an editor and contributor, with such publications as Territories of Difference (ed. Renee Baert, 1993) and Questions of Community: Artists, Audiences, Coalitions (eds. D. Augaitis, L. Falk, S. Gilbert, M. A. Moser, 1995) which are very much indicative of a belief in socially-contingent and responsible cultural and artistic practices recognizing the need for flexibility, inclusion and hybridization in the arts.

I spoke with Ms. Augaitis, now Chief Curator and Associate Director of the Vancouver Art Gallery (VAG), formerly Chief Curator of the Walter Phillips Gallery (WPG) and Director of Visual Arts and the Banff Centre for the Arts. I asked her what she saw as the changing role of galleries today, specifically the VAG, considering her obvious committment to change and the challenging of boundaries.

> Daina: Wherever you are in terms of Institutions there is a responsibility to adapt your own personal beliefs to make them work in conjunction with the needs of the particular community and institution you are with at a given time. For the VAG that community includes Board/Staff/Director as well as diverse audiences, hence the mandate is broader and is invested with a larger responsibility [in relation to the Walter Phillips Gallery]. The WPG was concerned with developing curatorial ideas that were thematically-based, often reflecting a socially-based [and contingent] mandate, concerns that I have an interest in. There are specific histories and expectations invested here at the VAG that are very different from that of a smaller site such as the WPG. At the WPG the mandate was closer to the cutting edge and the presence of residences [afforded] more engagement with non-

mainstream artists and artistic practices. The community was smaller and more focused where the resident artists [at the Banff Centre] served as a primary audience for the Gallery - an audience that was very sophisticated and knowledgeable. Here at the VAG, the audience is much more diverse with a variety of experiences. While there is definitely an art audience here that is knowledgeable and sophisticated, the VAG has a responsibility to a larger audience that may not have had a great deal of exposure to art and perhaps very little exposure to art that is provocative or challenges the norms of society. I see curatorial practices and the changing role of the gallery as an ever changing process, one where the challenge [issued] to the VAG is to address the breach between contemporary artistic ideas and practices and an uninformed audience's perspective. Because I believe art can be influential on a political and social level and [play] a transformative role in a changing society, it is an Institution's responsibility [as charged with the responsibility of housing/caring for/ showing art] to engage audiences in contemporary ideas that might affect change. In order to do this, support has to be extended to audiences through a variety of programs including special projects, didactic panels, interpretive sites. These may prompt people to think about, or perhaps rethink, suppositions and preconceptions. I also believe that we need to be involved in projects that step the Gallery site itself, and while I have no immediate projects in mind, it is a concern for the future. Also how we function in an institution and represent things need to be more visible or transparent, such as how we look at collections, what history the collections represent - basically we need to offer up a critique of the institution and the power mechanisms at work when that seems appropriate (Interview: October 24, 1996).

This response indicates a desire, and a recognition of the need, for a gallery system that to a degree recognizes that it must operate as an entity; where, as a community, it reflects the changing needs of an art and public community - those needs being to have venues that represent a full spectrum of artistic practices. But how meeting those needs is accomplished is one of the difficulties faced. I asked Ms. Augaitis (1996) how she envisioned art becoming more public and what strategies were being employed to extend the VAG's art audience.

> Daina: Well as I mentioned, stepping outside the site is one way. I think we also need to look at what the barriers are and grapple with them. But as I said, it's a process that involves lots of people and perspectives and it

takes time. We need to increase marketing because I don't think enough people know about the gallery and all that goes on in it. We need to analyze things much more carefully. Who comes here, and why? What we want to come here? We need to relate things to the changing demographics of this city. For example, there are growing Asian communities in Vancouver. It has been seen to be a priority at the VAG to organize major exhibitions that introduce art from Asia. We also need to look at what different kinds of art venues are available to art-goers beyond the VAG and ensure that a full spectrum of what goes on in the art community is available in Vancouver. What is our place in that spectrum? What is the VAG best suited for and capable of doing that others are not? Each organization asks this question. We must also realistically consider the fact that we are dependent on private and corporate funding, much more so than the WPG, so again, the agenda has differing pressures. Curators, artists, educators all need to get the word out and engage audiences on their terms. This is one of the major challenges. Lots of people are interested in art, but we need to offer some points of entry and contest for the work. We are living in a society that does want to be more involved. I think people feel like they have been excluded in many facets of life. It is a challenge to ensure that there are meaningful opportunities for engagement of ideas.

Karen: You were mentioning the presence of an Asian community in the gallery and that this has been seen as a priority. There is also a growing Latin American Community here in Vancouver. Do you feel that they are/will be equally present/represented? If so, how?

Daina: Well, I have only been here for a short time, since March 1996. I hope that many people feel that they are represented some how throughout Vancouver's art galleries. That is why analyzing what the different venues do and for whom is very important (Interview: October 24, 1996).

It is my contention that such a tactic is very important. It is necessary to have galleries recognize the role they need to play in the art exhibition community, ensuring that they are providing a particular look at or facet of art while others are presenting different ones. They do need to be committed to assuring that a 'full spectrum' is indeed evidenced and accessible. I believe this to be a positive and necessary step. It represents a movement towards creating exhibition practices more connected to and reflective of all people, not

just some people. This is an important construct in terms of developing more inclusive exhibition methodologies. But of course this is only one strategy and needs to operate in conjunction with many others.

The Importance of Contextualization

One of the other tactics that I feel is important to employ in galleries and art education curriculums is the contextualization of artworks. As has been evidenced in the past, a lack of contextualization of an artwork can lead to many misunderstands and misreadings of a work. This can be especially true if the work has been created in a context outside a North-American, Eurocentred one. As Randall Morris, director of the Calvin Morris Gallery, noted, in the recent and not-so-recent past "there is [and has been] a contextualization that's missing from the presentation of a lot of contemporary art. ...[M]useums and dealers have treated the public as being too ignorant to deal with the meanings that pertain to an art work" (Morris in Wallis, 1990:185). Morris suggests that institutions need to provide more information, or contextualization, and allow the public to decide for themselves how much information they want regarding particular pieces of art. He maintains, as do I, that "[i]t doesn't kill the power...of a piece for me to know where it came from, who did it" and by what cultural mechanisms it was informed or influenced (185). In fact, he cautions what can happen when works do not receive the contextualization they need and deserve.

Morris cites the case of Martin Ramirez whose work was present in the 1988 exhibition "Hispanic Art in the U.S.", a show mounted by the Corcoran Gallery in Washington, D.C. Despite the fact that Ramirez, considered by many in the North American art community to be one of the greatest self-taught artists, had been producing work that had been seen in a limited capacity in "alternative" venues for more than ten

years prior to its inclusion in the Corcoran's show, it is not surprising that many were unfamiliar with his art until it 'arrived' under the auspices of 'Hispanic' art in a major art institution.   Moreover, without contextualization - and this is far from ideal contextualization, lumping all Mexican-American, Mexicans, Central and South American descent artists into the category 'Hispanic' - his work had been continually misread. In fact Donald Kuspit, a well-known art critic, had relegated Ramirez's use of language in his drawings to that of "hermetic" language, indicating that it was not a universal language but a language of the insane because Ramirez had spent time in a mental institution. There was some contention whether language "per se" was present at all in the works; many thought him to be illiterate - most likely they meant literally, in terms of words, but perhaps this illiteracy extended to become more broadly culturally based - despite the fact that words appear repeatedly throughout the works (186). As Morris noted,

> no one ever bothered to learn Ramirez's language, which was basically *Mexican*. In doing our culture-clash research we've gotten very much into syncretism which is the blending and melding...of lifeways. In the case of Mexico...[i]f you look at...the beauty of the culture's long memory, then you begin to see Ramirez's work. No one ever took Ramirez's work back to Mexico, no one ever gave it a Mexican context. And it's so important to...everything he did. There's not one element in any of [his] drawings that is not a Mexican element (186).

With regards to the contention that Ramirez was illiterate, Morris comments that one word in particular showed up in all of his major works, that word being "delite". "It's been accepted by every critic who has written about it as "delight", but in Spanish "delite" means "sinner". He was in an institution for thirty years and died in that institution, yet there is no indication that anyone ever spoke to him in Spanish" (186). What words he did articulate were relegated to "autistic mumblings".

Martin Ramirez is just one example and "one could find a thousand stories like that in the field of art. What I'm saying is that contextualization doesn't hurt the art, willful

decontextualization does" (186). Concurring with this Lucy Lippard adds that it is *precisely* the context that gives art substance (Interview: October, 1996).

Juxtaposing Artworks and Refusals of Categorization
as Contextualizing Methodologies

I asked Daina Augaitis how important she thought it was for galleries to contextualize the works of artists and how such contextualization might occur, as it would obviously occur differently depending on the type of art involved.

> Daina: It's very important, but it's also important and necessary for artists to share this responsibility. Contextualization can be accomplished in multiple ways. However, we must be careful, like in the use of didactic panels on a wall, that things don't get too narrow; they aren't too reductive, that we aren't presenting only one perspective or one reading of the artwork. In cases where the artwork demands it, we need to share multiple viewpoints with audiences and engage questions, dialogue, debate. And this can be accomplished in a number of different ways on different levels. At the VAG we have animateurs who engage the public in very direct ways. Another is through extended labels or through juxtapositions of different artwork (Interview: October 24, 1996).

The point raised by Augaitis, that of juxtaposing certain types of artwork is another recent, very popular strategy employed in an attempt to de-categorize works of art and this has been witnessed in many art institutions. I asked exactly what kinds of juxtaposings were being done at the VAG and for what purpose. What did *she* mean by juxtaposing in this context.

> Daina: One example [of juxtaposing] is to compare things on a historical axis. We are going to mount a show where we juxtapose the work of Emily Carr with Lawrence Paul Yuxwelupton that give both bodies of work new readings. Museums have developed some very set categories and ways of viewing work and it can be challenging. to get beyond these

categories. Juxtaposing differing types of work still needs a purpose, but it
can be one way to lead people to new readings of the work (Ibid).

In Chapter 5 I will discuss in greater depth alternative sites and exhibitions that are
employing this tactic and the successes that have been witnessed in an art context, in terms
of de-categorizing artworks for audiences, as well as some of the problems that arise from
it.

I was impressed with the fact that many of my concerns regarding inclusion, the
role the gallery should play in fulfilling the responsibility it has to the public, and the need
for the more appropriate contextualization of artworks were also concerns held by Ms.
Augaitis. In a number of ways this did not surprise me because, as previously stated, her
curatorial practices at the Walter Phillips Gallery had seemed alternative and socially-
concerned. However, the fact remains that while the VAG does have pressures applied to
it that result from its corporate funding sources, it is the main gallery in Vancouver and it
remains a public institution funded in part by the public and government sources that are
to work on behalf of the public. "And I think we have to look at our public institutions as
just that: public. They have to deal with all of society, across the board. Having said that,
the lack of examples where this has been accomplished is another thing altogether"
(Avalos in Wallis, 1990:187).

It is true that other, smaller venues are and should be (primarily because they tend
not to be corporately funded; hence are not responsible for echoing corporate sensibilities)
exhibiting the works of more alternative, in some ways more challenging and provocative
art. But the fact remains that most people, especially the broader perhaps less art-
informed audience, will visit large institutions like the Vancouver Art Gallery if they are
going to visit a gallery at all. It is, based on its size, marketing and funding, the literal
'centre' of the gallery system in Vancouver for many individuals and certainly the most
widely known among a non art-educated audience. As such, I feel that it has a

responsibility to provide that audience with some access to art that, if it doesn't appear there, will most likely never be seen by the vast majority of people.

David Avalos, co-founder of the Border Arts Workshop, and artist: formerly in residence at the Centro Cultural de la Raza (1978-88), asserts that part of what keeps certain artists out of these Institutions is indifference; indifference on the part of the public and those making the decisions about what gets seen. "They prefer indifference; that's very powerful...indifference" (176). But are they indifferent? Or is it simply a choice to keep certain artists and artistic practices outside the 'centre'?

Lucy Lippard (1990, 1996) maintains that certain kinds of artists remain 'unknown'. She believes, as do I, that larger, more prominent galleries keep groups of artists, especially women and people of color, in that 'unknown' position for political and economic reasons. "This goes on, and...has gone on in very different ways for years. I've been around for thirty years, watching, and the fact remains that [in a contemporary context] the distance between dominant culture and "minority" culture has not closed that much" considering the fact that certain groups of artists in a contemporary context remain in that 'unknown' space (Lippard in Wallis, 1990:181). And it is easy to come to the conclusion that large art institutions keep them there purposefully because "the information, the art, is there to be known and institutions are well equipped to know" they just choose not to (181). I asked Daina Augaitis whether she felt this statement was fair.

> Daina: Well, I think that there are artists who choose to work outside the system. Their art is about engaging communities more concretely and specifically. For them it's not about speaking through an institution, it's about speaking directly with an audience. So just because they aren't in the institution doesn't mean they are purposefully being kept out. They may choose to be outside and occupy an important position in the community. This is, of course, not always the case (Interview: October 24, 1996).

And more often than not, I would argue this is in fact not the case. As Lippard recounts

I know people who have said no to shows, who told the curators to go fuck themselves, but they're few and far between. [And the reason they choose not to participate is] [b]ecause of politics and general principles: not the principle "I will never be in a museum [or gallery], but a principle about what the show is, who the people who are doing it are, who's paying for it, what the ideology behind it is, and how art and artists are going to be used in it (Lippard in Wallis, 1990:182).

A case in point was related to me by Alfred Quiroz, an artist, trained art educator and Associate Professor of Art in the Art Department at the University of Arizona, whom I encountered while doing research at the University this past summer.

Quiroz is a second generation Mexican-American, descending from self-named Mexicans and Yakis; a self-proclaimed political artist whose work reveals his intent to create art manifesting a sense of how politics, history, and personal experiences combine with art to deal with and make sense of life issues. He told me stories of how he has turned down a number of art exhibition opportunities for precisely the reasons cited by Lippard, including the CARA exhibition - Chicano Art Resistance and Affirmation: Active Artists 1965 - 1985. According to Quiroz, CARA Organizers invited him to participate in the show - to choose a work to be included. When he presented them with his chosen piece they said "Not this. We can't have this. This isn't....Chicano enough" (Interview: July, 1996) He continues, "Well that really floored me. Not Chicano enough. What, were they kidding? What was it, too German? I figured out that they didn't want me, they didn't want my art. They wanted a stereotype and I told them [where to go]" (Ibid). Quiroz proclaims, "I don't want to be considered a *Chicano artist*. It's too easy for art categorized in this way to become type-cast. I am an artist. I am also Chicano. I refuse to have my art assigned a category based on the colour of my skin. Many other Chicano artists who feel fine about being categorized, who maybe even capitalize on the fact that ethnicity is "in" right now, felt I was being a traitor. To my race and to my heritage. But

that's not it. I don't need to be pigeon-holed, told where I fit, and given a soap-box to tell the world who I am" (Ibid).

In our interview Quiroz (1996) discussed how such "racist categories" were a topic of discussion at the 1992 DBAE (Discipline Based Art Education) Conference that he attended in Austin, Texas.

> You can call my art *Chicano Art,* you can "insert" it under the guise of Multi-culturalism. But make no mistake, it's racist and it's bullshit. That whole ideology is part of that "let's feel good and pretend we're not racist" thing that acts as a band-aid solution and gives people an escape hatch so that they don't have to deal with the real issue. [That being,] that categorization of this nature...in the art world, in the art curriculum, is racist. It's as racist as you can get. We've gone from being coloured people to people of colour. Very little has changed in terms of the ideology and the exclusion that accompanies it. What has changed is that a preposition has been added along the way, one that allows a hell of a lot of people to feel better, to breathe a little easier (Interview: July, 1996).

I asked Alfred Quiroz for some clarification regarding what characterizes *Chicano Art.* His response was that it has a tendency to manifest four recurring components or thematic concerns: a relationship to or with the Catholicization of Mexico, the Mexican Revolution, the Aztec History of Mexico, and the urban. I asked whether his work manifests any of these criteria. "Sure, in lots of ways. Look at "Novus Ordo" (acrylic on mahogany, 1993), "Allá en el Rancho Grande (Over the Big Ranch)" (#13 in the Medal of Honor Series, oil on canvas and masonite with mixed media, 1990), "Jefferson Sows the Seeds" (oil on canvas, 1995-6)" [these] among many others" (Ibid. See Plates #1-3). But just because

> I don't choose to be, or accept being, categorized doesn't mean that these things don't surface in my work. They are part of my life experience. As such, they're in my art. Often I deal with the politics of race and war because these are the things that kill people. They are like a cancer. But they kill all people...not just my people. And the death is not just a literal one. I deal with issues around illegal aliens, borders, manifest destiny. This is evidenced in my work "Muneefi$t De$tiny" which examines how

the Anglo-American's idea's around manifest destiny in Mexico are familiar to the Nazi's ideas on the same subject to Jews in Germany. Beyond that, in the past I did a series of 22 paintings based on people's past lives. But you see, the minute I accept the term or category of Chicano artist, avenues for expression become closed to me because there are many expectations that get put onto Chicano artists and what their work should look like and speak of. I think that some people are getting past that...this need to slot and shelve. And my rejection of this terminology attests to my belief in such a goal and the promise it offers. I believe that art is about thought and feeling. It helps people to know what and how you can utilize ideas and feelings and be in the world around us. For me, it can only be about this if I reject a place [or category] that will stifle me (Ibid).

Alfred Quiroz's rejection of categorization, one that he deems to be racist, compelled him to refuse to participate in a show that would have used his work in ways and in support of an ideology he found and continues to find unacceptable. Yet, as he himself acknowledged, in this rejection an opportunity to have his work gain exposure was lost.

It is apparent to most people in the art community that galleries and museums of art are making attempts, albeit limited ones in some case, to change some of the practices that keep certain types of art from being seen. There appears to be a recognition of the need for change. However, as Lucy Lippard noted "there still remains a chasm between recognition and intention, and action and actuality in terms of what the public is exposed to and what they get to see. Despite good intentions, many institutions just don't seem to want to give up the turf they have been staking out for many decades now" (Lippard: Interview, 1996). Yet she recognizes that as more activist artists, feminists and artists of colour make demands in conjunction with a public who is more involved and engaged, "we [as a community concerned with such things] are stronger than we realize...[and] broad based cultural participation is happening more frequently" (Lippard in Wallis, 1990:187). I think this will work to effect change. But the pressure on and scrutiny of the choices being made on the public's behalf by institutions of art needs to continue. As Lippard notes, "[y]oung artists don't know what the Art Workers Coalition was

demanding of the New York museums - things like a free day, nonwhite and women's representation...decentralization into neighbourhood centres, etc... All this sounds mysterious to people now, even though it was only twenty years ago" (187-188). And if, as Fuchs (1995) purports, the mission for art institutions is to ensure the prevention of forgetting, this situation needs rigorous address. If certain stories, narratives, moments and practices never get in the door of institutions capable of getting the word out to the largest numbers of people, if they never get represented, how will any one be able to remember that which has sedulously been denied voice and venue? And I concur with Lucy Lippard when she proclaims, "it seems to me that this is one place - [the galleries and museums] - where institutions can damn well do their job. They could at least document the alternatives as well as the mainstream, to tell the truth about [current and past] participation[s] in social movements, ...to educate students and the public about the cultural [and artistic] diversity that exists" (Lippard in Wallis, 1990:188).

Beginnings: Resistance by Artists in the 'Centre' to Institutional Practices - Daniel Buren and Barbara Kruger

As artists and art educators I feel that it is important for us to assume the task of reconciling opposing views regarding what galleries actually do at this time and what they might become capable of doing, recognizing that the space existing between these two antithetical positions might be collapsed with participative interaction. Many contemporary artists, including those deemed inside the 'centre', have sought to accomplish just this, addressing not only the institution, but the frame that accompanies it. Daniel Buren was one such artist. For art education such tactics and reframings of art and institutional apparatuses are important in that they can serve as models which can be

appropriated to similarly frame and reframe particular types of artistic practices in an arts education context.

For the reader it is important for me to explain why I choose to refer to Buren in the past tense when he is living and practicing today. First, the works I refer to are situated in the late 1960's and 1970's. This is the time period during which his questioning began. Referring to the work in the past tense frames his early work as a starting point for some of the questioning that is posited throughout the course of this thesis. Second, it is important that the reader not conflate 1995/6 critical and art theory with 1968-73 artistic practice. Third, the employment of Buren needs to be framed as a background to and of institutional criticism; that is to say, the ideas are not new in an art forum - this type of criticism and questioning has been occurring in art and artistic practice for some time, although not necessarily as frequently or rigorously in an art education sphere. Along this line, it is important to use these ideas and material as a starting point only because the work does not specifically address inclusion and exclusion in the context in which I am by writing about and situating it in an art education context.

Having stipulated that, it is also important to note that he like many artists at the time (primarily 1970's-80's) and since, Robert Smithson, Claes Oldenburg, Barbara Kruger and Jenny Holzer to name a few, were operating in the context of a set of developments that inspired a critique of the Institution by stepping outside of it.[1] This is evidenced in artists moving out of the gallery and the traditional patronage systems in order to subvert their dictates. The work and practices of Buren are useful to examine in the context of this thesis in that they act as a precursor to more contemporary practices.

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[1]Many of those practices were subsumed by the institution and insofar as the subsuming goes, it is important to recognize that conditions in 1996 remain much the same as they did in 1968. This means that the works, while they attempt to subvert the dictates of the patronage system, in fact do continue to get subsumed by it.

In October of 1968, Daniel Buren sealed off the Galleria Apollanaire in Milan. This sealing off was his exhibition. For the entire duration of the exhibition, access to the public was denied. He affixed vertical pieces of striped green and white fabric over the door, denying visitors entry and forcing them to contemplate not art, but the gallery and systems of patronage in general. It was intended as a polemic statement regarding the politics of patronage and the gallery space - a comment on the social contract and complacency that allows art to be created, sustained and exhibited in particular ways. His was a monologue in search of an argument (O'Doherty, 1986:29), a reactive art whose purpose was to expose the limits imposed on the work of art and its producer by its frame: artistic institutions and the network of institutional discourses which serve as controlling mechanisms for artistic reception and, hence, artistic production. Buren can be positioned as an artist who "conceives of the museum space as being corrupt: then moves to fill it [and in Buren's case, extend it] with something better, [or at the very least, an alternative]" (Taylor, 1995:9). The work of art evidenced, "takes issue with the presuppositions of all museums, but occupies its spaces in the apparently confident expectation" that in doing so, he could affect a change to and in the institutional framework (9).

Buren's work (refer to plates #4-6) was specifically formulated to question the frame, its limiting structure and the necessity of its existence. The Milan stripes closed the gallery in much the same way that public health officials close infected premises. The gallery is perceived as a "symptom of a disordered body social", but the toxic agent housed within its confines is not so much art as what contains it (O'Doherty, 1986:30).

In 1973 Buren said that there is not, and never has been, an art which is political and an art which is not. "All art is political and as a whole, art is reactionary". Institutions have and continue to advocate that some art is apolitical, as evidenced in art which is deemed 'aesthetic' as opposed to 'social'. When institutions do recognize something as being political the tendency is to do so "for one of two reasons: either to denigrate that

art or to hide the fact that all art is political" (Avalos in Wallis, 1990:187). Consequently, what is called for is the analysis of the formal, political and cultural limits within which art exists and struggles. While the "prevailing ideology and its associated artists try in every way to camouflage them, and although it is too early - the conditions are not met - to blow them up, the time has come to unveil them" (Buren, 1973). This 'unveiling' called for by Buren was an uncovering and scrutinization of the mechanisms at work that distort our viewing of art. These included the frame, systems of patronage, and the underlying social beliefs and values that inform these things and help to maintain them, as antiquated as they may be. Like the later works of such artists as Kruger, Holzer and others, Buren's work aimed to make visible the conductors, those things which guide or blind art-vision, of the viewing of art (Lyotard in Buren, 1981:58). His queries were directed at the processes of looking at the work of art. Asking some of the very questions posed earlier in this thesis. For example, what makes a painting a painting? A case in point would be the work *Within and Beyond the Frame* (1973) which asked: are these works paintings? Do they continue to exist as paintings when extended beyond the frame or galley space? What of their being suspended two stories above the street, much like banners or laundry might be? And if they continue to exist as such, why and what makes it possible for us to see them as paintings? Possible answers might be, when we are told they are, when the artist intended them to be, or when they are framed as such. When Marcel Duchamp took a urinal, identical to those found in any private home or public pissotiere, and called it a 'ready-made' or work of art, what had changed was the context in which it existed. It became contained, or framed. And in its containment, it became art.

Buren issued a challenge that was effected through two avenues that constituted his aesthetic style, the first being stripes (a sort of leitmotif, which has remained constant since 1965), and the studied placement of these stripes in various locations, most often in and around systems of patronage, be these galleries, museums, or other institutions or

containers of fine art practices. There are no horizontal bands clashing, mixing or colliding with the vertical stripes to produce tension, and this operates to create a total absence of conflict that eliminates mythification or secrecy (Buren, 1973:14). The second avenue issuing a challenge was evidenced in his hope that no meaning could be read into the subject matter due to their neutral or 'ground-zero' composition: the methodical arrangement of bands of equal width (8.7 cm), white bands alternating with bands of colour (Buren, 1973:13). The total absence of intended meaning aspired to make the work incidental to the site, directing and locating our attention at and onto its frame demonstrating that, "even the hallowed distinction between context and object can be overcome, and with it, of course, the aura of the museum[/gallery] and the art-object itself" (Taylor, 1995:9).

