

Auto/ethno/graphies as Teaching Lives

An Aesthetics of Difference

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We teachers
hide the
work
we care
about
in classrooms
just as
artists
stack it
in their attics

(Grumet, 1988, p. 91)

MAXINE GREENE (1991) states that “the idea of making spaces for ourselves, experiencing ourselves in our connectedness and taking initiatives to move through spaces, seems to me to be the first importance” (p. 27). In the chronicling of our teaching lives/our research lives, we begin an intertextual journey of creating, becoming, altering, entering, and exiting texts of selves and others—(re)searching for the aesthetic in our cultural portraits (Creswell, 1998, p. 61). Reading in-between Grumet, Greene, and Creswell, we find ourselves trafficking in the aesthetic...transporting text(ure)s between the attic and the classroom. Stepping stealthily along guarded corridors of syntax, drills, and outcomed skills, we parole back and forth against standard sentences in the house of pedagogy’s arrest.

Scouring demonstrations of (man)dated expectations
in dada of spelling lists, fonix quests and factual wares,

we dredge documentations that push for estrangement
while (de)shirking identity and
resisting in doubled dares.

Two at work: rearranging, camouflaging, re-creating space for what is yet to come. We slip in between students scrimmaging in structures of past curricular years. Novel lessons, grammar exercises, dissecting the little prince. Pre-stepped methods flagged in red, green, and blue. Learning nothing new, they want review. Can't listen to children's stories but they can read one to you. Answers to chapter questions, border trims. Cardboard cutouts arranged around a wall of word whims. In radical spins, we (re)enter in. Bulletins boarded in the glow of haunted houses. A take-home mosaic collaged in storied swatches. A troll tale in chants set in rhythms inside boxes. A scene of multi genres filed and mixed up in museums in the metropolitan. Books resolved in scraps, wood, and a map. Biographies embodied on the walls of fourth floor halls. Charlotte Doyle, night rumbles, the canine waiting for mail from the flue, skinned secrets, fishing teaches, we read and transact with these and many more too. In fact, as well as real fiction,

Halls do tell a story. Often, many stories.
In fact, the writing is on the wall.
Sometimes on the surface. Sometimes hidden.
The self [re]emerges from under
the layers of paper, paint, and plaster.
Clear your desk. Dip your brush...

In the midst of the everyday of academia, two teaching lives collide in an office doorway, tentatively exchanging stories of students' language 'art'—each sparked by the other's interest in the aesthetic of pedagogy. These intersectings of "knowing and not knowing" conspire in our lives to begin a daunting journey of evoking in teachers-to-be aesthetic possibilities in the teaching of language arts. We share the personal scriptings and scripts of our teaching lives, exposing both the vulnerabilities and the possibilities of the arts for our selves and our students in the pre-service language arts classroom. Using Pierce's (1968) viewing of a picture single, "the figures have been disposed along...two crossing paths and receive something of their great energy from the dramatic rushing movement" (p. 15) emanating/pulsing/pulsating from a student's work of art in a grade one classroom. We write and are written by our students. We are each of us in a Derridean (2000) host(age) doubling exposed to the promise and the tyranny of an other. Always already a troubling. Excavating the aesthetic, Abbs (2003) contends that "the purpose is not to prescribe settled...meaning, but to engender a quest in search of what is not yet known, of what may never be known..." (p. 14).

We know that bodies must have been there.
Body biographies disappeared from the fourth floor hallway walls.
Engendering a quest. But bodies remain unnamed. Excavating. We don't
know who. Removed the papered bodies from the fourth floor walls.
Sometimes hidden.
(Un)settled meanings.

Differencing Threads Together

Our teaching lives, Miller (1990) contends, “are woven together by the threads of our similarities and our differences as we attempt to act upon...our commitments to the creation of spaces where voices can be raised within and across the differences that divide us” (p. 7). As Alexander (1971) states in reference to Moustakas’ unpredictable outcomes of the teaching process: “Here are the materials that have been meaningful to me, here I am, share us” (p. xi). What is ‘the me,’ ‘the us,’ ‘the other’ that transpires and conspires in the chaotic wonder and bewilderment of the classroom? How do we negotiate identities in the spaces of (un)becoming (to) a teacher (Sumara & Luce-Kapler, 1996)? What are the variations in the graffiti, the metaphors, the metonyms, the picture books, and the novels? How can we work the doubling rhythm of (in)aesthetic variations (Badiou, 2004)? Where do we locate ourselves in the (un)grammatical renderings (Leggo, 1998) of the ‘arts’ in language arts? We listen to Ashton-Warner (1963): “If only I could get it out and use it as working material...under its own volcanic power...loud with the sound of erupting creativity...merciless and shockingly beautiful” (p. 14).

