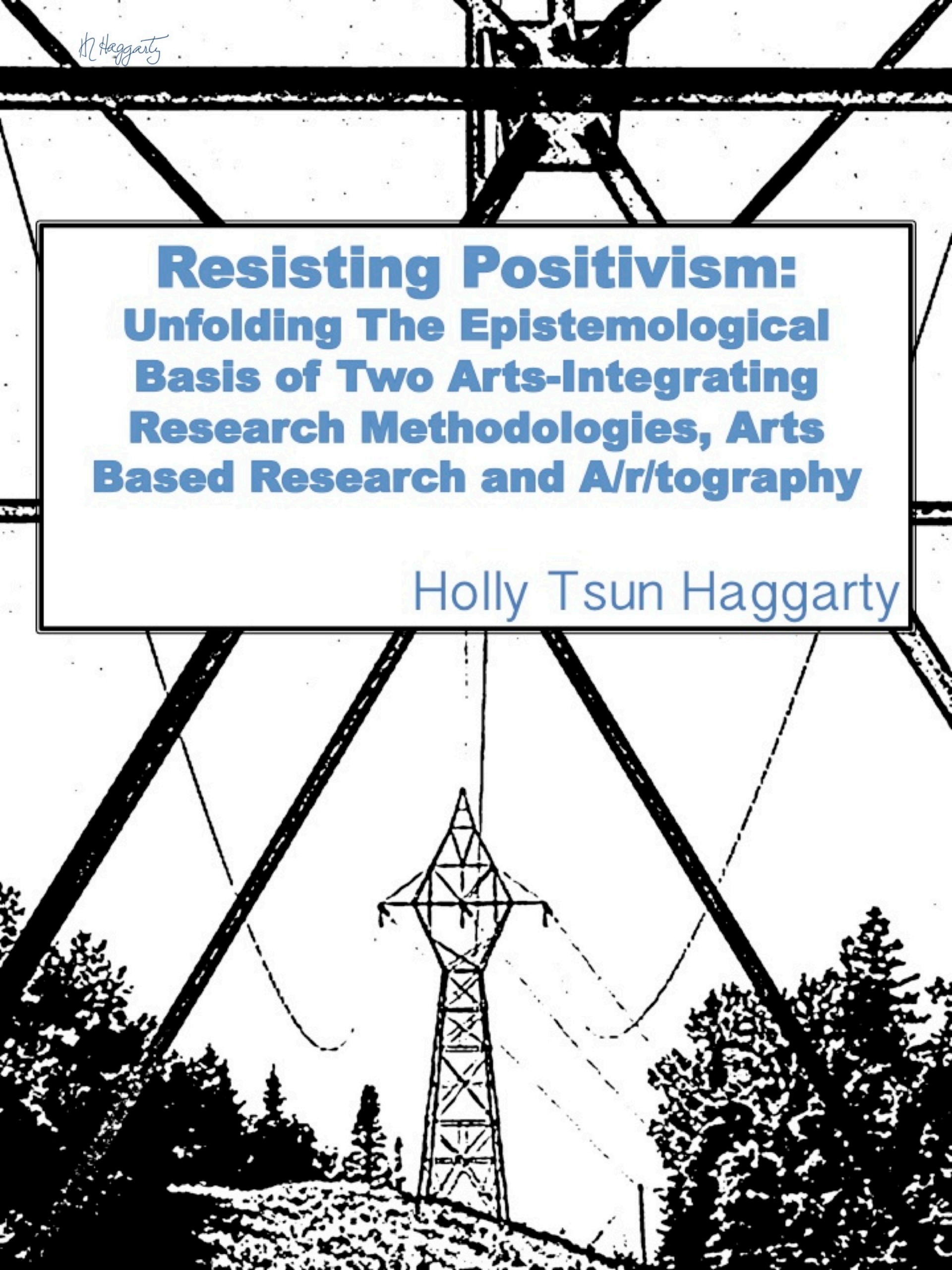


H. Haggarty

**Resisting Positivism:  
Unfolding The Epistemological  
Basis of Two Arts-Integrating  
Research Methodologies, Arts  
Based Research and A/r/tography**

Holly Tsun Haggarty



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## Prologus

### Abstract

How may an arts practice be considered a research methodology? This thesis examines two arts-integrating methodologies, arts based research and a/r/tography, to uncover their epistemological constructs and philosophical positions. The inquiry begins with inquiry, a re/cursive/search for an appropriate methodology to allow both critical and creative windows from which to gaze. Using a unique, hybridized design involving educational criticism (Eisner), the creative process of poetic inquiry (Hawkins, Prendergast), and heuristic inquiry (Moustakas), this thesis demonstrates that both arts based research and a/r/tography resist positivism – but for different reasons and to different effect. Arts based research is a methodology that looks structurally and constructively at the nondiscursive symbolic system of art, and offers tools for understanding the uncertain meaning in art. A/r/tography is a methodology that sees knowledge as rupture: it refuses to engage with positivist structures, actively disrupts them, and finds knowledge through disruption. Both methodologies prompt as many questions as answers in regards to how art is a way of knowing.

### *Knot*

this quest begins with a question  
 twistedtight  
 coiled in a snarled nest the answer  
 I work at it gently ~~un~~tease the tangles  
 straighten the curls ~~un~~spring  
 the truth will ~~un~~fold  
 find!  
 the in/side of one fold is the out/side of  
 another  
 discover!  
 this task is not for the searing iron but  
 eyes wideshut  
 un~dulate gather  
 the flow the wa~ve  
 and and  
 and and  
 bescribble the lines (artfully)  
 then hand over  
 hand over comb

**Proem***Getting It*

What do I do when I do this:  
 scribble these lines,  
 dribble them, stumble over them,  
 worm them, squirm them,  
 leap frog hop them,  
 chop  
 them,  
 stay the rhymes  
 play them like a fish line?

I guess I hope to catch some sense,  
 pour it into a four-quart jar,  
 perch it on the mantelpiece,  
 throw a party, sip martinis,  
 call it art.

Is that what I do when I en-art my mind?  
 for no big reason, mind;  
 urged on not by hunger,  
 no raving thirst to save the waters –  
 change, blame, tame the waters –  
 just age old wonder  
 about all that is this warty world.

Is that enough?  
 must I shout, dart about,  
 art-act the page,  
 re-tra-ct,  
 spell it out,  
 space  
 the  
 lines  
 into  
 lists,  
 ist-tw em-th art-ap  
 restart, impart?

Well I will, if you wish,  
 to help you catch my drift,  
 though we could rather swim like fish:  
 (eyes) ((askew)  
 gazing sidewise always,  
 yet ably able to see the wiggle–  
 and get it.

## **Purpose of Inquiry, Research Questions**

### **Research Area**

This research project may be categorized as within the field of philosophy of education and subcategorized as a topic within epistemology of the arts.

### **Research Topic**

The epistemology that underlies two arts-integrating education research methodologies, arts based research and a/r/tography.

### **Specific Research Questions**

- What are the epistemologies that underlie two leading arts-integrating research methodologies, namely that of arts based research and a/r/tography?
- How do the epistemologies that underlie two leading arts-integrating research methodologies, namely that of arts based research and a/r/tography, compare?

### **Research Meta-Question**

- How is art a way of knowing?

## **Purpose of Inquiry, Meta-Perspective**

The above stated specific research questions offer a procedural entry and guide to my master's study. But my inquiry could be more fully described with the more expansive question: How may an arts practice be considered a research methodology? That is, how do arts-integrating education research methodologies view knowledge itself, and how do they regard art as a way of knowing? What claims and assumptions about the nature of

knowledge, explicit and implicit, are made by each of these research methodologies? How do their conceptions of knowledge and of the epistemology of art compare? How may their formulations be interpreted and evaluated? What beliefs, values, and constructs are they based on? What epistemological issues do they raise? For what or for whom do they best serve? And how might they serve me?

I ask this last question because in my research project I am also implicating myself. That is, while I begin this project with an analytic reading, directed towards elucidating and comparing the epistemologies that underlie these arts-integrating methodologies, I then use my reading and my analysis as a springboard towards an arts-prompted meditation. It is equally in this meditation that I interpret and interrogate the methodologies, and the epistemological issues that arise from them. And in doing so, I concomitantly consider how my *own* arts practices, both as an artist and as an educator, may be considered a research methodology and a way of knowing. What is my poetics of knowing? How do I understand art as a way of knowing? *How is art a way of knowing?*

Thus, it can be seen that there are multiple layers to my research questions. Note that, in this master's thesis, I am not be able to complete my inquiry of the two above-mentioned arts-integrated research methodologies, let alone the more expansive umbrella question(s). However, this leads to another purpose of this project: the expectation that it will form a foundation for a continuing inquiry, at the doctoral level, a study which would be prompted by the following question: How may the epistemologies that underlie two leading arts-integrating research methodologies, namely that of arts based research and a/r/tography, be critiqued?



## Focus of Inquiry

As noted in the research questions, stated and discussed above, this study examines the epistemology that underlies two arts-integrating education research methodologies, arts based research and a/r/tography. In this study, I examine the theoretical rationale put forth by the authors of these methodologies, but it is important to underline that neither methodology has a specifically formulated rationale or document. Instead, the authors of both methodologies present their theoretic views over a number of writings. In my study, as I examine theory, I am likewise working theoretically, combing these theoretical documents to investigate the epistemological statements and beliefs of their authors. This is not an easy task, given the depth, breadth and complexities of their writings, but by circumscribing my task, I may work with specificity and particularity, and, in my critical study, maintain a systematic and analytic focus.

It may be felt that by limiting myself to the theoretical statements of these methodologies, and not discussing instantiations of their practice, I am likewise limiting my discussion. I recognize this as a limitation – a useful limitation – of my study. I am interested in delineating the distinctiveness in the epistemologies of arts based research and of a/r/tography, and in reflecting on their particularities. In my study, I focus on what the authors of these methodologies have to say for themselves. In doing so, it is important to underline that with both of these two methodologies there are no standardized expectations of practice; no prescriptions; no systematizations. Thus, examples of practices under the banner of either methodology are diverse, divergent, and seemingly self-situated. I agree with Crotty (1998; see below) that all research is epistemological, and I see that every study applies its own unique epistemological lens. This is particularly the

case with arts-integrating research, which, though it presents an epistemology, does not impose it. It would be intriguing to examine examples of arts based research and a/r/tography, to consider their epistemological correlations, but such a study is beyond the purview of this master's thesis.

### **Clarification of Terms of Reference**

1. *Critical, creative.* In my methodological inquiry, I speak about critical and creative components of my work. But, it is important to note that the linguistic nomenclature of the English language is limited and problematic here: the word "critical" is conventionally set in opposition to "creative," as in critical thinking versus creative thinking (as noted by Bailin, 2001), with the former proffered as a means of a negative and reductive catabolism, and the latter as a means of divergent or appreciative anabolism, and with the analytic approach considered the ne plus ultra of research. This is *not* the nomenclatural understanding followed in my work, by myself, nor by the methodologies I am studying. In my work, the critical inquiry engages systematic, analytic, discursive processes, and is expressed through prose. The creative inquiry engages nondiscursive processes of affect, intuition, and imagination; it is expressed through poetry. However, the delineation is not absolute; these components are distinguished to allow for alternative conceptual frameworks, yet the processes are inter-related, not hermetic. And both methods of inquiry are integral components of my study.

2. *Methodology, arts based research and a/r/tography.* Throughout my inquiry, I refer to two arts-integrating research methodologies, arts based research and a/r/tography. It is important to realize that in doing so, I am denoting the theoretical constructs of their authors, expounded over a number of theoretical writings. I am not

referring specifically to the authors, nor generally to the practices of either methodology, but to the theory thereof, in particular, the abstracted, epistemological theory I have garnered from their writings.

3. *Art*. This study considers art, art practices and arts-integrating research. Should I define art? To define is to establish a delimiting tautology, which I am loath to do. I expect that the readers' understanding of art will be applicable in this inquiry. I suggest that art may be viewed, very widely, as a creative practice, work, product, or expression, engaging non-logical, non-systematic, non-analytical processes of mind(s), such as imagination and intuition. Poetry, fiction, theatre, dance, paintings, sculptures, and music are examples of art, but art could also be an installation, a meal, a game, an event, or an activity.

4. *Epistemology*. This study is epistemological, as mentioned above, a study of how art, art practices, and art-integrating research methodologies are a way of knowing. Before continuing, it is worth reflecting on what this philosophical term, epistemology, means, and why it is so important in research. Epistemology is widely defined as the study of knowledge. Jonathan Dancy (1995), in the *Oxford Companion to Philosophy*, says it is "the study of our right to the beliefs we have." Thus, Dancy notes that epistemology is normative. That is, with an expression of a particular knowledge proposition comes the expectation of justification of that belief, as well as an expectation of judgement of the rightness of that belief. Traditionally – traditionally meaning the Western tradition – knowledge has entailed a quest for certainty: knowledge has been explicated as truth, or at least as justified true belief (see Ichikawa, J. J., & Steup, n.d.). Yet, even traditionally, epistemology has always been polemical, as the basis of what may justify belief has been

viewed quite divergently. For example, an empiricist view is that there is a sure reality beyond conscious minds, the knowledge of which is obtained by the experience of the senses (Lacey, 1995). On the other hand, a rationalist view is that there are essential truths prior to experience, the knowledge of which is obtained by reason (Lacey, 1995). The above philosophies ascended in the eighteenth century, during the Western Enlightenment, and have in common a belief in a world realized and ordered by a transcendent creator. In either case, knowledge is uncovered, not created. Subsequently, doubts about this view of reality resulted in alternative views of knowledge (Critchley, 2001). From the nihilism of Nietzsche came a view of knowledge as an individual, existential choice. From the socialism of Marx and Engels came a view of knowledge as power. This brief discussion recounts that epistemology, the conception and study of knowledge, is, and always has been, a contested subject. The divergence of views demonstrates that epistemology is unavoidably ontological: one's epistemology depends on one's worldview. Research, as a way of knowing, derives from one's epistemological view. In research, one's epistemology, one's view of knowledge, cannot be taken for granted, and nor can it be taken for granted that a research practice follows a traditional or dominant paradigm of knowledge.