The installation of each work was subordinate to the awareness of site (Lyotard in Buren, 1981:57), to the constellation of architectural details such as walls, doors, windows, stairways, and so on. Buren meticulously inspected and prepared the site so that each installation was particular and particularizing, what Lyotard refers to as monadic, and therefore cannot exist elsewhere. The destruction of the work at the end of each exhibition was indicative of the fact that its inherent value lay *in situ*, as opposed to within the discourse of object status. This was analogous to the inseparability of the work of art from its context, exposing the frame which conditions the viewing of art.

A number of uncertainties emerge as I address the issues manifest in and raised by Buren's work. He questioned the situational conditions that affect the way art is seen, yet he himself questioned them situationally (Lyotard in Buren, 1981:57). Paradoxically, the institutional frame was necessary for his work to fulfill its function; that is to say that his work is reliant upon the existing discourse and required to be framed as a painting before it could call into question that framing. Only by locating itself as a painting was it possible for his work to question its condition. This leads to further complications: if the work is

framed as a painting then the spectator will, via a conditioned and socialized reflex and situatedness, expect it to render up its meaning. For the spectator limited to a single work, without the aid of the familiar institutional conductors, contexts and codes, it will not be obvious that Buren's works are not meant to function by meaning, but rather by positioning. That is to say that they are not meant to signify but to refer to (62). And for the spectator, even if this were clear, a different set of uncertainties emerge: do the works criticize, ornament, underline or perhaps symbolize their referent? The audience, unless previously familiar with or engaged with this particular type of questioning will be left in a vertiginous, unstable position[2], unable to respond to or decipher the work and its message without the help of text or an educated situatedness. However, one must also recognize that this is true of all art, more or less, inasmuch as one has to know it and be familiar with it in order to read or engage it. In the case of Buren, the issue gets further extended in that not only do we need to engage with the institutional conductors but rather, that these become a conscious and necessary part of the work: without these, the work does not operate. What remains problematic for the average spectator is that they are accustomed to looking at representational works of art where the context and conductors are invisible. Buren challenges the viewer to actively and critically engage the work and the systems that shape our thoughts, teachers, students, art consumers, about art in a particular North American, Eurocentred location.

Buren theorized about his work in order to elucidate its aim for his audience. The decoding of its message can be arrived at through the reading of the text. In this way his work transgresses discipline boundaries (ie: the visual work breaks down the gallery walls

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[2]I actually feel that this unstable position to which I refer is one of the most interesting aspects of the work, or most work of art for that matter. There is also an unstableness in other, seemingly less problematic works, such as Kruger's; however, because Buren does not ground the 'masses' (Kruger does this grounding by employing the visual and literal language of advertising) his work tends to get dismissed as opposed to worked through.

and the text breaks down the discipline boundaries). The text then also frames the work, affording the viewer with access. And, in order to gain a full reading of the work, one must, to a certain degree, be engaged with and by the language of art. This issues a challenge to the viewing audience and society in general. It reminds viewers that art, like any other discipline has a language of its own that must be learned. To many people, Buren's work might seem silent; silent in that for them the work may not speak, at least not in the way a representational work speaks to them. To a degree, the work operates as a mute presence situating the viewer in the position of negotiation, forcing the viewer into an active relationship with the work of art. This is very different from the ways in which most representational works operate: you stand in front of them, they tell you something that is generally familiar and the engagement with them is often passive. Buren's art only starts to work when a viewer recognizes that there are no easy answers. Certain types of work are predicated on the necessity of knowing, to a certain degree, a type of language - a language rooted in art, and your ability to engage that language. And yet there is a constant resistance manifesting itself; a resistance to learning that language. Yet we learned the language of science and math, etc..., so why shouldn't we learn the language of art? Ironically, we all engage the language of art all the time - every time we watch a Hollywood movie, or go shopping in the supermarket, every time we look at a magazine ad. So why the resistance to engage with works operating under the auspices of 'art'? Buren revealed that to read other kinds of art, involves challenging our preconceived ideas and that makes us very uncomfortable because we get cut loose from the reassurances and safety that the dominant culture and ways of looking provide us with. The language that Buren employed; one that breaks down discipline boundaries and conventional expectations, upset the status quo. Moreover, it takes work to be active. And this work demands an active participation. A reciprocal interaction between the work and the viewer. If one chooses to engage it, a fuller, richer, more situated and contextualized

understanding of the work is arrived at. This is not unlike strategies employed by writers like Gloria Anzaldúa who chooses to write her books in both English and Spanish, with both languages wrapping around one another, moving within and across boundaries that have previously been, and for the most part continue to be, rigorously defined, protected and maintained. She asserts that, "ethnic identity is twin skin to linguistic identity. I am my language (and)...until I am free to write bilingually and to switch codes without always having to translate...and as long as I have to accommodate the English speakers rather than having them accommodate me, my tongue will be illegitimate" (Anzaldúa, 1987:59). This challenge of the dominant practices and accepted paradigms is not unlike the work of Buren. Both are attempting to unglue and abnegate the apparatus that maintains the necessity for discipline boundaries and to create a new frame of reference and reading. Yet, in the case of Buren, this frame seems, to some degree, beyond critique because it is autonomous and excluded from the site and the inquiry. Buren saw the existing institutions and their respective discourses as interrupting and distorting the reception and production of the work of art, but he neglected to address the possibility that his text, which essentially substitutes one frame for another, does likewise.

Additionally, difficulties arise when the artist considers him/herself to be the sole agent of revelation, "encouraging the world's systems to vocalize themselves through his constant stimulus" (O'Doherty, 1986:30); this effectively returns readers/viewers to the artist-as-omnipotent-genius myth. The striped works then become an icon, a signatory monogram, a heraldic logo. Yet, despite their intended absence of meaning, Buren's work have become invested with meaning through context, time and repetition. They have become symbolic, indicative of a particular commentary about the limiting and confining framework of art that exists and continues to be held in esteem and perpetuated, so that their text is their context. Through this and his extensive exhibition in and around

institutions of patronage, they have become synonymous with a universal symbol of art, a sign declaring 'art is/was here', and an emblem of artistic consciousness.

By drawing our attention to the site or the frame, Daniel Buren's work, in its own particular capacity, revealed the need for a rethinking and reevaluation of the existing discourses that serve to exclude and mystify. His striped pieces of fabric have become emblematic of the frame, perhaps themselves framing the frame, altering and colouring our perceptions of that space as belonging to the world. Like other discursive works seeking to deconstruct dominant art practices and situate these and artists in a more socially-contingent realm, Buren's works have been absorbed by the very system of high art that they sought to expose and criticize. Perhaps more than anything, Buren has underlined the inevitability of a frame, that which forms the basis of a shared understanding of the work of art.

Buren's work makes present to us the fact that a system of shared understanding is indeed necessary and desired from a European/North American perspective, recognizing that the museum itself is a western construct. And while I have been struggling with notions of inclusion I have become bound up in an unresolvable dilemma, unresolvable at the present time in the present situation; that being that all history, which includes that of art, needs to be a process of selective containment and inclusion, otherwise chaos ensues. However, there are alternative histories that can be presented to counter the dominant, official version and an effort must continually be made to open up avenues that afford more artists the opportunity to have their work seen, read and engaged with[3]. So, having

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[3]While I will explore the idea of alternative histories in more depth during this chapter, this is an important concept. I support alternative histories and the looking at alternative types of art and artmaking practices that acknowledge their contingency and their own making even while they are telling themselves. These practices make us conscious of history as a rhetorical device even as they operate. This would not be unlike a 'Brechtian' (Laskarin) history.

come to that conclusion, Buren's work serves to underline the fact that we must constantly be aware of context and the mechanisms at work that have previously and to some extent unavoidably had, and continue to have, an agenda when making the selections.

Hence, Buren's work functions in a number of ways. For those who are actually familiar with and engaged with the work of avant-garde artists, his work serves as a reminder that much of the work in the '60's and '70's that sought to expose a system has now been subsumed by that very system...and it reminds us of the power of that system. His work also serves to make us aware that the context and the presentation of works must constantly be scrutinized and questioned.

Many other artists continue to subject the institution, the frame of the traditional art museum/gallery space and the discourses and ideologies that these privilege to scrutiny and rigorous critical analysis. This is very much indicative of a reconstructive postmodern construct and it purports the idea of art being part of the everyday world[4]. Barbara Kruger is another such artist. Through her work she

> opens up avenues beyond those allowed by the current consensus of critical [visual] forms. [The text/images] afford a way of creating new models, new identities, and new options for movement. [They] ...demonstrate alternative capacities to generate ambiguous, complex, and experiential forms of knowledge which are collective and cultural but not equitable with bourgeois norms - this is stressed as a basis for broad political change. While often this political meaning [may] not be explicit, it is encoded in the images of resistance and renewal which structure the secondary or allegorical level of meaning in these images/texts (Wallis, 1987:xvii)

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[4]I situate the 'everyday' in the tradition of the 'Soviet Bauhaus' - a combination of ideas/practices emerging via the populist programs initiated after the Revolution in the Soviet Union and at the Bauhaus school in Germany. It witnessed the blurring of boundaries traditionally separating art and craft, and the materials deemed appropriate for the creation of 'art', setting the tone for a movement of artists involved in the creation of more hybrid art forms. It also advocated unveiling art as political and social.

In her work, she merges marketable categories such as advertising with discipline regulations dictated by photography, disrupting the traditional normative territory. Her work is also indicative of storytelling, she herself operating as artist and allegorist simultaneously, collapsing these categorizations and synthesizing them to become one in the same. As with the storyteller, "the allegorist does not invent images, but confiscates them. [S]he lays claim to the culturally significant, pos[ing] as its interpreter. And in [her] hands the image becomes something other...[as she] adds another meaning to the image" (Owens, 1984:204). Her images reveal visuals and text, arrested from their familiar context, bound to and by social and moral norms, hegemony, patriarchy and tradition, disrupting their meanings by recontextualizing them. And "insofar as [the employed] texts correspond to certain strategies of picture-making in contemporary art and are concerned with the construction and deconstruction of cultural representations, they are [above all] and inescapably allegorical...they are texts which say one thing and mean another" (Wallis, 1987:xiv). In this way, "the recovery...of 'hidden' knowledges or resistances feeds our understanding of the nature and variety of cultural and social oppressions as well as the means for their reversals" (xvii) as the work opens up fissures in what would otherwise be the seamless surface of photographic representation, deviating from the etymological derivation of photography as 'light writing'. They exist, as images and allegories, not unlike a visual palimpsest. The traces of what came before are sedulously present, literally and figuratively. A second layer of meaning lies behind both visual and text, so that the language and the image are read through another, one that came before, in a different context. This alternative context speaks of very different concerns and sensibilities, aesthetic, political,' social, ethical and "the relationships take place under conditions in which the central terms are constantly shifting" (Wallis, 1987:xvi). In her mixing of discursive and non-discursive languages, both visual and literal, Kruger employs "the strategic use of stereotyped expressions [to]...expose stereotypical thinking; [this]

attempts [to] introduce a break into the fixed norms of the Master's confident prevailing discourses" (Trinh, 1992:138). In this way then, Barbara Kruger locates her work in a forum that seems somewhat familiar and accessible; that being, work that is situated in an advertising context and located in/on public spaces such as billboards, T-shirts, shopping bags, etc... rather than showing only within the gallery space exclusively. She recognizes that for most viewers nothing is 'valid' "if it is not dispensed in a way recognizable to and validated by them" (138). By providing some way in, a familiar entrance by which to gain access, she lures the viewer in and then proceeds to subvert and challenge preexisting, hegemonic constructs. For art educators, the work is particularly useful in that it issues a challenge not only about how art should look, but what it should be and is capable of saying, ideas about shelving and categorization, where 'high' art begins and ends and who decides, as well as raising questions about how to be in this world. Moreover, in terms of its literal situatedness, the work also serves to tear down a monolithic notion--that art belongs only on a wall, in a gallery or museum. Kruger's work is specifically designed to question the frame, its limiting structure while in the confines of a gallery or museum space, believing, like Daniel Buren, that the gallery is a symptom of a disordered social body. It is through "the rejection of such institutionalized and exclusionary models [such as the patronage system, language, etc...], by which one large group of humanity has for a millennia constructed its world, [which] forms the central allegory [of her work]" (Wallis, 1987:xv). Yet it is imperative to note that her work, like that of Buren, has also been subsumed by the system that it remains critical of. And, as Cornel West notes,

> the new cultural politics of difference are neither simply oppositional in contesting the mainstream (or *male* stream) for inclusion, nor transgressive in the avant-gardist sense of shocking conventional bourgeois audiences...This perspective impels these cultural critics and artists to reveal, as an integral component of their productions, the very operations of power within their immediate work contexts (ie: academy, museum, gallery). This strategy, however, puts them in an inescapable double bind - while linking their activities to the fundamental structural overhaul of these

institutions, they often remain financially dependent on them...For these critics of culture, theirs is a gesture that is simultaneously progressive *and* co-opted (West, 1990:19-20).

Yet despite this, or perhaps precisely because of this, by drawing our attention to the site of framing, Kruger underlines the potentialities of an alternative frame, one that allows art to take its place in the world, affording consumers of art with a site that promotes significant shared understanding of the work of art. This redefining of site, or frame, is not unlike moving teaching out of the classroom and into the community, where people live and work. Socially, this recognizes a dissolution of the specificity of site and the consequent fragmentation and disembodiment of ideas created by an establishment that at times seems to have nothing to do with educating people. When ideas and information enter the world, we witness the possibility for there to exist significant exchange; for the dissemination of information and knowledge across boundaries, and for the free-flow of information necessary for social equality.[5]

Her works (refer to plates #7-12) are indicative of all types of social issues— discrimination, the objectification of women, deterritorialization of space and language, power, phallocentrism, and racism, to name a few. All of these issues impact our lives in ways not dissimilar to those that touched/influenced the life of the artist. The works locate us in our world and provoke us to think, consider, question via the images which are "manifestly social texts, structured...and meant to engage the full participation of the receiver" (Wallis, 1987:xvi). The questions raised by the images, "questions of marginalization and displacement, of categorization and access, of use and misuse of

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[5]But one must still recognize that it remains art and the 'institution' extends beyond the walls of the institutional site. Consequently, until the majority can embrace some of the ideas advocated in this thesis that argue for the need for a reexamination and reformulation of the way we look at art, the hegemonic system which holds exclusionary, disengaged ideas and practices in place cannot be completely escaped.

criticism, of free speech and silencing are all questions which circulate around the issue of power and how it is implemented through the forms of language and representation" (Wallis, 1987:xv]. Kruger recognizes that in "reflecting on language(s) as a crucial site for social change, [alternative ways of articulating] should precisely challenge a compartmentalized view of the world [that relies on closures and building up/maintaining boundaries] and render perceptible the (linguistic) cracks [that exist]...while questioning the nature of oppression and its diverse manifestations. This is where disrupting the 'grand narrative'...becomes a means of survival" (Trinh, 1992:155).

Kruger's relationship to language is a negative one and she tears it apart, a practice which, in itself, is born from the avant-garde tradition. Yet, in her employment of language we witness a play with language rather than a complete rejection of it; she plays with the patriarchal, exclusionary structure, twisting and juxtaposing it, playing it out until it becomes more dynamic and speaks differently. This is important because I believe this 'play' can serve as a model for art education in that a play with traditional, confining concepts could be similarly worked with and through to a point of departure, where they are capable of speaking differently.

Kruger's images bring to light social and human imperatives and relationships, in this process of unnaming the familiar and reformulating, in a way that few other words or mediums could. Her simultaneous "engagement and disengagement with master discourses [as can be seen via her employment of seeming binaries such as high art and advertising] can indeed...be heightened by the [recognition] that our entry into the "master's house" continues to be a forced entry" (156). In her use of the language of the patriarchy, "language masquerading as convention or official speech is used to foreground the hidden social and political assumptions of everyday speech [and the] consideration of the [constructed, recontextualized] texts as allegories suggests that they contain not the false hope of a utopian wholeness and surety, but the opposite: an exposure of the

contradictions of our social mores" (Wallis, 1987:xv). Moreover, by appropriating the structure used in an advertising context the works reveal that while this system of visual and literal communication is used everyday in almost every facet of our daily lives, seemingly making access to information easier and more coherent, in fact such a system operates to "encourage certain readings of that information and structure into their systems of misrepresentations, exclusions and silences" (xv) in concurrence with the power agenda of those whose best interests it serves to maintain the hegemonic, exclusionary practices and ideas imparted to the masses via this and other systems.

I maintain, in accordance with many others, that Kruger's work is interesting for both its aesthetic and social qualities. Often, the size of her work interests students; partially this can be attributed to its 'in-your-face' quality, and the fact that its presence in our everyday world cannot be ignored, but more than that, for its graphic and confrontational design (ie: her stark black and white images indicative of an 'in your face' genre evidenced in socially motivated genres, juxtaposing of image and confrontational, almost taunting text). Her use of what Bruce Nauman calls 'large language' recognizes that the viewer is not really a reader but rather, is a passer-by, a driver, a walker. Consequently, 'large language' "pares 'reading' down to 'seeing'...and it becomes a 'thing'" (Nauman, 1994:186). He accords this 'thingness', this 'large language' that is seen rather than read, with the ability to make language solid: in doing so, it prevents intimacy, forming a block which leaves the reader out in the world where there is a community, as opposed to 'small language' which removes us from the contingencies the world provides and asks us to internalize, miniaturizing and decontextualizing the reader from the world 'outside' the text. 'Kruger's work, in concurrence with these ideas, encompasses 'large language'. As such it contains a community of people and spills out into the world (186).

Kruger's use of language and text is borne from a long and painful struggle with writing. In her work she puts expression and language on the political agenda creating a

space where politics of the personal afford women a voice out of necessity, offering up the possibility for interrogation...for a space indicative of strategized non-speaking disruption for the purposes of reformulation. Kruger relocates text into various non-traditional sites that extend beyond the conventional boundaries of language and culture, rupturing the patriarchal tautology and addressing the need for the activation of an alternate site. Her use of what linguist Roman Jacobson terms 'shifters' (I, me, you, we) supplant the notion of objecthood within a dialogue that engages the viewer in a manner in which they are unable to "refuse the address of the work" (Linker, 1990). Such juxtaposing of language and signs further serve to confront homogeneous systems of ideology by resembling what has been called "the fascism of language. Language is legislation, speech is its codes...To utter a discourse is not, as is too often repeated, to communicate; rather, it is to subjugate...language - the performance of a language system - is neither reactionary nor progressive...it is, quite simply, fascist" (Foster, 1984:189).

Indicative of these sentiments, her images can be said to operate on three distinct yet mutually inclusive levels; a) images as a signifying system, necessarily socially contingent, b) images as indicative of an immeasurably capricious system, thus an agent of the state apparatus, and c) images as a pedagogical tool, an educatory mechanism. Thus pronounced as a linguistic economy, a grammatology of images, and as an 'active verb' of a larger ideological discourse, it follows that Kruger decries and strategizes language as a revolutionary weapon (Roud, 1970 as noted by Rosenberg, lecture, 1993).

It appears that Kruger seeks to 'turn back against the enemy' the weapon with which, fundamentally, the maintainers of the status quo attack: language. She explores the notion that "[l]anguage is the illusion of community. The dictionary stores a 'common' language, and a system of conventions; in doing so [it] affirms the dominant language, and the power-source of conventions" (Nauman, 1994:105). In her exploration of language and its uses and misuses, Kruger's work confirms that there is no way of checking how a

person employs language and how they mean for it to speak. Others using the same words might be thinking/meaning entirely different things to the way that the words are used by another. In this way then, she reveals that language has been providing a camouflage of 'public': using language as a cover. Her works propose an unlearning of "the reactive language that promotes separatism and self-enclosure; essentializing a denied identity requires more than willingness and self-criticism": it requires a challenge (Trinh, 1992:140). This challenge then becomes not to offer up a mere rejection of this language..."but rather to displace it and play with it, or to play it out" (140) as is evidenced in her work. She extracts images and language from one context and puts them forward in an alternative context precisely in order to play that meaning against the system itself from where the images originated. This "liberation opens up new relationships of power, which have to be controlled by practices of liberty. Displacement involves the invention of new forms of subjectivities, of pleasures, of intensities, of relations, which also implies the continuous renewal of a critical work that looks carefully and intensively at the very system of values to which one refers in fabricating the tools of resistance " (Trinh, 1991:19).

Her visuals are not merely vehicles for self expression, nor simply images within whose confines fictional edifices extracted from their socio-political context are to be erected. Rather, the work exists as a historically specific apparatus possessing the faculty to construct, constitute, revivify and disseminate particular forms of knowledge and information. Domesticated, materially and conceptually, by predilections and exactions of bourgeois ideology, those latent and insidious forms which purport and perpetuate cultural hegemony, Kruger, alongside other contemporaries, reveals that visual art can serve as a puissant and cogent opponent. And, as an ideological apparatus, her work exists as a political mechanism, a structural site within which a critical agenda can be articulated.

Denoting a discerned intelligence, Kruger's images, absorb, and in turn reflect, a diversity of intellectual preoccupations: literary and linguistic, psychological and experimental, commercial and alternative, political and sociological. Her images enunciate what is already known to be true: that the direction of meaning is in the hands of those who control language production, dissemination and reception.

Through the work of Barbara Kruger one witnesses the employment of the visual space to create a discursive environment, a political and conjectural field of action, into a mode intended to provoke and incite. The images advocate the abandonment of particular ways of using systems of language, meaning and authorship via a complex and didactic anti-narrative. If one can successfully be extracted from the banal, self-referential, apolitical (paradoxically political in this apoliticity) and stagnant system which "normalizes a particular point of view, petrifies a specific ideology as a historically sanctioned hegemonic norm," (Laskarin, lecture, 1993) then and only then can there exist a deconstruction of the site which perpetuates a binary discourse privileging patriarchy and 'the centre'.

In the work there is both a literal and metaphoric dissolution of the specificity of site. Here there is an indication revealing the possibility for significant exchange, for the dissemination of meaning, language and knowledge across boundaries, for the construction of female subjectivity, and for the slippage and ungluing of fixed locations to resonate the necessity for social and cultural parity and equality. Kruger's work relies on the image as a reflective surface for the spectator's own ideology. The act of juxtaposing, whereby visually analyzing the relationship between the repression and commodification of women and sexuality as opposed to more 'conventional' forms of repression, serves to turn seemingly isolated connotations into commentary. She does not actually teach an interpretation; rather, it is the spectator's own socially conditioned prejudices that are to

furnish the lesson (Levitin, 1986 as discussed by Rosenberg, lecture, 1993), and I believe that she intends and anticipates this. In her employment of what I, in concurrence with others (Owens, 1984, Wallis, 1987), have called the allegorical text juxtaposed against the image, she offers up work which affords "particular importance to the critic or interpreter, at the expense of the author or creator. This...suggests that when we read the [visuals and] writings of contemporary artists - many of which employ allegorical forms - we are participating in a critical response in which real personal and cultural events are used to enlarge the ethical, social and political meanings they suggest" (Wallis, 1987:xv). In this way then she argues in the face of the reader or viewer, requiring them to contribute to and recognize their part in the making of meaning. Her work reveals that meaning doesn't exist and rely solely in the image/text relationship; rather, Kruger forces an acknowledgment of and critical engagement in and with the notion that the reader is also a maker of meaning.

In many of her images Kruger opts to explore the visual images of women, as delineated within the body politic of mass culture via advertising, as sedulously being one of object identity. This 'identity' is articulated primarily by a white, patriarchal, capitalist, dominant ideology manifest in Western culture. In the images "[t]he question of gender...is opened up in a multiply layered way. The inquiry into identity provides [us] with an example. [T]hrough (re)appropriation of the inappropriate(d) body - the relations indirectly built up between the problematics of translation; the multiple (re)naming ...and the plural expropriation (owning, selling, humiliating, burning, exposing, glorifying) of women's bodies is explored. Translation, like identity, is a question of grafting several cultures [and ways of thinking and being] onto a single body" (Trinh, 1992:144). Consequently, these images of women are revealed and designated as codes and significations which are indicative of meaning that has become reified in society: man has

elected woman as 'other', that is, she serves as a problematic icon that is measured against an arbitrarily defined 'norm' (Laskarin, lecture, 1993). All too often the position of women has culturally and historically been that of the signified: the passive, silent figure upon which male desire is projected - and a peculiar fantasy it is, for it is comprised of an intermingling of fetishization, eroticism, fear and hatred, that which "oscillates between the forever threatening and the perpetually desired" (Barzman in Rosenberg, lecture, 1993). This phenomenon has attempted to keep women silent, confused, insecure, frightened, dependent and endeavoring to become or remain desirable, or, as John Berger describes it, constantly in a state of 'survey'.

Hélène Cixous - referring to a Lacanian/Freudian view - writes that woman is said to be 'outside the symbolic'...that is, outside language, the place of law, excluded from any possible relationship with culture and cultural order (Cixous, 1990:349). This is what she refers to as "the lack of the lack", that is, she does not enjoy what orders masculinity - the castration complex (Cixous, 1990:350). In many images then, woman is perceived as the "bearer of the lack", or the bleeding wound which symbolizes a primal male fear of castration, and therefore, she is the focal point of anxiety. This in combination with woman's lack of an assigned 'speaking' location is where we find Kruger, and a multitude of others, situating herself, exploring the ramifications of this 'fetishism' within an economic, political and sociological context. In her work Kruger explores the position accorded to 'woman' as images of women in combination with co-opted, patriarchal text rupture, dismantle, and threaten the dominant ideological male forces that 'signify'.