(Re)informing Aesthetics in Possibility

Last Tuesday while prospecting in possibilities, we are undergrounded in Sullivan (2000) querying the implications of “surprise and delight at the laciness of...yellow trees, purple stars, an orange flame...for education in a society that demands artificial attention and immediate testable results” (p. 222). She maintains, “we must stare at them, ponder them, arrive at an understanding not only of what the forms contain, but also of how [aesthetic] form informs” (p. 223). Two days later we ‘startle’ at finding Joseph and Paul (2004) hand-crafting literacies, “lovingly designed and thoughtfully made” (p. v) to reach children who have been forced “to read texts which have been bleached of all color and life” (p. v). In redefining and redesigning standardized prose steeped in topic sentences and conclusions, Joseph and Paul call on book-makers and book-artists to “celebrate the individual, the messy, the defacing and remaking of texts, the loving, the forbidden, the joyous and the inconclusive” (p. vii). Inspired and (re)fired we (re)venture, ‘transiting’ with our students in mediations of intertextual expressions. Tensions reverberate in eight, twelve, and one o’clock sessions. We persist and insist amidst interspersions of requests, referencing in criteria, stickers, and tests. Formulas for paragraphs, proper structure, and preplanned reads. Past comforts of spelling tests, standards, and answer leads. We counter and (re)dare.

Puppets posing as detectives in first and third person
perspectives. Trumpets in colored lines and shapes—black rippling edges, green notes
that resemble masks and capes. Poetry in jazz in various keys. Kandinsky and O’Keefe clash
[with] Fantasia by Disney. Romeo and Juliet metaphoring plasticine red and blue. Scenes from
fables reassembled, represented
and shifting out and in glue.

As Greene (1995) states, “We live in what we experience as an interlude between lived past and what we conceive to be some future possibility” (p. 65). The past, like the ashes and smoke that fill the air after a volcano’s raging tantrum, has the capacity to cover and color our responses

to the many challenges that erupt in the multiple (con)texts of teaching. Remnants of experiences, encouragements, inspirations, diffractions, and reactions we have pieced together, sometimes with careful stitches of gossamer threads, other times with a rough hand splicing unraveling twine, to (re)form our teaching lives. Our own and those of our students. Sumara and Uptis (2004) make reference to the rhythms of a doubling notion of a knowing body and a body knowing. Something happens in the gap. Perhaps an event. We work with notions of intertextuality (Bakhtin, 1981; Kristeva, 1996) as material “events” (Warminski, 2001; Wolfreys, 2004). Staging and staged by an event. Grumet (1988) confides that, “the text is material, it has texture, it is woven; we pull and tug at it, it winds around us, we are tangled up in it” (p. 144). A material ‘event’...at-work...

(Un)settling in Narration...‘Innervations’

According to Beynon, Geddis, and Onslow (2001), teaching is a complicated and transformative experience within “unstable and indeterminate contexts” (p. 2). A commitment to engage with the (re)actions of this complex process of pedagogy requires teachers who can, according to Britzman (1986), develop critical ways of knowing which can interrogate school culture, the quality of students’ and teachers’ lives, school knowledge, and the particular role biography plays in understanding [and responding to] these dynamics” (p. 454). We read Trinh (1991) reading Benjamin that the self is a text...the self is a project to be built. A project for bricoleurs. We draw from qualitative methodologies that work with biography, autobiography, and ethnography settling with “auto/ethno/graphy” to unsettle the scripts of hegemonic discourse. We work out on the Aokian (2003) slope [/] in-between the ‘auto’ and the ‘ethno’ and the ‘graphy.’ The slopes of auto/ethno/graphy offer intervals for breaks and gaps and swerves. To trouble and be troubled by the (dis)course. We work with literary anthropology (Iser, 1989, 2000) to (under)mine systemic hegemony and to unpack the language that helps to sustain it. Unraveling our own journeys, we unpack our baggage, re-arranging our artifacts. We work with notions of bricolage (Kincheloe, 2001) as rigorous qualitative research. We gather our materials for bricolage and, as bricoleurs, we build our ‘selves’ as texts collaged into garret concertos casting illuminations of terracotta scripts.

Art as rupture. It slips and touches, only to break away again. Arts-based educational research as a/r/tography is a process of unknowingness and loss. Loss not as nostalgic longing, but as a moment that creates openings for something else to seep through...

(Springgay, 2004, p. 15)

Britzman (2003) contends that “something about education makes us nervous” (p. 1). It should make us nervous. According to Felman (1987) who draws from Freud, pedagogy is an interminable task. We work with pre-service students in the gaps of auto/ethno/graphy as nervous, restless interminable rhythms—as (in)aesthetic variations. We draw from the work of arts-based scholars Irwin and de Cosson (2004) on a/r/tography as living inquiry—artist/researcher/teacher—as inspiration for our auto/ethno/graphies as teaching lives. We graft the arts as living inquiry into language and literacies. We listen to Fischman (2001) who queries “the reliance on words and numbers among educational researchers” and encourages us to evoke

“images and visual culture” into our research (p. 28). We engage with Aoki (1990/2005) who calls for a juxtapositioning of *sonare* and *videre*. One with an other.