### **Context and Rationale of Inquiry**

As noted above, epistemology, the study of knowing, has never been definitive or static. The conception of what knowing is has changed with history: with ideological, cultural, academic, and individual structures and beliefs. Thus, one may speak of paradigms, of theoretical frameworks that have become conventionally accepted. Of course, convention can be resisted; paradigms can, and do, change (Paradigm, 2004).

In early twentieth century, as technological achievements impressed Western

civilization, scientific paradigms of research reigned supreme. Research presumed a scientific methodology: systematic, linear, empirical, experimental, data-oriented, and reductive, along with a concomitant epistemology that was objectivist and positivist. At this time, faculties of education, along with those in other human studies, such as anthropology, sociology, and psychology, categorized their fields as social *sciences* out of a desire for the sense of credibility and justification lent by a scientific approach to research and to knowledge. Then, mid-century, institutional and cultural epistemological views shifted. Crotty (1998) notes several prompts to this shift. Firstly, he notes that Heisenberg's "uncertainty principle" – the idea that subatomic particles cannot be predicted with certainty because their position is altered by the act of being observed – diminished the construct of knowledge as based on an essential, fixed reality that required a neutral observer to accurately assess (pp. 29-30). Crotty (1998) also notes that Thomas Kuhn's concept of science – as a theoretical paradigm that scientists generally accept and work within until anomalies force a shift, or revolution in thinking – highlighted the influence of cultural and social values on scientific research (pp. 34-37).

Social values affect epistemology. In a postbellum Western world, diversity became a social value, as well as an epistemological position. Eisner, among many other educators, were dissatisfied with the "one-size-fits-all" behavioural model of education and searched for alternatives. In the 1960s, qualitative research developed as phenomenological approaches offered an alternative to the then-prevailing empirical and quantitative methods of research (Qualitative Research, 2006) and allowed a wider investigation of social issues. This qualitative turn prompted continued contemplation and practice of alternative models of knowledge and of research – phenomenology, hermeneutics, critical

theory and so on. However, the qualitative alternative to traditional scientific research has not been without contention: in 1994, when an article by American physicist Alan Sokal, published in a postmodern journal, turned out to be a hoax, it energized a furious debate over the relative epistemological merits of qualitative versus quantitative; scientific versus humanities research methods (Swartz, 2010). Contention notwithstanding, qualitative approaches to research are currently very common throughout social research, including the field of education.

Arts-integrating educational research methodologies developed out of qualitative approaches to research, as artistically minded educational researchers, dissatisfied with the traditional positivist paradigm of research, sought to incorporate the value of art into their work, and to allow the art to engender new epistemological positions in research. As one example, educational researcher Elliot Eisner developed the methodology he termed *arts based educational research* and *arts based research*<sup>1</sup> in the 1980s<sup>2</sup>. Closer to home, Canadian educational researchers Ardra Cole and J. Gary Knowles developed, when at OISE during the mid-to-late 1990s, the approach they called *arts-informed research* (Knowles & Cole, 2008a). And, at the turn of the millennium, educational researchers at the University of British Columbia, Rita Irwin et al., developed an approach they termed *a/r/tography* (Irwin, 2008).

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<sup>1</sup> Note that arts based research is not the same entity as arts based educational research, although Eisner and Barone have been connected with both. Arts based research is a research methodology while arts based educational research is titularly a special interest group of the American Educational Research Association (AERA), whose purpose is to “[provide] a community for those who view education through artistic lenses, who use a variety of arts-based methodologies, and who communicate understandings through diverse genres” (<http://www.abersig.com>). Thus, AERA uses the term “ABER,” arts-based educational research, as an umbrella term covering various arts-integrating research. Eisner and Barone have written about their work under this terminology; see, for example Barone and Eisner, 2006.

<sup>2</sup> According to Barone, 2008.

Under the influence of these research schools, many arts-integrating research educational projects have been carried out. Knowles and Cole's 720-page *Handbook of the Arts in Qualitative Research: Perspectives, Methodologies, Examples, and Issues* displays the diverse range of art genres, inquiry methods, and research domains of arts-integrating research (Knowles & Cole, 2008b). A book on poetic inquiry, by Prendergast, Leggo, and Sameshima (2009), includes over a dozen examples of the use of this art form in research. A review article by Sinner, Leggo, Irwin, Gouzouasis, and Grauer (2006) enumerates thirty a/r/tographical dissertations, categorizing them by forms of inquiry, study focus, and findings.

As is the case with all qualitative research, as arts-integrating research methodologies proliferate, theoretical reflections into their use have also increased. Eisner, the patriarch of arts-integrating research, wrote extensively throughout his career<sup>3</sup>, writings which will be examined in this work, along with those of Tom Barone, a former graduate student of Eisner, and who is also associated with this methodology. A/r/tography has no single spokesperson; Rita Irwin is the bellwether, but a/r/tographical articles are usually multiply authored, as are all of the book-length works. I have found that the anthology format is the rule for most art-integrating research works. Knowles and Cole's handbook is not only a prime example in itself; it serves as a reference list, as many of its authors are joint authors and editors of other publications, such as *Provoked by Art: Theorizing Arts-informed Research* (Cole, Neilsen, Knowles, Luciani, 2004). While such anthologies are testament to the vigour of the field, their manifold nature precludes the presentation of succinct, coherent statements of theory.

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<sup>3</sup> Note: Regrettably, Eisner passed away January 10, 2014.

In addition to the above, other arts-integrating researchers who have written theoretical expositions include Patricia Leavy, Graeme Sullivan, and Jan Jagodzinski and Jason Wallin. Leavy (2015), in her book, *Method Meets Art: Arts-based Research Practice*, portrays arts-integrating research methodologies as emerging from the work of ethnographic sociologists, such as herself, from an effort to evocatively represent researched phenomena. Sullivan (2005), in his book, *Arts Practice as Research: Inquiry in the Visual Arts*, laments the perceived need of arts-integrated research to hitchhike onto established social science and educational research methodologies and to limit the scope of art in research. Rather, he believes that “it is possible to consider ‘the visual’ not only as a descriptive or representative form, but also as a means of creating and constructing images that forms an evidential base that reveals new knowledge” (p. 180). In his well-regarded book, Sullivan develops a multi-dimensional model that relates the engagement of art practice as research. His work draws from two sources, firstly, from Habermas’ triadic categorization of knowledge interests, which Sullivan terms “technical, contextual, and critical,” and which he describes, respectively, as knowing in order to control, knowing in order to interpret, and knowing in order to transform (p. 95). Secondly, Sullivan’s work draws from his interest in the epistemological possibilities of visual representations such as the fold (p. 94), the braid (pp. 103-106) and fractals (pp. 106-107). While Sullivan demonstrates an intrigue with visual representation, Jagodzinski and Wallin (2013), in their recent book, *Arts-based Research: A Critique and a Proposal*, contrarily attempt to use a Lacanian and Deleuzian point of view to interrupt the paradigm of knowledge as



representation, proposing the concept of knowledge as an a-signifying becoming<sup>4</sup>.

Arts-based research may be burgeoning, but it certainly is not mainstream – neither widely recognized, nor widely critiqued. Arts-integrated research seems to circulate mostly in its own coterie, unattended by those who might be critical of such approach. Is this because of the insularity of knowledge disciplines? Is it due to a lack of comprehension of approaches and practices that may come across as esoteric or idiosyncratic? David Pariser (2009), at Concordia University, is one critic who voices scepticism over the validity of arts-integrating research, questioning its lack of scientific qualities. “Research,” Pariser insists, “is grounded in normative science and is founded on a positivistic epistemology” (2009, p. 2). On the other hand, Michele Forrest, at Mount Allison University, in considering the value of arts-integrating research, asks: “What is the point of sneaking art in the back door of the social sciences if, in doing so, one does not celebrate what makes art distinctive?” (2007, p. 9). Arts-integrating research begets the question of what constitutes social science, research, and knowing.

In my literature review, I have found no research that explicitly investigates or compares the epistemological bases and warrants of arts-integrating research methodologies. Yet arts-integrating research is not all of the same ilk. For example, as will be seen in this work, as I examine in detail two arts-integrating research methodologies, that of arts based research and that of a/r/tography, each offers a very different epistemological position: the former takes a structuralist view of knowledge while the latter is postmodern. This makes for an exciting comparison. It is both interesting and

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<sup>4</sup> Their mission: “Unfettered from the edicts of *common sense*, arts-based research might become a place for the fabulation of *a-people-yet-to-come*, or rather, a people for which there exists no prior image, narrative, or transcendent organizing principle” (p. 7).

useful to examine the epistemological basis of two arts-integrating research methodologies. By comparing these two methodologies, the distinctiveness of each is illuminated, allowing each to be highlighted, also encouraging further reflection on their particular situation and value in research. Furthermore, by comparing these two contrasting methodologies, distinct and divergent conceptions of art as a way of knowing are brought forward for contemplation.

## **Part One: Modus Operandi**

### **Methodology**

#### **Preamble: Unfolding and Recursive Inquiry as a Route to Methodology**

Before one can commence an inquiry to answer one's research questions, one must have some kind of a plan of action – a modus operandi. The funnel model is a widely used and widely recommended tool for organizing research (Marshall & Rossman, 1999; Punch, 2006; Russell, 2012; Griffith University, 2012; Lakehead, 2012). This conventional model, comprising the steps of identifying a research topic, composing questions, formulating a design to answer the questions, collecting data, analyzing them, and thus determining an answer to the questions, is proposed as a way of streamlining the process of designing research by ensuring it fits into the same model which will then be used to structure the research process. That is, the model is a framework that presupposes and encompasses a

research methodology that is systematic, linear, empirical, experimental, data-oriented, and reductive; along with a concomitant epistemology that is objectivist and positivist.<sup>5</sup>

However, what if one's conception of knowing includes emotion, embodiment, intuition, subjectivity, inter-subjectivity, ideation, ideology, self-development, and transformation? What if one's strategies of knowing include reflection, argument, persuasion, theory, idea and question generation, narration, dialogue, and artistic processes? Where does the funnel model allow for creativity? A conventional model of research would not work for arts based research, or for a/r/tography, the arts integrating methodologies I am studying, and nor would it work for mine.

"Every piece of research is unique and calls for its own unique methodology," notes Michael Crotty, research epistemologist, in his book on the philosophy of research (1998, pp. 13-14). "Method must lend itself to topic," says educational researcher Monica Prendergast (2009, p. xxii). The first demand of my study, then, has been to form a methodology, which I have done by first conjecturing the needs of my methodology and then embarking on my epistemological study of arts-integrating research models long enough to ferret out and connect to appropriate methodologies and recursively apply them to my needs. In my search here, I conceive of methodology, after Crotty (1998, pp. 3-7), as a broad plan of action for answering one's research question, a plan that emerges from a theoretical rationale, and that leads to, and incorporates, a design, structure, or framework.

Crotty (1998) notes four elements of research: epistemology, theoretical perspective, methodology, and methods. While he stresses that a conception and view of knowledge underlies all research, he notes that

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<sup>5</sup> A depiction of the conventional model of research, with the image of a funnel used to describe the process, is presented in Appendix A.

not too many of us embark on a piece of social research with epistemology as our starting point. . . . We typically start with a real-life issue that needs to be addressed, a problem that needs to be solved, a question that needs to be answered. (p. 13)

Likewise, I began my research with wondering about art as a way of knowing. My initial contemplations led to the formulation of two research questions, as listed above, with their task of describing and comparing arts based research and a/r/tography (and an eventual third question, involving the task of critiquing). These questions are useful in their specific tasks, yet they serve the greater epistemological query of pondering art as a way of knowing. In pondering this, I am attempting to fulfill a personal passion in constructing for myself an understanding (a theory, an epistemology, a poetics) of the meaning of art.

Cognizant of this, I see the development of my methodology as a means whereby:

1. a cogent and systematic analysis of the epistemology in arts based research and a/r/tography may be undertaken;
2. the issues prompted by arts based research and a/r/tography may be aesthetically interpreted;
3. and my subjective understanding and investment in this study may be espoused.

I require a unique methodology that particularly responds to the aims and requirements of my study. Developing that unique and appropriate methodology is an integral and essential aspect of my inquiry. It is an epistemological inquiry, in itself. It is also an enormous and disquieting undertaking, as Knowles and Cole (2008c) relate in their article, "Using an Arts Methodology to Create a Thesis or Dissertation:

To complete a thesis or dissertation is a formidable task in itself, and new scholars and their supervisors working with arts-related approaches face additional

challenges that make the thesis/dissertation journey all the more full of uncertainty and surprises. Risk taking, courage, openness to unknowing, and tolerance for ambiguity . . . are prerequisites for developing an arts-related project. . . . Creativity is at the heart of the enterprise. (p. 519)

To orient my project, I have taken what Keith F. Punch refers to as an *unfolding* approach to research. In his 2006 book, *Developing Effective Research Proposals*, Punch distinguishes an unfolding research design from what he calls a *prestructured* research design (p. 13). Punch notes that the prestructured approach is the conventional approach to research, in which the research methodology follows an empirical approach and where the research questions, investigation, analysis, and evaluation follow a highly structured, predetermined format (pp. 13-14; 36-38; 70-72). By comparison, Punch describes an unfolding approach as one in which the research questions and the investigative format emerge as the study evolves. Punch suggests that the prestructured approach is suitable for quantitative research, while qualitative research may prefer the latter approach. I believe that Punch is relating that with some qualitative research, much study may already have occurred prior to the point where research questions and design can be specified. Such has been the case with my research project. Before I could begin to describe, compare and critique arts based research and a/r/tography, I have had to study them as well as other arts-integrating research methodologies in order to recursively devise a framework for my study, which I will now describe.

The methodology of my study is hybridized, engaging a critical, a creative, and a heuristic inquiry; incorporating elements of educational criticism (Eisner 1991, 2002a, 2002b), an intuitive creative process (Hawkins, 1991), poetic inquiry (Prendergast, 2009)

and heuristic inquiry (Moustakas, 1985, 1990). While it generally follows the structure and nomenclature of a traditional framework, it sometimes re-appropriates traditional terms, such as “data” and “data acquisition,” and other times it adopts less conventional terms, such as “proem” and “parvum opus.” It involves a tripartite design embracing and integrating critical, creative, and subjective elements. It is communicated in written form, using a prose essay with poetic excursions. A diagram of my research design is found in Appendix B.