In response to this Laura Mulvey (1984) posits that in order to escape this ferment, the male unconscious chooses one of two avenues: 1) a demystification of the woman, whereby the male position of dominance is re-established upon her "devaluation, punishment or saving of the guilty object", a sadistic solution, implying a narrative

necessitating closure, and 2) fetishization of the object herself, a form of over-valuation, as in cult status, or the substitution of a fetish object. By definition, sadism dictates the need for a narrative - a teleological course in which the authoritative voice may become veritable emerges intact in a position of dominance. Kruger, along with others like Cindy Sherman, attempts to destabilize and subvert the comfortable, dominant 'looking' position, offering up an alternative in its place where the power of the gaze resides as much in the subject of the look as with the looker themselves. She recognizes that "where there is power there is resistance"; not a singular notion of resistance, but rather "a plurality of resistances, which play the multiple roles of advisary, target, support, or handle in power relations" (Foucault, 1978:95). Her images challenge viewers to make a choice; to recognize that power, in this case the power of the gaze, is relational and in this recognition it becomes possible to redefine its terrain.

The British Pop Movement, Richard Hamilton et al., visually purported that capitalism forces the majority, whom it exploits, to define their own interests as narrowly as possible by imposing a false standard of what is and is not desirable. Therefore, woman as commodity object must fulfill a socially constructed role in order to be desired; the exchange value takes place within a phallocentric definition (phallus being, in this case, what Lacan refers to as the 'transcendental signifier') and the woman adhering to that definition. What this has traditionally dictated is the creation in the female psyche of a cooperative, exhibitionist position in accordance with the set standard, or a feeling of guilt, alienation and destructive self-abhorrence for the failure to attain it. Kruger recognizes that the economic foundations of power and dominance have been created and perpetuated by a phallocentric, white ruling class, which has a vested interest in maintaining the status quo. She visually articulates that the myth of patriarchy and bourgeoisie is centrally fueled by a media which defines rather than reflects an inclusive

mass culture. The images reveal the implicit and blatant messages that women receive through the media - the promise of 'reward' for their exhibitionism. Women conform to hegemonic standards revolving around sex, wealth, beauty and silence. The implication is manifest: if women submerge themselves in this construction indicative of the 'desire woman' they will reap the reward for their objecthood. She asserts through her images that women are conditioned to define themselves and exist in accordance with how men 'see' them. If power cannot be realized through the channels of the patriarchal status quo, then they are encouraged to seek power via osmosis- by complying with and operating within the parameters designated by those who possess power.

Barbara Kruger ruptures the tradition of male subjectivity by confronting, subverting as opposed to inverting, and fragmenting the 'narrative' that seeks to perpetuate the traditional role of the male viewer as signified. The possibility of female subjectivity is investigated via a process of examining their out-of-position context. The construction of the anti-narrative, a narrative operating in opposition to the officially accepted and sanctioned one, is indicative of her refusal to accept standardization, not only of women but of the 'majority', and she actively attempts to construct a resolute cultural text, revealing and insisting upon the possibility for there to emerge a polyphony of alternative voices. Kruger also invites a patriarchal, voyeuristic gaze, through the use of the images and 'language', visual and otherwise, of advertising, but disengages it simultaneously. By invoking a temporal and spatial dislocation within the images, what is portrayed is unavailable to that gaze via her refusal to accord a fixed, 'stable' location from which the viewer is capable of exerting power as it has been traditionally defined and situated. By this very disintegration, the spatial uncertainty creates an instability in which the viewer is unable to control, or at times, fully access, the traditional 'narrative'. When control is denied, closure and the return to the 'familiar placehook' becomes obscured. As Kruger

imposes text onto the apprehended images, all of which are appropriated from media sources, she accuses, addressing an elusive force, and attempts to offer the images up as an ironic renunciation of standard signification. The concern revolves around semiotics and the power designated to the 'science of signs', and the ways in which these figure into contemporary culture, particularly pertaining to images of woman and those embraced by the all encompassing power of a hegemonic norm; the images delineate and subvert the 'dominant social directives' (Rosenberg, lecture, 1993).

At this point, especially given that I offer this tactic used by Kruger as an exemplar to be employed in an arts education context, it is necessary to get at this idea of 'woman' and the implications embedded in the use of the term. I employ the term because I believe it is important to look at the writings concerned with its use. In addition, the ideas behind its use are important to pull apart, as is the looking at and deconstructing the way women have been constructed in the world, in written and visual works. However Kruger, again like others, has used the term as an access point, as a code, assuming that the word 'woman' is a universal and there is the implication that its use affords access to all women who have been situated in a place on the margins because of their gender. But out of the use of this term what happens is that there is an assumption that all women are "woman-identified". "The women's movement has perpetuated a myth that there is some common experience that comes just 'cause you're women" (Reagon, 1983:360). In the end, however, this strategy is exclusionary and restrictive because the word 'woman' and all that it is 'supposed' to embody and represent is **not** universal and to think of it as such is just another means of categorization, because what of the women who do not see themselves in this term 'woman'? And it happens. As Bernice Johnson Reagon observed,

> So here you are and you grew up and you speak English and you know about this word "woman" and you know you one, and you walk into this "woman-only" space and you ain't there. Because "woman" in that space

does not mean "woman" from your world. It's a code word and it traps, and the people that use that word are not prepared to deal with the fact that if you put it out, everybody that thinks they're a woman may one day want to seek refuge. And it ain't no refuge place! And it's not safe! (360).

I think that it is important not to use this word 'women' as a haven. As a sanctuary. To operate under the assumption that anything is universal. And I believe we as artists and educators embark on a dangerous path if we continue to categorize and isolate in reaction to an exclusionary system that has kept people out of the meaning-making process solely because of sex, race, sexual identity, etc... I believe that we need to focus more on breaking down the system that excluded. This is not achieved by offering up more categorizations that effectively continue to dichotomize, reproducing the same problematic situation as the one that already exists.

Having noted this, while I do feel Kruger employs images of women in such a way that implies there is universal access to the category of 'woman' just because one is female, I feel that her work is extremely successful in that it does manage to visually articulate the invisible power (the 'they' that dictates morality, sexuality, family values, etc...(Laskarin, lecture, 1993) that is reinforced via signs, symbols, visuals and stereotypes and reveals them, as they attempt to function as a strategy of truth-making. "In our society dominant discourse tries to never speak its own name. Its authority is based on absence. The absence is not just that of the various groups classified as "other", although members of these groups are routinely denied power. it is also the lack of any overt acknowledgment of the specificity of the dominant culture, which is simply assumed to be the all-encompassing norm? This is the basis of its power" (Ferguson, 1990:11). Kruger's work articulates this 'unspoken norm', challenging its power and presence, disclosing its agenda. As alternative, counter-moments, her work reveals that, "different moments of a struggle constantly overlap and different relations of representations across 'old' and 'new' can be

made possible without landing back in dialectical destiny" (Trinh, 1991:3). And, as such, she designates a fixed place to those in the sphere of 'other'. When a silent, oppressed entity or group attempts to usurp the power structure, further components of silencing, or an insistence on an 'absence', all too often enters into the equation: by assigning them a peripheral place of unimportance, by an inundation with propaganda, and by assault. Through the work, "postures of exclusionism and of absolutism...unveil themselves to be at best no more than a form of reactive defense and at worst, an obsession with the self as holder of rights... - or in other words, as owner of the world" (Trinh, 1991:3). Kruger reveals that the struggle to perpetuate the progress of a 'new enlightenment' and to cultivate its natural evolution is just beginning (Rosenberg, lecture, 1993).

In her images we witness the employment of the visual space to create a discursive environment, a political and conjectural field of action; a mode intended to provoke and incite, socially. The works are constructed as alternatives. And while they

> appropriate and reproduce the language of the culture [Kruger] contest[s], it is clear that these confiscations function by doubling: to reject and shame the forms of dominant speech, to challenge the relative social positions of the [speaker/artist] and the [subject/viewer], and to resist the oppressive models of exclusion and control which shaped their pasts. By acknowledging and exposing the [language] that formed their communities, [artists like Barbara Kruger] are able not only to build on their historical traditions [by interjecting alternative ways of looking], but also to stand with others favoring communal culture, to turn away from an exclusively or unengaged theoretical sphere, and to embrace the necessity of social activism (Wallis, 1987:xvii).

Her images demand that we extract ourselves from this banal, self-referential and stagnant system which normalizes a particular point of view, and petrifies a specific ideology as a historically sanctioned hegemonic norm. Then and only then can we deconstruct the site which perpetuates a discourse privileging apathy. Perhaps via the employment of allegory

in this particular context we will come to a place where it "will no longer seem gratuitously fictive, but rather closely bound to historical and political necessity" (xvii).

Kruger's work also raises imperative questions and concerns regarding the canon. By ungluing the patriarchal structure of language and looking, a structure which is employed as the standard against which all other work is measured and/or excluded, the work reveals that as historically marginalized groups, insist on being heard and having their own visual and literal identity,

> the deeper, structural invisibility of the so-called centre becomes harder to sustain. The power of the centre depends on a relatively unchallenged authority. If that authority breaks down, then there remains no point relative to which others can be defined as marginal. The perceived threat lies partly in the very process of becoming visible. It becomes increasingly obvious, for example, that white...men have their own specificity, and that it is from there that their power is exercised. No longer can whiteness, maleness or heterosexuality be taken as the ubiquitous paradigm, simultaneously centre and boundary (Ferguson, 1990:10).

For art education this is an important construct to attempt to work through. The centre is being challenged, in a number of ways from a variety of communities evidenced via alternative and interdisciplinary practices. A good deal of contemporary artistic practice recognizes that "[w]hat is needed is distance from [the prescribed centre, from] conventional patterns of thought and discourse to plot the naturalizing of practices that have been culturally constituted, institutionally authorized and therefore, open to challenge" (Barzman, 1994:327). And the fact remains that "[t]he picture of a centre which feels itself seriously challenged [in some ways] is..evident in the demand for a return to the teaching of the traditional canon of 'great' works in the arts. In practice, of course, the great works under discussion almost all turn out to have been produced by white men. This is the corpus which we are expected to take as representing all of human culture" (10). This echoes observations previously made by bell hooks that this practice maintains

the desired structure of those in power. But the very fact that artists like Kruger and Buren, who are indicative of many others, are debating and challenging the canon indicates some hope for a restructuring to occur while simultaneously revealing "some of the problematic elements emerg[ing] alongside the opportunities offered by challenges to the centre. Critiques which call only for the admission of a somewhat wider variety of voices to the canon tend to leave many of its most fundamental assumptions unchallenged. Despite the intensity of the polemic, the function of the canon is not deeply threatened" by the demand that 'minority' or excluded artists be granted admission to it (10).

In previous pages it was pointed out that as Buren and Kruger subjected the institutional frame and apparatus to critique, their work was subsumed by the system they sought to deconstruct. This is also evidenced in the work of peoples of colour, artists like Wilfredo Lam, whose ethnicity may be central to their work but who easily become absorbed by the sophisticated and well-entrenched apparatus of Eurocentric scholarship. This is primarily due to the fact that "[t]he demand for admission to the canon remains a contradictory project, because it implies an acceptance of essential features of the existing structure. As Edward Said, a Palestinian, writes, those on the borders or margins can "read [them]selves into another people's pattern, but since it is not [theirs and there has never been room for unforced entrance]...[they] emerge as its effects, its errata. Whenever we try to narrate ourselves, we appear as dislocations in *their* discourse" (Said, 1986:140). What effectively happens is that as those who have not been a part of the 'centre' attain entry, those who do manage to attain it are those who have adopted some measure of that which has been prescribed all along. Because what happens is that this call for the inclusion of the 'difference' that has been excluded in the canon, is in reality often a call for sameness under the guise of difference.

Bernice Johnson Reagon spoke of this very concern, and her words provide a useful analogy. Institutions create a space, a 'barred room' if you will. And within this

space they decide that they only want certain types of art, and people making art, that have an agenda in accordance with or not too much different from their own, and they devise a set of arbitrary criteria upon which entrance is predicated. Reagon classified this criteria as having been 'named' or recognized as an "X-type". Right now what is happening due to some increase in people's awareness of human rights issues and concern with a more inclusive, open way of living and being, is that

> [i]f you're white and in the barred room and if everybody's white, one of the things [the Institutions] try to take care of is making sure that people don't think that the barred room is a racist barred room. So [they] begin to talk about racism and the first thing [they] do is say, "Well, maybe we better open the door and let some ['Other'] folks in the barred room. Then [they] think, "Well, how we gonna figure out whether they're X's or not?" Because there's nothing in the room but X's. [So they] go down the checklist. [And because these Institutions have been working on a mandate, sorting out for public opinion who they are they say], ..."If we can find [Other] folks like that we'll let them in the room". [But what has happened is that they] don't really want [Other] folks, [they] are just looking for [them]selves with a little colour to it. (Reagon, 1983:358-9).

What this reveals is that real changes are impossible without a questioning of the master(piece) discourse and ideas about what should and should not be included which forms the Institutional foundation that continues to exclude and relegate. As Toni Morrison [notes], resistance could begin with a questioning of the unspoken assumption of white, male, heterosexual identity which underlies the concept of the universal" (10). And this questioning which is purposed could begin in the classroom.

This brings us back to the fundamental question of what role the gallery/museum of today might play in society. More importantly, what role and responsibility do other institutions, such as schools whose function it is to introduce 'the best' of art and culture to students, assume and play? If indeed the aim is to present the 'best' of contemporary and past works of art, from our cultures and others we need to pin down how we are doing this and based on what criteria. A greatly needed step forward might be to recognize and

qualify that the 'best' is fluid, mutable, changeable, subjective. And further, that what gets positioned and framed in the gallery, and similar institutions accorded a sense of authority in the eyes of the larger community, tends to get done so erroneously, in a contemporary context. Often the works that get situated there are not necessarily gallery-type things. It is important to understand that particular works might be considered to be the 'best' of what curators, gallery owners, historians, etc... have seen and that the choices made are reliant upon this limited and limiting criteria. In the coarsest example, one might have a display of the 'best' of abstraction, but judgments of the 'best' are predicated upon notions of 'the best' that come straight out of the gallery/museum at this time, so it is all contemporary. In this instance what the public sees as and are told and perceive to be 'the best' is in fact not necessarily the best of abstraction. What they are actually exposed to is a sample of what the people making the decisions and doing the caring for of art believe to be the 'best' based on their exposure, and their standard which are, again, formulated in a contemporary context and are indicative of a very specific agenda, political, social and economic.

Conclusions

As evidenced through the work of Kruger and Buren, counternarratives and alternative practices of all kinds do enter "mainstream" society and culture. It is important to recognize that

> [o]ne of the great strengths of the existing structure is its capacity to absorb a constant flow of new elements. In any system based on consumption, new products..and styles must be perpetually supplied. Such flow is essential to its health and survival...[I]n fact,...a salient characteristic of dominant Western culture is its denial of repetition in favour of the rhetoric of constant progress, growth and change. The vital, independent cultures of socially subordinated groups are constantly mined for new ideas with which to energize the jaded and restless mainstream of a political and

economic system based on the circulation of commodities The process depends on the delivery of continual novelty to the market while at the same time alternative cultural forms are drained of any elements which might [significantly] challenge the system as a whole (Ferguson, 1990:11).

This raises further questions with regards to the challenge and the function it serves. While the structure referred to may indeed be strong and in some ways flexible, I would argue that the flexibility is merely a guise. The system remains inherently intact. How much can the "centre really [or willingly] absorb without having its own authority called into question?" (11). What comes of that questioning? A return to the rigidity of the standards of quality articulated by the 'masters'? Will the centre and the canon it advocates for the purposes of maintaining a power exerted through institutional frameworks permit itself to be dismantled?

Having spoken to Daina Augaitis I was left with a more positive outlook than the one I had subscribed to prior to our discussion. Because of, as opposed to in spite of, this I believe that in our current, North American context we must persist in the process of challenge and inquiry where these institutions are concerned. In doing so, we apply pressure that might produce a more inclusive, collective, public, accessible arena that will reflect our entire society as opposed to a small, elite portion of it. The fact remains that these institutions are supposed to be democratic. "They are [in part] funded by the taxes of everyone, and in principle at least, they're supposed to be working for everyone. [One of the jobs of artists, cultural/art advocates, activists and critics and art educators is to reveal] how inadequate they are [and have always been] in presenting the creative power of all people...[This] is something that should be done" (Avalos in Wallis, 1990:177).

While I don't have the answers to all of these questions posited at the start of and throughout this chapter, it is my belief that galleries and museums should be recognized as **beginnings,** as forums for thought as opposed to monuments indicative of 'the best',

which all too often gets translated into 'the only worthwhile' art. And as they change, to become more dynamic and inclusive, so must the public's awareness of art and the type of engagement being advocated here must be proportionally broadened as well. The recognition must also be made that galleries, museums and systems of patronage are only a small part of the change that must evolve, and they aren't even the main thing. One might argue that the main thing has to do with involvement, engagement with the world on a more critical level, and political activism.

Coalition Work: Implications for Art and Art Education

For art education, the work of Kruger, Buren, Quiroz and many others, undertaken for several decades, does underline the fact that images can serve as a starting point for what might be called coalition work in the classroom regarding looking, ways of seeing, what is being seen, how it is presented, by and for whom. And what all of this says about our world and how we have constructed our place in it. Such an undertaking would also afford a space whereby one might pull apart culturally articulated, entrenched and dictated ideas regarding how to be in the world, which as I maintained previously is one of the functions of art...to teach us how to be in the world, and how to perhaps be in it differently. I think that the employment of this type of tactic could cause the revolution in the way we look advocated by bell hooks. Looking differently at visual works, the world and how we are in it can help students to recognize that "[w]e've pretty much come to the end of a time when you can have a space that is "yours only" - just for the people you want to be there [because]...we have [to] finish with that kind of isolation. There is no hiding place. There is nowhere you can go and only be with people who are like you [and to desire this space, to teach people that this kind of space is desirable is not only racist

but]...is totally inadequate for surviving in [and enjoying a] world with many peoples" (Reagon, 1983:358).

Now coalition work might seem like a strange undertaking in an arts education forum, but in effect, it is not if one of the goals is to break down categorizations, discipline boundaries and restrictive, exclusionary expectations that keep visual works, people and the ability to look paralyzed and stagnant. The ability to look differently is contingent upon being able to think and see differently. This involves taking apart our expectations about how things should be and recognizing that this rigid place we have arrived at - this place which is all too often only capable of seeing things one way, dismissing them if they appear different, and problematic issuing a challenge to the safe position we have comfortably accepted and been worked into - keeps us confined, bound to and by ideas that are no longer desirable. We should be aware that these were prescribed by someone else according to an agenda that should no longer be adopted, accepted or sanctioned as the 'norm'. It has become critical for all of us to feel that this is our world, that we can see and be seen in it, "[a]nd that we are here to stay and that anything that is here is ours to take and to use in our image [and image-making process]. And [for our students] we need to watch that "our" - make it as big as [we] can...The "our" must include everybody...That's why we have coalitions. Cause I ain't gonna let you live [create and be seen] unless you let me [do the same]. Now there's danger in that, but there's also...possibility" (Reagon, 1983:365).

Plate #1 - Alfred J. Quiroz
Novus Ordo, Detail Right Panel
1993, Acrylic on Mahogany, 12' x 24'
(Photo courtesy of the Artist, Tucson, AZ)
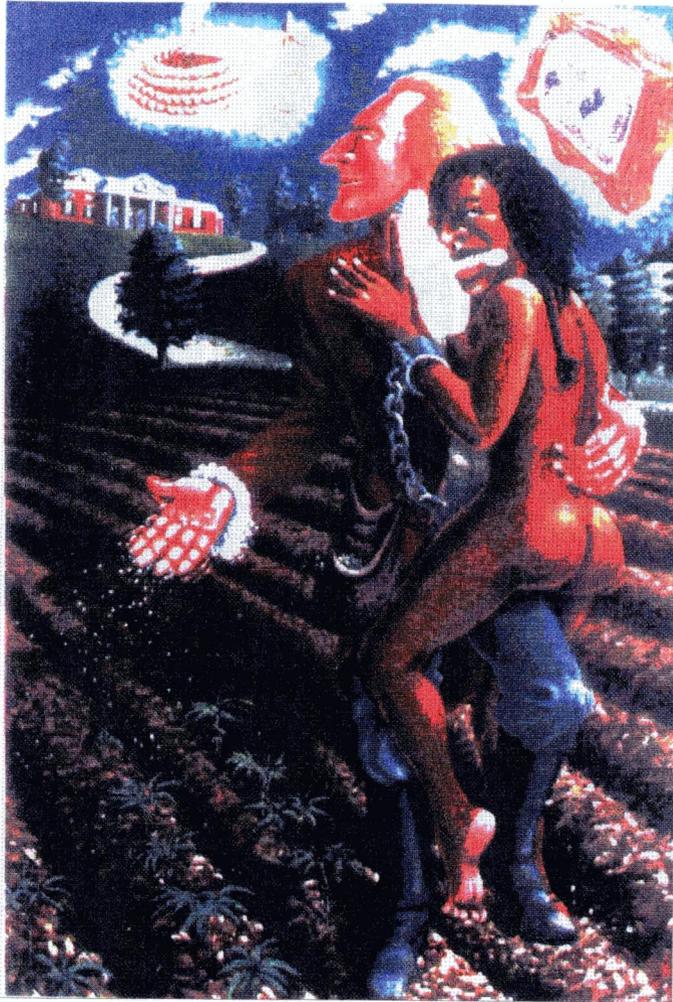
Plate #2 - Alfred J. Quiroz
Jefferson Sows The Seeds
1995-1996, Oil on Canvas, 72" x 48"
(Photo courtesy of the Artist, Tucson, AZ)
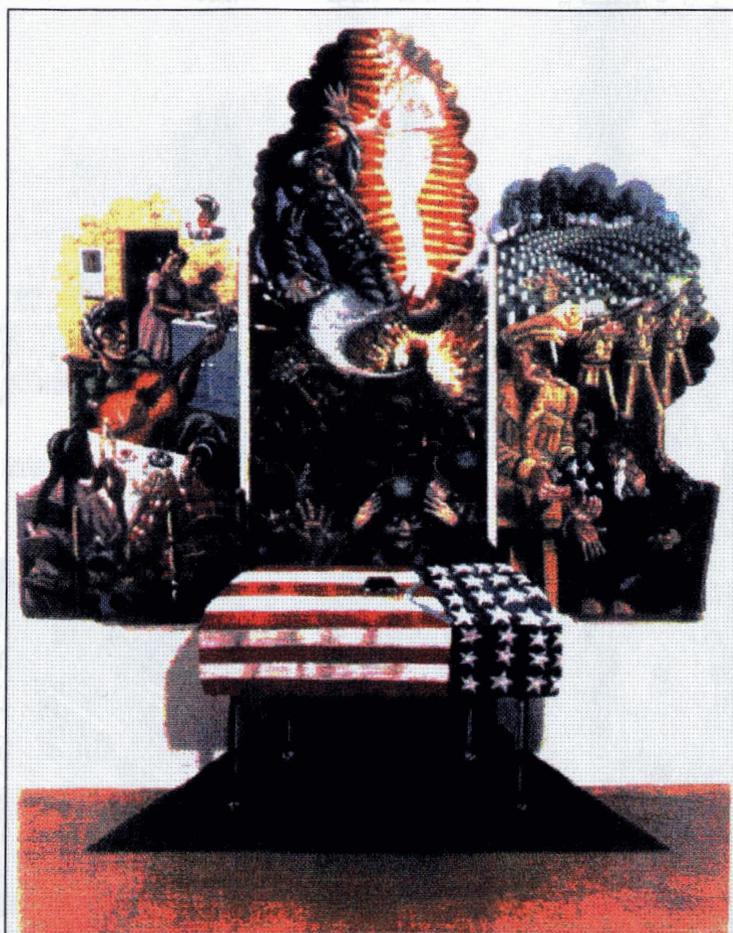
Plate #3 - Alfred J. Quiroz
Allá en el Rancho Grande (Medal of Honor Series #13)
Over the Big Ranch
1990, Oil on Canvas and Masonite with Mixed Media, 144" x 120" x 18"
(Photo courtesy of the Artist, Tucson, AZ)
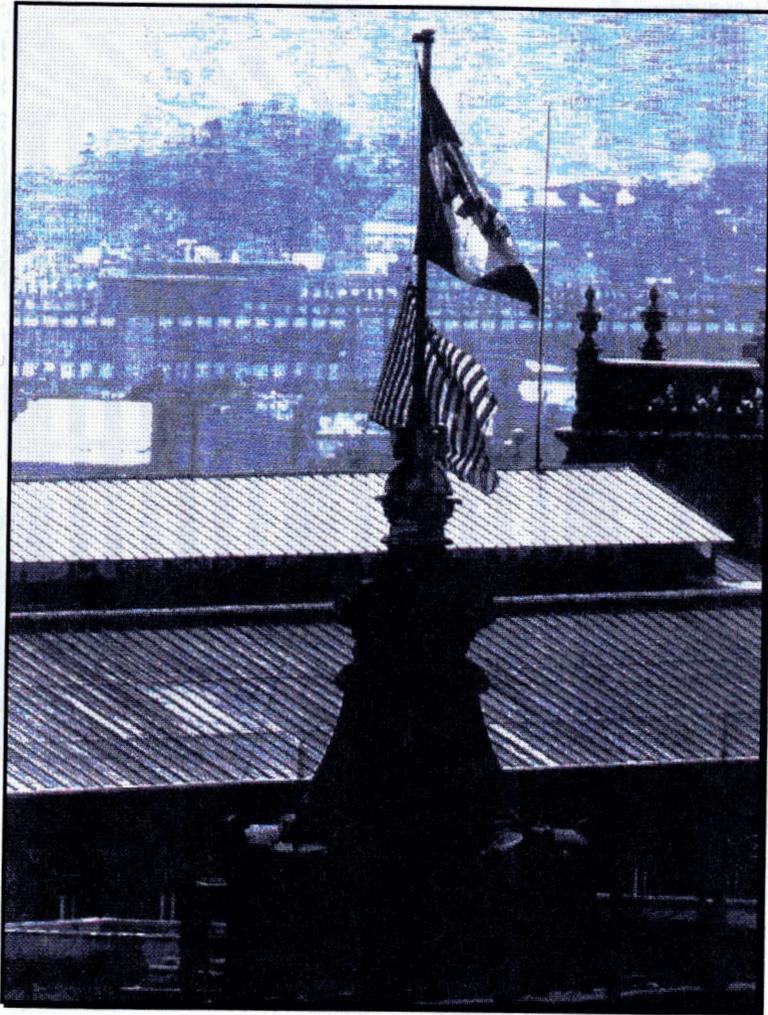
Plate #4 - Daniel Buren
From the Sculpture / Installation "Les Couleurs"
1977, Grand Palais - Paris, France
(Photo courtesy The John Weber Gallery, NY, NY)
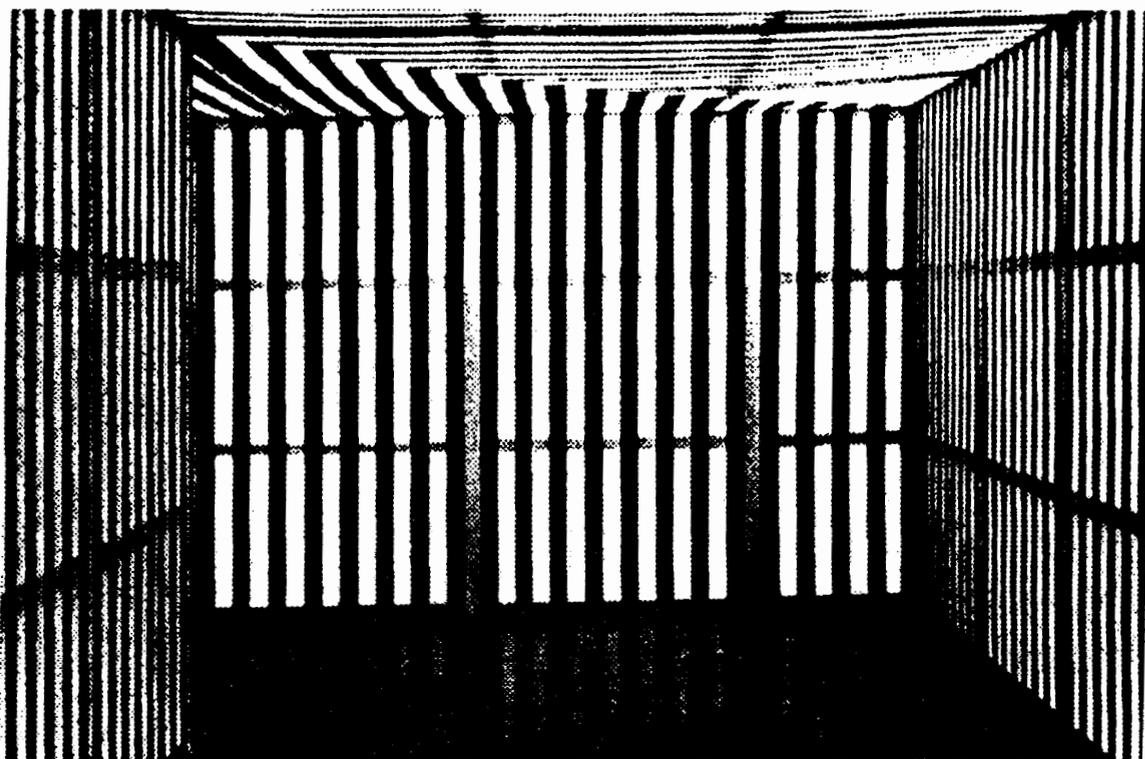
Plate #5 - Daniel Buren
From the Installation "Points de Vue"
1983, Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris
(Photo courtesy The John Weber Gallery, NY, NY)