There can be no work of art if the visual organization does not make us feel that our gaze has been seen and that the object is watching.... We thought we knew how to see; works of art show us that we were blind.

(Lyotard, 1989, p. 224)

We ask: How can we as teacher educators provide our students with multiple opportunities to engage in the vulnerabilities and possibilities of the texts of our teaching lives as research praxis? We ask with Aoki (2003): Where do we locate ourselves in pedagogical discourse? We ask with Eisner (2004): What happens to the text when we stretch it with artful formats as living inquiry? We begin with ourselves. Tracking our storied lives as reflexive, diffracted, and (in)aesthetic, we begin to rewrite and revise our research praxis from in-between spaces of difference.

[Cynthia] According to Adler (1956), the individual is “both the picture and the artist” (p. 177). My teaching life, my (re)current life in multiple (re)collections of meaning making, began in reflexive invitations of a butter-colored grandmother’s flower garden quilt. Enter school—a plaid satchel, at the age of five, (re)stocked annually/yearly. Nestled among the workbooks, suppressed questioning, and rotations of subject matter, a water color depiction of McGilligott’s Pool, an India ink rendering of New England houses in front of a private girl’s school, a tissue-paper collage eliciting teacher cheers. (re)Enter teacher space—special education classes—redefining and defying disabilities—theirs...Mine? (re)Enter teacher space—academia, parenthood of homework, a pedal harp’s lament in the staccato punctuations of classical jazz, language arts, pre-service teachers. How do we engage cognitively, kinetically, tactilely, affectively, and inter/intra/personally in the work of language production and consumption. Inspired, urged on, and (re)awakened by his accent on art as a way of knowing, Eisner (1998, 2002) has influenced my recent struggles to make sense of the multiple strands that intermingle and (in)form my research, theory, and practice. A situation of beginning with my instructional self emerges in these complex acts of placing, piecing, and layering the stuff of the texts of teachers’ lives. It is the working (Adler, 1937, 1969, 1971) and the reworking (Anderson, 1999; Clark, 2004; Eckstein, 1984; Mosak, 1995) of Alfred Adler’s psycho-educational theory of Individual Psychology that provides the theoretical batting and backing; it is the multiple possibilities of Gardner’s (Coreil, 2003; Gardner, 1999) “frames of mind” that (re)arrange the patterning coordination of life’s remnants; it is Rosenblatt’s (1970) transactions between reader and text, aesthetic and efferent, that guide the threaded needle as it passes back and forth connecting, with the traces of humanness and imperfection, the (inter)textures of poignant life events. Behar (1996) reminds us that the making of our lives is not a private enterprise, rather our lives are constructed in public places and spaces of self and other—in the picture book readings of Good Night Moon (Brown, 1947), in the vicarious spaces of heartbreak, loyalty, and healing community that pierces the lives of Ponyboy, Johnny, Cherry Valance, and other adolescents in The Outsiders (Hinton, 1967), within the voices of the brave and frightened young women who live for us and through us in Foxfire: Confessions of a Girl Gang (Oates, 1994).

*It is all of this and more that (con)textualizes the situation within
which our research resides.*

*TENANTS IN AND OF THE TEXT/ONE STORY HALTS TO MAKE WAY
FOR THE NEXT...*

[Pat] I work between-the-posts of post/colonial and post/structural discourses (un)tethered through the stories of auto/ethno/graphy—querying the (im)possibilities of being-at-home in a text. Cutting into and away from the scripted academic genres of writing and teaching to Haraway’s (1997) notion of a diffracted gaze that swerves. My teaching identities are re-marked by geographic and ethnographic dislocations and relocations across continents—midst fragments of [lost] languages and cultures. Tiers of tears, three small glasses of Tuareg tea, bitersweet...scandal, chai, and violets... cabooses and train tracks, moose tracks...my tracks...on the shifting curvature of a sand dune...on the spongy hummocks of Arctic tundra...traces always already under erasure. My teaching life as an academic writes and is written by words and worlds of difference. Anesthetized by my own schooling, only the angry edgy remains remain as remains evoking in me a radical responsibility to create the conditions for messy spaces (Low & Palulis, 2000, 2004) from which something new might emerge. Through dislocations in and out of country, my teaching life has been fractured and transformed. I read my border crossings as trafficking in repetition but (re)readings and (mis)readings are an invocation for stories to swerve. I read my way out of pedagogy so that the “re” of a return can begin to trouble the banal domesticity of teacher education. Reading Malabou and Derrida (2004), Cixous (1993), Felman (1987), Bhabha (1994) and Trinh, (1999), I struggle to work with an ‘other’ in spaces that are [not] mine—to (under)mine as (in)aesthetic variations of agonistic spaces. The estrangement of art evokes in me a space for [not] belonging in the text. I draw from Dyson (2001) and Luke (1996) to deconstruct the sly spatialities of childhood literacies shifting with Baker (2001) to a childhood in perpetual motion. I work to disrupt what we ‘do’ to children in the name of hegemonic literacy. My interest in arts-based pedagogy began in the Arctic working with Inuit students in collaboration with an innovative art teacher. A magpie at-work, transported to an Arctic habitat, I poached and plundered aesthetic acquisitions from my teacher colleague. There is no art to be found in my curriculum vitae. No art classes. No paintings. No art portfolios. No installations. No childhood drawings. But I have always needed to invent aesthetic spaces for my ‘self’ as habitat(ation). And when I met academic scholars Ted Aoki and Carl Leggo, whose writings transgressed the boundaries of traditional scriptings, it seemed that I had always been in-waiting for the spatiality of writing as arche-texture...