### **Critical Inquiry**

My thesis report begins with a critical inquiry, an investigation of the research methodologies of arts based research and a/r/tography, wherein I examine closely and carefully what these methodologies say about knowledge itself and how they consider art a way of knowing. I review and compare these two epistemological constructs. This critical examination is structured by what Eisner calls educational criticism.

Eisner discusses his concept of educational criticism in several of his books, including his 1991 work, *The Enlightened Eye: Qualitative Inquiry and The Enhancement of Educational Practice*; his 2002 book, *The Educational Imagination: On the Design and Evaluation of School Programs*<sup>6</sup>; and his 2002 work, *The Arts and the Creation of Mind*.

Eisner defines criticism, after John Dewey, as “the re-education of perception of the work of art,” (2002a, p.187) and says that good criticism should “help others see what they otherwise may not have noticed and, if noticed, not understood” (p. 187).

Eisner (1991, 2002b) relates four dimensions to educational criticism: *description*,

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<sup>6</sup> *The Enlightened Eye* has gone through two editions: 1991, 1998; *The Educational Imagination* has gone through three editions: 1979, 1985, 1994/2002; I reference the editions I used in my study.

*interpretation, evaluation, and thematics* (sic). I like that these dimensions are meant to apply equally well to a critique of either artwork or academic work. Description, says Eisner, is “an attempt to identify and characterize, portray, or render in language [the] relevant qualities” of a work (2002b, p. 226). Eisner also relates description as an “incisive rendering in an expressive medium” (2002b, p. 226). Furthermore, he states that description should be evocative, allowing the reader to “participate vicariously,” to imagine, or to connect through imagination (2002b, pp. 226-229). He also notes that description, as the dimensions of educational criticism, is necessarily subjective, as the critic focuses her particular attention and unique perceptions on the study at hand. Description, as all of the dimensions of educational criticism, may be subjective and creative, yet incisive and analytical. Interpretation offers explanation, for example, of the ideas or ideology of a piece of work. Evaluation, says Eisner, “requires judgments about merit” (1991, p. 188), about “value” (2002b, p. 231), based on the “application of educational criteria” (2002b, p. 232). Eisner espouses strong principles regarding evaluation, as will be discussed in my descriptive analysis of arts based research. For now, I note that Eisner believes that evaluation in the arts cannot be achieved by standards, by quantitative measurements, but by judgements whose warrant depends on the establishment and application of criteria appropriate to the work itself (Eisner, 1995; Eisner 2002a, chps. 6-7; Barone & Eisner, 2012, chp. 8). And finally, Eisner suggests that thematics, the fourth dimension of educational criticism, consists of deriving generalizations, distillations, or conclusions about the issues in the work one is critiquing (Eisner 2002a, pp. 188-189; 2002b, p. 233).

While these four dimensions suggest distinct and linear steps, and while I am using

them as a framework, as sequential signposts, in my study, Eisner notes that, in fact they form part of an integrated process (2002a, pp. 188-189). This integration may especially be noticed in my creative work (poetry), which may be seen, betimes, as descriptive, interpretive, and evaluative. Please note that in the subsequent subsection on methods, I further elaborate on the analytic procedure of the critical inquiry.

### **Creative Inquiry**

I believe that just as one cannot swim without getting into the water, one cannot understand the epistemology of art (or art-integrated research) without the involvement of art. Thus, this study also involves a creative inquiry. A creative inquiry allows a unique way of knowing, one that differs from a scientific or positivistic way of knowing, the study of which is the entire point of this thesis and thus cannot yet be summarized. However, from my study to date of arts-integrated research methodologies, I know that the epistemic issues go beyond the formal, categorical, rational elements associated with critical inquiry into other dimensions of knowing, such as the sensory, emotional, social, and existential. While such dimensions may certainly be studied through systematic, analytic processes, accessing them through an artistic approach prompts a different understanding – an “epistemic seeing” says Eisner (2002a, p. 89). What does an artistic approach to knowing involve, and how may it be described as methodology? Alma Hawkins, an American choreographer, art therapist, arts researcher, and founder of the dance studies department at UCLA, wrote extensively about her conception of the creative process, and I adapt it for my own use here (Hawkins, 1991; Cancienne, 2008, p. 401). Hawkins applied this process to the creation of art; it may be equally well applied to the creation of poetry.

Hawkins describes the act of creation as an intuitive process involving the following



phases: sensing; feeling; imagining; transforming, and forming. How do these phases apply to my creative exploration of the ideas, issues, problems prompted by my comparison of arts based research and a/r/tography?

*Sensing* involves taking in sensory input and being aware of the inner sensation that results. In terms of the research experience, this could be applied to the reading process (literature study). Reading offers data, which in critical analysis becomes fodder for an examination of argument, for a reaction of agreement or disagreement. In the creative process, I read and allow myself to intuitively react. *Feeling* is that reaction; it is an embodied response which, all the while experiencing, I take note of. I attend to my feelings, my sense of agreement or conflict, my sense of surprise, dissonance, wonder, curiosity, complacency, assurance, reassurance, defensiveness – whatsoever be the feelings that arise. Sensing and feeling are experiential processes, which lead to the next few steps, which are still experiential, but also experimental. *Imagining* involves linking feelings to sensory images<sup>7</sup>, or aesthesias, and vice versa, linking sensory images to feelings. Imagining involves freely associating, projecting, or transmediating from one sensory domain to another (synaesthetizing). Note that for a creative writer, words themselves become not just linguistic symbols, but artistic images. When I imagine, I am free to go beyond the conventional, the rational, and the logical. I am guided instead by my impressions, reactions, associations, intuitions – by my embodied feelings. *Transforming* involves letting these sensory images develop and evolve into aesthetic patterns, situations, scenarios, designs, and ideas. It involves engaging the language of aesthetic media as well as aesthetic devices. When I create poems, transforming involves exploring my artistic

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<sup>7</sup> Note that images are often defined as visual representations. In the arts, the term, *image*, means a concrete representation of *any* sensory experience (Holman, 1980).

images and ideas in the form of poetic devices such as figurative language, tropes, irony, rhythm, word and line order and placement. *Forming* is expressing inner ideas in an outwardly communicable form. In the context of this research project, forming is the formal act of registering my feelings and ideas regarding the data in the form of poetry.

The artistic genre that I have chosen, poetic inquiry, will be further discussed in the subsequent subsection on methods. At this point, note that although I am describing the two main components of my research separately, as distinct epistemological processes, in fact, they form part of a more complex, interconnected research system, as the two components reverberate with each other.

### **Heuristic Inquiry**

And this brings us back to the unfolding. I began this section on methodology by describing my research project as taking an unfolding approach. I described the unfolding approach as one in which the study does not rigidly predetermine the questions and research design, but allows these to emerge and evolve as the study progresses. This is useful in a qualitative study, especially when the initial questions are discovery oriented; when findings may change the initial question, or bring up unanticipated responses, or prompt a discussion of hitherto unrecognized issues. But the idea of discovery, unanticipated responses, hitherto unrecognized issues, is itself an epistemic idea, an assertion that knowledge is not just a matter of using a prestructured methodology to test and *un-cover* pre-existing realities, but also a matter of participating in the creation of meaning.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Such is the case, for example, with the discovery learning approach of educational psychologist and constructivist theorist Jerome Bruner (1960).

Another research methodology I have engaged, which works well with Punch's conception of an unfolding approach, which encompasses the subjective, and which allows the critical and creative components of research to work meaningfully together, is that of Clark Moustakas' (1985, 1990) methodology of *heuristic inquiry*. Moustakas and fellow researcher Bruce Douglass, describe this method in their 1985 conceptual essay, "Heuristic Inquiry: The Internal Search to Know." In this article, the authors describe heuristic inquiry as "a search for the discovery of meaning and essence in significant human experience" (p. 40), and they state that it entails "a subjective process of reflecting, exploring, sifting, and elucidating the nature of the phenomenon under investigation" (p. 40). Heuristic inquiry is phenomenological in that it sees meaning as something that arises from lived experience. But unlike classical Husserlian phenomenology, in heuristic inquiry, the research does not bracket off the experience, but remains passionately connected to it (p. 43). Thus, in this model of research, the researcher is directly implicated and involved; data is pursued through "the intimate and authentic processes of the self" (p. 40). "It is the focus on the human person in experience and that person's reflective search, awareness, and discovery that constitutes the essential core of heuristic investigation" (p. 42).

It is also pertinent to note that heuristic inquiry is not synonymous with the psychological concept of heuristics, in which the term refers to a cognitive shortcut or mental rule of thumb. Rather, heuristic inquiry connects to its etymological origin, the Greek word *heuriskein*, meaning to discover or to find (Moustakas, 1990, p. 9).

In the earlier article, Moustakas and Douglass (1985) outline steps that would be involved in heuristic research, namely, *immersion*, *acquisition*, and *realization*. In later writing, Moustakas (1990) expands these into seven phases: *initial engagement*; *immersion*;

*incubation; illumination; explication; creative synthesis; and validation of the heuristic research.* The phases are not meant as a prescribed sequence, and I do not them as such in my research. What I think is important, and what I take from heuristic inquiry, are the meaning-making processes involved, which Moustakas considers deeply in his writings.

Moustakas notes that one begins research through immersion and he says that “vague and formless wanderings are characteristic in the beginning” (Douglass & Moustakas, 1985, p. 47). Of course, Moustakas does not expect this sense of uncertainty to continue, suggesting that through focused reflection, “a growing sense of meaning and direction emerges as the perceptions and understandings of the researcher grow” (Douglass & Moustakas, 1985, p. 47). This focused reflection Moustakas calls (after Polanyi, 1964, 1969, 1983) *indwelling*, and he describes it at length in his writing, calling it “the willingness to gaze with unwavering attention and concentration into some facet of human experience in order to understand its constituent qualities and its wholeness” (Moustakas, 1990, p. 24). Moustakas emphasizes focus and discipline in the research process, all the while following a reflection that is intuitive, tacit, subjective, and inter-subjective. I very much relate to Moustakas’ description of immersion, of wandering and wondering; this has comprised a long period of my research, and, in fact, is a continuing phase, as the scope of my study is not completed with this master’s thesis (and, indeed, perhaps it never shall be).

Moustakas’ model focuses on the use of personal reflection, of turning inward, as a means of comprehending a phenomenon or experience. Moustakas acknowledges that what constitutes *data acquisition* will vary depending on the specifics of the research project, yet promotes the idea of dialogue, both with research participants (Moustakas,

1990, pp. 46-49) as well as with oneself (i.e. *self-dialogue*; pp. 16-18). I can relate to Moustakas' conception of data acquisition, as, in my case, I am in "dialogue" with other researchers through their writings and with myself through my poetic reflections.

Where the reflective period of immersion and incubation leads, Moustakas promises, is to a point of realization, "a unifying picture" or "Gestalt" (Douglass & Moustakas, 1985, p. 47). In his later writing, Moustakas (1990) expands the phase of realization to include the components of illumination, explication, and creative synthesis. This is a useful expansion, elaborating on what one might do with one's insights, after the moment of gestalt. Moustakas suggests that one must then try to make sense of the gestalt, to interpret and explicate it. He suggests that after illumination, "concentrated attention is given to creating an inward space and discovering nuances, textures, and constituents of a phenomenon" (p. 31). This is very much what occurs in this study, as I try to understand the epistemological nature of arts based research and of a/r/tography.

Moustakas' model culminates in a creative synthesis. Moustakas stresses that a creative synthesis is not merely a conclusion or a summary, but "a new reality" (Douglass & Moustakas, 1985, p. 52) and "a comprehensive expression of the essences of the phenomenon investigated" (Moustakas, 1990, p. 32). Here, my methodology differs from Moustakas. Firstly, I do not know whether an essence can ever be pinned down, much as I agree that insights may be found, may interpret and illuminate. Thus, I would not say that my inquiry will ever culminate in *one* creative synthesis. Rather, I think that each step of work that I undergo creatively synthesizes, or gathers, from previous steps. Accordingly, my methodology has been synthesized from my initial readings, and the subsequent comparative analysis of arts based research and a/r/tography is an application of my

methodology. Furthermore, my methodology includes a poetic inquiry, which presents numerous creative discernments, though these may relate more to Moustakas' idea of Gestalt, of cumulating insights, rather than of culminating syntheses.

As noted above, Moustakas' description of the epistemological processes of heuristic inquiry correlates extremely well to that of an unfolding approach to research. Heuristic inquiry encompasses the exploratory nature of an unfolding approach to research and yet also offers an epistemological explanation for how clarity of direction and findings will come about: "The indwelling process is conscious and deliberate but not logical or linear. One follows clues wherever they appear and then dwells inside them expanding their meaning and associations until a fundamental insight is achieved" (Moustakas, 1990, p. 24). This associative process may seem at odds with the with more categorical aspects of educational criticism, which I am using for systematic analysis, but as may be seen later in the descriptive review of arts based research, the heuristic model does fit well with arts based research's concept of qualitative reasoning, which likewise proposes an epistemological approach of immersion with material until an insight is gained.

I note that initially, in investigating educational criticism and heuristic inquiry as methodology, it seemed to me that the phases of heuristic inquiry would correlate to the sequential phases of educational criticism, with the initial phases of heuristic inquiry, of immersion and acquisition, corresponding to the stages of description and interpretation of educational criticism, while the phase of realization would correlate to the stages of evaluation and thematics, but I have found this not to be the case; in both cases, but particularly with heuristic inquiry, the meaning-making processes are porous and integrative. Ultimately, I think it is important to consider the model of heuristic inquiry as

dynamic rather than static, as a non-linear rather than as a sequential pathway, as process rather than structure, and as recursive, as a process that ends only to begin anew. Thus, I work my way through the heuristic arc in both micro and macro levels as I engage in my master's study, and will then continue the process as I further my epistemological study of arts-integrating research at a doctoral level.