Plate #6 - Daniel Buren
From the Installation "Points de Vue"
1983, Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris
(Photo courtesy The John Weber Gallery, NY, NY)

Plate #7 - Barbara Kruger
Untitled (You Thrive On Mistaken Identity)
1981,   Photo 60" x 40"
(Photo courtesy The Mary Boone Gallery, Manhattan, New York City)

Plate #8 - Barbara Kruger
Untitled (We Are Your Circumstantial Evidence)
1983, Photo 144" x 96"
(Photo courtesy The Mary Boone Gallery, Manhattan, New York City)

Plate #9 - Barbara Kruger
Untitled (Now You See Us/Now You Don't)
1983, Photo 72" x 48"
(Photo courtesy The Mary Boone Gallery, Manhattan, New York City)

Plate #10 - Barbara Kruger
Untitled (Your Comfort Is My Silence)
1981,   Photo 60" x 40"
(Photo courtesy The Mary Boone Gallery, Manhattan, New York City)
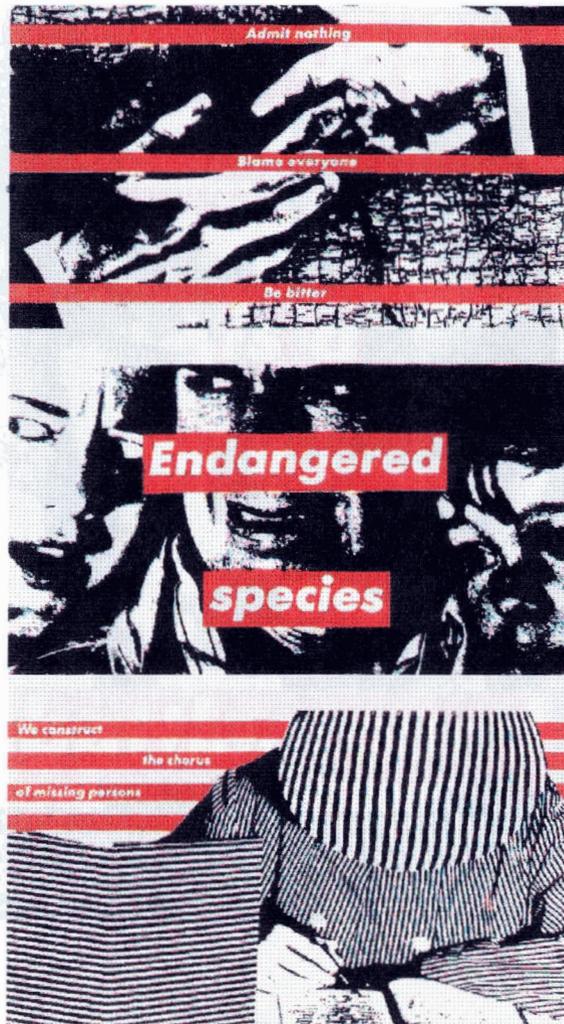
Plate #11 - Barbara Kruger
Untitled (Endangered Species)
1987, Photo Silkscreen on Vinyl 107½ " x 191½ "
(Photo courtesy The Mary Boone Gallery, Manhattan, New York City)
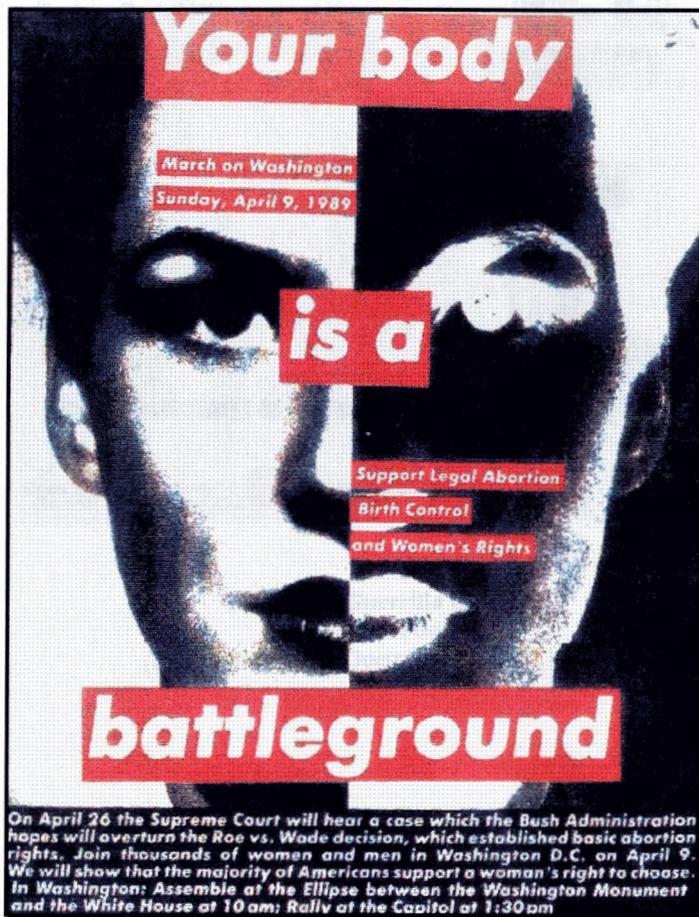
Plate #12 - Barbara Kruger
Untitled (Your Body Is A Battleground)
1989, Poster for March on Washington,   29 " x 24 "
(Photo courtesy The Mary Boone Gallery, Manhattan, New York City)
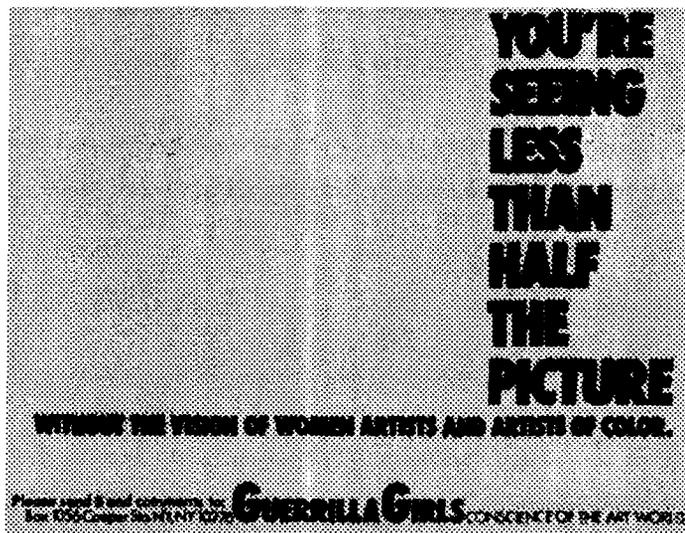
Plate #13 - Guerrilla Girls
1989, Street Poster
(Photo courtesy The Guerrilla Girls, NY, NY)

CHAPTER 5

ALTERNATIVES, INTERDISCIPLINARY PRACTICES
AND HYBRIDIZATIONS

Introduction

This chapter is dedicated to an exploration of alternative narratives and artistic practices which I feel are indicative of reconstructive postmodernism, as advocated in the previous chapters, which can inform art education theory and practice. The first part of the chapter looks at the Johannesburg Biennale which employed a number of alternative exhibition tactics, revealing the need for and possibility of divergent voices and practices coming together in one arena. These tactics offer up some interesting alternatives for art education. The juxtaposing of such works and practices witnessed a dialogue between and among methodologies, disciplines, histories and voices and encouraged viewers to adopt a more flexible approach to the "looking at" of artworks. I believe that aspects of the exhibition and the tactics employed are capable of serving as a model for art education in a spirit of reconstructive postmodernism.

The remaining components of the chapter focus on: (1) the importance of alternative histories and their inclusion in an art education forum, (2) 'new avant-gardism' as an agent of reconstructive postmodernism, (3) the deterritorializing of borders that have bound people to and constrained them in particular places outside of the centre. This positioning has relegated them to a place often deemed 'less than' in both art and art education spheres. It has prevented them from entering into the art education curriculum in any significant way where they might become part of a student's way of looking at, thinking about and valuing art differently, and (4) the need for the arts to 'unname' or 'de-

categorize' via an interdisciplinary approach; an approach which advocates the abandonment of categories which serve to shelve and confine voices, practices and beliefs to containers that limit their potential as art to represent a polyvocal, collective community.

An Introduction to the Johannesburg Biennale

> But every place she went , They pushed her to the other
> side   And that other side   pushed her to the other side
> of the other side   of the other side
> Kept in the shadow of the other.
>   Gloria Anzaldúa

> As in all struggles there are divengences among us; mostly
> in terms of strategy and location, I would say but
> sometimes also in terms of objective and direction. What
> I understand of the struggle...is that our voices, [images],
> and silences across difference [and categorization]
> are...many attempts at articulating this always-emerging-
> already-distorted place that remains so difficult, on the
> one hand, for the First World even to recognize, and on the
> other, for our own communities to accept to venture into,
> for fear of what has been a costly gain through past
> struggles.
>   Trinh T. Minh-Ha

> unwind it for us.....
>   Trinh T. Minh-Ha

Along the lines of opening up the 'our' referred to in the previous chapter, one development that has been emerging for some time now is the biennale exhibitions that have been held in Venice, Sydney, São Paulo, Havana and now Johannesburg. These types of exhibitions are very important in the context of this thesis and have implications for an art education curriculum because they serve as potential models for alternative systems of patronage, questioning, and the choosing of art and what gets seen. And while

they are certainly not 'the answer' in isolation, they offer some interesting possibilities and alternatives.

What Made it What it Was and Why is it Important?

I view the Johannesburg Biennale as a source of inspiration - marking out important paths for art education and exhibitioning tactics - because it was important to both art and art education communities for a number of reasons. First, in accordance with the advocacies of reconstructive postmodern art education, the Biennale looked at the importance of art in a context that is not exclusively First World. Second, those involved in the curating and organization of the exhibition - as well as those showing artworks - participated in collaborative interactions that were flexible. Methodologies employed to find, mount and view artworks were rooted in consultation and negotiation. This was evidenced in the exhibition's use of "soft" curatorship - a term coined by Bruce Ferguson in 1994 at the São Paulo Biennale - which can be considered curation through consultation (Scherer, 1995:85), a tactic very much indicative of reconstructive postmodernism as discussed throughout this thesis. Through recruits in a young 'trainee curator' program in combination with Outreach Development Coordinators efforts were made to locate, encourage and enable applications from artists in a variety of locations - economic and geographic (rural as well as metropolitan). This was an attempt to respond to the fact that many artists remain unknown and unnoticed because they "ordinarily do not [or can not] respond to projects which require written budgets and competitive conceptualizing" (85). Hopefully, "the inclusion of the work [from the] urban Community Art Centre [an artist's coalition group in Johannesburg] and rural artists in an international exhibition may develop as a new [tactic in both educational and exhibitioning institutions] if included in other exhibitions on the geographical margins" (88). Third, the Biennale was not

concerned with traditional, Eurocentric notions of coherence as manifest in the fact that over 64 foreign countries in addition to various African countries - including Ghana, Botswana, Angola, Senegal, Sudan, Uganda, and Mozambique - participated in the exhibition. Moreover, the organizers were not concerned with the exhibitions illustrating a particular, singular theoretical stance; rather, dissonances and contradictions were encouraged and allowed to play themselves (86). The model for the Biennale was a political one committed to "self-representation, and notions of identity obviously arising in response" to the differences and arrhythmic moments that marked the exhibition (86). As the Biennale sought to operate in opposition to a Eurocentric ideal - which tends to imply a coherence, readability, and universalizing standard of quality and aesthetics - it became very important for differences to manifest themselves and for the contradictions present to jolt comfortable prejudices. This tactic was an attempt to encourage viewers to develop relationships with a variety of artworks and to begin to read works differently. It was important for all those involved to "find new categories [and tactics for self-naming] and the Johannesburg Biennale offered itself as a vehicle to do this" (86). The Biennale was committed to "the process of investigating the potential dynamism and problems of placing artists from radically different cultural backgrounds into one exhibition" (87). In this agenda it tried to avoid imposing a hierarchy on the artworks and to avoid privileging certain modes of production over others. "[A]s it cannot be argued that there is a universalizing standard by which we can evaluate art globally, the mixing of different cultures within one curatorial proposal was a very difficult exercise to manage" and not unlike the challenge issued to a reconstructive art educator in the formulation of a curriculum predicated upon ideas forwarded through this writing (87). In response to the challenge, organizers opted to avoid dismissing the works of artists with no formal education, or art that was utilitarian, that had a tendency towards repetitive production, or was made with materials not valued in the First World (87). In the breaking down of

constraining Eurocentric categories and ideas regarding standards for evaluating art, and the definitions bound up in what actually constitutes 'art', different notions of quality and art emerged that were repositioned and context dependent. The exhibition embraced the dissonances and conflicts - cultural, social, economic, geographic - and took seriously the fact that art in that particular context and venue sought to represent more than just an elite few (Lippard, interview, 1996).

The Johannesburg Biennale is of particular interest for a variety of reasons, political, social and cultural. 'Africus', as the exhibition was entitled, was indicative of a moment "which, in effect, represented the coming-out of the South African art community after approximately four decades of isolation" (Breitz, 1995:89). The Biennale's coordinator, Laura Ferguson noted that South Africa had experienced more than forty years of international cultural and academic boycott, primarily due to the country's tenuous political situation. Subsequent to the democratic elections, it had become important for South Africa to reintegrate itself into the international cultural arena. (Scherer, 1995:83). She also noted that the artistic and broader cultural exclusion experienced by South Africans effectively "forced [them] to assess [their] multi-cultural situation as a positive impetus to develop [their] art but towards the end [of their segregation from the rest of the world] South African art was [necessarily] becoming stultified" (83). There was no interaction with or wider stimulation from other African countries and due to the fact that artists and cultural producers and critics were largely cut off from developments in the art communities of all other countries. As well, there was a need for significant artistic exchange to take place to reinvigorate and reintegrate their art with the broader artistic world.

The questions that confronted the artists and organizers of the Biennale are not unlike those discussed throughout this thesis. Questions were also raised regarding how the exhibition might address notions surrounding 'savage' and 'salvage' paradigms that

have been, and continue to be, applied to African art. Additionally, there was a committment to deconstructing, or at the very least confronting, the idea that African art needs to be 'authentically African' (whatever that means). Eugenio Valdes Figueroa notes that from the moment European artists 'discovered' African art via art museums,

> that cultural production was 'contemporaneous'. It was a contemporaneity that was not recognized by an ethnographic approach, which situated it in a spatiotemporal past with respect to modernity. Characterized as 'the primitive', this art did not fit into the space of the modern since it served only as source material for the vanguard artists [Picasso being a prime offender], many of whom practiced a kind of 'collectionism' which was not simply ethnographic but pursued aesthetic values. It was a question of collectionism which sought value, not only in an acquisitive act of compensation, but in the possibility of the consumption of an alternative aesthetic universe to that of the ephemeral structure of canons, succeeded and superimposed, in the modernist frenzy (Figueroa, 1995:3).

The result was that the attitude of European artists was durably parasitic and condemned African art to passivity. Behind this parasitism there was no strategy, but rather an unconscious impulse towards appropriation and expansion indicative of Eurocentrism and colonization.

Lucy Lippard writes that "[p]ostmodern analysis has raised important questions about power, desire, and meaning that are [particularly] applicable to cross-cultural exchange (although there are times when it seems to...wallow in textual paranoia). The most crucial of these insights is the necessity to avoid thinking of other cultures as existing passively in the past, while the present is the property of an active "Western civilization" (Lippard, 1990:11). This impulse to relegate non-Eurocentred art to a place deemed less-than continues to persist and these ideas and theories get applied to works of art that embrace and resemble more traditional artmaking practices. This impulse is interesting in light of the fact that many contemporary, postmodern, EuroNorth American artists have been trying to combine traditional and contemporary art-making practices along with an

engagement with social issues to challenge both the canon and ideas about high art and craft, this in reaction to the definition of art founded on the metaphysics of beauty which is essentially a class definition and is intended to preserve the upper classes in their special privileges of culture and taste (Ullrich, 1995:16).

The similarities between Arts and Craft theory and reconstructive postmodern art activism is evidenced in the work of many artists, including Betye Saar, Asco, Maria Brito, Suzanne Lacy, Faith Ringgold, Eva Hesse, Lousie Nevilleson, Jimmie Durham, Bruce Nauman, Group Material, Alison Saar, to name just a few, as there continues to be an emphasis in combining art and everyday life, which was one of the mandates insisted upon by the Crafts movement. "This over-riding theme was echoed when postmodern artists subverted a 'high' or separate art category with the use of everyday materials and activities" (17). Moreover, the Craft movement's search for "local styles, as well as prominent roles played by [activists], parallels reconstructive postmodernism's support for plurality and people at the borders of dominant culture. The Arts and Crafts' emphasis on process in art-making within a cooperative workshop setting is seen in the postmodern attack on the cult of the solitary male genius producing art for a privileged, solitary audience" (17). Basically, emerging Eurocentred artists have blended tradition and materials, contemporary ideas and theories and created art indicative of an 'anything-goes' ideology. Yet, African art has only attained a 'contemporaneous' status, which was a symptom of the conditioning applied, via its assimilation of traditional western aesthetic criteria. Only through this type of assimilation and the abandonment of traditional practices has a sector of artists and artistic production been freed from its relegation to the categories of 'ritual art', 'popular art', or 'craft'. It has only been through the acceptance of Eurocentric ideals and criteria that the artworks have been able to occupy a position simply known as 'art'. (4)

Yet it is ironic that notions of the 'genuine' and 'authentic' continue to be expected from and imposed on African art. An ideology persists that places an "overemphasis on static or originary identity, and notions of "authenticity" [tend to get] imposed...lead[ing] to stereotypes and false [ideas regarding] representation that freeze non-Western cultures in an anthropological present or an archeological past that denies...a modern identity or...reality on an equal basis with Euro(ancestors)" (Lippard, 1990:12). In fact it has been noted that many of the detractors of the Johannesburg Biennale felt that 'Africus' needed to be more 'African' in character (Breitz, 1995:89). It is a frightening concept to try to pull apart within the context of this discussion what these detractors might have meant by 'more African' and on what criterion this would be based and reflected.[1] One of the other, many, difficulties that such a point raises is how western critics can expect the artistic production of indigenous artists in general, in this case African artists, to simultaneously embrace western aesthetics while maintaining a traditional, 'African' character[2], especially when those same western aesthetics of which I write all too often relegate the works of women and people of colour employing more traditional practices to a status of non-art, thereby confining them to a space in the ethnographic museum. Somehow the art establishment has decided that any group that once used more traditional practices to create non-art objects specifically is no longer permitted to do so in the name of contemporary art. Whereas men, specifically white men, who were not historically

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[1]The situation is not unlike ones confronted by Alfred Quiroz. Previously in this thesis it was marked out in an interview with Quiroz how certain individuals and institutions have assumed that his work should possess and make manifest inherently 'Mexican' characteristics, rejecting it if these characteristics were not evidenced to their satisfaction. Such ill-informed, racist assumptions are all too familiar to the one articulated by Breitz.
[2]Eugenio Valdes Figueroa noted the similarity between the application of the need for the 'authentic' with that of the 'savage' paradigm. From this position, visions of the authentic become equated with ritual art. Paradoxically, this authenticity does not resemble or correspond with the aesthetic-artistic paradigms so rigorously esteemed by the West.

involved in the 'crafting' process now seem to have gained the official permission and stamp of approval to integrate such practices into their art-making strategies while still having the ensuing products maintained in an art-status positioning.

It is important to realize that "the" African, and the subsequent production of art by Africans, is only considered authentic insofar as the artist satisfies predetermined western fantasies, contained in fetishistic concepts like originality, purity or authorship. Figueroa notes that the vulgar side of the western or Eurocentric gaze at African art is unveiled in their persistence in imposing ethical or ideological judgments with regards to artists who may simultaneously choose to produce both commercial, tending to employ more traditional, expected and associated practices of artmaking, and non-commercial works of art. From the Eurocentric mandate there comes the need to categorize and we have become conditioned to call some objects 'art' and others 'craft' or 'kitsch'. Much of the artwork which might have a utilitarian purpose has been pejoratively relegated to the latter category, yet

> [t]his is a decontextualized discourse in Africa, [because] what is called 'art' has always been a functional activity, intrinsically bound to collective, practical needs, and regulated by the imperatives of demand. In Africa, aesthetics has been, rather than an individualistic value derived from a psychological displacement, the recognition of an order in which the individual is connected with the community. Colonialism discovered and tried to impose on African art another scale of aesthetic values across the criteria of art; the African responded with assimilation, but also with the simulacrum. Both attitudes are logical, looking after the survival of the culture as well as the [individual] (Figueroa, 1995:5).