And now, conversations with Morawski evoke artful inquiry with pre-service teachers. Site-specificity is (re)marked by the spaces in-between as a mobile site between two institutional tendencies.

Tenancies and/as vacancies.

Converging Dada Surreal

Our dada is raw...surreal...disconcerting in the shiftings of resonance and dissonance. Inky spillage and watermarks. Fragments within light and dark. Vibrant tensions in-between. Some

invisible and some that can only be seen. Our narratives articulate and fill space once voided by chemical waste. We now use color, musical notes, and paste. This is not easy work. When Jersild (1955) spoke about “teachers facing themselves” he referred to those who, “glowed with the dedication of their calling, bristled with anger, trembled with fear...voic[ing] hopeful expectations of things to be (p. 1). Entangled in the text with Grumet (1988), we pull and are pulled by the textures—(un)settling foundations and (re)working a (dis)course. Two voices. Two storied lives converge and, from the spaces in-between, something else surfaces to emerge.

Unisons in diversion of aversion to the script. Conversations, peer consultation, and consoling in a high schooled skit. Treading heavily in lightning streaking through the room. Epiphanies come in bursts once or twice—maybe three times by ending June. Did we reach ready to teach?

We settled on auto/ethno/graphy to settle our desparate topographies—to unsettle our pedagogical practices. Reading with Visweswaran (1994), we do our fieldwork as homework—we need to unlearn so as to relearn. We do the ‘home’ work at school. Our site-specificity is the everyday life of pedagogy. We work with and against the grain of a moribund curriculum. Barthes (1977) contends that “the ‘grain’ is the body in the voice as it sings, the hand as it writes, the limb as it performs” (p. 188). We ask with Barthes: What is research? And we hear from him that “Research...is an adventure of the signifier, an excess of exchange” (p. 198). We live to ride the wild wakes of excess...

We draw from Catherine Russell (1999) who writes on autoethnography in cinema as a space whereby “autobiography becomes ethnographic at the point where the film or videomaker understands his or her personal history to be implicated in larger social formations and historical processes” (p. 1). For Russell, identity becomes a “staging of subjectivity” (p. 2) fragmented and hybrid. Reed-Danahay (1997) defines autoethnography “as a form of self-narrative that places the self within a social context. It is both a method and a text” (p. 9). Reed-Danahay refers to “schooling stories” within relationships of leaving home and becoming educated. We want to work with mobile ‘home’like tendencies. Home plate. Home range. ‘Home’bound teacher. A blending of life and work. A homing device for the ‘home’less home maker. A “life world being carried out in the adjoining kitchen” (Grumet, 1988, p. 5), where perpetual humidity bakes blocks of clay into work for the home—rearranging furniture, restocking cupboards, repairing for another year.

Our auto/ethno/graphies work in the intervals and gaps between the live(d) and the virtual world in-and-out-of-print. On-and-off-the screen. A cover of *Newsweek* querying women’s role in education. A cigarette lady concealing a prohibitionist’s idolization. Strolls to dada central boosts values in glass. Door art reveals what is needed to pass. Engaged in arts-based pedagogy, as teachers, as researchers, we work within what Aoki (1996/2005) terms the in-between spaces of a curriculum-as-planned and a curriculum-as-lived. In the practice of auto/ethno/graphy we work with picture books (Miller, 1998), postmodern texts (Goldstone, 2002), fiction featuring multiple voices and multiple genres (Gillis, 2002), reflective journals (Stone, 1998), resolution scrapbooks (Lowenstein, 1995), body biographies of literary characters (Smagorinsky & O’Donnell-Allen, 1998), graffiti (Peters, 1990), and talking walls (Knight & O’Brien, 1992). Dada shifts... disconcerts...