### **Postscript (Another Ambling and Unfolding)**

I mentioned in my discussion of the unfolding model of research, above, that an inquiry may already be well underway by the time research questions, format, and procedures are delineated. What has evolved in my study is an awareness that not only one's research, but also one's methodology incurs a philosophical and epistemological position. The above section has described my methodology, not merely as procedures or tasks but as an unfolding path to knowledge. This entire study is an exploration of knowing: what it means to know; how art is a way of knowing; what is my epistemology; my poetics of knowing. At this point, in this study, I see that my epistemological lens, like that of the methodologies I am studying, is non-positivist. My inquiry unfolds not as the uncovering, of facts, nor of proving an argument, but of engaging with, interacting with, and interpreting another's communication, aware that this is a limited, incomplete, always tentative and frail human position. All the same, I see that my poetics looks at knowledge as both personal and holistic. My tripartite research design encompasses a circle of knowing: knowing through the mind, through the body, through the spirit; through reason, imagination, and intuition; through bones, flesh, and blood – wholly.

### **Poetic Excursus**

*Wholly*

It isn't enough to know, just *thinking*  
 If I think, therefore I am  
 And if I am, herefore I stand  
 So I must know with all mine own.

With my own eyes, I must see the fit  
 With my own ears, it must sound right  
 How can I know, unless I sniff  
 and smell who before me has known?  
 How can I know, unless I taste?  
 Always I hope for lemon gelato or crème brûlée  
 but what if it tastes like an aspirin stuck sick  
 in the back of the throat?  
 What if it tastes like the mucous of a snail trail?  
 I've not tasted snail snot –  
 What would that taste like?

And what it touches like –  
 I must be able to run my fingertips over its texture  
 Is it smooth or rough, and in what way –  
 smooth as the glossed glass of Toronto skyscrapers?  
 or smooth as a cleaned, creamed baby's bum?  
 rough as scraping my elbows on pavement?  
 or rough like the wool tweed of a fiddler's cap?  
 And feel the pattern –  
 Is it regular, repeatable, as the two-times table?  
 Are there unexpected breaks  
 fractures sharp as shattered glass?  
 Or fissures of eroded time?

It isn't enough to know with my brain  
 with grey convolutions, synapses and straw-coloured fluid  
 cerebral  
 I must know with my heart  
 With my bones, my blood, my bladder, my bunions  
 I must know within my self.

With whole, wholly, self must I know  
 I must strip to nothing and stand on the edge  
 Open armed, I must spin full circle  
 Let sun wind rain me, weather me  
 wrinkle me  
 whistle me  
 whisk, whiz  
 whoosh.



## **Methods**

After Crotty (1998), I am distinguishing methodology and methods, the former encompassing the framework of my research and my plan of action (*modus operandi*), and the latter comprising the activities and tasks to carry out my plan. In this section, I will look at each of my methodologies and describe the methods I will therein apply.

### **Educational Criticism Method**

The critical component of my inquiry consists of describing and comparing the methodologies of arts based research and a/r/tography in a systematic and analytic way, using Eisner's educational criticism as a framework. To facilitate a systematic and analytic perusal of the authored works that comprise the two methodologies under study, I have generated a list of twenty questions. This list serves as prompts for deliberation, not as a standardized tool or checklist. Note that these questions go beyond the description of arts based research and a/r/tography, into the interpretation, evaluation, and thematization of the epistemological concepts of these methodologies, spanning all the phases of educational criticism delineated by Eisner. Furthermore, they go beyond the critical component of the research and offer a springboard to engage in a subjective and imaginative reflection on the issues. The question list may be found in Appendix C.

### **Creative Process Method: Poetic Inquiry**

In the above section on methodology, I described a process of intuitive creation, using the ideas of dance choreographer Hawkins. The actual method of creation will be that of poetic inquiry. Poetic inquiry could be, and indeed is, considered a methodology, a research strategy. Monica Prendergast, Laurel Richardson, Carl Leggo, and Sandra

Faulkner are several arts-integrating researchers who define themselves through this methodology. Prendergast, Leggo, and Sameshima have edited a book on poetic inquiry, *Poetic Inquiry: Vibrant Voices in the Social Sciences* (2009). In the opening chapter Prendergast discusses the field of poetic inquiry, noting its “hybridity and heteroglossia” (p. xx) and that the term is “an umbrella to cover multiple terminologies” (p. xx). Perhaps poetic inquiry is better seen as methodologies, rather than a methodology. Prendergast considers poetic inquiry as a qualitative research practice that is focused on meaning, on expressing human experiences, the inherent lyricism of which, she says, poetic language and devices are most effective in conveying. Prendergast asserts, “in my opinion, the best poetic inquiry will carry within it the power to move its audience affectively as well as intellectually” (p. xxii).

Initially, I had thought to use poetic inquiry as a methodology, but as my study has unfolded, I have decided that this vast pluralism makes it difficult for me to relate a theoretical rationale for its use, thus I have decided to categorize the use of poetic inquiry as a method rather than a methodology. Prendergast (2009) relates three approaches, or *voices*, of poetic inquiry: *vox theoria*; *vox autobiographia/autoethnographia*; and *vox participare*, although she acknowledges conceptual overlap between them. *Vox theoria*, she categorizes as poetry linked to theory in a discipline or field, while *vox autobiographia/autoethnographia*, is poetry written from field or research data, and *vox participare* is poetry written from interview transcripts or from participants themselves (p. xxii). Thus, Leavy (2009) and Faulkner (2005), who emphasize the use of poetic inquiry as a tool in the representation of data in ethnographic research, would employ the latter two methods. In my research, I use poetry as a means of contemplating epistemological issues,

which would thus be considered the first method, *vox theoria*.

A significant and contentious issue in using poetic inquiry as a method of research, one that prompts epistemological considerations, and one that comes up in *Poetic Inquiry: Vibrant Voices in the Social Sciences* (Prendergast, Leggo, & Sameshima, 2009), is that of communicability. In this book, there is much discussion regarding the literary merit of research poetry, including how artful a poem must be to be accepted as poetic inquiry. While there is no discussion of how comprehensible a poem must be to be accepted as research, there certainly are assertions about whether art in research requires explication. In this text, many artists express resentment, even anger, at the suggestion that their art would need “translation.” Educator and creative writer Jane Piirto states, “That an artist should have to explain the work of art is anathema to many who work seriously and with intention. . . . To explain my literary novel is impossible, for only now, 15 years after I wrote it, am I seeing it” (2009, p. 83). Eisner, however, as will be noted in the description of arts based research, below, encourages such translation as part of the task of educational criticism. Eisner (2002b, p. 213; perhaps following Socrates) uses the metaphor of a midwife to depict this task as a noble gesture of birthing knowledge. In this light, I have written a poetry gloss as an aide to comprehending the research significance of the poems of my thesis (see Appendix D). On the other hand, I trust that the poems do stand on their own. As poet psychologist Kay O’Connor warns, “If the poem does not succeed without these [after]words, these [after]words cannot succeed even with the poem. If I were you, I wouldn’t read them” (as quoted in Prendergast, 2009, p. xxxi).

What I think is even more valuable than an explication of the poems in a poetic inquiry is an ability to read and understand poetry oneself. How does one read a poem? I

believe that first and foremost, to read a poem, whether a “research poem” or an “art poem,” requires an appropriate attitude. To start, I think this means accepting poetry reading as engaging in a conversation, a conversation involving non-objectivist language. While poetry may assert statements, it does not do so through logical argument. The language of poetry is literary and thus, a fluency in being able to decipher its sign system – the artistic devices used to carry meaning – is helpful. Hence, annotations, such as the gloss I have written, may be of great help. However, understanding poetry is not just a matter of intellectual decoding; poetry is also a lyrical conversation involving senses, feelings and imagination. Hawkins’ methodology is apt here, as a guide. I recommend entering the poem sensually, allowing yourself to concretely experience the images in a poem. I also recommend reading with empathy, feeling and sharing the emotions of the poem, and relating them to your own experience. I recommend reading the poem intuitively, heuristically, as the poem may work a logic that is not rationally apparent. Here, again, attitude comes in: to read a poem, a tolerance of ambiguity is essential, as double entendre, and even polysemy, is a fundamental characteristic of literary language. In that poetry is a conversation, the inherent multiplicity of interpretation is an invitation for the reader’s response. And in that poetry is a conversation, etiquette is involved. Poet Eve Merriam (2006, p. 7) advises:

Don't be polite.

Bite in.

Pick it up with your fingers and lick the juice that  
may run down your chin.

It is ready and ripe now, whenever you are.

### Heuristic Synthesis Methods

In the above section on methodology, I have presented and discussed heuristic inquiry as a methodology. In addition to describing the phases of heuristic inquiry, Moustakas (1990) also describes more specific practices of heuristic inquiry, which he summarizes as: *identifying with the focus of inquiry; self-dialogue; tacit knowledge; intuition; indwelling; focusing; and the internal frame of reference* (pp. 15-26). Some of these practices – self-dialogue and indwelling - have been described already. In the others, Moustakas points out further qualities of a personal, creative inquiry. As these qualities have not yet been discussed in this proposal, it is worthwhile to discuss them here. In identifying with the focus of inquiry, he addresses the need for empathy (pp. 15-16). Tacit knowledge is a concept he draws from the well-known scientist and philosopher, Michael Polanyi. Polanyi's famous quote, "We know more than we can tell" (as cited in Moustakas, 1990, p. 20), acknowledges the contribution of passion, values, imagination, and intuition in the formation of personal truth and meaning. Moustakas particularly emphasizes intuition in the development of knowledge, a quality he believes is very important in the discovery process that leads to a gestalt: "Through intuition I reach beyond the scope of my usual perceptual abilities and discover knowledge and meaning unexpectedly and implicitly" (Douglass & Moustakas, 1985, p. 50). By focusing, Moustakas (1990) not only alludes to the rigour of his methodology, but also to the benefit of a "relaxed and receptive state [that] enables perceptions and sensings to achieve more definitive clarification" (p. 25). Finally, Moustakas emphasizes the importance of the internal frame of reference in research; that it is important for the researcher to be aware of her own motivations, as well as those with whom she is in dialogue (pp. 26-27). It is important to emphasize that the method of

heuristic inquiry does not consist of steps or procedures and corresponding results. Rather, heuristic inquiry is a research methodology that emphasizes psychological attributes and practices that enfold the research process. I have used, and continue to use, these heuristic methods in my contemplation of epistemology of art. Note, too, that heuristic qualities may also serve in the reading of research!

### Poetic Excursus

#### *ten thoughts*

1.

a mouse maze of streets  
and a map in a strange tongue  
my journey begins

2.

art experiment  
itchy questions twitch the quest  
not hypotheses

3.

shall i study the  
taxonomy of a rose  
to learn about love?

4.

like solomon's knot  
twisting around, how do  
i know that i know?

5.

many times i've known  
truly what will come to pass  
every time i've cried

6.

i thought i knew you  
once but now, as i think twice  
i know i know naught

7.

all i claim is that  
i was born from love and so  
i was born to love

8.

bread crumbs on the floor  
butter in the sugar bowl  
shall we play a tune?

9.

sunrise to sunset  
the sun beats across the sky  
my heart clocks the time

10.

if poems were read  
as answers why would we keep  
on asking questions?

## Part Two: Parvum Opus

### Description of Arts Based Research and A/r/tography

#### Introduction

In this section, I will describe the epistemological foundations that underlie the arts-integrating research methodologies of arts based research and a/r/tography. Note that these methodologies do not set out to present epistemologies – theories of knowledge - per se. Rather, their authors present and argue for their visions of arts-integrating research. Their methodologies are theoretical, not procedural. Though they are not explicitly epistemological, they do purport a route to knowledge. While their authors make numerous statements regarding their views of research, knowledge, and knowing, they do not extensively relate these in terms of their epistemological basis. Nor do they detail their philosophical stance. Nonetheless, a close reading of these methodologies uncovers their epistemological issues and frameworks.

Both arts based research and a/r/tography share many things in common. They are both research methodologies developed by university academics. Both advocate strongly for the incorporation of art into a research practice. Both have a social mandate, in the engagement as well as the outcome of research. Both see their research as of benefit to the social realm that is education. Both portray this benefit as coming about not from disinterested researchers, nor from researchers impelled primarily by a mandate of systemic social critique and change, but from subjectively engaged researchers, immersed in, and passionately responding to their lived social situations. Although both methodologies include researchers who identify as artists (a situation more strongly the



case with a/r/tography than arts based research), both use written, discursive language to present their visions, ideas, and points of view. Neither methodology employs art as a means of explication, although both refer to examples of arts-integrating research and both integrate examples of art when discussing aesthetics (e.g. Eisner in his 2002 book, *Arts and the Creation of Mind*; Irwin in her 2003 article, "Toward an Aesthetic of Unfolding In/Sights through Curriculum"). Eisner and Irwin are connected more strongly to the domain of visual art, although their commentary applies to any art form and researchers connected with each methodology have applied them thus – Barone, for example, to narrative research, and Leggo, to poetic inquiry. Most significantly, both methodologies act in resistance to the traditional positivist research paradigm. Their entries in the 2008 *Sage Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research Methods* both make reference to this position and, as they are written by the researchers themselves (Tom Barone in the case of arts based research; Irwin in the case of a/r/tography), it is worthwhile quoting them here. In his entry, Barone writes that arts-based research not only "entails a shift away from the traditional objectivist epistemology identified with most social science research" but it often "transgresses" against conventional understandings of the social world (Barone, 2008a). And Irwin writes that a/r/tographers "interrupt taken-for-granted ways of knowing" (Irwin, 2008). I will describe arts based research, the older methodology first, then proceed with a/r/tography.

### **Description of Arts Based Research**

Arts based research and a/r/tography hold in common a sense of resistance to the traditional construct of social science research, which has focused on a positivist approach that emphasizes the collection and evaluation of observable, objective, and measurable

data. Both Eisner and Barone look to alternative approaches to research. Both wrote significant and cogent polemic tracts to this effect (arguing against positivism) during the 1980s and 1990s, and these articles still stand well to elucidate their philosophic points of view and are still widely referenced to explain and substantiate the use of arts as a qualitative way of knowing.