The Johannesburg Biennale can be seen as an imperative attempt and organic project whereby African art was integrated into 'the universal' without forcing *only* 'a priori' adaptations to models imposed from the outside. It represented sameness and difference in African art in the present circumstances, revealing that artistic and "social creativity only could be liberated and the democratic ideal only become cultural praxis if

those intellectual assumptions which, since independence, served to support authoritarianism are left behind" (Mbembe in Figueroa, 1995:7). Moreover, the participating artists and organizers recognized that it is partially the difference, stemming from history and isolation, that makes the work unique in a contemporary context. "[T]o emphasize difference, be it from an external discriminatory position or from a politics of identity generated internally, also does not mean a true vindication of its autochthonous values. The vindication - often magical - of a specific cultural identity ends up in the construction of a closed and disciplinary history, and (one might add) created conditions for the manipulation of collective sentiments, leading to chauvinism and racism and a twisted expression of the 'authentic'" (Figueroa, 1995:7). In the Biennale a forging of a new identity for artists and artistic practice was witnessed. In this particular context identity can be viewed as a way

> of re-departing...the return to a denied heritage allows one to start again with different re-departures, different pauses, different arrivals. Since identity can very well speak its plurality without suppressing its singularity, heterologies of knowledge give all practices of the self a festively vertiginous dimension. It is hardly surprising then that when identity is doubled, tripled, multiplied across time (generations), and space (cultures), when differences keep on blooming despite the rejections from without, [we are dared] - by necessity. [As seen in the biennial and hopefully one day in all art education venues, we might dare] to mix; dare to cross the borders to introduce into language (verbal, visual, musical) everything monologism has repressed (Trinh, 1991:14).

This re-departure played itself out very well, especially because "[s]hifting the setting of an international art event from the moneyed centres of the international art market to the developing world necessarily challenge[d] many Western assumptions on the nature (and culture) of art." It was this *in situ* that served as a catalyst for such a dialogue. (Karon, 1995:3).

The other critical construct which was challenged was the notion of standardized 'quality'. It has been noted that certain participants, both local and international, were said to have criticized the 'quality' of the work in and on the Biennale. "This complaint, symptomatic of the same colonial hangover which gave rise to the disappointment of some in the lack of a rational organizing principle for the [show], can only be taken seriously if we retain faith in the possibility of discernible, [fixed] and measurable 'quality' which might be used as a yardstick in the assessment of culture" (Breitz, 1995:94). More importantly, what emerged as a result of the Biennale itself and the associated negotiations, symposiums, and conferences, was "the realization that the 'universal' standards of 'quality' held so dear by many international events [curators, etc..], are not only impossible to transpose into the South African context, but intrinsically problematic in that they impose confining cultural value judgments" (94).

The Johannesburg Biennale revealed tactics and possibilities for mixing, blending, clashing, intermingling, coming together in participatory, relational ways that stretch beyond the limits of the canon, of antiquated notions of quality. These tactics unveiled the possibility for a variety of diverse practices and ideas to be introduced into a singular forum. And while detractors felt the need to criticize the exhibition as evidencing an 'unevenness' of quality, not once did these detractors discuss how notions of appropriate 'quality' should have been arrived at. As Candice Breitz notes, it was precisely the hybridizations, the juxtaposing of seemingly contradictory ideas and practices alongside one another that created a "creative cacophony which was glorious...[N]either the audience, nor the players themselves, could have predicted how the Biennale would play itself out, given the variety of components which were constantly in the process of being added and removed in the face of ..contingency" (90). And it was precisely because dissonances were allowed to play themselves out, a result of the loosely conducted interactions of the various components of the Biennale, that viewers were privy to a

performance which reflected far more elaborately on a character of African art and the relationships between art in and from diverse cultures. As Breitz writes,

> the viewers were able to encounter the mythical allusions of Egypt's El Ghoul Ali Ahmed's sculpture, alongside the paintings of Gabon's Betrand Nzamba in which Cubist forms were blended with Nzamba's reflections on his ancestral heritage, alongside the conceptual installations of Angola's Antonio Ole. What was refreshing about this dynamic interplay of the 'Africas' was the *absence* of an ideological narrative by means of which the viewer could find the *true* Africa and indeed, the refusal of this structure to entertain the possibility of a homogeneous, definable Africa. The result was a pleasing celebration of the diversity of contemporary African art, a diversity which disrupted the neat parameters which we have come to expect from international exhibitions representing 'Africa' (Breitz, 1995: 90-1).

The Biennale recognized that one cannot locate African artistic practice and production without contextualizing that production: without attending to its socioeconomic conditions and attempting to evaluate its economics and politics without attending to its conditions in terms of cultural production would be a grossly misinformed way of approaching the looking (7). The exhibition recognized that "there is room in Africa to offer an international biennale to artists and curators that is not exclusively First World in context but investigates the current unfolding of artistic production from a developing world perspective as well...It was seen as [an opportunity] for reciprocal cultural exchange...[it was not] a process where it could be perceived that [the artists involved] would be re-colonized intellectually or theoretically" (Ferguson in Scherer, 1995:83-4). The Biennale was about renaming, reframing, rediscovering and reformulating. It represented a renewal and re-departure.

> Re-departure: the pain and frustration of having to live a difference that has no name and too many names already. Marginality: who names? who fringes? And elsewhere that does not merely lie outside the centre but radically striates it. Identity: the singular naming of a person, a nation, a race, has undergone a reversal of value. Effacing it used to be the only means of survival for the colonized and the exiled; naming it today often

means declaring solidarity among the hyphenated people of the Diaspora (Trinh, 1991:14).

In this case the re-departure and "eccentricity of the Biennale's structure" seemed well worth the attempt.   The success of the Biennale, despite, and perhaps partially because of, the structural, situational problems experienced, was evidenced in the challenges issued to the barriers which have been so noxiously invoked in the representation of Africa in previous large-scale exhibitions. By virtue of the organizers' rejection to "impose a logic or hierarchy of any sort in arranging the relationship of the exhibitions to one another, a chaotic, discursive space, in which other exhibitions could converse, argue, collide, was preserved. At the same time the loose arrangement of the Biennale spoke of the flux of the historical moment, the shifting of identities and the breakdown of coherent categories in post-Apartheid South Africa" (94).

The exhibition managed to articulate what I have referred to as an alternate moment or history, interjecting itself into the dominant system or discourse in an effort to reveal the possibility of other methods of visual, verbal, literal articulation that stand in opposition to hegemonic practices. "Within the anti-geography of the exhibition, there was the potential for viewers to construct their own narratives, a subversive potential which was understandably experienced by many as threatening. For it proffered no easily navigable path for either the newcomer or the established cultural critic. No one mode of representation emerged as dominant, and the Biennale could not be lucidly mapped with recourse to the theories of multiculturalism or post-colonialism which have been developed in other contexts" (Breitz, 1995:94). And while the path it began articulating may seem difficult to negotiate, this path needs to be redefined as the constructs currently held in esteem are antiquated and not particularly useful. The engagement in and with this type of exhibition opens up new models for looking, seeing, thinking, that if transposed into an arts education context might reveal a space for significant cultural, artistic and

social exchange and the possibility of moving beyond a canon that has served to constrict and confine artistic thought and practice both within and outside of the institutional framework.

The New Avant-Gardism, Activism, Border Issues and Art Education

Avant-gardism, minimalism, conceptualism, the works of women and peoples of colour seldom or never get taught to students in elementary or secondary school, and this is where most of us formulated our opinions about art in conjunction with experiences made available to us outside of the classroom. While the situation is changing to a certain degree, the work coming out of the aforementioned schools of practice and thought remains provocative, frightening, confrontational and unreadable to most people.

Avant-gardism and more specifically the emergence of what has been coined the 'new' avant-garde is particularly interesting within the context of this thesis.[3] David Hoppe noted that the chasm between avant-gardism and arts education has traditionally been wide. In fact, "postmodern avant-garde practitioners and theorists are likely to view their arts-in-education cousins as living in another world. [T]he former, more often than not, address adults about themes like disenfranchisement, power relations..., sexuality, [among others, while] artists in the schools deal with [young people and, more importantly] they work a venue - the schools - associated with the very conservativism, stratification, and lack of vision that the avant-garde aims to upset" (Hoppe, 1995:14). On the surface it would seem that the agendas of these two would be completely incompatible, and perhaps in theory they are. However, "through a combination of factors, a situation is emerging that indicates the new arena for avant-garde practice [could possibly be the schools

[3]It is especially interesting to note the employment of the word 'new' in conjunction with avant-gardism when one considers the meaning of the word avant-garde itself.

themselves]. That, in light of reconstructive [p]ostmodern theory, arts educators are likely to constitute the next wave of significant avant-garde practitioners" (15). One of the 'factors' that Hoppe alludes to may be that as socially and politically contingent and motivated art practices continue to emerge and sustain themselves, the demand for alternative ways of looking at, dealing with and teaching art becomes increasingly imperative. And while "within the dominator system art has been organized around the primacy of objects rather than relationships, and has been set apart from reciprocal or participative interactions" (Gablik, 1991: 41) a new way of formulating and articulating our relationship not only to but with the art object is beginning to take precedence over a distanced, static, unidirectional way of experiencing art. This is in part due to the fact that

> where artists used to talk about their work in terms of form, technique and the like, now they are using an entirely new vocabulary that talks about communities and audiences, education and empowerment, activism and society. There is a growing feeling among artists and a broad range of cultural critics that it is no longer sufficient for art to express the inspired creativity if that work fails to resonate beyond the art world. It is no longer enough for the work to succeed [solely] in art world terms if it fails to have relevance to the broader context in which that work is created. The artist as iconoclast is being replaced by the artist as citizen (Durland, 1992:10).

And while postmodern reconstructive theorists like Lippard (1990), Gablik (1991) and Durland (1992) work towards articulating "a new paradigm for avant-garde practice, arts educators...[work towards] formulating the principles for a new pedagogy" (Hoppe, 1995:16) one that is indicative of "radical systemic reform ... [that] eventually implies broader societal reform as well. This is the place where the aspirations of the avant-garde and arts education finally converge" (17).

My reading of David Hoppe's use of the term avant-garde is to use it in a reconstructive postmodern context as meaning before, in front of or leading a new artistic

movement or genre[4]. In fact, "[a]vant-gardism in art, since the Second World War, may be seen as the principal ideology which has sustained an important aspect of [the art world] in its need to launch...new movements and replace the obsolete" (Burgin, 1988:217). If we situate the term in this locale, then its usage in conjunction and in concurrence with the preoccupations of the reconstructive postmodernism that is one of the principal concerns of this thesis, then Hoppe's employment of the term becomes clear and appropriate in the context of this thesis. But one might also recognize that this usage is in fact the antithesis, in many ways, of the ideas on which the avant-garde movement itself was predicated upon; or, more precisely, the way in which we have come to understand the term as a result of its conflation with modernism as an entity via the postmodern critique. Having said this, it is important to briefly look at 'historical' avant-gardism[5], the ideology on which it relied, and what commonalities and differences manifest themselves in relation to 'new' avant-gardism. The latter was located in and indicative of one expression of modernism. One of its defining characteristics was that it tended to be inaccessible to the public in terms of its reading and meaning. And at this point in time it is somewhat anachronistic because while it sought to be 'outside' of the mainstream and bourgeois practice, it, like many other forms of radical artistic practice evidenced in the last 50 years, has been subsumed, accepted and both publicly and financially supported by the very system that it was so critical of.

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[4]At this juncture I should note that while I cite and employ the use of Hoppe's ideas, I do so stipulatively and conditionally because I feel that his ideas revolving around what actually constitutes avant-garde practice need to be examined and recontextualized. The fact that he does not offer any exemplars or definitions throughout the course of the article is somewhat problematic in relation to positioning his use of this term.

[5]This term is from Peter Burger who, in his book Theory of the Avant-Garde distinguished between the 'historical avant-garde' and 'aesthetic modernism'. In making this distinction he attempts to look critically at the difference between the actual motivation of avant-gardism as opposed to the agenda ascribed to it via postmodernism's suggestion that avant-gardism's mandate was synonymous with Greenbergian formalism.

Peter Burger in the Theory of the Avant-Garde forwards the idea that avant-gardism was a reaction to bourgeois practice that relegated art to a functionless, unproductive position within society. Jessica Evans writing on Burger notes that the argument proposes that "as the division of labour intensifies, the artist turns into a specialist, hence the aesthetic experience [as predicated upon the bourgeois idea of the autonomy of the aesthetic becomes] ...a specific experience; art becomes the content of art and the tie with society is severed" (Evans, 1994:219). Burger notes that the autonomy of art is reliant upon "a category whose characteristic is that it describes something real [what Burgin defines as the 'detachment of art as a special sphere of human activity from the nexus of the praxis of life'] but simultaneously expresses this real phenomenon in concepts that block recognition of the social determinacy of the process" (Burger, 1984:36). Given that the "historical avant-garde" evidenced not merely the production of art "which would have consequences for society, but by sublating art into the praxis of life ('lifeworld')...[so that it no longer] exists as a (separate) entity" (Burgin in Evans, 1994:218), we can begin to see that this is antithetical to the idea of the autonomy of art, as avant-gardism sought to rejoin art and life. In this way then, 'historical' avant-garde practices worked oppositionally against the propelling force behind the concept of the autonomy of art which in itself can be recognized as "an ideological construct and, as with the character of ideologies, it is at the same time the product of a specific history and the means by which that history is repressed, denied" (218).

For my purposes, I find that if a number of Hoppe's ideas get reframed or, more specifically, more particularly framed within the context of 'new' avant-garde practices, which are indicative of the changed artistic practices necessary to witness the collapsing of the space articulated between art and life via Greenbergian formalism or modernism, then the term is useful in affording a site capable of bringing art and life together with a specific social program while simultaneously recognizing artistic practice as having its own

problematics. In this way then, new avant-gardism within a reconstructive postmodern arena vigilantly remains cognizant that art is a social production. As such it works in conjunction with changed ideas about art, life and society, while at the same time engages the fact that art has its own dynamic. Pedagogically, this construct raises a number of imperatives that could be employed and unpacked in an art education context.

I would suggest that it might be the embracing and employment of 'new' avant-garde tactics that afford us a place from which we can negotiate and collapse the space between a socially-concerned and engaged artistic practice and the creation of art preoccupied with its own internal uncertainties. As art educators and artists we have been required to rethink "the repercussions of the art world's isolation and to consider how we who are involved in training [and educating] the next generation of artists might begin to incorporate into this process a fundamental concern for the particularities of audience, ...the placement of art work within a societal context" (101) the need for participatory, critically informed interactions with the work, and a broadening of the criteria employed to define, locate and unpack 'good', 'meaningful' art. Ideally this would be a place which moves beyond binary oppositions and into "[a] new paradigm that redefines the role and practice of the artist; [this location] also demands a new definition for the work of art itself. The work of cutting-edge arts educators, viewed through the lens of reconstructive postmodern theory, suggests that the new-era classroom (in both secondary and post-secondary contexts), school or educational system" are ready for and in need of the consideration of artworks indicative of the ideas and practices 'new' avant-gardism advocates because if one of the primary aims of the reconstructive project is about forging a reinvigorated community what venue could be more appropriate that the educational institution (Hoppe, 1995:18)?

If one of our concerns is what constitutes a "critically-informed" education, then, the arts, extracted from their educationally and socially relegated positioning in the 'ghetto'

(sic) could be reconceived. In this context, the arts could then be "the key to finally defining what we mean when we talk about a truly educated person" (18).[6] Because if art educators can agree that one of the goals of art is a practice wedding individual creative vision concerned with its own internal dynamics and dimensions

> to community consciousness and that the school is the logical arena where the first stages of learning this practice can take place, then a great deal becomes possible - for the arts and for our understanding of education. The processes intrinsic to artmaking - personal discipline, trial and error, contextualizing, ...adapting to changing circumstances, [responding and interacting intuitively and otherwise to materials and both internal and external stimuli] - might allow us to grow beyond conventional education's temporal fixations on work-force training and stereotypical socialization. Schools might become places where meaning is built; where, in short, students learn how to learn.(18).

The Construction/Reclamation of Alternative Histories

> and when we speak we are afraid
> our words will not be heard
> nor welcomed
> but when we are silent
> we are still afraid
> So it is better to speak
> remembering...
> My silence has not protected me.
> Your silence will not protect you....
> In the case of silence, each of us draws
> the face of her own fear - fear of contempt
> ...of censure, of some judgment,
> of recognition, of challenge,
> of annihilation.

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[6]I employ the word ghetto in reference to the 'ghetto' used in Hoppe's article. I do so stipulatively in recognition of and respect for the painful history embedded in this term and I realize that for many it may be a difficult reminder of people being put into isolated/confined places.

But most of all I think, we fear for
the very visibility without which
we cannot truly live.
Audre Lorde

You try and keep on trying to unsay it,
for if you don't
they will not fail
to fill in the blanks on your behalf,
and you will be said.
Trinh, 1989:91

One possible solution that might be implemented, for my purposes in the art education curriculum and other art-based forums and institutions that serve to inform about art and artistic production, is the presentation of an alternative version of history, or popular memory. This presentation has been done for some time in other disciplines, assuming the name of social history, meaning the presentation of another version, or history, of the official history. It is a "highly radical and subversive act to tell a familiar story in a new way. Once you start to do it you realize that what you call history is another such story and could be told differently and has been. And then the authoritative tradition starts to crack and crumble. It too, it turns out, is nothing more than a particular selection of various stories, all of which have at one time or another been believed and told" (Chernin in Lewis, 1993:69). It is this breaking down and questioning of the exclusionary, authoritative History (big 'H') that has claimed official, legitimate, omnipotent and singular status that I am interested in uncovering; and in its place, offering up alternative versions and accounts that act as interjectory, revealing and supplanting alternate, diverse, and multitudinous remembrances that are more inclusive and dynamic.

Many people, especially those with a vested interest in the arts, concur with the interpretation of the

postmodern flexion as the record of an "authority crisis" in the dominant Western culture - a crisis caused by the end of meta-narratives and by the lack of confidence in any kind of ultimate truth or final signification that prevails as an absolute under the hierarchical assumption of a universal meta-domination. The fall of the Eurocentric model would liberate...the voices that until now have [for the most part] been discarded or censored for inhabiting the margins of dominant representation [masculine-occidental]. The rupture of totalities and the crisis of totalizations makes possible new anti-totalitarian expressions [the multiple, the plural, the divergent, and the minority] that up to now functioned as heterological modulations of the "other" in a postmodern code (Richards, 1992:57).

This is an important position to assume because it establishes a place from which one can begin to understand the necessity for and construction of alternative histories and tellings that work on pulling apart the meta-narratives and the official histories that serve to inform the consciousness of many still to this day. By looking to the construction and inclusion of alternative histories, and problematizing knowledge and the way in which culture can be historicized, the necessity for a critically-aware position that engages "the relationship between knowledge and authority, how the latter are established, and what relationship they have to the dominant regimes of representation" is revealed. (Giroux, 1994:26). The most perceptible debates regarding this are being waged in the university and educational system over the demand and need for curriculum reform and the struggle to determine exactly what constitutes the canon of great works of art and based on what criteria (26). However, to date the predominant debates regarding knowledge and authority have failed to include the full range of symbolic modes of production and creation that construct meanings and diverse social struggles and modes of contestation and consider the potential these forms of artistic production possess to critically inform the ways in which we think.

History is a construction. And to a certain degree has been fictionalized. History once was and still is the culmination of stories: "this does not necessarily mean that the

space they form is undifferentiated, but that this space can articulate on a different set of principles, one which may be said to stand outside the hierarchical realm of [agreed upon 'facts']" (Trinh, 1989:4). Along this line, what I am suggesting is embracing memory as the culmination of presences, and differing subjectivities and divergencies, allowing them to speak of many versions and voices that have been altered by perceptions and the telling. This effectively has the ability to act legitimately as a source of inquiry as history. This 'memory of myth' is fictionalized and I refer to it in a Barthian site. The memory demarcates a space wherein it operates as an interjection against dominant or official histories, in and of themselves merely one version of a moment or happening. This alternate history is a situated memory and should be presented as such. It is not absolute and in terms of its own formulation acts self-consciously as an interjectory activity. In this context one should also be very explicit in contextualizing this situated remembering so as to avoid affording it with the same problematic credence and authority accorded to history as it now exists. To transpose the same 'truth' or 'logocentred authority' bound up in the official history onto alternative histories would undermine the potential purpose and power possible. The power in memory comes from flexibility, the blending and clashing of different subjectivities and, "with an ear for the tones of audience, historical moment, social interests and intentions of authors [and artists], and the material-physical appearance of sources, I would like to consider in greater detail the question of [memory and the retelling of history]. In particular, [to focus on] whose stories [and work] appear and disappear in the web of social practices" (Haraway in Dirks, Ely and Ortner, 1994:72). It is important for all of us, especially in the art education sphere, to critically consider how history has been constructed and for whose benefit it is maintained. Because History leaves so much of importance out, it is imperative that we not assume that memory as being our own in a contemporary context. Alternative practices, artistic and otherwise, remind us that there is an underside to History; that being, that which is remembered but

denied voice. Being that the official History of the centre understates resistance and the power of alternative practices and stories, drawing and maintaining a distinct line between centre and margin, "claiming [an exclusionary] 'centre' which continually marginalizes others...inhibit[ing] people from constructing their own history of histories. [In this way then, the maintenance of official History effectively] arrests the future by means of the past" (Gabriel, 1989:53).

Walter Benjamin (1969) was one of the first critics to recognize that storytelling, in both its visual and accompanying textual forms, was and is being employed by contemporary artists as a source of information and communication. This can be witnessed in the works of artists like Kruger, artists who employ allegory. Allegory, as James Clifford (1988) reminds us, focuses particular attention on the narrative character of cultural representations and to the stories built into the representational process itself. This echoes Benjamin and in fact, it was Benjamin that advocated that because storytelling (as opposed to literature) was a direct result of social interactions, it opened up a space wherein meaning was located not merely in the text or subject matter itself, but rather in the human transmission of experience and it became a critical element of his aesthetic theory (Wallis, 1987:xii). And if history has been employed to relate to us what happened at a specific time and place, then, in accordance with these ideas of telling alternative versions and histories, we can "rely upon [alternate stories] to tell us [not only another version of] what might have happened but also what is happening at an unspecified time and place" (Trinh, 1989:4).

The idea of storytelling is important because it relies on a participatory community. It "necessitates an active, immediate and communal bond between teller and listener. What is more, the nature of the story - its recourse to tradition, its rejection of originality... - foregrounds a preexistence of meaning, reversing the metaphorical 'search for truth' [in a logocentred capacity]. What Benjamin identified in the eclipse of

storytelling was the final destabilization of the sources of social identity [and in his advocacy of the resurrection of storytelling he recognized] the revolutionary potential of a seemingly archaic genre" (Wallis, 1987:xii). In this recognition of storytelling as a means of synthesizing personal experience, subjectivities past and present as well as social and political desire, "it is appropriate that many [artists and] writers today [in particular, women] have turned to storytelling and other [alternative modes of literal, verbal and visual communication] as forms of cultural criticism. These alternative forms suggest the real social relationships which underlie artistic production and the ties between individual experience and a mass culture [and is offered up from] a particular cultural position - of simultaneous marginality and authority" (xii). These notions are invested with profound implications for art.

I propose that art education could benefit by investigating ideas suggested by Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari (1990) with regards to what they call the function of the 'minor'. The 'minor' is a site derived not from a minor language but rather from a space in which a "minority constructs within a major [or dominant] language [or site] and is affected with a high coefficient of deterritorialization" (Deleuze and Guattari, 1990:59). If we locate the storytelling genre in this locale, one in which a "specialized, local language serves to challenge or disrupt the structures and confidences of a dominant language [then] this writing of the "minor" discredits the masterpiece and dismantles form, genre and canon. [Moreover], in its movement between margin and centre, the "minor" neither romanticizes the marginal nor privileges the mainstream - both positions are rejected as static and confining" (Wallis, 1987:xii). Three characteristics demarcate the 'minor': "the deterritorialization of language, the connection of the individual to a political immediacy, and the collective assemblage of enunciation". These criteria are clearly manifest in the works of Barbara Kruger (Deleuze and Guattari, 1990:60). In the visual realm these characteristics work in conjunction with one another to subvert the metanarrative and

allow alternative histories to come forward, via a theoretical position "which exists "in between" fixed points [Consequently these practices do] not seek to fulfill the conventional forms of "major" culture in establishing a unified subject or asserting the primacy of the individual, rather there isn't a subject: there are only collective assemblages of enunciation. Thus, one important question for [artists and art educators]...is not how to gain access to the accepted forms of [theory and practice], but how to recognize [those]...which [are] relevant to the issues of their particular community [and practices]" (Wallis, 1987:xiii).