[Cynthia] One researcher, focusing on the influence of the intra/personal—the knowing and (re)making of oneself within the con[text] of other(s), the knowing and (re)making of others within the con[text]

of oneself—including desires, fears, and capacities to live life, turns to and around in the practice of reflexing in bibliotexting for finding and meaning the ebb and flow of (the) acts, thoughts, and feelings that inhabit our teaching. My biblioactive (re)acting and transacting in written texts—poetry, novels, essays, short stories, works of art, music, and artifacts—has played significant parts (Morawski, 2003a, 2003b; Morawski & Gilbert, 2000) in what Grumet (1998) refers to as the “why and how we have come to feel the way we do about what we teach” (p. 128).

Among those teachers who have dared and feared to “face themselves” [as Jersild (1955) would say], a number of courageous individuals have stepped outside the classroom to invite us into their personal and private lives of teaching. “To help contribute to the validation of the voices and experiences of classroom teachers at all stages of their professional lived careers” (Isenberg, 1994, p. xviii), Isenberg creates her

own teaching retrospective—Going by the Book—using popular texts such as To Sir with Love, Up the Down Staircase, Teacher, and How Children Fail. In particular, she chronicles her times in an inner city high school where students and teachers take up learning in classrooms with window-less walls. By penning novels such as The Tiger’s Child (1995), Ghost Girl (1991), and Somebody Else’s Kids (1981), that feature the intimate inner struggles with the rich and bristling territory of the

special education classroom, Hayden provides us with opportunities to recast our view of the stoic educator who will stop at nothing for the “good” of her students. In her compilation of memorable moments and events of first-year teachers, Kane (1992) captures the anticipation, disappointments, satisfactions, resolutions, and wrenchings that reshape and rebuild (re)entries into the life of teaching.

Through their contextual (re)accountings of teaching lives in the (re)making, each one of these above works helps to underscore the importance of untangling and (re)weaving the emotions, thoughts, and actions that (re)define our teaching—the essence(s) of our lives.

TRANSITING IN INTERTEXT RED AND COMIC BLUE/PASS OUT (OF) AND IN TO THE NEXT SWERVING THROUGH...

[Pat] Another researcher works from a doubling performativity of language and spatiality with reading/writing as a doubling gesture (Palulis, 2003), messy (w)rites of passage (Palulis & Low, 2001), and collaborative work on provoking curriculum (Bruce, Feng, Nishizawa, Palulis, Russell, & Worthing, 2003). This research represents transitional praxis from extensive and diverse elementary classroom teaching to teaching pre-service teachers—working with and against the grain of ministry dictations in the rhythms of everyday life (de Certeau, 1984; Lefebvre, 1991)—as intertextual spaces between literacies, arts-based pedagogy, and autotechnologies. Work that emerges from resistances of pre-service students to difficult theory. From recurrent themes in student journals telling stories of schools shutting down interest in reading.

In performative contradictions with those who insist on maintaining the in-house structures. From the lived classroom experiences of the researcher in eccentric and urban spaces in Canada and internationally. Work that evokes a space for difference in the demographics of the every-

day. From live(d) pedagogy to virtual polyglossia. With the click of a Mouse, as language leaves home, it translates—transmits—transgresses—transforms—or as Haraway (1997) contends...it swerves. Reading with Marcus Doel (2004) who tracks the differential traces of human geographies through “passwords, driftworks, switchboard” ...I take refuge in his assumption that “we are invited to inhabit the fabric of the text , activate the schizoid switchboard and create a life” (p. 159).

Riding the wild ride of the currency of a swerve, I rework the signs and signals and signatories of course assignments.

When the first student auto/ethno/graphies began to arrive I was startled to read between the container and the (un)contained—capsules, closets, chains, and treasure chests and wastebaskets rich with crumpled stories—the emergence of the as-yet unimagined—was beginning to happen...

*my own storied fragments
re-written
through the in-between spaces
of students’ textual travels...*

And I had thought that I could see...

Doubling Praxis (Re)movement

Neuman (1996) states, “as we move through culture, culture moves through us, and this mobilized configuration, the individual story leaves traces of at least one path through a shifting, transforming, and disappearing cultural landscape” (p. 183). It is in this cultural landscape—the site of our doublings of praxis, the sharing of personal scripts—that traces of evidence may (dis)appear in the transformation of our teaching lives—situated in the verisimilitudes of broken pencils, Evian water bottles, e-mail fragments, complicated conversations, confessions, rage, citational gems, marginalia, interrupted conversations, containers, door-art, nostalgic images, paper bags, scandals, rumors, edgy borders, guilt, harp lessons and concerts, hesitations, scribbles, rejections. These interruptions run through and around our ongoing conversations on how we shift our pre-service teachers from the treatment of language arts as a canned study in nightly chapter questions, daily pop quizzes, clinical character descriptions and plot summaries to asking and keeping open the question: “What is a text?” According to Short, Kauffman, and Kahn (2000), “text refers to any chunk of meaning that...can be shared with others...a novel, a piece of art, a play, a dance, a song, or a mathematical equation” (p. 165) as well as all those other daily chunks of meaning, such as a piece of jewelry, a student’s scrawl, or a crumbled bus transfer.