In his 1981 article, "On the Differences between Scientific and Artistic Approaches to Qualitative Research," Eisner notes the difference between a traditional, positivist approach to research and compares it to a specific alternative qualitative approach, that of art. The first thing he notes is that the difference is not actually one of a quantitative versus qualitative analysis; furthermore, nor is it one of phenomenon of study, but of mode (p. 5).

In his article, Eisner goes on to compare ten key modes of scientific versus artistic research, which may be summarized as follows:

1. *Forms of representation*: Science uses formal statements and discursive propositions; art allows an idiosyncratic, non-discursive use of form (pp. 5-6).
2. *Criteria for appraisal*: Science uses a formalized set of procedures to verify the reliability of research conclusions; art looks to persuasiveness: "what one seeks is illumination and penetration" (p. 6).
3. *Points of focus*: Science looks at the manifest behaviour of an individual or group; art looks at the experience of individuals and the meaning of their actions for others (p. 6).
4. *Nature of generalizations*: Social science is nomothetic, says Eisner, taking a statistical approach in its effort "to move from the particular to the general, and is interested in particulars only insofar as they represent the general" (p. 7). Art, on the other hand, can learn from a sample of one: "Generalization is possible because of the belief that the

general resides in the particular and because what one learns from a particular one applies to other situations subsequently encountered” (p. 7).

5. *Role of form*: Science aims for standardization for form; art exploits form – for art, form is content, according to Eisner (p. 7).

6. *Degree of license allowed*: Eisner queries the dichotomy between science and art – that of fact versus fiction and objective versus subjective – all the while acknowledging the greater degree of license allowed in an artistic approach to research (pp. 7-8).

7. *Interest in prediction and control*: Science aims for prediction and control while art looks for explication: “It is not an algorithm that artistically oriented research seeks as much as a heuristic” (p. 8).

8. *Sources of data*: In science, the researcher uses formal instruments to collect data; in art, the researcher is the instrument (p. 8).

9. *Basis of knowing*: Science expects emotional neutrality to generate formal propositions; art accepts the role of emotion as central to a “methodological pluralism” (pp. 8-9).

10. *Ultimate aims*: The issue here, for Eisner, is of truth versus meaning. Ultimately, Eisner notes that the aim of science is to un-cover a pre-existing, essential truth; the aim of art, on the other hand, is to construct meaning. This aim, Eisner says, entails a clear separation between these two approaches to research. “Truth implies singularity and monopoly. Meaning implies relativism and diversity” (p. 9).

In this 1981 article, Eisner comes out as a methodological pluralist, stating that “each approach to the study of educational situations has its own unique perspective to provide” (p. 9). In trying to understand the epistemology of arts based research, a good place to start is Eisner’s resistance to positivism. Arts based research does not exist solely

in resistance to positivism, but as the presentation and advocacy of an alternative research methodology. It is useful to look developmentally at Eisner's educational theories to sleuth out the epistemological beliefs that arose from the concomitant development of the arts based research methodology.

Eisner's early work in education theory, at Stanford University, in the 1960s and 1970s, shows his resistance to the positivist views of curriculum theory that then held sway. In his 1969 article, "Instructional and Expressive Educational Objectives: Their Formulation and Use in Curriculum," Eisner discusses the difference between instructional objectives and expressive objectives. He notes that the idea of instructional objectives comes from a scientific model of curriculum, notably, the positivist model of behaviourism, in which learning is based on predicting outcomes, controlling a learning situation to bring about said outcomes, and evaluating the success of education by measuring said outcomes. "In an effective curriculum using instructional objectives the terminal behavior of the student and the objectives are isomorphic" (p. 34), says Eisner, of the behaviourist view of curriculum. However, Eisner notes, and proposes, an alternative, in the form of expressive objectives, which he describes thusly:

An expressive objective does not specify the behavior the student is to acquire. . . .

An expressive objective describes an educational encounter; it identifies a situation in which children are to work, a problem with which they are to cope, a task in which they are to engage; but it does not specify what from that encounter, situation, problem, or task they are to learn. An expressive objective provides both the teacher and the student with an invitation to explore, defer, or focus on issues that are of peculiar interest or import to the inquirer. An expressive objective is

evocative rather than prescriptive. (p. 34)

In later writings (e.g. *The Educational Imagination*), Eisner changes his terminology from expressive *objectives* to expressive *outcomes*, to contradistinguish from the idea of objectives being pre-formulated goals:

Outcomes are essentially what one ends up with, intended or not, after some form of engagement. Expressive outcomes are the consequences of curriculum activities that are intentionally planned to provide a fertile field for personal purposing and experience. (2002b, pp. 118-119)

Arthur Efland, in a review article on Eisner's theories, notes that from his work on expressive objectives, Eisner is led to further consider what such objectives entail with respect to epistemology; videlicet, what they say about knowledge. Efland notes that the behaviourist model of instructional outcomes led to taxonomies of instruction, separating subjects into the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor:

The cognitive subjects were those that cultivated high levels of abstract thinking; those in the affective domain gave rise to the expression of feelings and emotions like in the arts, while the psychomotor dealt with the acquisition of physical skills. (2004, p. 72)

And the result of this taxonomy, says Efland, was that art was considered to be non-propositional and non-cognitive. But Eisner, disputing this postulate, is led to his subsequent, significant inquiry: "if work in the arts is cognitive or intellectual, in what way is it so? Are there such things as qualitative forms of thought and problem solving?" (as cited in Efland, 2004).

Eisner's inquiry into art as a way of knowing spanned his entire career. His early

works, as noted above, show his theorizing art in contradistinction to positivist, behaviorist models of learning; disputing that learning in art may be predicted and specified, rather, that this is something that must be allowed to be explored and expressed. In further works, for example *Cognition and Curriculum Reconsidered* (1994) and *The Arts and the Creation of Mind* (2002a), Eisner closely considers *how* art is a way of knowing. It is this understanding of how art is a way of knowing, this epistemology of art, that he brings to arts based research.

Eisner strongly repudiates the idea that art is non-cognitive. In doing so, however, he redefines the meaning of “cognitive.” Building on the work of a number of theorists, including cognitive scientists as well as philosophers of mind, Eisner develops a cogent theory of the cognition of art, predicated on his conceptions of sensation and perception, qualitative reasoning, forms of representation, and somatic knowledge, which I will now detail.

### ***Sensation and Perception***

In chapter 2 of *Cognition and Curriculum Reconsidered*, Eisner (1994) discusses the role of senses in concept formation. Drawing from the cognitive science work of Ulric Neisser, he notes that cognition is rooted in the biologic sensory system (1994, p. 35). As Kant, too, noticed, cognition is inextricably somatic: percepts from sensory systems translate into sensory constructs, or “images,” that form the basis of mental concepts (McCormick, n.d. section 4). Eisner’s model may seem simplistic, or even self-evident, yet it relates a distinct philosophical position that stands in contrast to classical (Platonic, Cartesian) rationalist theory, which separates mind and body. Eisner’s model deliberately breaks away from this traditional scheme; in his model, cognition includes more than

rational thinking, more than the workings of an isolated brain; rather, Eisner re-embodies human cognition as a somatic system interacting imagistically (aesthetically) and affectively with its environment. Eisner emphasizes that embodied cognition is interactive: it is not only constructive, as described above, but also experiential, transactional, reciprocal (p. 27). “What one is able to experience through any of the sensory systems depends, for example, not only on the characteristics of the qualities in the environment but also on one’s purposes, frames of reference . . . anticipatory schemata” (p. 25).

### ***Qualitative Reasoning***

Eisner’s concept of qualitative reasoning builds on the above-described conception of a mind that works with sensory images, as well as the assertion by philosopher Noam Chomsky that thinking is not necessarily linguistic (Eisner, 1994, p. 30). Eisner uses these cognitive science propositions and connects them to the arguments of American philosophers John Dewey and Suzanne Langer regarding the epistemology of art. Eisner is greatly informed by Langer’s theory of semantics, particularly her distinction between discursive and presentational symbolization. Eisner notes these distinctions in expression, and parallels them to a distinction between discursive and non-discursive knowledge (1994, 70-71; 2002b, p. 220-226). Discursive symbolization is based on convention and a rule-bound syntax wherein “the terms employed in discursive propositions can be combined not only to create new meanings but to alter them without the loss of meaning” (1994, pp. 70-71). Presentational symbolization, or what Eisner calls non-discursive symbolization, on the other hand, is qualitative and requires a holistic interpretation, as with a poem, a picture, or a tune: “when you change a part, you change the whole in which it participates” (1994, p. 71).

For Eisner, an awareness of non-discursive symbolism is key to grasping the qualitative nature of artistic reasoning, along with its very cognitive quality. Eisner purports a non-linguistic, non-discursive basis to artistic knowing: instead of rational, linguistic, propositional thinking, he believes that, in art, knowing is based on qualitative reasoning: an ability to apprehend and work directly and wordlessly with images, with sensory elements, with the apprehension of felt qualities, both physical (e.g. weight, time, space) as well as artistic (e.g. tension, suspense, mood, tone). Eisner fastens his conception of qualitative reasoning to a key comment by Dewey, in *Art as Experience*, that qualitative reasoning is every bit as intelligent as propositional discursive thinking:

Any idea that ignores the necessary role of intelligence in production of works of art is based upon identification of thinking with use of one special kind of material, verbal signs and words. To think effectively in terms of relations of qualities is as severe a demand upon thought as to think in terms of symbols, verbal and mathematical. Indeed, since words are easily manipulated in mechanical ways, the production of a work of genuine art probably demands more intelligence than does most of the so-called thinking that goes on among those who pride themselves on being “intellectuals.” (2005, p. 47)

### ***Forms of Representation***

In Eisner’s model of art as cognition, the thinker is an *experiencing* individual, always interacting in a social environment. Thus, in addition to apprehension and internalization, cognition involves externalization. “In order to achieve a social dimension in human experience, a means must be found to carry what is private forward into the public realm” (1994, p. 39). Aesthetic thought involves perception, qualitative reasoning,



and expression. Expression is achieved through forms of representation, “the devices that humans use to make public conceptions that are privately held” (1994, p. 39). Eisner also defines a form of representation as an “expressive medium” (1994, p. 45). The use of the term “medium” is most appropriate as what Eisner is considering is the *vehicle* of communication. In his book, *Cognition and Curriculum Reconsidered*, Eisner (1994) explores the semiotics of artistic forms of representation. He stresses that in art, communication may occur wordlessly, non-discursively, through the use of a selected medium such as dance, instrumental music, sculpture, and painting (pp. 35-36). He notes that a medium may be multi-sensory (p. 37) and synaesthetic (p. 40). He considers the process of working qualitatively with a medium and notes that any particular medium will offer both constraints and affordances (pp. 40-42; also, 2002a, pp. 236-238). While Eisner avoids defining forms of representation as genres of art (e.g. music, sculpture, poetry), the consideration of forms of representation leads to his definition of art, which he describes here (and also in Eisner, 2002a; Barone & Eisner, 2012) as an action, as a heuristic (non-algorithmic) process of working within a medium (p. 43).

### ***Somatic Knowledge***

In Eisner’s model, the processes of cognition is carried through an entire cycle from receiving sensory data, translating data into image constructs, working qualitatively with these constructs, and expressing conceptions through forms of representation. Richard Siegesmund (2004), commenting on Eisner’s work, enumerates these processes into three stages<sup>9</sup> – perception, conception, and expression (pp. 82-84). For Eisner, all of these stages of aesthetic knowing may be non-discursive, based on qualitative reasoning. Thus, they

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<sup>9</sup> Eisner, surprisingly, for a listophile, does not explicitly enumerate these processes.

require decisions based, not on rules, as is the case with discursive, propositional judgements, but on “somatic knowing”: on “rightness of fit,” an aesthetic, imagistic, affective bodily feeling that one’s artistic judgement is right (Eisner, 2002a, pp. 19, 76-77, 121, 231). Eisner explains:

The process of composing relationships in qualitative material does not yield to algorithms or other formulas. . . . One must make judgments by consulting one’s somatic experience. . . . In the process we undergo an aesthetic form of life . . . pervaded by feeling. The anaesthetic dulls feeling. The aesthetic promotes it. (2002a, p. 231)

Although, in his conception of aesthetic cognition, Eisner emphasizes non-discursive cognition, I feel it is not that Eisner is wanting to silence linguistic language or remove it from the artistic process; rather, it is that he wants to point out that its involvement in the art process itself is facultative. He acknowledges that the separation of discursive and non-discursive is not an either-or phenomenon. In his chapter on the semiotics of art, in *Cognition and Curriculum Reconsidered*, he notes that while some forms of representation (e.g. arithmetic, computer programming language), have rigid, rule-oriented, or conventional syntax, others are figurative, and allow for novel, idiosyncratic interpretation (1994, pp. 55-60). Note that art may involve a linguistic medium as it may be appropriated non-conventionally, as in the associative, a-syntactical work of poetry. Eisner recognizes that linguistic language, while not essential for art creation, is a primary mode of communication, and may be essential for the discussion, contextualization and comprehension of art (2002b, pp.220-225).

Perception, qualitative reasoning, forms of representation, and somatic knowledge:

these four elements not only inform the elements of Eisner's theory of the cognition of art, they also inform the methodology of his research—arts-based (educational) research. How? Because as integral as intelligence in qualitative reasoning, skill with forms of representation, and astuteness of somatic judgement is to the process of art, so it is the methodology of art research. First and foremost, Eisner asserts (and Barone agrees), an arts-based researcher is a connoisseur of art. Ulteriorly, an arts-based researcher is a critic of art. And one cannot be a critic, says Eisner, without being a connoisseur (although one can be a connoisseur without being a critic) (2002b, p. 219).

Eisner notes that, in art, to be a connoisseur is to be able to appreciate the qualities of art (as a wine connoisseur appreciates the qualities of wine). To be a critic, whether of art or of education, is to “[disclose] the qualities of events or objects that connoisseurship perceives.” (2002b, p. 219); thus to “re-educate perception” (2002b, p. 213). Eisner is very insistent on the specifics of role of the critic: this role is *not* to attempt to translate or recreate a work of art; but to account and evoke the art in such a way as to allow an audience to experience the *qualities* of the art that they may not have otherwise noticed. Eisner invokes the verb, “render”:

The art critic finds himself or herself with the difficult task of rendering the essentially ineffable qualities constituting works of art into a language that will help others perceive the work more deeply. In this sense, the critic's task is to function as a midwife to perception, to so talk about the qualities constituting the work of art that others, lacking the critic's connoisseurship, will be able to perceive the work more comprehensively. (2002b, p. 213)

In Eisner's model of qualitative research, criticism forms the method of research. Because

the educational researcher, or critic, is competent in both discursive and non-discursive communication, s/he can “read” education as an art critic would a work of art, examining the qualities and qualitative relationships, and communicating (describing, interpreting, evaluating, thematizing) them from her/his frame of reference.