In this inquiry into the power of alternative histories some of the ideas advocated by Trinh T. Minh-Ha deserve examination as she writes of the necessity to speak *to* history and the tale, as opposed to *about* history. In "Cotton and Iron" she writes about the difficulty made manifest when one attempts to 'speak about' because,

> without a certain work of displacement, "speaking about" only partakes in the conservation of a system of binary oppositions (subject/object; I/It; We/They) on which territorialized knowledge depends. It places a semantic distance between oneself and the work; oneself [the maker] and the receiver; oneself and the other. It secures for the speaker a position of mastery; I am in the midst of knowing, acquiring, deploying the world - I appropriate, own and demarcate my sovereign territory as I advance - while the "other" remains in the sphere of acquisition. Truth is the instrument of mastery which I exert over areas of the unknown as I gather them within the fold of the known (Trinh, 1991:12).

This is precisely what history has served to do - to assume a posture of truth predicated upon ideas born of colonization, oppression, and exclusion. What I am proposing by advocating an alternative history or re-telling of the tale is assuming a position where one recognizes the necessity of 'speaking to' the tale in a way that, "breaks the dualistic relationship between subject and object. The question "who speaks" and the implication "it-speaks-by-itself-through-me" [through my eyes, my remembrances, my position, my biases and baggage] is also a way of foregrounding the anteriority of the tale to the teller,

and thereby merging the two through a speech act" (Trinh, 1991:12). In this way then 'truth', assumes a much less authoritatively centred, questionable position and is recognized as both "a construct and beyond it; the balance is played out as the narrator [and the audience] interrogate the truthfulness of the tale...provid[ing] multiple answers [and opinions]" (12). We can then arrive at a place where we can rigorously question and engage 'who' and 'what' are actually speaking, whether this 'speaking' is visually or otherwise manifest. This tactic applies not only to the teller, but also to the tale.

In this investigation of alternative histories, fissures begin to open up in what would otherwise be the seamless surface of the official history. This rupturing necessarily interrupts the way we read works of art and the way we construct, or have been led to construct, our subjectivity - a construct which will be discussed in further detail later on in this chapter. My goal, in having traditions, differing works and systems of beliefs intermingle and clash, is to witness the emergence of a series of juxtapositions indicative of a language that destabilizes the respective conditions and their assumed contents and contexts in such a way that demarcates new hybridizations. The power of the mixing of traditions speaks of flexibility and the subsequent blurring of fixed subjectivities, making many things possible. Here, "the story never stops beginning or ending. It appears headless and bottomless for it is built on differences...The story circulates like a gift; an empty [unnamed] gift which anybody can lay claim to by filling it to taste, yet can never truly possess. A gift built on multiplicity. One that stays inexhaustible within its own limits. Its departures and arrivals. Its quietness" (Trinh, 1989:2). It moves beyond the telling of things synthetically which tends to mask the tones and versions which emerge from an exploration beyond the conventions and categorizations; categorizations that are often devised to shelve and constrain. Yet the images do retain a sustaining symbolic capacity, recognizing the importance of employing something one cannot not use

(Spivak)[7]. They exist as a culmination...a union of memory and a momentary, fragmented 'reality', both unstable and subject to wide and disparate interpretations and fluctuations.

As a woman I am particularly interested in alternative histories and tellings because I have not seen much of myself in history, in art, in culture. Certainly not as a student. Because most women "have been kept from knowing their history and from interpreting history, either on their own or that of men. Women have been systematically excluded from the enterprise of creating symbol systems, philosophies...and law" (Lerner, 1986:5) that have been deemed important, creative, innovative and significant enough to be included in the official history: a history constructed for and perpetuated by a phallocentric majority whose interests it has served to keep the margins firmly situated 'out there'. This lack of representation is further complicated by the fact that "women have not only been educationally deprived throughout historical times in every known society, [but have also] been excluded from theory formation" (5). And, despite the fact that women, "contribute disproportionately significant labor to the maintenance of the earth [society, and the production of art and culture], simultaneously we have been, and continue to be, denied the status of meaning makers. [W]e have been excluded from the stories we are told as well as those we are encouraged to tell to and of ourselves" (Lewis, 1993:70). Moreover, the work and words of women that do manage to 'get out there' do not receive enough, if any, attention from the conservative mainstream or even

> from more progressive audiences who purport to be our allies in struggle. When it appears either that there is no audience for one's work or that one's work will be appropriated and not directly acknowledged, the will to do more of that work is diminished. Patriarchal politics in the realm of the visual frequently insure that works of powerful men, and that includes men

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[7]While this is not a direct quote I have come to associate this idea with Gayatri C. Spivak. This results particularly from my reading of her book Outside in the Teaching Machine (1993) and her discussion in it about the strategic use of 'essentials'. I have come to understand this idea as part of a standard academic discourse.

of colour, receive more attention and are given greater authority of voice than works by women. While feminist thinkers of all races have made rebellious critical interventions to challenge the art world and art practices, much of their groundbreaking work is used, but not cited, by males (hooks, 1995:XIII).

As a result, I am concerned with the construction of an alternative history that is inclusive, and indicative of art from varied cultures, traditions, and ideologies. And as noted previously I am concerned with the inclusion of art, writings, and critiques of art by women from varied cultural and situated contexts, into an art education context.[8] Because, while there can be no disagreements that both, "men and women have suffered exclusion and discrimination because of their class (economic position, race, cultural and/or sexual identity)...no man has been excluded from the historical record because of his sex while...all women were (Lerner in Lewis, 1993:13). This statement does need to be contextualized for the reader because it must be very clear that what I am suggesting is indeed inclusion, not the privileging of women's art over men's art in an attempt to balance scales that have been and continue to be unbalanced. Because if one was to attempt to simply accord women and the words and objects they produce the same kind of authority that has been granted to their male counterparts, then the 'system' merely reproduces itself, leaving nothing challenged or unchanged. It simply privileges one group over another yet again. And this is not the endeavor which I believe to be important. I believe it is important that people be able to see and construct a vision of themselves and the world around them that includes them and attempts to represent as many people as possible, this endeavor in itself context-dependent, not just one elite group. Also, to attempt to replace a male vision with that of female vision, one would once again encounter a project

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[8]As previously noted, in concurrence with Fehr, moving beyond cursory insertion of marginalized artists and works, our goal must be significant and meaningful inclusion of diverse works of art in a redefined, alternate site that extends beyond the existing canon constructed by, and predominantly for, white males.

whereby it is assumed that there exists a "homogenous reading audience in the process of

fixing meaning. ...[This] assum[es] that [art made and read by women speaks of] ...some

shared identity transcending difference(s) among them. [This would] reinforce the same

reader-text relations as those set up by the dominant art histories which do not encourage

us to become critical viewers, readers, writers [or artists] ourselves" (Barzman,

1994:327). And in the process of attempting inclusion, the art educator must avoid

reaffirming whenever possible the structure of hierarchical relations and asymmetries of

power at the moment of their reception (328).

For the art education curriculum it is important for students to recognize that

women have been systematically excluded, and more precisely, as Griselda Pollock and

Rozsika Parker note, effaced from the history of art. So the imperative and fundamental

question must be asked: Why has this occurred? In their book Old Mistresses Pollock

and Parker (1981) emphasize that the way that "the history of art has been studied and

evaluated is not the exercise of neutral 'objective' scholarship, but an ideological practice[9].

It is a particular way of seeing and interpreting in which the beliefs and assumptions of art

historians...[reproduce] the ideologies of our society, shape and limit the very picture of

the history of art present to us by art history [and]...embody values which privilege the

named creative individual and certain forms of art over all other expressions of creativity"

(Pollock and Parker, 1981:xvii-xviii). While the stereotypes imposed on women's art have

most certainly been criticized, especially evidenced in emerging critical theory and feminist

texts, students of art must delve into the fundamental power relations entrenched in these

exclusionary practices questioning and working through what it means and why these

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[9]I recognize that this book was first published in 1981. Some readers may question its
inclusion in this thesis wondering if a more "contemporary" text might have been
employed. Yet Old Mistresses remains referred to regularly and is seen as a sort of
cornerstone in the examination of the exclusion of women from the history of art.

practices have been "so insistently and anxiously asserted. Why has it been necessary to negate so large a part of the history of art, to dismiss so many artists, to denigrate so many works of art simply because the artists were women? (Refer to Plate #13) What does this reveal about the structures and ideologies of art history [and our larger society and culture], how it defines what is and is not art, to whom it accords the status of artist and what that status means" (xviii). In the employment of some of the tactics I have laid out, storytelling, and the inclusion of alternative versions of history as an interjectory activity and as an alternative to the dominant, privileged discourse, not only will the visual work of women artists find its way into the curriculum, but relating the experiences of the artists in question will also come into play. This will affect not only the curriculum but the consciousness of the students. In this way the art educator can unpack the notion that while the 'feminine' stereotype "seems merely to be a way of excluding women from cultural history, it is in fact a crucial element in the construction of the current view of the history of art". It might then be revealed that "[w]omen's place in art history...has been misrecognized; [this in turn] allows us to realize the true significance of women['s lack of an accorded position] in art history as [being indicative of a larger] structuring category in...ideology [in general]" (xviii).

Hence, via the employment of alternative histories, experiences and tellings in a broader context, we can come to recognize that women's relation to artistic and social structures has been different to that of male artists. The re-telling affords us access to a position whereby we can analyze women's practices as artists to discover how they negotiated their particular positions [and that] they were able to make art as much because of as despite that difference" (xviii) and reveals that this history is one of the many of alternative ones in need of investigation. Including alternative versions of history and including the work and experiences of women artists makes it possible to avoid presenting the history of women in art as merely

a fight against exclusion and discrimination by institutions...of art. To see women's histor[ies] only as progressive struggle[s] against great odds is to fall into the trap of unwittingly reasserting the established male standards as the appropriate norm. If [the histories of women are] simply judged against the norms of male history, women are once again set...outside the historical process of which men and women are indissolubly part. Such an approach fails to convey the specific ways that women have made art under different constraints at different periods, affected as much by factors of class as by their sex. [Our investigations need to show] how women have participated [and continue to do so] in the development of the language and codes of art, contributing to and at times opposing the meanings conveyed by the dominant styles and images. In other words we [as art educators need to] stress women's relations to *art practice* not just to the institutions of art. [One of the main issues needing particular and specific address] concerns the tensions that have existed for women between the possibilities for becoming artists and the possibilities for making [works] in which [we] can produce meaning of [our] own (Pollock and Parker, 1981:xviii-xix).

In this way then we can consider the repressive restrictions imposed upon the art of women not only by the larger social institutions and power relations, but also by the language and codes of art within whose confines we have been forced to work. By referencing and interjecting alternative tellings, histories and subjectivities, as well as looking at 'radical' art practices employed to confront the ideologies of art institutions, writings on art and the meanings produced in art itself we can offer other ways to look at the history of art, and to open up a critical space from which alternate practices and systems of belief can operate. And while reconstituting or bringing forward new knowledge or versions is unable to abrogate previous histories (and this abrogation is not their intent), different "moments of a struggle constantly overlap and different relationships of representation across "old" and "new" can be made possible without landing back in a dialectical destiny. Postures of exclusionism and of absolutism therefore unveil themselves to be at best no more than a form of reactive defense and at worst, an obsession" (Trinh, 1991:3) with owning the world and the direction of knowledge.

For art education I believe it is important to recognize that in addition to recognizing that Canadian curricula tend to be Eurocentric we should simultaneously expose their phallocentricity. This is another step towards ensuring that art education students become more critically informed. As Susan Cahan, education coordinator at the New Museum of Contemporary Art, advocates, there is a need for students to realize a more critically informed perspective as well. She notes that it *is* critical to witness a more inclusive, integrated art curriculum, but equally important is getting students to "*analyze* the Eurocentric and phallocentric materials [simultaneously] that are being put before them. They need the tools, [the information and access/exposure to that perspective], to understand how those cultural objects exert their power and create our sense of identity" (Cahan in Wallis, 1990:94). As a case in point she asserts, "[i]t's not enough for me to stand up and say that Picasso's "Demoiselles d'Avignon" does violence to women. I have to [ask students/viewers of art to think about]...*how* it does that and *why*" (94). I would agree that this is a component of art education that needs further address and reflects a need for the type of critical questioning that I posit is essential for the development of a reconstructive postmodern art education curriculum.

Ruptures

As some critical, academic debates increasingly situate themselves in and around postcolonialist discourse, feminist theory, multiculturalism, etc..., "which are all considered to be analyzed from the anti-canonical point of view of the strategies of 'otherness', of the subaltern" it must be recognized that simultaneously "postcolonialist intellectuals of the "other" depend on a network of metropolitan thought that, regardless of how much importance is given to the 'marginal' as the object of a discourse, still exerts

a centrist function for those of the margin who figure as the "other", because they operate outside the hegemonic trace of the metropolitan culture" (Richards, 1992:58).

In the sphere of representational politics, questions of identity and subjectivity are imperative, as are questions about sameness and difference. Audre Lorde (1990) addressing the institutionalized rejection of difference notes that this rejection is an absolute necessity in "a profit economy which needs outsiders [or others] as surplus people. As members of such an economy we have *all* been programmed to respond to...and handle difference in one of three ways: ignore it, and if this is not possible, copy it if we think it is dominant, [mining it as we might a natural resource thereby continuing and reinforcing the centrist project], or destroy it if we think it is subordinate. But [as yet] we have no patterns for relating across our human differences as equals. As a result, those differences have been misnamed and misused in the service of separation and confusion" (Lorde, 1990:281-2) working to maintain and reproduce a system of dominance that benefits both economically and socially from the maintenance of these differences and categorizations of 'other'. If those of us who have been assigned a position of Other, because of sex, sexual identity, colour, socio-economic status, etc..., are "collectively to affirm our subjectivity in resistance, as we struggle against forces of domination and move towards the invention of the decolonized self, we must set our imaginations free. Acknowledging that we have been and are colonized both in our minds and in our imaginations, we begin to understand the need for promoting and celebrating creative expression" (hooks, 1995:4). It is also imperative to acknowledge that our identity and subjectivity has been locally or situatedly constructed, both by choice and by context. This recognition goes a long to way to insist upon the need for alternative histories as these tend to recognize the import of this assertion.

Renee Baert notes that the calibrations of the terms sameness and difference "form invisible [and, I would argue visible] boundaries, primarily social and economic, that

demarcate the discourse of a nation, the character of a collectivity, the narrative of the self" (Baert, 1993:8). For the purposes of this thesis this is an important point because art and artists outside this boundary or border, located within the sphere of 'other', tend to get excluded precisely because of their lack of a situated position (speaking, political, social, economic) in the entrenched centre. A central challenge of undertaking an interdisciplinary, unnaming project is to pull apart the import and signification status accorded to the centre and the impact it has on those excluded from it. Nelly Richards wrote that as the centre is currently situated it does not exhaust its signification in the geographical realism of a metropolitan position. In fact, it must be realized that every axis that

> makes a system of references move around its symbols of authority is operating as a function of centrism - normative or canonical. And in this sense, the perimeter that determines legitimacy and decrees the actuality of the postmodern theme of the "other" on the international scene is limited by the academic-institutional network (universities, publishing houses, museums, etc...) that spreads and consecrates the prestige of European and U.S. theories. The hierarchical position of the Centre results not only from the fact that it concentrates wealth and regulates its distribution. It proceeds, above all, from the investiture of authority that allows it to function as a focus of endowed meaning. The symbolic advantage of the Centre is a result of its monopoly over the resources to negotiate the power-discourse relationships through univocal processing and manipulation of the equivalencies of signs and values (Richards, 1992: 58).

Via this determination of legitimacy, the centre has consistently excluded the periphery based on notions of difference that have not met the standards imposed by it. Ironically, the 'difference' that has been the force propelling identities and subjectivities into this 'other' position is a

> marked one, for it is in and through difference that the "self" is made. The "other" is the very figure of that difference, a position that cannot be assimilated to the order of the same and hence the site onto which anxieties, fears and desires are projected. In a politics of domination,

difference [or heterogeneity] is reduced to the negative pole of a dualistic and hierarchical narrative, where it becomes a condition to be managed, appropriated, colonized, ignored, dismissed, fetishized, idealized or otherwise mastered in service of the stability of a privileged "one" (Baert, 1993:8).

If there is to be a substantive rupture of the tradition of patriarchy, colonization and other categorizations that serve to constrict all of us (which includes those located both in and outside of the centre), ideas about these 'shelving' terminologies along with ideas about subjectivity and how it is constructed need to be investigated. As colonization, official histories and artistic practices that do not allow for interdisciplinary work and approaches become rigorously contested, then deterritorialized spaces open up wherein the rigidly defined and demarcated territories of difference and borders become blurred. Hybridization, notions of differing subjectivities and 'cultural syncretism' through alternate practices become possible.

This hybridization acknowledges the positive and productive side of hybridity liberating the subject from notions of fixity (Papastergiadis, 1995:9). This type of hybridity exists as a deconstruction of identity as defined by colonization (Bhabba, 1994). It recognizes and affirms a postcolonial identity, and I would argue subjectivity, beyond essential nationhood and the "arch-narrative of the master-slave" (Purdom, 1995:25). It exposes the world as existing as "interweavings". This hybridity rejects and denies colonially-defined and imposed borders; simultaneously, it reserves the right to re-appropriate or coopt the term in acts of renewal, refiguration extending beyond interruption. This is evidenced in repositioning subjectivity in a state of hybridity.

I have always been interested in subjectivity - the way it is visually represented and constructed, how it gets contested via certain types of visual articulation and the ways in which representational politics operate, often serving to limit, constrict and confine subjectivity, making it reliant upon knowledge and power relations that have become

untenable. For art education an investigation into subjectivity works conjunctly with an examination of how a reformulation of existing power relations might serve to open up the possibility of realizing a more inclusive, interconnected curriculum. I am also interested in it from a position of how subjectivity reformulated through hybrid artistic practices is capable of embracing "particular experiences of migration and invasion...which refuse both the melting-pot idea and the nostalgia for pure identity. [The endeavor] is about affirmation as well as opposition" (Purdom, 1995:19). With this in mind, "borderline culture" and works of art can operate in such a way that accomplishes more than the innovation and interruption of a present's performance, as advocated by Bhabba (1994). In the reclamation or relocation of subjectivity and identity the artist can illustrate, as Theresa Hak Kyung Cha does, especially evidenced in her performance piece, Aveugle Voix (Blind Voice), the possibility of identity *per se*. This is displayed in "that "moment of suspense" (Derrida's phrase) 'beyond' or 'prior to' identity, a moment which acts as a condition of identity and which is not framed by the metaphysical 'writing' of identity. This is a moment and/or space where the possibility of representation is shown" (Purdom, 1995:21) as a hybrid - something which is not fixed (Bhabba, 1994). Additionally, we might also venture further, moving beyond taking apart identity "or breaching the frame of identity, show[ing] the blueprint for the very idea of an identity [and a subjectivity]...questioning the subject identity within the work" (21).

Such an endeavor is often present in works depicting border-culture and many artists creating such pieces refer to them as "borderline artworks" (Peña, 1989). Jacqueline Fraser is a case in point. As Purdom (1995) relates, "she presents her work to an English audience with Maori titles (in the same way that Anzaldúa writes bilingually, interchanging English and Spanish) as if to assert a distance [linguistic and otherwise] between two cultures and a disparity between the possible understandings of the work" (20). Purdom, taking up Peña's terminology, identifies this as "borderline art" which "does

not sit easily within either culture, neither is it a coalescence of cultures; it is something different, an 'entity' which dovetails with the postmodern as a fragmented, complex and open representation" (20). This extends beyond Bhabba's ideas regarding "biculturalism" (1994) as artists creating "borderline artworks" are not presenting their identity - in Fraser's case Maori - "as biculturalism but as historically specific heterogeneous experiences of border culture. Theresa Hak Kyung Cha's work, as previously noted, evidences a similar practice. Her art speaks of memory, loss and the abyss that exists between experience and languages - visual, verbal, non-verbal. In Solomon-Godeau's Mistaken Identities she articulated that her work is about "looking for the roots of language before it is born on the tip of the tongue" (Cha in Solomon-Godeau, 1993:56). Purdom writes, Cha's work "directly confronts the problem and the possibility of creating a 'language' with which to show the complexity of an identity when the designation as Other is refused" (Purdom, 1995:20).

When I first began this work I believed that my interests were located particularly in the investigation of identity and how works of art construct for us different ways of formulating our identity. But identity is about a unitary state of being and is all too often accorded a false sense of authority that tends to lead to ideas about legitimacy via a very narrow field of locating and map-making. Moreover, identity is frequently employed as a taxonomy demarcating boundaries that are stiff and reified, and the ideas tend to resolve themselves in a very fixed field. Trinh T. Minh-Ha echoes some of these ideas regarding questions of identity. She states in Framer Framed, if identity is designated as a point of re-departure

> for those of us whose ethnicity and gender were historically debased, then
> identity remains necessary as a political/personal strategy of survival and
> resistance. But if it is essentialized as an end point, a point of "authentic"
> arrival, then it only narrows the struggle down to a question of
> "alternatives" - that is, a perpetuation, albeit with a reversed focus, of the

notion of "otherness" as defined by the master, rather than a radical challenge of patriarchal power relations (Trinh, 1992:157).

She goes on to assert that identity has the power to operate strategically in a way that affords us with an enabling path, one that is process-oriented and situates us in a place whereby we can question our position in such a way that we are able to intimately come to understand how the personal and experiential are cultural, political and historical. But she also points out that the question identity can regularly focus too intently on is: *Who* am I? when in fact a more useful, reflexive question that might be considered is "*When, where, how* am I (so and so)?" (157). This is why I, in concurrence with Minh-Ha,

> remain skeptical of strategies of reversals when they are so intricately woven with strategies of displacement. [The] notion of displacement [in this location] is also a place of identity: there is no real me to return to, no whole self that synthesizes the woman [and all the other things that the "I" embodies]; there are instead, diverse recognitions of self through difference, and unfinished, ...arbitrary closures that make possible both politics and identity (157).

Consequently, I believe that subjectivity is a more appropriate and useful term for development and exploration because unlike "identity" it is not reliant upon the essentialist closures and end points. It is in fact much more fluid and dynamic. It is about knowing and the terms and conditions of knowing. In my work it is about getting at this oscillating, transient and protean 'state of knowing' that extends beyond the epistemological limits. Interestingly enough, there has, for the past few years, been a contestation of the "legitimating codes and representational practices through which prevailing western models of [subjectivity, identity] and knowledge are grounded" (Baert, 1993:8). The contestation of the dominant, acceptable forms of visual and artistic articulation is located in the "never seamless convergences of such disparate critical enterprises as postmodernism and post-structuralism and such theoretical configurations as feminism, postcolonialism, gay liberation and other emancipatory movements" (8). There is a call to

reexamine, reconsider and rename critically in the situated position of these movements. This is especially imperative in the present location of overcodification, of

> de-individualized individualism and of reductionist collectivism, naming critically is to dive headlong into the abyss of un-naming. The task of inquiring into all the divisions of a culture remains exacting, for the moments when things take on a proper name can only be positional, hence transitional. The function of any ideology in power is to represent the world positively unified, To challenge the regimes of representation that govern a society is to conceive of how a politics can transform reality rather than merely ideologize it. As the struggle moves onward and assumes new, different forms, it is bound to recompose subjectivity and praxis while displacing the way diverse cultural strategies relate to one another in the constitution of social and political life (Trinh, 1991:2).

Through this challenge, this inquiry into subjectivity we begin to realize that the possibilities of the meaning in "I", the "I" articulated via subjectivity, "are endless, vast and varied because self-definition is a variable with at least five billion different forms. [T]he I is one of the most particular, most unitary symbols, and yet it is one of the most general, most universal as well" (Candelaria, 1986:38). This consideration of the "I" and what it means and can mean, reveals the need to rename that which has been named for us...for all of us in one way or another...creating a self-definition indicative of the "I" we are now and the "I" we can be.

When we rename, we force people to look and think differently. Through renaming we might also deconstruct the co-optation of images through reductive and restrictive stereotypes that has kept people and artistic production stagnant far too long. As names and labels change, those which have confined people to untenable roles and tied to paralytic relationships between themselves and others, themselves and society, the questions change and must be confronted. (Lippard, 1990:48) Renaming or self-naming is a reconstructive project in which such relational factors - balancing one's own assumptions with an understanding of others - are essential. When names and labels prove insubstantial

or damaging they need to be discarded or discredited, and exposed as falsely engendered and socially constructed (Lippard, 1990:55). Then they can be chosen anew, even if only temporarily, because after awhile these might not fit either. Not all naming has to be confining or imply permanence and rigidly defined spaces and situations.

Unnaming Via an Interdisciplinary Approach

> So where we are now is that a whole country of people believe I'm a "nigger" and I *don't*, and the battle's on. Because if I am not what I've been told I am, then it means that *you're* not what you thought *you* were *either*! And that's the crisis.
>
> James Baldwin

> We have reached a point where to name things is to denounce them: but, to whom and for whom? ...*We are what we do, especially what we do to change what we are*: our identity resides in action and struggle. Therefore, the revelation of what we are implies the denunciation of those who stop us from being what we can become. In defining ourselves our point of departure is challenge, and struggle against obstacles.
>
> Eduardo Galeano

Lucy Lippard observes that "[for] better or worse, social existence is predicated on names. Names and labels are at once the most private and most public words in the life of an individual or a group...Naming is the active tense of identity, the outward aspect of the self-representation process, acknowledging all of the circumstances which it must elbow its way through" (Lippard, 1990:19). She also notes that despite the seeming permanence of a name, there is the possibility for radical and subversive change to take place. What she does not emphasize is the difficulty in 'unnaming' that which has been named, accepted, categorized and shelved. Because the moment you move from

the position of a named subject into the position of a naming subject, you also have to remain alive to the renewed dangers of arrested meanings and fixed categories - in other words, of occupying the position of a sovereign subject. "Non-categorical" thinking sees to it that the power to name be constantly exposed in its limits. So in terms of subject positioning you can only thrive on fragile ground. You are always working in this precarious space where you constantly run the risk of falling on one side or the other. You are walking right on the edge and challenging both sides so that they cannot simply be collapsed into one. This is the space in between, the interval to which established rules of boundaries [can] never quite apply (Trinh, 1991:173-3).