Everything is story—and story is rhizomatic. Collage...découpage...montage...bricolage...gouache. Clough (2000) draws from Haraway on diffraction as “rhizomatic writing, a composing and recomposing that cuts into and cuts away from genres, technologies, images, and scenes so that the movement is never simply narrative or life story” (pp. 184–185). (In)complete with what Gergen and Gergen (2002) refer to as “...reverberations from multiple relationships and emotional expressiveness” (p. 14), our compositional tablinum recollects, records, and restores—the tesserae, the sinopia, the wash and asymmetry of our teaching life

lore. Pierce (1968) comments, "...there are many pictures within any single picture; it is rarely possible to single out only one pattern as *the* composition" (p. 14). We recreate, debate, anticipate, another year of our pedagogical fate. Moving tables. Cupboards of wares. Canadian content. Cross-border book exchange. International book fair. Wanting fair trade. Once again we prepare to (re)dare.

[Cynthia] Today I read that "aesthetic vision adjusts the flow of time...seiz[ing] a moment in order to stare at it more fully, more deeply..." (Sullivan, 2000, p. 221). One evening last Fall, I sat on the back steps as after dinner cyclists stamped silhouettes across an ink red sky. For a brief pause, a bracketed breath, "That great door open[ed] on the present, illuminating it as with a multitude of flashing torches" (Dillard, 1974, p. 81). All too soon, the bits of lights dissolved and resettled on my memories—like, as Annie Dillard (1974) described, "a lightning path traced faintly on a blackened screen...fleeing, and gone" (p. 80).

Sometimes. Maybe, often times. I live my teaching life in hidden volumes among the stacks of pre-service pedagogy, waiting for that flashing moment when someone opens the pages in the middle and understands the text. After a recent (re)venture in language/arts education, I sift through the flotsam washed ashore from, as Witty (1955) described, "a river full of shadows, eddies, and treacherous currents" (p. 331). With a tactile tug from a nearby paper patch I (re)move a moment or more of mutual (trans)action—a B.Ed. student's masterwork in worded images, a Boston writer-in-residence drawing resolution in blues, a graduate student's modern postings in 3-D scripts. Working the forces of Hexam Hills (Ryan, 1971), I cram these (inter)texts into a translucent box,

where they remain riveted to my casting eye. When Sullivan (2000) asks how we teach ourselves and others to "attend with keen eyes and fine sensibilities," she knows that "aesthetic vision does not assume that what one sees in the moment is what one will always see" (p. 221). Questioners of box tops may one day recognize the lessons of a puppeteer's replacement. Doubtfulers of assignments may come to see their part in the remaking and reshaping of instructional gifts. Short story runners may eventually stop and (re)audit their ears to the tellings of students' words. Moustakis' (1969) nine-year-old David, performing existentially in a pre-packaged classroom, observes, "Out there, right now, I see a fuzziness in that place where the road is.... You might think it was something different if people didn't call it a road and say what it was for.... You might see it as a pattern or a contrast..." (p. 31). David as aesthete. Aesthetes as teachers. Sullivan (2000) says that aesthetic researchers, "look for pattern within disorder, for unity beneath superficial disruption, and for disruption beneath superficial unity" (p. 221). I glance and glimpse a Greenwich Village nun running around in high tops spinning a 3D sculpture by a fountain square. A carrousel triangulates roundelays by the stacking staircase across from the class rooming in artful facts of fictitious truths.

*Tripping in trepidation, trembling with anticipation of inanimate stares, we enter the room, as well a new year. From out there, in here, somewhere, rhymed images of Bill Martin with Eric Carle (1967) reappear. Purple bear purple bear, what do you see, I see seventy-four students looking at me. Green horse, green horse, what do you hear, I hear a question posed from me with a dare—to tear. If you tore the shape and size of an early school memory into a colored piece of paper, what would it say, mean, and be? We begin *Where the Wild Things Are* (Sendak, 1983) set in the jagged green shards of a first grader rifting in torn pages of a discarded reader. Jersild (1955) maintains that "it is better to have such a home in the wilderness*

than to move through life in a mechanical way, unreached, untouched, and unmoved by what one learns and uninvolved in what one teaches” (p. 7).

Teaching lives among the bohemians—(in)tangibly ephemeral. An interlude preluding in red...