As with a positivistic model of research, Eisner maintains an expectation of developing generalizations from one’s research. In his model of criticism, generalizations are termed “thematics.” At this point, reviewing his 1981 article, described above, puts his comments on the difference between scientific and art research into greater perspective, recalling, for example, his statement that in science one makes generalizations based on commonalities of many samples, whereas in art one may generalize from a sample of one. For Eisner, judging the adequacy of meaning in art, is not based on repetition (predictive value of averaging), but on issues of structural corroboration and referential adequacy, which he describes thus:

Structural corroboration seeks to determine the extent to which criticism forms a coherent, persuasive whole. It seeks to determine if the pieces of the critical story hold together, make sense, provide a telling interpretation of the events. Referential adequacy is the process of testing the criticism against the phenomena it seeks to describe, interpret and evaluate. Referential adequacy is the empirical check of critical disclosure.” (2002b, pp. 240-241.)

Eisner developed his theories of knowing, and his methodology, over many years of working in educational research. Arts based research, of course, is not solely connected to Eisner; it is a methodological umbrella employed by numerous arts-integrating researchers. The creation of this methodology is also particularly linked with Tom Barone,

a former graduate student of Eisner, who has also worked for years in educational research and whose focus has been arts-based, particularly on the use of narrative in research, on fiction as research and as knowledge-making.

Barone's methodological consideration of narrative in research has both merged with and extended from Eisner's conception of arts based research. Barone has implemented narrative to investigate the issue of educational risk in his 1989 book, *Ways of Being at Risk* and the issue of teacher quality and its pedagogical effect on students in his 2001 book, *Touching Eternity*. Barone has also theorized on the use of narrative in research.

In his 1995 article, "The Purposes of Arts-Based Educational Research," Barone makes his oft-quoted statement that "the postmodern genie is out of the bottle and will not return" (p. 171). Barone is influenced by postmodernism and interjects a postmodern influence to arts based research. In this article, Barone comments on anthropologist/storyteller Clifford Geertz and his postmodern aspiration of genre blurring between science and art. In Barone's consideration of narrative, extrapolating from the ideas of literary critic Wolfgang Iser, he troubles and blurs the dichotomy between fiction and nonfiction as he explores commonalities between the two traditional genres (Barone & Eisner, 2012), as well as the use of conventions of fiction in non-fiction texts (Barone, 2008b). The genre blurring, for Barone, serves not a postmodern exercise but a justification for the use of narrative in research. In his 2007 article, "A Return to the Gold Standard? Questioning the Future of Narrative Construction as Educational Research," Barone states: "Our aim as researcher-storytellers is not to seek certainty about correct perspectives on educational phenomena but to raise significant questions about prevailing

policy and practice that enrich an ongoing conversation” (p. 466). This points to an epistemological statement about art, and about arts based research methodology, one which Barone explicitly makes in his 1995 article: “Good art can be said to promote the enhancement of uncertainty” (p. 172).

Barone and Eisner together have written many articles and chapters on arts based research. In 2012, they published a book-length exposition of their methodology. *Arts Based Research* is a very accessible work, suitable for students or educators wanting an introduction to arts based research. The book reiterates and reinterprets concepts and theories of arts based research that have been developed over the years in numerous articles and book chapters. Thus, the book serves as an excellent summary of arts based research, although its brevity gains depth from having experienced the chronological development of the ideas of arts based research. Barone and Eisner’s book also serves well to summarize their conceptions regarding the epistemology of art and of arts based research, maintaining their proposition of both art and a/r/tography as not aiming at truth or certainty, but as meaning-making endeavors that enhance uncertainty. While this book still strongly endorses a semiotic view of art as a nondiscursive form of representation, it shows its postmodern influence in its consideration of the purpose of art and of arts based research, which it conveys not only as generally “enlarging human understanding” (p. 8), but also as a “disturbance,” a “disequilibrium,” an “undercutting of a prevailing world view,” and an “emancipation” (p. 16). This book also reflects an evolved epistemological sense of the warrant, or justification of knowledge claims. The earlier criteria of structural corroboration and referential adequacy, described above, have changed over time and the criteria now put forth for appraising research are incisiveness, concision, coherence,

generativity, social significance, evocation, and illumination (pp. 148-154).

Arts based research grew out of a lack of applicability of positivist theory to explain artistic knowing. From the attempt to explicate the nondiscursive epistemology of art, Eisner and Barone developed a theory and a methodology of arts-integrating research. An important point of arts based research can be summed up using the classical knowledge warrant of syllogism: if arts are a way of knowing, and a way of knowing is a way of research, then arts are a way of research. Arts based research theorists state that their methodology “enlarge[s] the conceptual umbrella that defines the meaning of research itself” (2012, p. 2). The arts based research methodology has supported many arts theorists over the decades and has grown into a dominant American arts education theory, an umbrella encompassing many arts-integrating research methodologies. Next, I shall consider a more recent methodology, a/r/tography.

### **Poetic Excursus**

*Either it will rain tomorrow or it will not rain tomorrow*

The way science works is this:  
 It peers into dark clouds with long polished lenses  
 searching for the ultimate.  
 Then it announces, “Hey, Lego blocks make up the world!”  
 And just to prove it, science goes to its lab bench  
 and makes a copy of what it sees,  
 using its own set of plastic toys.  
 Then science smiles, because the two structures look alike.

I can do that too.  
 I can say that kittens are young female felines  
 and that digital phones are audiovisual communication devices  
 and that free speech is a democratic stream of consciousness.

But you might say those are tautologies.  
 And you'd be right.

*It doesn't always work, flipping things around, as if they're the same  
I can say catfish, but not fishcat  
I can see catbirds, but not birdcats  
And speech may be free but my cellphone is not*

Nonsense.

What I really want to know is  
why does my father have seventeen cats, and why, when I call,  
does he only talk about them –  
sweetly furry Isabel, second chance Ivan, that good mother Gem –  
but never a word about my mom?  
What is it like to realize you are losing your memory?  
Does it feel better when it's gone for good?  
Will my mom get her mind back in heaven?  
What was my sister praying as she waited on her knees  
for death to come?  
What happens to the souls of aborted lives?  
What if we could rescue unwanted life; take it from those who don't want it  
and give it to those who do?

*Dad spelled backwards is dad  
God spelled backwards is dog  
Pray flips into yarp  
And mom is now cat*

Up in the sky, clouds darken, it's raining  
*cats and dogs*  
*lauffing, yarping*  
and I, the poet-scientist, run outside to collect  
Lego blocks.

### **Description of A/r/tography**

As with arts based research, a/r/tography promotes art as a way of knowing and resists the positivism of scientific or quantitative approaches to research. However, although a/r/tography shares many features of arts based research, its epistemological *raison d'être* is very different; a/r/tography resists positivism for different philosophical reasons.

As mentioned above, a/r/tography is a recent methodology, and although it is associated originatively with Rita Irwin, a strong feature of a/r/tography is its multiple associations and writers. Since an inaugural article in 2003, each subsequent article has



featured fresh writers along with additional methodological considerations and propositions. As with arts based research, a/r/tography shows a connection between its conception of art, research, and knowledge. However, unlike arts based research, a/r/tography does not demonstrate a clear evolution of ideas. The term “evolution” and its consequent corollaries of “time,” “progression,” or “development,” would be much too positivistic to describe a/r/tography. Rather, one could say that over time, a/r/tography has explored many tangents of research, and has expressed a number of positions. In this chapter, I will offer a tour through a/r/tographical articles from 2003 to 2008 as a means of describing a/r/tography’s statements and positions with respect to the following epistemological questions – What is research? What is knowledge? What is art? – and in doing so, concomitantly answer the question – What is a/r/tography?

Although Irwin references a/r/tography in a 2003 article, the earliest publication I have found in which Irwin presents this methodology is a chapter of a 2004 book she co-published with Alex de Cosson, *A/r/tography: Rendering Self Through Arts-Based Living Inquiry*. In this chapter, “A/r/tography, A Metonymic Métissage,” Irwin offers the following concise and epigrammatic definition of art: “Art is the visual reorganization of experience that renders complex the apparently simple or simplifies the apparently complex” (p. 31). Her definition of a/r/tography, however, is anything but concise:

A/r/tography is a living practice of art, research, and teaching: a living métissage; a life-writing, life-creating experience (Irwin et al. 2001). Through attention to memory, identity, reflection, mediation, storytelling, interpretation, and representation, the artist/writers/teachers who share their living practices with us. . . are searching for new ways to understand their practices as artists,

researchers, and teachers. They are a/r/tographers representing their questions, practices, emergent understandings, and creative analytic texts. They are living their work, representing their understandings, and performing their pedagogical positions as they integrate knowing, doing, and making through aesthetic experiences that convey meaning rather than facts (see Green 1995). Their work is both science and art (Eisner and Powell 2002), but it is closest to art and as such, they seek to enhance meaning rather than certainty (see Ellis and Bochner 2000, 751). (p. 34, citation format as per cited text)

I have presented this definition in its unabridged form in order to demonstrate the prolix, abstract, and vague qualities of the writing, a style that continues in this and all of a/r/tographical writings, and which renders them difficult to follow, summarize, interpret, and discuss.

Here are what I consider the salient aspects of this definition. Firstly, a/r/tography is presented as a living inquiry. This concept harkens back to Pinar's concept of curriculum as *currere*, that is, of inquiry as an experiential process (verb) rather than a static, standardized content (noun).<sup>10</sup> Secondly, this inquiry engages and interweaves the roles of artist, researcher, and educator. Thirdly, the aim of this inquiry is best described, hearkening here to Eisner's proposals, as a search for "meaning rather than certainty."

In this article, in spite of her diffuse style, the author does use some organizational devices to relate her concept of a/r/tography: namely, figures of speech, metonymy and metaphor, some images, and some conceptual terms. Starting with metonymy, what a/r/tography extracts mostly from this figure of speech is the idea of contiguity. This is

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<sup>10</sup> The concept of *currere* is introduced several times in Irwin's 2003 work without reference until the end of the article. It is not uncommon for a/r/tographical works to introduce concepts without references.

exemplified in the title of the methodology, which embeds and visually demonstrates the proximal relationship of the integral roles of artist, researcher and teacher. The idea of contiguity of roles continues in the image of the braid, which additionally portrays the idea of roles interacting and interconnecting. This metonymic image is further extended into the theoretical concepts of a/r/tography with the terms, *métissage* and *thirdness*. *Métissage* is a neologism which takes the Canadian fur-trade word for miscegenation (Metis) and (wittily) applies it to the research approach of a/r/tography, extending the image of braided, interwoven research roles, all the while adding a connotation of cultural synergism and transgression, a connotation also located in her term, *thirdness*.<sup>11</sup> With her term, *thirdness*, Irwin invokes a number of ideas.<sup>12</sup> Note firstly, that *thirdness* fits in with the idea of braiding, of an interweaving of three strands. Beyond that, Irwin uses the concept of *thirdness* to recur to Aristotle's triad of knowledge – *theoria*, *praxis*, and *poiesis* – to point out the validity and benefit of contiguously incorporating each of these three modes of thought – knowing, doing, and making – which she correlates to researching, teaching, and creating art. Although not directly expressed by Irwin, the use of *thirdness* in the above instance suggests a re-integration, through addition, of fractions of a whole (i.e.  $1/3+1/3+1/3=1$ ). Irwin also employs the meaning of *thirdness* as an ordinal reference in her proposal of a/r/tography as resistance to traditional positivist research. Whereas traditional positivist research, says Irwin, creates dichotomies and hierarchies in thinking, a/r/tography not only prefers “a dialectic perspective [that] views categories of thought as being in equal relationship to one another” (p. 28) but also extends that

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<sup>11</sup> A visual symbol of the Métis was their colourful braided belts, called *ceintures fléchées*.

<sup>12</sup> In this article, Irwin makes no reference to Homi Bhabba's concept of “third place,” from which this concept seems to draw, although she does reference Bhabba elsewhere.

perspective into “a multilectic view that encourages thirdness, an in-between space that exists between and among categories” (p. 28). Thirdness works not so much as a metonym here as an abstract metaphor. By not being first or second, thirdness emphasizes a/r/tography as being non-dominant, like the Métis, a minority group on the border of society. Irwin pushes this idea as she links thirdness to another abstraction, that of the *in-between*. What is the in-between? Irwin does not offer a response at this point except to say: “There are spaces between and spaces between the in-between,” (p. 31). What she is relating, here, I believe, is her view of the uncertain, ambiguous, multiple and even subversive nature of knowledge, qualifiers I have drawn from her text, and which are reprised in subsequent works by Irwin et al., in related terms, such as *hyphenated relationships, intersitital, liminality, and without*.

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Although Irwin’s 2004 article demonstrates a hermeneutic alliance with arts based research, still sitting under its research umbrella, and agreeing with arts based research that knowledge is “meaning rather than certainty” (p. 34), in a 2005 article, “A/r/tography as Living Inquiry Through Art and Text,” written with Sylvia Wilson Kind, and with Stephanie Springggay acting as principal author, a/r/tography flies off on a tangent of its own. Indeed, in this article, a/r/tography is described as a “tangential thread” (p. 899). The mood of this article is feisty, as a manifesto is declared:

This article proposes an understanding of arts-based research as enacted living inquiry, which we call a/r/tography. A/r/tography is not intended to discredit other forms of arts-based research, nor is it separate from all previous discourse. Rather, it is one of a range of research methodologies involving the arts and education. It is

a tangential thread; perhaps a thread that has become un/stitched, un/raveling its own existence into new beginnings. (p. 899)

In this article, the authors assert that a/r/tography needs its own methodology, not a methodology or criteria based on that of existing qualitative research (p. 898). What would this methodology be? The authors boldly pronounce a methodology that moves beyond any positive statement of method, a methodology whose basis lies in *absence*, a term explicated thus:

Loss, shift, and rupture are foundational concepts or metonyms for a/r/tography. They create openings, they displace meaning, and they allow for slippages. Loss, shift, and rupture create presence through absence, they become tactile, felt, and seen. (p. 898)

I consider the concept of absence, as well as the other synonymic terms, metaphorical vehicles used to describe, not only their methodology, but also their conception of knowledge. Various terms are used to develop this metaphor of knowledge as absence, those above – loss, shift or rupture – as well as the term, *without*, a concept to which they acknowledge visual art researcher Irit Rogoff. The authors state that “this without is not a form of negation, a lack, or a denial of what has been previously done.” (p. 898). Rather, they state, it is “a space of active participation where one discovers that previous methodologies are not sufficient while simultaneously resisting the formation of specific criteria to replace them” (p. 898).