In accordance with this, the task of unnaming remains especially challenging in artistic disciplines. This may seem antithetical to some but from personal experience I believe it to be true. In the context to which I have been referring it seems that a traditional, conservative, officially sanctioned Eurocentric artworld - and it is important to note that this thesis asserts that there are many artworlds beyond the Eurocentric one - remains resistant to change while simultaneously appearing to embrace it. This process operates as a function of absorption and assimilation. If this seems contradictory, that may be because it is. Limited spheres of the artworld may promote seemingly 'radical' practices, but in actuality they avoid that which is different and that which they cannot easily categorize or ground in familiar territory. This remains fairly indicative of human nature in general. We fear what we cannot readily place.

This precise problem is evidenced when artists who do not name themselves because they choose not to or do not fit into the neat packaging and categorization that has been assigned to those who preceded them are promptly assigned a name by those who maintain and control the art distribution systems (Lippard, 1990:35). The ramifications of this are immense because, "[j]ust as Native...children were renamed when they were forced into government schools, and just as the very land they stood on was renamed overnight; just as the immigration officials at Ellis Island simplified their jobs by

truncating, respelling, or reinventing the unfamiliar names of new citizens, so the high-art world renames the art of the "Other"" (35-6).

What is ironic is that the reasons for being assigned this position of Other seem to be widening rather than narrowing. Not only do artists fall into this category because of gender, colour, and sexual identity, but also when they work collectively or when they employ materials in particular ways; in ways that are interdisciplinary and outside the specified borders of a particular, accepted practice[10]. What becomes increasingly clear is that if the

> postmodern inclination towards the "other" is to become something more than a stated disposition, and if it really modifies the discursive institutional agreement sealed by the official bonds of the Centre's prerogatives, it becomes necessary to decentralize the symbolic power of cultural representation and pluralize the [methodology and the] socio-institutional mechanisms of critical participation and debate (Richards, 1992:58).

If this decentralization cannot be realized the "other" effectively confronts two risks: "either to serve rhetorically as a discursive fetish, so that the progressive intellectuals of the Centre pay their radical tribute to the "good consciousness" of the Third World; or to remain confined to the prescribed and supervised territory in the margins as a zone of non-interference with the institutions of the Centre" (58).

Recently, in response to this and other problems, as an alternative tactic to the conservative and accepted art-making practices prescribed by the centre, more and more

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[10]As noted in Chapter 4, working collaboratively is in itself seen as an oppositional art practice. The Kiss and Tell Collective noted that in this culture collective art practice, more often than not, has come to be associated and identified with a loss of control, power and material reward (Kiss and Tell, 1994:41). Moreover, collaboration raises uncomfortable questions for most regarding authorship and genius, notions that many seem unwilling to part with. This is particularly problematic because collaborative practices are capable of recognizing and revealing the power imbalances created by and articulated through an ideology and history centred in and predicated upon ideas of absolute individualism.

artists have been turning towards interdisciplinary or collaborative approaches, necessarily finding more traditionally-singular and conservative practices limiting and paralytic. There is an ever emerging and increasing interest in destabilizing the predefined, conformist parameters. Artists are seeking to literally and figuratively break down categorizations and move away from separatism and self-enclosure. This follows the path of those wanting to dissolve the borders and those who reject marketable categories. Such a tactic was evidenced in the interview with Alfred Quiroz (1996), located in the previous chapter.

In speaking of interdisciplinary practices it is essential to situate a new meaning for a familiar word. 'Interdisciplinary' has been around for some time, but this notion is

> usually carried out in practice as the mere juxtaposition of a number of different disciplines. In such a politics of pluralist exchange and dialogue the concept of "inter"-(trans)formation and growth is typically reduced to a question of proper accumulation and acquisition. The disciplines are simply added, put next to one another with their boundaries kept intact; the participants continue happily to speak within their own expertise, from a position of authority. It is rare to see such a notion stretched to the limits, so that the fences between disciplines are pulled down. Borderlines then remain strategic and contingent, as they cancel themselves out. This "new" ground [is] always in the making....It constitutes the site where the very idea of a discipline, a [singular] specialization, and an expertise is challenged. No single field, profession, or creator can "own" it. (Trinh, 1992:138-9).

In truly interdisciplinary work there is a concrete movement away from the constraining and paralytic situatedness that confines us - as artists, educators and people - to the illusion of acceptable places to be and exist. Consequently, one witnesses the abandonment of roles, identities and subjectivities that serve to keep us in a state of stasis. It may well be precisely because of the potential this approach affords a more diasporic generation on both artistic and theoretical grounds that has encouraged the aforementioned to voice their discomfort with the safeguarding of boundaries on either side of the border (140). This is exactly because

the repressed complexities of the politics of identity have been fully exposed. "Identity" has now become more a point of departure than an end point in the struggle. So although we understand the necessity of acknowledging this notion of identity in politicizing the personal, we also don't want to be limited to it. Dominated and marginalized people have been socialized to see always more than their own point of view. In the complex reality of postcoloniality it is therefore vital to assume one's radical "impurity" and to recognize the necessity of speaking from a hybrid place, hence of saying at least two, three things at a time (Trinh, 1992:140).

It is via an interdisciplinary artistic and theoretical approach that hybridizations truly become possible.

As the internal examination intensifies for names to counter anachronistic impositions through a process of unnaming "that will reflect and reinforce the difficult coalitions being forged,...it becomes clear that...[this process is necessarily] reinvented and reinterpreted in each generation by each individual and [more and more] it's often something quite puzzling to the individual, something over which he or she lacks control...[and] it is something that emerges in full only through struggle" (Fischer in Lippard, 1990:45).

Seeing differently, a concept advocated throughout this chapter, can be realized through interdisciplinary work. Such work disrupts and breaks down prescribed roles and boundaries, offering new tactics, possibilities and hybridization that pull apart norms and exclusionary assumptions that have become too comfortable. Such practices in conjunction with tactics of unnaming and self-definition challenge us to see and acknowledge in public spaces/forums that which has remained unsaid or unheard. What results is not only artworks that look different, but reflect a different vision, propelling all of us into a space where we can and need to look differently at people and the works of art they produce. Encouraging students to look and see things differently, raising new questions about what is seen and who it has made visible and/or invisible and why, is one

of the first steps towards a critical way of looking and being in this world. Looking differently is, in my opinion, the only way to realize a revolution in vision and a location revealing that a different way of thinking, seeing, looking and engaging can completely transform the conditions that make for meaningful artistic, cultural and social relations (Napier, 1992:51).

CHAPTER 6

BEGINNINGS: ALTERNATIVE PATHS FOR ART EDUCATION

A Map for Beginnings

In contemplating a conclusion for this thesis I found it very difficult to think of it as a "conclusion". Throughout the writing and research of this text I have advocated against grand closures that tightly wrap and package things neatly. These demarcate closed, constraining spaces that are the antitheses of what I believe should be witnessed.

Instead, what I have marked out are a series of beginnings: ones that can be examined as possible avenues for arriving at more inclusive and dynamic locations in an art education sphere. None of these beginnings to which I refer can operate in isolation; rather, they might ideally work in conjunction with one another, as a community or collection of ideas and practices. Together they serve as beginnings to numerous paths, ones that have perhaps been more thoroughly considered and traveled in art worlds yet could be assumed by a reconstructive postmodern art education curriculum in a North American context. The beliefs and methodologies marked out in this thesis are indicative of reconstructive postmodern practices and sensibilities as argued for throughout the course of this text.

What follows in this 'conclusion' is a recognition that a number of tactics could be adopted that might operate in a collective and simultaneous or conjunctive fashion. These tactics include: (1) focusing on contextualizing artworks and artistic practices in an art education forum, and how contextualization can operate as a form of resistance against categorization and shelving terminologies, (2) issuing a challenge to an undemocratic,

Eurocentric curriculum as one necessary step in the establishment of a pedagogy indicative of reconstructive postmodern art education, (3) unnaming and deterritorializing restrictive discipline boundaries and emphasizing the importance of interdisciplinary artistic practices. This extends to art educators including hybridizations issuing from such practices in art education curriculums, and (4) the import of critically-informed art education curriculums and art education students. A critically informed perspective encourages students to recognize and interrogate the 'politics of representation' bound up in all artmaking practices. The 'representations' referred to throughout this chapter are seen as visual manifestations. Simultaneously, they are bound in and to the politics involved in visual articulations. Interrogations of the politics of representation are seen as being "interpretive act[s] that reveal cultural practice. As such, [particular] representations [are capable of] pointing to cultural practices that both include and exclude, that unsettle, for instance, what Biddy Martin and Chandra Mohanty call the "seeming homogeneity, stability, and self-evidence of 'white identity'" (Giroux, 1994:91). In this context I am preoccupied with a pedagogy of representation that encourages white EuroNorth American students to understand how their own identities are beyond neither history, ethnicity, difference, privilege, nor struggle (91). It is important to contextualize that "[c]ultural difference, in this case, must be taken up as a relational issue and not as one that serves to isolate and mark particular groups" (91). It is my belief in accordance with Giroux that by engaging the arts as being historically and socially constructed, art educators "can provide..site[s] for students [wherein they might] create counternarratives of emancipation in which new visions, spaces, desires, and discourses can be developed that offer them the opportunity for rewriting [both visually and otherwise] their own histories differently within rather than outside of the discourse of power and social struggle" (Giroux, 1994:90).

The Importance of Contextualization Revisited

As previously noted in this thesis I have attempted to resist the urge to 'dictate' or impose another set of dogma on the field of art education as this goes against my belief in the importance of multiplicity and a rejection of singularity. I have done so by qualifying things, by suggesting as opposed to insisting, by trying to remain aware of location as an unstable, context-dependent entity. In this portion of this chapter I am going to divert from this practice somewhat by actually asserting that contextualization *should* occur. Throughout my investigations contextualization has emerged an a critical lens necessary for locating and viewing works of art in the spirit of reconstructive postmodernism. In the teaching of art in a reconstructive postmodern art education forum, I have come to believe that contextualization is necessary. "In learning and teaching about the art...of other cultures [and peoples], we [as art educators] need to investigate the culture that nurtured the artist who made it - the experiences, beliefs, practices...and literature of the people the artist calls his or her people. We must avoid using only the lenses of European and [North American] mainstream cultures and values" (Garber, 1995:220).

Through contextualization a modification and expansion of categories and borders becomes possible through the address and development of what Guillermo Gomez-Peña has termed "border consciousness". This tactic uncovers that an interruption or reformulation of the way we have traditionally categorized artworks is necessary in a reconstructive postmodern forum. Recognizing that this contextualization operates in more than one direction as it questions the work's interiority and exteriority to the assigned categories is also very important (Trinh, 1990:162). Peña's "border consciousness" through contextualization "necessarily implies the knowledge that two sets of reference codes operat[e] simultaneously. The challenge [then becomes] to fully assume this biculturalism [and I would argue for the assumption of a position beyond bi-

culturalism; perhaps one that is poly- and/or transcultural], develop it and promote it" (Peña, 1989:113). Students realize through contextualizations that it is important, especially in an art education context, to learn about "the art, history, literature and narrative stories, popular and folk images, political ideas, everyday lives, spirituality, even the language of the culture" in order to read or understand the artwork (Garber, 1995:223). As art community members we might then "come to understand varieties and subtleties within [a] culture" (223) through a sort of immersion in it. This immersion might permit the development of new ways to think about, look at, and value art.

In having many varied voices speak simultaneously through contextualized disciplines and factions - artistic, cultural, political, and economic - attention gets accorded to diverse beliefs and multiplicities evidenced in every culture. I maintain that one of our goals in art education should be to refuse the need that has emerged and persisted for decades for us to privilege and include only "the coherent, balanced...aspects [of artworks]...those elements that seem to [afford a sense of] continuity", omitting those ["other" artworks] that appear to be "disputed, torn, intertextual, or syncretic" (Clifford, 1988:232). In an acceptance and inclusion of alternative practices or lifestories leaks and fissures open up and get recognized. This recognition might prevent neat categories and labels from persisting, leading us back to category resistance through contextualization and other strategies, such as interdisciplinary practices, which will be discussed later.

Issuing a Challenge to an Undemocratic, Eurocentric Curriculum

Much of the time it seems that even when art educators attempt to challenge the canon, they tend to do so using a methodology deemed by feminists to be one of 'sprinkle and stir' origins. "A few women, a few blacks, [perhaps a few] Mexicans...Native [Canadians], Asians, (and rarely, a few Middle Easterners) are tacked onto the existing

narrative. We don't [significantly] change [or challenge] the Eurocentric narrative or our understandings except to [minimally] acknowledge that women and persons of colour also made art within these traditions and standards" (Garber, 1995:220). As Elizabeth Garber notes a kind of 'multicultural quick-fix' has emerged in many art education curriculums wherein what little studying of the art of "Others" does occur is all too often indicative of homoginization and this is what becomes manifest (220).

This "homogenization", as defined by cultural studies scholar Jose David Saldivar (1990), witnesses the conglomerization of several unique, distinct cultures - such as Mexican, Mexican-American/[Canadian], Puerto Rican, Cuban, Nicaraguan - into a singular indistinct group "("Hispanic" or "Latino/a"), which levels the cultural distinctions between groups and individuals within each group" (Garber, 1995:220). This in turn serves to negate the importance of distinct histories, narratives, practices, and individual experiences. As James Clifford argues, "[w]e need to be suspicious of an almost automatic tendency to relegate non-Western [and non-European derived] peoples and objects to....an increasingly homogeneous humanity" (Clifford, 1988:246).

In a "town meeting" discussion included in Democracy (1990), a Dia Art Foundation project, Tim Rollins, Director of the Art and Knowledge Workshop in the Bronx, NY, notes that intentionally or unintentionally most of the curriculum does tend to concentrate on Eurocentric ideals and practices that suggest that all knowledge and practice emerge from Europe or a Eurocentred location, and that is particularly true in the Fine Arts. But he also notes that the same is true in other disciplines such as literature and philosophy and that everything else that gets included that is "outside" of the Eurocentric tradition is present only as a "token gesture" (Rollins in Wallis, 1990:90).

With this in mind he advocates that it is useful, if not critical, to approach the problem from a position that recognizes that it is not only about privileging this general idea of what "culture" is and is not, or what "education" is and is not about; rather, it's

about recognizing and maintaining a "very fundamental awareness that it is not a democratic culture that we are talking about and it's therefore not a democratic curriculum" (90-91). This recognition *necessitates* a change in the way people not only look at art, but a fundamental shift in the way we look at the world and the people in it. Once we actually come to an informed place where we can admit this lack of democracy, it no longer becomes a frivolous or peripheral issue, this need to rigorously address the exclusionary, racist, sexist methodologies manifest that omit particular histories and alternative artistic practices from the curriculum. When you think about what is privileged, what gets included and seen, what we "allow" students to develop a relationship with, disallowing through omission and silence that which is not desirable, it "indicates very clearly how disturbed our perceptions are because, in fact, ninety-two percent of the world's population is non-white" and at least, in fact slightly more than, half is comprised of women (Harris in Wallis, 1990:93). Why then, are works by what in effect constitutes the majority of the world's population omitted from the curriculum? As art educators, and as members of society, we must ask ourselves what this is indicative of if not racism and sexism? A reconstructive postmodern art education curriculum, as dealing and concerned with the investigation and looking at of artistic practices which struggle against such undemocratic ideas, offers a space wherein such contestations might revolutionize the way we think about these ideas and methodologies.

A challenge that could be issued to art education via the employment of a reconstructive postmodern set of methodologies is for it to undertake a deterritorialization of traditional, colonially-demarcated boundaries and borderlines. Such a challenge calls for the abandonment, or at the very least a reformulating and reframing, of the predilections and predispositions we have so comfortably slipped into and maintained regarding the assignment of categories and labels. As Trinh T. Minh-Ha advocates, what is being sought after is a resistance of and to simplistic attempts at classifying. She notes

that it is important for all people, artists in particular, to resist the comfort of belonging to a particular classification and of producing classifiable works. One might also recognize that in this endeavor the question remains "entangled in the vicissitudes of history". In order to deconstruct the shelving and slotting strategies that bind us to untenable, non-connected, and paralytic places, we could develop more inclusive, hybrid spaces, tactics and practices that take into account both the way history has been made up and the way we tend to take it for granted, especially evidenced in our consumption of artworks (Trinh, 1992:161). This is where the embracing and inclusion of alternative histories, narratives and lifestories in a reconstructive postmodernist art education curriculum becomes desirable.

Unnaming/Deterritorializing via Interdisciplinary Methodologies that Witness Hybridizations

As I advocate for a recognition of the importance and inclusion of interdisciplinary practices and beliefs in an arts education context I have come to realize the innumerable possibilities such inclusions offers. Interdisciplinary practices when employed as a pedagogy in an art education forum push against the boundaries of artistic, disciplinary and cultural containment to become sites for pedagogical struggles in which the legacies of rigid disciplinary boundaries, dominant histories, particular sanctioned artistic practices, codes and relations become unsettled. This unsettling opens up the aforementioned rigorously defined borders to a place wherein they can be challenged, rewritten and revisualized (Giroux, 1994:91). In accordance with Giroux I forward that this inclusion and consequent unsettling "suggests at the most general level that a pedagogy of representation [as stipulatively defined] must be a pedagogy [that includes] place, that is, it must address the specificities of experiences, problems, languages and histories [bound up

in art] that students and communities rely upon to construct a [counter]narrative of collective identity and possible transformation" as advocated by and indicative of reconstructive postmodern practices in an art education curriculum (91). This inclusion is once again representative of one of the tactics I feel art educators could employ in an effort towards realizing an art curriculum indicative of reconstructive postmodernism.

The misfit between formal, structured categories and/or disciplines that confer artistic practice, identity and subjectivity in fixed terms - like discipline, class, gender, race - have constricted the way we look at art and have effectively blinded us, literally and figuratively, to a plethora of happenings and practices within artworlds and the world itself. Unnaming, or refusing a singular name through the tactical use of interdisciplinary practices as argued for within this thesis is a political choice that casts artworks and artistic practice into an unknown, or certainly lesser-known, place in the sphere of art education where the struggle to he heard or achieve venue is no less difficult; in fact, it may be moreso. However, in this interstitial space, a more fluid, dynamic environment is evidenced where established and restrictive rules of boundaries never quite apply. This deterritorialized space, existing in a vertiginous unstable position that refuses singular practice, categorization and meaning, reveals an appreciation for the contrapuntal where there is no comfortably convenient relationship between this image and that image, or this practice and that, and so on.

As revealed in the Johannesburg Biennale the looking at and juxtaposing of artworks that seem arrhythmic, provocative, unfamiliar, resonating a multiplicity of artistic practices and the inflection of dissonant voices and ideas, suspends restrictive expectations. At the Biennale such juxtaposings challenged both artists and viewers to renegotiate their position in relation to art. In eluding categories enabled by and reflective of exclusionary practices, hybridizations, as born out of interdisciplinary practices, advocate negotiation as an act of interrogation in which new consciousness and ways of

looking become possible. For a reconstructive postmodernist art educator, a similar tactic could be employed where unnaming becomes possible. This might be accomplished through a deterritorialization of traditional discipline boundaries and 'acceptable' artistic practices in conjunction with the inclusion of hybrids resulting from such deterritorializations.

Hybridizations evidenced in unnaming through interdisciplinary work are "not based on their capacity to hold together all the earlier parts or fuse together all the divergent sources [of practice, identity, and subjectivity which came before], but [are] found in the way they hold difference together. Hybrid identity is thus not formed in an accretic way whereby the essence of one [practice or] identity is combined with another and hybridity is simply a process of accumulation" (Papastergiadis, 1995:18). Rather, as articulated by Bhabba in The Location of Culture "hybrid hyphenations emphasize the incommensurable elements - the stubborn chunks - as the basis of cultural identifications" (Bhabba, 1994:219). Due to the dialogic possibilities manifest via hybridizations interactions between disciplines, cultures and ideologies proceed "with the illusion of transferable forms and transparent knowledge but lead increasingly into resistant, opaque, and dissonant exchanges. It is in this tension that a 'third' [or hybrid] space (Bhabba's term) emerges which can effect forms of [artistic and] political change that go beyond binarisms in which the ruled would otherwise be confined to the role of usurping the power of the ruler" (Papastergiadis, 1995:18).

As visually manifest in the Biennale and some of the artistic practices investigated in the course of this thesis, practices by Cha, Fraser, Quiroz, Trinh, "[t]he hybrid is formed out of the dual process of displacement and correspondence in the act of translation. As every translator is painfully aware, meaning seldom moves across borders with pristine integrity. Every translation [visual or otherwise] requires a degree of improvisation [and contextualization]. The hybrid is therefore not formed out of an excavation and transferal

of foreignness into the familiar, but out of this awareness of the untranslatable bits that linger on *in* translation" (Papastergiadis, 1995:18). In this way then, the hybrid reveals that

> otherness and sameness are more useful when they are viewed not in terms
> of dualities or conflicts but in terms of degrees and movements within the
> same concept, or better, in terms of differences both within and between
> entities (difference between First and Third- [employing such names only]
> if such naming serves a temporary purpose - and differences within First,
> within Third- if [and only if] such boundaries can be temporarily fixed).
> Otherness *to* the outsider or insider is necessarily not the same as otherness
> *from* these positions, and in their encounter the two need not [merely]
> conflict with each other nor merely complement each other (Trinh,
> 1991:140).

The hybrid succeeds in revealing that if the work of differentiation is constantly engaged and made visible, then issues relating to what should and should not get included in an art education curriculum take on a different meaning in a different connotational context (140).

Perhaps if art education can come to accept that possibilities for artistic and cultural understandings for students emerge *via* hybridizations indicative of reconstructive postmodern practices that fuse art/experience/lifestories/sameness and difference together simultaneously - albeit in ways different from and unfamiliar to conventional or traditional methodologies - the inclusion of such practices might become a reality in a reconstructive postmodern art education curriculum. Such inclusions could lead to collective, participatory interactions between students and diverse works of art; in turn becoming reflective of a more interconnected, socially-responsible and inclusive art education community indicative of many people as opposed to a few.

Criticality, The Politics of Representation and An Interrogation of History: Pedagogical Implications

Throughout this thesis I have maintained that if critical looking were to evolve and occur in an art education forum it might open up that forum to some of the questioning and practices I believe would benefit students. One of the goals of reconstructive postmodernism in this sphere is to critically educate and prepare students to be able to appreciate and better understand certain works of art while simultaneously subjecting institutional frameworks to critique. In accordance with this goal it is important for students of art to realize that "active analytic viewing requires something more than deconstructing the ideological character of the image. ...Ideological critique is crucial to any critical practice, but it is not enough. ...[A concern] with how images engender forms of investment, negotiation, and translation on the part of [both] makers and viewers [should also come into play]" (Giroux, 1994:98). An understanding of divergent and alternative forms of art "must begin with the recognition that [art] is a building block in a larger structure. This larger structure, whether manifest in a textbook...or on a gallery wall, is defined by the ideologically structured material and semiotic field in which [art] appears" (99).

With this concern in mind I advocate that art educators might strive to equip students to look at the agenda implicit in the choices being made by educational and institutional apparatuses. How students come to view and interrogate these apparatuses becomes a "crucial determinant of any conception of critical practice that seeks to shift how [art is] seen and (more ambitiously) refashion [arts'] contribution to the social [and artistic] imagination[s] of diverse publics" (99). On a particular level "this suggests that students must analyze those institutions that constantly work through the power of representations and social practices, in Chandra Mohanty's words, to "produce, codify and

even rewrite histories of race and colonialism in the name of difference"" (Giroux, 1994:88). This involves subjecting the Eurocentric, phallocentric, hegemonic mandates that have permeated EuroNorth American art curriculums to critical address. Artistic practices and ensuing artworks

> are not simply forms of cultural capital necessary for human beings to present themselves in relation to others...they also inhabit and sustain institutional structures that need to be understood and analyzed within circuits of power that constitute what might be called a political economy of representations. In this case, a [reconstructive postmodern art-based] pedagogy and politics of representation would highlight historically how "machineries of representation"...are inextricably linked to the emergence of corporate-controlled and knowledge-based societies in which a politics of representation must be partially understood within the imperatives of...the postmodern age (Giroux, 1994:88).