MOVING OUT AND ENDING IN BETWEEN/REVOLVING IN TWO PART HARMONY

[Pat] Dwelling in the fleeting moments of the end of term, I’m reading fragments of a Deleuzian citation extracted from Kaustuv Roy’s Teachers in Nomadic Spaces. I’m reading about how we “are only definable by movements and rests, speeds and slownesses, and by affects and intensities” (cited in Roy, 2003, p. 1). I struggle with my lack of definition. I am impatient with the slownesses of my writing. And yet from the shifting intensities of performativity, something else happens. We are at the end of another term. I am trying to re-vive a teaching life. I find my ‘self’ slipping through the ‘reads’ with Roy and Deleuze into a Cixousian (1979) story of an orange—Vivre l’orange/To live an orange...

From the backroom boxes of a little health food store near the university, I purchase a small organic blood red orange. The blood red of hospitality extended through a Cixousian ‘read’: “through the fine skin of the word” (1979, p. 18). Tasting the strangeness of an other—through blood red traces. I want to escape from the text. In the rhythms of everyday life at-home, I seek to swerve out of the text through the fine skin of a blood orange. Transported, transporting...a password...a passport...for doubting the words in a teaching life. At term’s end toujours déjà a time for mourning...for doubting the life of a teacher...mourning at the ends of words...mourning as (in)aesthetic variations...

A teacher working in London, England, travelling alone in the south of Spain, finds her way from the railway station to a convent hostel and is offered the gift of an orange—the gift of an orange proffered from the hand of a crone-like nun in a cold and dim and musty room in a convent. The gnarled hand of an ancient crone extending a gift—the gift of a blood red orange. I remember my fear in tasting the strangeness of blood red fruit in the eerie light of the room—not wishing to offend my benefactor and yet hesitant with/in the shadowed spaces of specters of vampires and phantoms in the gaze of (un)holy orders. I have always feared the Catholic religion of my childhood years. With Cixous, “I fear the fall of words...” (p. 8). The falling of words nearby. Pounding the paper. Cixous writes from “the shame of being unable to receive the benediction of the fruit giving itself peacefully...” (p. 14). And now as I read with Hélène Cixous: “The orange is a moment...at least three times are needed” (p. 18)...

*“a blink after each flash of red lightening...
three looks around an orange...” (p. 20).*

I am reading Cixous reading: “Through the fine skin of a word, I sensed that it was a blood-orange. By a fine vibration in the toile...” (p. 18). Cixous is reading Clarice Lispector. One is always already reading (with) an other. I cannot find my way into the texts of Lispector; but I am drawn to Cixous’ readings of Lispector...blinking in the flashes of red lightening...

*blinded by the dazzle of lightening flashes
blurred re-visionings
light filtered through heavy cotton curtains*

*framed shadows of enunciated spaces
I leave the curtains closed
shutting out
a large round orange sun*

There are times when I cannot bear to be at-home in the nation's capital—in-dwelling in a capital 'O' and the only means of escape at-hand is through the fine skin of the word—escaping stigmata of a capital letter with Hélène Cixous...escaping to another story. I yearn to escape en français but grammar and structure hold me in a mise-en-demeure— my lessons are not with Cixous and so I read (with) her on the sly...one page and then an other—English with French and French with English. I am reading in-between languages ... Vivre l'orange/To live an orange...and in-between readers writing...escaping and not escaping...

I am writing with the words of Morawski falling nearby. Perhaps I am caught up in the fear of a benediction of words—the benediction of words on the tongue—all that remains at the end of a term. Perhaps I am now the old crone passing on benedictions through the fine skin of the word—(bene)dictions that arrive without a conversation...without a reception. Awaiting affects and intensities...finding moments of dissonances... resonances with a co-author. And in my academic teaching life...a restlessness in the doubtful wake of definition...in the vibrant possibilities of a 'lack' of definition...a Lacanian 'lack' that generates desire...

*I would like to write as a painter. I would like to write like painting.
—Cixous, 1991, p. 104*

I would like to write like Cixous. I would like to write like painting. Overpainting as in gouache—underscripting with ghosts. Into Cixousian elseWhere spaces...Elsewhere with Žižek...

Slavoj Žižek (2001) was delighted to find Lacanian traces in Shel Silverstein's "The Missing Piece" (1976) and "The Missing Piece Meets the Big O" (1981)... my primary students adored the works of Silverstein...and now the traces move on to trouble the 'symptom' and generate 'lack'...in teacher education...

[In]conclusions...