A close reading here begs the question: if there are no criteria, how will the methodology be described, structured, ordered, carried out, or evaluated? And of course, the answer is “without.” Without method. Just as a/r/tographers look to find knowledge in

the spaces between the spaces, a/r/tography looks to find methodology in a place of “without” – that is, in alternative figures of speech. Thus, here, instead of method, the authors, as per Rogoff, offer *process* (“a condition you might find yourself while doing work”). Additionally, the authors, this time borrowing from Miele Bal, proffer *concepts* in place of methods. But the term, *concept*, does not follow common usage; it is appropriated by the authors as a figure of speech in the explication of the alternative epistemology that underlies their methodology. “Concepts are flexible, dynamic, and intersubjective *locations* through which close analysis renders new understandings and meanings” (p. 898, emphasis mine).

Indeed, the linguistic reappropriations in this article make for difficult reading! It helps to examine the article structurally. The first section consists of a proclamation of manifesto – the need for a/r/tography to be accepted as an independent methodology, distinct from qualitative research – and then an orientation to the alternative methodology proposed. Subsequently, the article enumerates fundamental concepts of the methodology of a/r/tography. Described thus, the article seems straightforward, but the explication of a/r/tography’s epistemology of absence is anything but direct.

After the authors first “rupture” the idea of concept by defining it as a location, they go on to further rupture the idea of concept by neologizing it as *rendering*. Note: this was actually the first article I read about a/r/tography and I was nonplussed: the explanation of how or why the concepts are termed renderings made no clear associations, in my mind. The connection to the etymological root sense of “giving back” relates only weakly to the neologism, rendering. And the subsequent enumeration and description of six such renderings do not clarify the terminology. Nonetheless, the authors offer six renderings,

six “theoretic spaces through which to explore artistic ways of knowing and being research”(p. 899). These six renderings (concepts, spaces) are as follows: *contiguity, living inquiry, openings, metaphor/metonymy, reverberations, and excess* (p. 898).

Just as I found the explanation for the term “rendering” difficult to follow, so I found the explanations of the renderings themselves. I grasped, and I could see the use of association, metaphor, and metonymy as a means of opening up new ways of understanding. But the non-linear, jargon-heavy descriptions puzzled me. It is difficult to describe these six renderings, because, as the very idea of rendering suggests, they rebel against conceptual correspondence and categorization. For example, contiguity deals with the idea of the juxtaposed roles in a/r/tography of artist/researcher/teacher, but it is more about abstract a/r/tographical ideas of positionality and relationality. The rendering, contiguity, recursively employs the metaphor of dynamic space by means of explanation. Thus, using their appropriated nomenclature, one could summarize renderings thus: the “space” of “space” is about “space.”

Irwin et al. return to the concept of renderings in later works, and are discussed again, below. For now I offer this summary: in this 2005 article, a/r/tography is described by the use of methodological markers that highlight ideas of research as knowing through experience, life and art. They highlight the idea of knowledge as absence, as rupture, as non-categorizable, non-namable, and non-linear; as emerging, rather, from experience, from the “emotional, intuitive, personal, spiritual and embodied” (p. 902). The renderings also highlight the use of rhetorical devices of metonymy and metaphor, as artistic and linguistic means of communicating the a/r/tographer’s researched gleanings. A fundamental term and concept of this methodology is that of contiguity.

In this article, the authors seem quite aware of the difficulty in following their communication, describing, as they do, their work as a “tangential thread” (p. 899). They are certainly provocative, which they also evidently intend: “It is about dwelling in a space of inquiry that resists formal naming: A willingness to allow for discomfort, frayed edges, and holes” (p. 901). And they are not without depth; in fact, they reverberate with poetic insight: “Spaces touching at the edges, then shifting to be close, adjacent, but not touching – only to touch again. It is not a process of categorization, but a concept that requires deep attention and penetration” (p. 901). The authors obviously hope to offer an opportunity for meaning-making, ending their article with the wish that “a/r/tography becomes a passage to somewhere else” (p. 909).

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The above-described 2004 and 2005 articles describe fundamental aspects of a/r/tography: its epistemological resistance to a (positivistic) dichotomous construct of knowledge; its proposed methodological alternative of absence, or rupture, and the research qualities (the renderings) of a/r/tography. Further articles by Irwin et al. divulge the philosophical theories from which a/r/tography is drawn.

In the 2006 article, “Rhizomatic Relations of A/r/tography,” using the context of an actual art-based research project – rendering the meaning of immigration with recent Chinese-Canadian residents – the authors (Rita Irwin, Ruth Beer, Stephanie Springgay, Kit Grauer, Gu Xiong, and Barbara Bickel) explore the rhizomatic concept of knowledge proposed by Gilles Deleuze (and Felix Guattari), as well as the relational aesthetics theory of art proposed by Nicholas Bourriaud. The links to Deleuzian theory and to relational aesthetics are brief, as the authors seize on key features that relate to a/r/tography. With



respect to Deleuzian theory, the authors connect to the idea of rhizomatic knowledge being non-linear and non-dualistic – i.e. non-taxonomic – presenting, instead, a relationship of interconnected networks. This idea of rhizomatic knowledge is used analogically by the authors to describe their experience of working collaboratively in, and with, a community. They also tie the concept of the rhizomatic structure of community with the very nature of the artwork they collaboratively created, through the relational aesthetic depiction of art as site dependent, meaning, in Bourriaud’s theory, that art is a contextual and interactive event rather than an object.

Subsequent articles by Irwin et al. expound further on these two theoretical (and ideological) concepts (i.e. rhizomatic knowledge, relational aesthetics). Still, what is interesting here are the propositions regarding a/r/tography as research and knowledge. A/r/tography is now defined as a “methodology of situations” (p. 70). A number of qualifiers describe the conception of knowledge that emerges from this “rhizomatic” and “relational” influence on a/r/tography. In this 2006 article, knowledge is described as:

- “a constant state of becoming” (p. 71)
- “emergent, generative, reflexive, responsive” (p. 71)
- “relational, singular and rhizomatic” (p. 72)
- “shifting” and “unstable” (p. 79)

A curious thing happens in this article as Bourriaud’s conceptions merge with those of Deleuze: the place-based metaphors shift, as the quality of movement is added to that of space. The authors note this shift in regards to installation art, where “‘site’ as a fixed geographical concept moves to a relational concept re-imagined as a ‘situation’ within political, economic, cultural, and social processes” (p. 72). This shift can be also noted in

their epistemology, as can be seen in the above descriptors as well as in the following summary statement:

Rhizomatic relationality affects how we understand theory and practice, product and process. Theory is no longer an abstract concept but rather an embodied living inquiry, an interstitial<sup>13</sup> relational space for creating, teaching, learning, and researching in a constant state of becoming (see also Britzman, 2003).” (p. 71)

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In 2008, Springgay, Irwin, and Kind published a chapter in Knowles and Cole’s *Handbook of the Arts in Qualitative Research*. This chapter, “Artographers and Living Inquiry,” picks up on the conception of a/r/tography as a methodology of situations. It muses on concepts from philosophers Bourriaud, Deleuze, and Jean-Luc Nancy (among other theorists) to further explore knowledge from the perspective of situation. It uses the installation (“situational”) art of Rachel Echenberg as exemplification.

The authors begin by reiterating the “relational understanding of community, art, and research that shapes the methodology of a/r/tography” (p. 84), pointing out, as in the 2006 article, and as per Bourriaud, that if experience is constituted by social, economic, cultural, and political processes, then knowledge - “learning, community, location, identity, art work” (p. 84) - is relational. The point of their essay, they state, is to “develop the conditions for enacting a/r/tography as relational” (p. 84).

A relational understanding of art, they note, views art not as object or product, but as event, wherein the meaning comes not from the work itself but from encounters and

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<sup>13</sup> Notice that the authors also introduce and interject another place-based metaphor, here; the idea that a/r/tographical knowledge is “interstitial.” This is an interesting metaphor, and evidently meant to have provocative, ideological resonances, but its meaning is not explicated nor referenced.

engagements with the audience (p. 85). As example, they use Echenberg's installation, "Fondre," wherein she placed ice blocks at various city sites, and "enacted a series of performative gestures" (p. 84), using her body heat to melt and mold the blocks. These installations were relational, explain the authors, because Echenberg's artistic "gestures exist only in the moment of encounter and exchange between her actions and the actions of viewers as they make meaning of such actions" (p. 85).<sup>14</sup>

From here, the essay then tries to further examine philosophical conditions (qualities) of relationality. It links to concepts such as Nancy's *singular plural*: that is, the idea that meaning is constituted not individually, but with other beings. The authors take from Nancy the relational idea that "we" does not demand "sameness":

'We' is often used to describe a universal quality, a generalization as in we – the entire field of educational research. A singular approach to we would understand we as containing within it divergent multiplicities, dividing endlessly unto itself – extraordinary, remarkable, and uncommon. (pp. 87-88)

The authors also incorporate Deleuzian conceits, not only rhizomes, but also *folds*, *stutters*, *assemblages*, and *singularities*, to present a/r/tographical knowledge as dynamic, networked events of *multiplicities* and of *complications* and to reiterate a/r/tography's methodological quality of contiguity. However, these metaphors are incorporated without explication.<sup>15 16</sup> The influence of Deleuzian theory is demonstrated in poetic riffs, as well

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<sup>14</sup> See Echenberg's work at <http://rachelechenberg.net/fondre-une-serie-de-sensations-hivernales>.

<sup>15</sup> Longer footnotes, such as the following one, may continue onto a subsequent page, in which case ellipses points will be used to indicate the incompleteness.

<sup>16</sup> This article required an extensive detour from me to study Deleuzian theory and gain an adequate enough grasp of the concepts behind its abstruseness. This was not an easy task, as Deleuzian references tend to be as abstruse as the philosopher himself. Here, for example, is a statement from the definition of *assemblages* in *The Deleuze Dictionary*:

Assemblages, as conceived of by Deleuze and Guattari, are complex constellations of objects, ...

as in summary statements such as this:

Echenberg's art can be regarded as a singular endeavor within a larger context, which is a complex collective of dynamic, interacting systems. Her interventions become relational moments provoking deeper understandings within and between other assemblages. For a/r/tographers these implications prompt a number of questions regarding the nature of art making, teaching, learning, and researching as relational. (p. 88)

In this document, as with previous works, a/r/tography shows its penchant for metaphor, particularly place or space-based metaphors. But note how the space-based metaphor takes an about-face in this document. In previous works, terms referring to place or space (e.g. borderland, in-between) were the vehicle used to describe knowledge. In this 2008 work, the notion of situation, or event, has become the vehicle to describe place – the art site. Note also that this analogy appears as a reverse-metaphor, because an abstract quality (situation) is used as the vehicle to describe something concrete (site). Again, this is intentional; the point that the authors make is to refute the traditional conception of space as a concrete container, just as later in the article they refute the traditional conception of time as inexorable, measurable movement. This attempt to complicate or rupture realist notions of time and space lends an ontological, metaphysical feel to their theory, something that will be discussed further in the philosophical interpretation of a/r/tography.

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bodies, expressions, qualities, and territories that come together for varying periods of time to ideally create new ways of functioning. Assemblages operate through desire as abstract machines, or arrangements, that are productive and have function; desire is the circulating energy that produces connections. An assemblage transpires as a set of forces coalesces together, the concept of assemblages applies to all structures, from the behaviour patterns of an individual, the organization of institutions, an arrangement of spaces, to the functioning of ecologies. (Parr, 2005)

This 2008 essay takes an integrative yet superficial and desultory approach to the philosophical concepts it integrates. None of the theorists, or theories are investigated or explicated with clarity; rather, their eminent terms and metaphors are borrowed cursorily as the authors explore relationality as a methodological condition of a/r/tography. Cursorily as it is, nonetheless, the statements the authors proffer regarding their view of knowledge are in keeping with this relational view of a/r/tography described here and in the 2006 article. Some such statements are that knowledge is/are:

- “acts of complication . . . disturbing, unexpected, hesitant” (p. 84)
- “non-linear, dynamic, relational” (p. 84)
- “events that interrogate” (p. 88) and “complicate” (p. 89)
- “liminal” (p. 84)
- “vacillations” (p. 84)

Note that the above descriptors include two more metaphors, that of liminality and of vacillation. These two, again, are place-based, though abstract, metaphors of knowledge, interjected into the text with little explication. Of the many descriptors of knowledge in this essay, perhaps the metaphor of knowledge as “vacillation” is the most fitting as it seems in this article as if the authors are trying to springboard away from the bonds of the concrete and the physical, into the abstract, the metaphysical, the ontological.

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In 2008, a/r/tography authors, Irwin and Springgay, also published a lengthy summative exposition of a/r/tography as the opening chapter of the book, *Being with A/r/tography*, which they edited, along with Carl Leggo and Peter Gouzouasis. This chapter, “A/r/tography as Practice-Based Research,” “examines the constructs and conditions of

a/r/tographical research” under following headings: “Practice-Based Research Theoretical Underpinnings”; “Communities of Practice”; “The Relational In-Between of Time and Space”; and “Conceptual Practices: Renderings.” As with Barone and Eisner’s summative book, *Arts Based Research*, in reading this chapter, it is helpful to already be cognizant of its antecedents and to use it by way of review rather than introduction. Although this review chapter differs from Barone and Eisner’s summative book in that the latter was looser than precedents while this a/r/tography summary is much more structured and linear than its antecedents, nonetheless, the work continues to manifest the communicative hindrance of overly dense sentence construction, abstruse and diffuse statements, abstractions and non-explicated references. This review does not offer new information with respect to a/r/tography’s epistemological expression of knowledge. It does elaborate on certain aspects of the philosophy that underlies its methodology, however. The theoretical comments will be employed in the philosophical interpretation of a/r/tography. Meanwhile, I will make a few notes.