As a result, it is important for art education to critically consider how history has been constructed and for whose benefit it is maintained. This thesis has maintained that because History leaves so much of importance out, we should not assume that memory as being our own in a contemporary context. In a reconstructive postmodern art education sphere students could begin questioning how and why these ideologies and apparatuses operate as they do, and what they are indicative of. Attendantly, this includes affording students with access and exposure to polyphonic and "alternative" ideologies and artistic practices in conjunction with educating them to have the ability to analyze these discourses. They require these tools and perspectives in order to understand how cultural objects exert their power and operate in part to create our sense of identity. In such a context, Anne Balsamo locates the struggle towards creating a sense of identity as a "struggle about the politics of representation and the relations of power that organize knowledge; this not only concerns the form and content of [art]...but more broadly in the university curriculum and social movements" (Balsamo, 1991:56). Within this perspective Balsamo's words suggest that students might analyze

how relations of power historically inform the narratives, experiences, [alternative histories and artistic practices] and positions from which such students construct their own identities and relationships to others [and works of art]. In doing so [in a reconstructive postmodern art education class], they would critically engage their own ethnicities [and cultural perspectives] and gain some sense of those complex and diverse [artistic and] cultural locations that have provided [or have failed to provide] them with a sense of voice, place and identity. This pedagogical practice also suggests providing students with the opportunity to move beyond the search for an *authentic* [my italics] identity (Balsamo in Giroux, 1994:90).

Such a pedagogy "establishes "spaces" where meaning can be rewritten, [revisualized], produced and constructed rather than merely asserted" (90).

The relationship between "history and [the construction of] identity is a complex one and cannot be reduced to [simply] unearthing hidden histories that are then mined for positive images. On the contrary, [art] educators need to understand and develop in their pedagogies how identities are produced differently [in different contexts], how they take up narratives of the past through...stories and experiences of the present" (Giroux, 1994:89) located in diverse contexts and manifest in interdisciplinary and divergent artistic practices and artworks. Understood in these terms, a pedagogy indicative of reconstructive postmodernism as articulated within this thesis

is not wedded to the process of narrating an *authentic* [my italics] history, but to the dynamics of cultural [and artistic reframing] - which involves rewriting [revisualizating, and recontextualizing] - between identity and difference through a retelling of the...past. Such a pedagogy is rooted in making the [politics invested in art] more pedagogical by addressing how critical politics can be developed through a struggle over access to regimes of [visuality and] representation...using them to re-present different identities as part of the reconstruction of a democratic public life (89).

As noted in this thesis I believe that one of our responsibilities as art educators should be to actively and committedly promote the establishment of conditions necessary for critical learning that enables students to rigorously and critically unpack works of art.

This critical learning enables students to locate the artworks in history and to then interrogate the adequacy of that assigned location as artistic, pedagogical and political questions (Giroux and Simon, 1994:90) in the context of a reconstructive postmodern art education community. Students of art could be encouraged to delve into the fundamental power relations entrenched in exclusionary practices, questioning and working through what these mean and why they have been so tenaciously and relentlessly asserted. Interrogations regarding what exclusionary practices reveal about the structures and ideologies of history and our broader culture and society might then be evidenced. Thinking about, looking beyond, and struggling against the EuroNorth American 'dominator' model of hegemonic analysis that is championed in most institutions requires reframing. In its place a model indicative of critical pluralism or transcultural consideration could evolve.

What I am and have been advocating is a realization that "transformation has to be accomplished by those [of us] who dream about the reinvention of society, the recreation or restructuring of society" (Freire in Shor, 1990:100). In part, this calls for critical looking and questioning to play a more important and dynamic role in education. If one believes, as I do, that this type of criticality will assist students in realizing the revolution in vision referred to throughout this text "[t]hen [art educators] need...to unveil the reality which is being hidden by the dominant ideology, the dominant curriculum" (100). This can only be accomplished by giving students the opportunity to develop critically informed relationships with more diverse artworks and artistic practices. Simultaneous to this exposure art educators might recognize that in a reconstructive postmodern art education sphere it becomes crucial for students to address not only how the substance of critical practice might be a focus but also how such a focus is sustainable. To accomplish such an endeavor art educators could "actively address the intersection of their own location as [art] critics, the shifting and differential terrains of audiences' perceptions [in an

educational context], and those hegemonic forces, both ideological and institutional, that are constantly attempting to depoliticize and reappropriate critical work" (Giroux, 1994:101). In doing so art educators might make critical steps towards realizing, for themselves and their students, the importance of "interrogating the politics of their own locations and modes of [looking and] understanding" that limit the possibilities of art (105).

Putting *Art* Back into Art Education

Having visited and researched at The University of Arizona this summer I had one of my strongest beliefs confirmed: that being, that art education departments in a North American context should operate more conjunctly with fine arts' faculties. After all, if there's no art, where does that leave art education? In a fine arts department it is the art that is most important so this idea is always there...you can't ever forget it. At times I think some art educators have[1]. This is not to say that being located in a fine arts context erases all the problems that exist. It doesn't. But perhaps it might lessen them.

I spoke with Elizabeth Garber, Associate Professor at the University of Arizona in the Department of Art, a department which houses both fine/studio arts as well as art education and art history. I was drawn to Garber because she has been writing about many things that concern me such as border issues, the importance of "teaching art in the context of culture" (Garber, 1995:218), the abandonment of homogenization and restrictive labeling, art education's attempts to "insert" those who have been left out rather

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[1] I want to note that this is based on my experience as an art education student and it is informed by a limited sphere: this includes contact with a number of Canadian art educators and art education students, discussions with art education faculty and students at the University of Arizona, and through exposure to the ideas and beliefs purported via published texts and articles.

than challenging a system that has excluded many. I felt that she was one art educator making strides towards what I have called a reconstructive postmodern art education and pedagogy. Elizabeth Garber teaches prospective art educators how to teach about art in ways that make sense to me.

I asked her what the benefits and drawbacks were with regards to an art education department being situated in a department of art.

> Elizabeth: One of the most important benefits is that art never gets forgotten and is considered important by everyone, first and foremost. And while there are some difficulties to being housed in the art department, there are more problems when art education is located solely in an Education building because most other branches of Education don't see art education as being particularly relevant. However, in the art department content and production can sometimes become more important than theory and I think that for art education, both are important. Additionally, artists often believe that because the art is the most important thing, the education aspect of art education becomes a really secondary consideration, if it gets considered at all. This relegates art educators to a second class position in the department's priorities. I guess we don't get away from lower status whether we are in an art or an education department. Most of the time I don't really worry about this too much because I value the work and many of the ideas in the field of art education. That the field is misunderstood and unknown to many of my colleagues isn't to me a terribly interesting site on which to dwell. The other problem arising is that many artists don't believe that art educators are artists and that doesn't sit very well with them. And in a lot of cases they may be right. But not entirely...actually I am involved with AAEA (Arizona Art Education Association) and I am trying to put together a show of the work being done by art educators and art education students in an effort to illustrate to local artists and the arts community in general that there are some art educators dedicated to making and practicing art, and some of them are producing really good work (Garber, Interview:July, 1996).

I asked Elizabeth how the response had been regarding her call for work/submissions. Her reply was that it had been much lower than she had anticipated. I wondered why that was. Was it because there wasn't much work being produced or were people just hesitant to show?

Elizabeth: I'm not sure, maybe a combination of both. It's pretty hard to complete all the work required of a person to teach well or to perform adequately in a Doctoral studies program or in a University tenure track position and still manage to produce art. It's really a difficult thing. It's done, but to work on both simultaneously usually seems to result in loss of focus and mediocre outcomes in art and writing. This, at least, is my observation. I know myself...I just haven't had the time to produce work the way I'd like to. What with teaching, publishing, traveling and having a family...it takes a lot of time and energy to do these things and there doesn't always seem to be enough time to do art. But I know I'll get back to it because it's in my pores...if art is really in you...you never lose that. That's when you know you will always produce art. And art for me is more than just a hobby. I think for some, that's what it becomes. Maybe that's because I did my M.F.A. and studio was so much a part of who I am. I think it will always be this way (Ibid).

This conversation reaffirmed a number of beliefs I had held prior to the beginning of this thesis, many of which were strengthened as my literature-based research and fieldwork progressed.

I maintain that art educators need to be committed to *art* and in this committment an investigation of contemporary and emerging theories and practices needs to remain a priority. As Garber notes, "for artists, art is always the imperative and they tend to produce lots of work and be involved in contemporary issues in art, something art educators don't always do. They [artists who choose to teach] are often concerned about relevancy and don't want to perpetuate archaic teaching models. [In short], they don't want to give students what they got...they want to see a change in education and in the quality of artists that are emerging from the system" (Garber, Interview:July, 1996). I think that art educators should assume a similar position and many do. Just not enough, in my opinion.

I believe that it would be helpful for art educators to possess both a studio and theory-based background as this goes a long way to motivating them to remain actively engaged in both theory and practice. According to Garber, "there is no substitute for

studio practice, a good understanding of art criticism and interpretation, an appreciation for materials, for understanding aesthetics, and the relationship an artist has to a work that they have made. There are no substitutes for having these understandings and knowledges and I think these play an important role in the teaching of art" (Ibid). In a best case scenario, "accomplished artists understand their materials and processes and are connected to what they do. When they are also committed to teaching and can connect to people, they have more to offer an art student than someone who is a good teacher but hasn't really experienced art in a profound way and doesn't understand art in a profound way" (Ibid). As an artist and art educator, I have to agree.

I purport that having art become more of a focus in art education is in alignment with the practices and ideas advocated by reconstructive postmodernism. In the acknowledgement that our art education curriculum, like many others, has not afforded students with an inclusive, interconnected look at art we might recognize that alternative strategies could be forwarded to change this reality.

A particular 'look' at art that might be realized has to work at becoming more representative of all people, not just some of them. This means that it is important for an involvement with many different types of art, artistic methodologies, beliefs and narratives to occur. Perhaps with an emphasis more specifically on art, and the engagement with it, an art-based pedagogy attempting to link art, knowledge, social contingencies and contextualizations will be witnessed.

Alternative Practices, Histories, Narratives and Lifestories

Tactical displacements through alternative practices and histories "defy the world of compartmentalization and the systems of dependence it engenders, while filling the shifting space" (Trinh, 1991:23). Alternative practices, histories, narratives and lifestories

serve to include that which has been denied voice and venue. They "resort to non-explicative, non-totalizing [tactics] that suspend meaning and resist closure" (74). They displace comfortable yet restrictive ideologies and ways of looking at and being in this world. "Displacing is a way of surviving...of living in-between [untenable practices and] regimes. The responsibility involved in [making art and] this in-between living is a highly creative one: the displacer proceeds by unceasingly introducing difference into repetition" (21). Alternative practices and stories disturb "one's own thinking habits, dissipating what has become familiar and clichéd,...participating in the changing of received values" (21). Those involved in the creation and inclusion of such alternatives recognize that one cannot speak without speaking of oneself, of history, without becoming involved and invested in one's story. Concurrently, there is a recognition that History is only one story, one version. As such it becomes a "highly radical and subversive act to tell a familiar story in a new way. Once you [begin] you realize that what you call history is another such story and could be told differently and has been" (Chernin in Lewis, 1993:69). Alternative practices and histories reflect the fact that the official, authoritative tradition or history that we have come to know is beginning to crack and crumble. The official History that has tenaciously and viciously claimed legitimate and singular status, denying and excluding that which has not been politically or economically advantageous for a particular group at specific moments, is being pulled apart. "It too, it turns out, is nothing more than a particular selection of various stories" (69). Alternative practices and histories uncover alternative versions and accounts of familiar stories. These tactics emerge as interjectory methodologies and counternarratives. They disclose and supplant diverse, flexible, hybrid, polysemous artistic practices, experiences and remembrances that are indicative of dynamic, transcultural, interconnected, community-based beliefs and discourses that recognize their contextual dependency.

For art education these counternarratives and methodologies demarcate the possibility of spaces where alternative realities, experiences, and methodologies find a situated position within the curriculum. In this location alternative forms of art and narratives that have previously remained silent and excluded come to bear on a student's consciousness and development of identity/subjectivity. These serve to inform via a culmination of denied presences and differing subjectivities and divergencies. As previously noted in this thesis, alternative practices, artistic or otherwise, suggest that there is an underside to History; that being, that which may be remembered and practiced but is excluded. Alternative histories and practices expose discontinuities, dissonances and fissures in what would otherwise be the seamless surface of the official history. This disjunctive rupture interrupts the way we have been led to read and value works of art. For art education, the goal in including the alternatives advocated throughout this thesis is to witness the emergence of hybridizations and differing subjectivities and ways of looking at art, the world and the people in it. This results in the destabilization of the respective conditions and assumed contexts of looking at art, marking out diverse, inclusive, socially-interconnected possibilities.

Some Final Thoughts on the Possibilities of Reconstructive Postmodernism

One of the most dynamic features of reconstructive postmodernism is its flexibility and inclusive character. The concerns and considerations bound up in it are wide and polysemous. Linearity is not a concern. Through its simultaneous engagement and disengagement with previous and emerging practices and narratives it has the potential to reveal and contest through rigorous critique exclusionary, hegemonic master narratives and discourses, arguing for "a politics of engagement rather than a politics of transcendence" (Mohanty, 1987:42).

It serves to unmask and critique the hidden social and political assumptions deployed through everyday speech. Theories and practices indicative of a reconstructive postmodern agenda uncover the fact that the very structure of thought and language depends to some extent on a coming to presence through signs. These signs have power and value accorded to them and these can inevitably extol particular identities while excluding others. As a result, there is a call to interrogate the mechanisms that hold the ability to accord power.

The advocacies of reconstructive postmodernism also recognize that silence can be a site of resistance: a tactic. Lack of "language is here dislocated, exposed, in abeyance" (Chambers, 1995:108), giving way to a chosen, informed silence. And even in the silence of the anonym, reconstructive postmodernism recognizes power in the necessary negation of privileged representation. This is "located not in denotation but in connotation, in the unacknowledged, in the absent narrative" (Oguibe, 1995/96:57). And while this does not mediate the exclusionary practices that have come before, "it nevertheless places it on record, thus pointing to a different history" (57).

Further, reconstructive postmodernism marks out that all things involved in artistic practice, including materials, are loaded with their own meanings; that these meanings are found in social endowment, through memory/knowing, usual social use, historical use and personal associations. It proposes that art can be most powerful through its inconsistencies: in material usage, beliefs, ideologies and predilections bound up in visual articulation. These inconsistencies implicitly describe the cultural upheavals in particular moments of histories.

The necessity and importance of community is also emphasized for

> [w]ithout a community there is no liberation. [At the same time reconstructive postmodernism contends that] community must not mean a shedding of our differences, nor the pathetic pretense that these differences do not exist...For difference must not merely be tolerated, but seen as a

fund of necessary polarities between which our creativity can spark like a dialectic. Only then does the necessity for interdependency become unthreatening. Only within that interdependency of different strengths, acknowledged and equal, can the power to seek new ways to actively "be" in [and represent our] world generate, as well as the courage and sustenance to act where there are no charters (Lorde, 1983:98).

A reconstructive postmodern art education curriculum succeeds in marking out how the binary relationships between centre and margin have been perpetuated and offers possibilities through its advocation of interdisciplinary practices relating to how such relationships might be deconstructed and reframed. It observes some of the problems and possibilities evidenced when one attempts to deconstruct the imposed boundaries and borders, blurring definite contours with flexible brushstrokes. Through visuals, texts, and lifestories reconstructive postmodernism exposes unvisited places which many institutions have purposefully left unknown. It critically challenges us to consider why we prefer to overlook certain things. Questions are posed regarding why this preference makes us so irresponsible and comfortable with ourselves. In its questioning it challenges the gallery and museum to include and "recall other histories, other struggles" other works and tellings (Mohanty, 1987:31).

Reconstructive postmodernism refuses the use of universals as witnessed in its rejection of woman-identified terminologies and notions of universal sisterhood. As such, there is a recognition that "[g]ender is produced as well as uncovered in feminist discourse, and definitions of experience, with attendant notions of unity and difference, form the very basis of this production (32).

Reconstructive postmodernism affords us with a site from which we might renegotiate and collapse the space between a socially-concerned and engaged artistic practice and the creation of art preoccupied with its own internal considerations and dynamics. This thesis advocates that work being done by cutting-edge art educators, as viewed through the lens of reconstructive postmodern theory, exposes that a new-era art

education curriculum is reflective of interactive and dialogic practices that are transcultural.

If there is to be a substantive rupture in patriarchy, colonization, exclusionary practices and categorizations that have become entrenched in art and art education, students in the context that has been stipulated throughout this thesis should learn to critically question the conditions and practices that have made these constraining terminologies possible and in fact desirable. For this to be achieved students might begin looking differently at works of art and the world around them. Looking differently calls for a revolution in vision to occur as advocated by bell hooks, and supported throughout this investigation. Such a revolution necessarily begins with "diverse programs of critical education both within and outside of institutional frameworks that [will] stimulate collective awareness that the creation and public sharing of art is essential to any practice of freedom" (hooks, 1995:4).

In a kaleidoscopic mixing and crossing of boundaries, borders, and disciplines, alternative artworks, artistic methodologies, histories, narratives, and lifestories emerge. These venture outside of previously imposed art contexts that were limiting, thereby articulating an alternative terrain. All that is bound up in reconstructive postmodernist ideologies and practices "suggests an insistent, simultaneous, non-synchronous process [of artistic investigation] characterized by [the inclusion of] multiple locations", voices, memories and practices (Mohanty, 1987:41).

Practices and theories within reconstructive postmodernism reveal that "[a]n increasing number of people are turning their backs on the fading "centre," motivated not just by anger, but also by a profound disinterest in the value systems it promulgates. The vertiginous collage that is contemporary life [and art] is illuminated through the cracks of differences [and multiple, transcultural presences]. Edges and boundaries shift, revealing

new views just coming into focus" (Lippard, 1990:245). These new views serve to mark

out those beginnings to which I referred: beginnings offering alternative agendas or paths

for art education.

Appendix I

Literature Search

The following data bases were searched for relevant current theoretical, review and research articles:

1) ArtIndex (1980 - 1996)
2) Current Index to Journals in Art (1980 - 1996)
3) Current Index to Journals in Education (1990 - 1996)
4) Infotrac (1990 - 1996)
5) Sociological Abstracts (1990 - 1996)

Netscape, E-mail and the World Wide Web were also employed as a means of accessing the most current art-related articles and reviews.

Appendix II

Information Letter to Research Participants

Dear (Participant):

My name is Karen Weggler and I am an Art Education Graduate student at Simon Fraser University located in Burnaby, British Columbia, Canada. I am writing to you in the hopes that you will agree to be interviewed as part of the research I am conducting for my Graduate Thesis in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Master of Arts.

(Personalized, individual paragraphs were created to indicate my interest in and motivation for asking that particular person participate in the research).

My thesis argues for the inclusion of art-making practices, theories and investigations which are socially responsible, reconstructive, inclusive and interconnected into the arts education curriculum, particularly at the undergraduate post-secondary levels. The ideas advocated purport the negation of theories that serve to legitimize our existing practices, and emphasize the need for the deconstruction of power relations that serve to marginalize those outside of the Eurocentric tradition of patriarchy. My goal is to map our a place where art education students can 'pivot the centre: to centre in another experience', (Apthekar, 1989) one that is indicative of collective, hybrid, reciprocal and participative interactions.

As per University regulations, I am compelled to inform you of Simon Fraser's policy regarding interviews and the collection of research material, and my intentions with regards to the information collected. If you were to agree, your participation would be completely voluntary. The interview would last from one half hour to an hour. You could choose to withdraw from the interview at any time and of course, refuse to answer any questions. The interview would be recorded and a draft would be forwarded to you for your approval. Any comments you were to provide could be recontextualized if necessary and you could choose to edit your responses in any way you saw fit, as this material would be used as a named interview. I refer to it as a 'named interview' because you will be identified and confidentiality and anonymity will not be ensured. (This sentence changes and is context dependent. In a number of instances, especially in Mexico, certain individuals agreed to participate only if anonymity was assured).

If you had any questions subsequent to the interview you would be able to address them to me (home address and telephone number provided in each letter). However, if you found yourself having concerns or complaints, you would be able to address them to Dr. Robin Barrow , Dean in the Faculty of Education at Simon Fraser University, who can

be reached at (604) 291-3148. If you were at all interested, a copy of the final thesis could be obtained by contacting me at my home address, as noted above.

A copy of the required consent form is attached for your signature. It is my hope that you will give me the opportunity to speak with you, as many of the ideas embodied in your (artistic/curatorial/writing) practices (again, context dependent) would most certainly benefit the art education community if transposed into that context.

I look forward to hearing from you soon. Thank you for your time, and for considering this request.

Sincerely

Karen Weggler, MA Candidate
Art Education, Faculty of Education
Simon Fraser University

Appendix III

<u>Consent to Participate in Research</u>

Title: Reconstructive Postmodernism: A New Agenda for Art Education

Researcher: Karen Weggler, MA Candidate
               Department of Art Education
               Faculty of Education, Simon Fraser University

Mailing Address and Telephone Number Provided

I, _____, agree to participate in an interview for the purposes of thesis research to be conducted by Karen Weggler, MA Candidate. I have read a copy of the information letter provided by Ms. Weggler and have had the purpose of the research explained to me.

I understand that:

My participation in this research project is voluntary.
The interview will last for a duration agreed upon between myself and the researcher prior to the beginning of said interview.
I may refuse to comment or answer any particular question at any time.
I my withdraw from the interview at any time.
I will be afforded with an opportunity to view and edit any material derived from my interview that is intended for inclusion in the thesis.
Any comments I provide may be recontextualized if necessary and as I see fit.
The material will be used as a 'named ' interview. I understand that as such, I will be identified and confidentiality/anonymity will not be ensured.
A copy of the completed thesis will be available to me from Karen Weggler upon request.

Additionally, I have been able to ask whatever questions I have about the research and the researcher has answered them to my satisfaction. I further understand that I may as for additional information at any time. I understand that the information collected will be included in Ms. Weggler's MA Thesis in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Master of Arts.

Any comments or complaints about this research may be directed to:

Senior Supervisor: Dr. Celia Haig-Brown   Dr. Celia Haig-Brown
                             Faculty of Education   Faculty of Education
                             Simon Fraser University   York University
                             Burnaby, B.C. V5A 1S6   North York, Ontario
                             (Prior to September, 1996) (September 1996 onwards)

or to:

The Dean: Dr. Robin Barrow
                             Faculty of Education
                             Simon Fraser University
                             Burnaby, B.C. V5A 1S6

_____

Signature of Participant

_____

Signature of Researcher

_____

Date

Appendix IV

Letter for Copyright Authorization/Release Permission

This is representative of letters directed to particular artists, galleries and copyright holders requesting permission to include reproductions of individual artworks in my thesis. Each letter was specific to the individual artist in question. In some cases, a brief description of my thesis and related-research was also included.

ATTENTION: (Gallery and Gallery Representative)

Dear _____:

      As per our discussion I am writing to you to secure authorization to reproduce works by (name of artist) in my MA Thesis, a project completed in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in the Faculty of Education, Simon Fraser University. It is my understanding that as you/your gallery represent(s) him, you have the authority to accord this request.

      As portions of my thesis discuss (artist's) work in detail, accompanying plates are required to make certain ideas and observations manifest for the reader, especially since members of the intended audience may not be familiar with his/her work. The thesis will be copied and bound by the University and is intended for academic and research purposes. There will be a limited number of bound copies reproduced, not more than 10, none for sale. The works by (name of artist) will be reproduced via colour scanning, colour photocopying or copy photographs.

      Your permission to reproduce the works would be greatly appreciated. No more than (particular number requested, changed depending on the artist in question) reproductions will be included. If these stipulations meet those that you require to release authorization, please sign at the bottom of this form in the space provided and fax it back to me at (number provided).

      Thank you for your time and anticipated cooperation.

Sincerely
Karen Weggler

I, _____ do hereby grant Karen Weggler, MA Candidate, Simon Fraser University, permission to use not more than eight examples of the works of (name of artist) as stipulated above in her MA Thesis. As the (particular name specified) Gallery represents (artist in question), I have the authority to accord this request.

_____(Signature)

Appendix V

Letter in Thanks

What follows is a generic letter representative of ones that were sent out to participants. Individual, personalized letters were of course written and were context dependent.

Dear (Participant):

      I want to extend my sincere and heartfelt thanks for taking the time to speak with me and contribute to my thesis. In the telling of your firsthand experience and involvement in the art community you have contributed a great deal to my writing and afforded me with a perspective that will broaden and deepen the implications my thesis has for the art education curriculum.

      Subsequent to the completion of my initial draft I will forward to you a copy of the section that includes/deals with any material that you have contributed as I want to provide you with the opportunity to make any modifications that you deem necessary. It is very important to me that the interpretation that I place on your words fits with what you originally meant.

      I am very appreciative of the time and effort that you gave to me. The thoughtful approach you took towards my research helped me to better understand your words and I am grateful for having the opportunity to include your voice and experiences in my Graduate thesis. Thank you again.

Yours sincerely

Karen Weggler

Appendix VI

Carta en Agradecimiento

La siguiente es una carta genérica la cual representa una de las que fueron enviadas a los participantes. Cartas individuales y personalizadas fueron escritas en su contesto dependiente.

Estimado (Participante):

Quiero extender mi mas sincero agradecimiento por tomarse el tiempo de hablar y contribuir con mi tesis. Al relatarme sus experiencias personales y su envolvimiento en la comunidad artística usted ha colaborado grandiosamente en mis escritos dandome una perspectíva mas amplia y profunda de las implicaciones de mi tesis en el curriculum del arte educatívo.

Subsequentemente al termino de mi copia inicial, yo enviaré una copia con la sección que incluye su aporte ya que quiero proveerle con una ultime oportunidad de hacer combios, si lo considera necesario. Es muy importante que la interpretación que yo dé con respecto a su aporte sea la correcta.

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