Two bricoleurs at-work: We chase after our affinities with notions of bricoleur and of bricolage which, according to David Miller (2000), “come from *bricole*, a corruption of which is the English word ‘brickwall’...The root word means ‘redound’ or ‘rebound’... bricoleur is always used with references to some extraneous movement...rebounding... straying...swerving” (p. 49). In the everyday life of the text, in the text of the everyday, a bricoleur works with what is at hand: a word, a pause, a spill, a stain, a silence, a gap, a spatial punctuation...whatever is close at hand. A text embedded in text—a textbox with(out) the box—corrugated corridors between textual traces—a meeting place where phantoms can shimmer with(out) words. We want to rebound from the brickwall of academic inscriptions. We want to stray—to swerve away—we want to want intransitively...

We are ourselves bricolage, as well as bricoleurs. The point is to give ourselves some leeway. *Topos*. Some space. Spacing. So that we may let education happen. *Gelassenheit*.
(Miller, 2000, p. 59)

Reading with one and then another. Brent Davis (2004) shares his shifting positioning toward teaching and learning being about “expanding the space of the possible and creating the conditions for the emergence of the as-yet unimagined” (p. 184) —*spacing...so that we may let education happen*. Readings in-between.

Auto/ethno/graphies are live(d) experiences that work within the (im)possibilities of closures, conclusions, and convocations. Working with method and/as text as arche-texture—working the ‘arts’ as (in)aesthetic texture, we (un)settle our teaching selves as a transformative process at-work with students in the aesthetics of the pre-service language ‘arts’ classroom. We work the slopes [/] to evoke generative possibilities for newness to emerge...acknowledging that our reflexive process is haunted by Haraway’s (1997) notion of the diffracted gaze (p. 16). Haraway contends that “[un]like reflections, diffractions do not displace the same elsewhere” (p. 273). The gaze swerves with diffraction as an optical metaphor. Reed-Danahay reading Pratt contends that “texts or works of art that are autoethnographic assert alternative forms of meaning and power from those associated with the dominant...culture” (1997, p. 8). Working out on the slopes of auto/ethno/graphy we (re)read between authors drawing now from Springgay, Irwin, and Kind (2005) who contend that “openings are cuts, cracks, slits, and tears; refusing comfort, predictability, and safety” (p. 905). Reading with these *a/r/tographers*, we struggle to keep the openings ‘open’...

In doubling gestures of (in)aesthetic variations, we work at aerating the pedagogical text in teacher education, we draw on Pratt’s (1992) notion of contact zone—a living archive of complex intersections. Two voices—two narratives—converging, distracting, disrupting in the spaces in-between—responding and responsive to (an)other’s responsibilities in working with students. Two at-work in a university text (un)settling foundations and re-building a (dis)course. As Neuman (1996) expresses, it is “a juncture between the known and the unknown, that which has been lived and the ambiguity of experience not yet made meaningful” (p. 184).

Our separate but interwoven art making, researching, and teaching practices embrace desire, disgust and disrepair not as abject leakages, but rather as spaces that perform and invite engagement. We contend that this active, performative and aesthetic encounter includes the “underside” of teaching, keeping open spaces in educational discourse for bodies to move, to mutate, and to touch in a contiguous relationship.

(Springgay and Kind, 2004, p. 1)

And for bodies of writing to move, mutate and [keep in] touch. We (re)stack the books that we are reading. Re-arranging exquisite textual bodies. Grafting citational gems as door‘art’—as subversive underpinnings—ambiguous meanings emitting signals—code words sending multiple messages—to passers-by—in silence and as graphic coda...ciphers and de-cipherings. It is how we live our teaching lives...

In the nervous wake that shadows time and space at the ends of a (dis)course, the “desire, disgust and disrepair” so poignantly portrayed by Springgay and Kind (2004, p. 1) become hesitating shadows that live on past end of term. In stunning reviews...blinded by ‘dazzle’...in a grant not granted...dazed and confused...through radical resistances, we work the performative

contradictions of (bene)diction. As the dust descends and tumbles on to the bottom steps lined and broken apart (il)logical in patterns pouring from the rent of a chemical experiment, heed the lyrical. The Romantics knew. Capriccio when fast. Intermezzo when slow. When Ayers-Nachamkin (1992) affected statistics for her students she heard, “Music to my ears of course” (p. 91).

With a (re)turn to the key in A, rarely B, but never C, we refrain—going and coming against a grainy curricular glossary. Furios, legato, and robato similes. Piano, staccato learning in harmonic cacophonies.

Aesthetics in efferent teaching blues blackboarded in green.
We (re)line our courses for ten times seventeen.
A chorus chanting rhythms rhymed in jazz dictations.
Parodying dictators their guidebooks of ministration.

Postscript(ed)...

Two teaching bodies vacate a house of education. Two teaching lives depart for a chapel hall. We sit near an open window. Amber light casts rosettes on ruby rhythms. Allegro, presto, andante, largo. An ensemble trebles in cello wood, oboe, and strings. A piano quartet. Bax. Walton. A Finzi interlude.

Diluendo...

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