Note 1. This review, while maintaining a link to theories of Bourriaud and Deleuze, also demonstrates an increased employment of the complexity theory of Davis and Sumara (pp. xxiii, xxiv, xxvi). Is this juxtaposition of the postmodern esoteric, abstruse ideas of Deleuze with the more rationalistically derived ideas of complexity theory, an attempt to justify a/r/tography to a more conventionally academic audience?

Note 2: This article holds a greater discussion of the relationality of time and space. It offers an explanation of resistance to traditional conceptions thereof – i.e. that artists do not necessarily see time as an inevitable, measurable passing; nor see space as container (p. xxvii). However, the explication of alternative possibilities is minimal, with just the

suggestion, through metaphor, of lyrical possibilities, such as the meaning of relationality as being:

this intertwining between  
 self and other,  
 inside and outside . . .  
 folded together . . .  
 a porous encounter . . .  
 that open[s] . . .

(p. xxvii; line breaks mine, to demonstrate the inherent lyricism)

Note 3: Particularly frustrating is the chapter's reiteration of previously ill-explained concepts, e.g. "concepts are locations" (p. xxvii). Similarly, their incomprehensible definition of rhizomes on page xx cannot be unpacked without extensive prior knowledge of Deleuzian theory.

Note 4: On the other hand, in this chapter, the six methodological renderings of a/r/tography are reordered and better described. In this work, one can see them now categorically (something which, of course, they are still trying to defy). Although the authors offer "concepts" as a synonym for "renderings," I think that the renderings can be more functionally described as follows:

- Contiguity: a description of the dynamic structure of a/r/tography
- Living inquiry: a description of process in a/r/tography
- Metaphor: a technique of a/r/tography and an element of its dynamic structure
- Metonymy: a technique of a/r/tography and an element of its structural

description (as metonymy is a relationship of contiguity)

- Openings: a metaphor depicting an attribute (or quality) of a/r/tography's poststructuralist way of knowing
- Reverberations: a metaphor depicting an attribute of a/r/tography's poststructuralist way of knowing
- Excess: a metaphor depicting an attribute of a/r/tography's poststructuralist way of knowing

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This descriptive tour of a/r/tography has elicited the epistemological basis of this arts-integrating research methodology. As the tour demonstrates, a/r/tography is not a clear, straightforward theory. All the same, it does hold strongly to its epistemological positions. At this point, it would be useful to summarize the epistemological position of a/r/tography, a task that can be best accomplished by comparison with arts based research. This chapter began with the statement that a/r/tography, like arts based research, is a research methodology that resists positivism, namely the conventional scientific and quantitative approaches to research. As previously noted, although a/r/tography shares many features of arts based research, its epistemological *raison d'être* is very different. A summary of these two different epistemologies follows.

Arts based research: In resisting positivism, arts based research resists objectivity, standardization, and generalization based on prediction. Although arts based research resists predictive explanation, it does value generalization. However, arts based research sees generalization as a quality that comes from many connecting to the artistic vision of one. For arts based research, knowledge comes from experience, from a transaction



between individuals and their environment (largely of other individuals). Knowledge-making is the construction of meaning and as such is always tentative and partial. Arts based research extols meaning, rather than truth, and resists the quest for certainty. Knowledge is not certainty, rather an enhancement of uncertainty. Knowledge re-educates perception.

A/r/tography: In resisting positivism, a/r/tography resists dichotomous knowledge. It resists the use of binary categorization as a means of knowledge generation. A/r/tography is not interested in generalization because rather than supporting generally shared meanings, it sees only multiple singularities. Furthermore, for a/r/tography, knowledge comes from rupturing, from complicating expectations and unsettling perception. Knowledge is not a construction, but the meaning that flows from a relational event. Thus, knowledge is always in flux, never certain, never predictable.

The above paragraphs outline prominent differences in the epistemology of arts based research and a/r/tography, as evoked by their writings, their communication of their methodologies. This comparison of arts based research and a/r/tography will continue as these methodologies are further interpreted in terms of their philosophical positions.

### **Poetic Excursus**

(et seq.)

*Stutter*

from the in/dubitability of beginning  
we walk towards un/certainty

birthed outside language  
over an umbrella of blessings/curses/lies  
we clamour before breakfast bell  
blink through morning prayer  
skate along the middle of high noon grace  
into an evening of fat decay

each-and-all together  
amidst the traffic of loneliness  
openly we hide, behind shame  
cower within joy  
laugh inside boredom  
yawn under surprise  
at the punctuality of sunset  
all the same

and/yet, in/spite, darkness rises among us  
we grope across closed books  
sniff behind heavy staircases  
wiggle between torn curtains  
wander without moonlight, starlight, streetlight  
with/out shadow as a guide

encompassed only by an itching sobriety  
we edge a/way beyond

**F  
r  
a  
g  
m  
e  
n  
t  
s**

**(inside,**

**outside,**

**in-between)**

my mother, in a flush of  
feeling, would stroke her  
hand across my cheek,  
“you’ll always be my baby”;  
today, she paces the home,  
and babbles, pulls down  
her pants to pee on the  
floor

the higher the dough rises,  
the greater the empty  
calories

once I stood at the water’s  
edge, skipping stones,  
defying, albeit briefly, the  
inside and outside of  
gravity

my father, in a poetic  
rapture, flew at me with  
his belt, drawing long-  
lined stanzas across my  
buttocks and back,  
teaching me couplets of  
bright red rhymes –  
rupture lines of learning

growing up, we had no  
name for him, not Daddy,  
not Dad, not Pop; he was  
our Father; remote as a  
pagan god, he ignored us,  
and we avoided him

God is dead, said  
Nietzsche; Nietzsche is  
dead, said God: apparently  
some concepts can be  
shaken inside out, like  
socks, like woolen toques

from within, a kiss is wet  
tongue, sickly saliva and  
the wormy muscle of lip;  
from without, a kiss is a  
starting gun, a business  
deal, a plea against  
uncertainty

the red fur of lichen on the  
bald headrock grows  
slowly as time; who notices  
the moment when the  
hoary dome splits into two  
shiny-cheeked rocks?  
every evening, the sun  
collapses under the  
burning weight of  
unanswered existence

all night long, I dream my  
worries; each image  
eroded by the flow of the  
next; I awake unsure if I’ve  
found rest

in the dark, the bee  
snuggles inside the flower  
cup; at dawn, the petals  
unfold; bud and bug tossed  
inside out

a red ribbon of cloud  
unfurls a question mark  
across an empty sky

at the beach, each  
advancing wave marks its  
limit in the sand, a line  
eroded by wave, wind and  
time

I feel time wrinkling in; I  
feel my insides falling out;  
I wait in-between for my  
turn to turn over

I disdain the fat rolling  
around my midriff: a  
useless appendage: please  
liposuck this leech

### **Philosophical Interpretation of Arts Based Research and A/r/tography**

So far, in this thesis, the epistemologies of arts based research and a/r/tography have been extracted out of their methodological statements. Their many, differing and distinct, concepts of knowledge and of knowing have been described. To further this epistemological inquiry, I will now interpret these conceptions of knowledge, in terms of their philosophical provenance. Of course, epistemology is an aspect of philosophy, but here I am differentiating epistemology from philosophy as a whole, specifically referencing views on knowledge with the former, while with the latter, referencing the framework in which these epistemological views sit. I will begin with an interpretation of arts based research and then proceed with a/r/tography.

#### **Philosophical Interpretation of Arts Based Research**

In his 1981 article, "On the differences between scientific and artistic approaches to qualitative research," Eisner espouses a heterogeneity of knowledge: while resisting positivism, he acknowledges science as a valid route to truth: "each approach to the study of educational situations has its own unique perspective to provide" (p. 9). This refrain of pluralism repeats throughout his writings. For example, in an AERA (American Educational Research Association) editorial, he states:

My hope is that we will achieve a rich methodological pluralism. . . . My own view is that science is a species of research; research is not a species of science. . . . What we need is an enriched pluralism in the ways in which we think about human understanding and the sources of its enlargement. (Suppes, 1998, p. 34)

As pluralists, Eisner and Barone, not only acknowledge a heterogeneity of

knowledge; they also incorporate this heterogeneity into their research philosophy. This heterogeneity, however, is not incorporated haphazardly; arts based research philosophy, whilst eclectic in its formation, is eminently contained, cohesive and coherent. And nor does this heterogeneity make relativists of arts based researchers Eisner and Barone; their theory is quite clear on what it espouses and what it does not.

To start, arts based research resists a fundamental proposition of positivism. Positivism rests on a correspondence theory of truth, on the expectation that a postulate of truth can be justified by a correspondence in fact. In his 1981 article, Eisner acknowledges the usefulness of this traditional position, but notes that it offers but one, delimited view of knowledge. In his 1992 article, "Objectivity in Educational Research," Eisner more philosophically discusses his epistemological position. This theory, Eisner explains, is based on an idea of "veridicality," or "ontological objectivity" (p. 10); in a belief that one may objectively know things as they truly are; that one may gain certainty. But Eisner, following Dewey, states that this quest for certainty is futile. Knowledge, Eisner asseverates, is not bound by fact, nor dependent on justification through a factual correspondence to reality. Rather, states Eisner, knowledge "is a function of a transaction between the qualities of a world we cannot know in their pure, nonmediated form, and the frames of reference, personal skills, and individual histories we bring to them" (p. 13). Thus, according to Eisner, knowledge may come from the persuasion, conviction, or illumination of shared insights, as happens in art or arts based research.

Eisner's philosophy of knowledge, as described above, builds from a number of other philosophers including Kant and Dewey. From Kant, Eisner takes the realization that human understanding depends on individual perception. Eisner paraphrases Kant's

fundamental dictum: “percepts without frameworks are empty and frameworks with percepts are blind” (1992, p. 12). From Dewey, Eisner takes on the consideration of warranted assertability – the justification of knowledge propositions – as well as the concept of knowledge as a transacted, communally held construction. Dewey is renown as a pragmatist and this is what Eisner takes as pragmatic: that knowledge is valuable in its shared construction and use, as opposed to its correspondence to putatively pure and certain, though ultimately unknowable and unusable, qualities of the world. As a pragmatist, Eisner does not so much refute positivism and essentialism as put these philosophical positions aside.

Besides Kant and Dewey, in his 1992 article, Eisner also refers to other theorists, including the constructivists, Piaget, and Goodman. My descriptive analysis of arts based research demonstrates the influence of constructivism on Eisner’s constructs of art as a way of knowing (through qualitative reasoning), of art connoisseurship (the ability to appreciate qualities in art or in education) and of art criticism (the ability to linguistically communicate nondiscursive qualities of art), constructs which form the basis of the arts based research methodology. Eisner does not describe himself or arts based research as constructivist (or constructionist); the term he uses that most strongly defines and describes his philosophical orientation is “cognitive pluralism” (2002b, p. 80; pp. 79-83). This term encompasses his view of knowledge as constructed – as communally built, shared, framework-dependent and tentative (1992, p. 15) -- but also emphasizes his depiction of this construction as cognitive, pointing to his expansive definition of cognition as not based on the rational or biological constructs of positivism, but based on a theory of mind that encompasses the perceptual, the emotional, the qualitative, the non-discursive,

and the somatic.

Possibly the most important feature of Eisner's theory of cognition, and of his philosophy of cognitive pluralism, is that it understands and relates knowing as inextricably bound to a symbolic system of communication. All of his constructs work towards semiosis: towards a model that explains art as a symbolic way of knowing; and arts based research as employing this symbolic way of knowing. I think that, above all, Eisner's arts based research methodology is a semiotic model, which serves both explanative and explicative roles. Arts based research theory is explanative in itself, in revealing how the non-discursive symbolic system of art communicates; arts based research methodology is explicative in how it may be employed to critically interpret non-discursive symbolic systems, such as education, or how it may be employed to critically interpret an educational system through a non-discursive symbolic system.

As a semiotic system, arts based research relates to several major philosophical positions. Firstly, arts based research is eminently structuralist and here it stands in contrast to the poststructuralist model of a/r/tography, as will be discussed shortly. Arts based research examines and analyzes one structure (the symbolic system of art), using another structure (the symbolic system of language). Arts based research sees structure not only in the symbolic systems of communication (whether discursive or nondiscursive), but also in the biological, psychological and sociological make-up of individuals and groups. This may seem self-evident, but the very idea of system, and of system construction is interrogated by post-structuralism. Furthermore, arts based research also adheres to the formalist proposition that form itself entails (though does not determine) meaning. This is seen in Eisner's discussion of the epistemology of art as communicating through a medium,

and thus an effort of working with the affordances and constraints of a medium (1994, pp. 41-42; 2002a, pp. 236-238).

Although arts based research takes on a structuralist position, it is significant to note that arts based research does not view structures as static, nor is it interested in rendering them static, in fixing them in time or space, for the purposes of analytic examination. Arts based research sees structure as arising from a dynamic, relational process. Thus, even as arts based research may use the (Husserlian) phenomenological approach of bracketing an issue for the purpose of examination or analysis, as in Barone's study of risk (described in Barone & Eisner, 2012, pp. 49-51), or in Sullivan's study of attention (described in Barone & Eisner, 2012, pp. 29-43), its methodology, through its connection to arts-integrating inquiry, through its connection to relational experience, and through its insistence on the tentativeness of conclusions, maintains the dynamism of the content of its study. Arts based research does not specifically identify as phenomenological, and in a discussion on the use of fiction in research, Barone specifically distances himself from Iser's phenomenological bracketing of fiction from nonfiction (Barone & Eisner, 2012, pp. 107-111). Barone acknowledges, and it is worthwhile to note, that this bracketing by Iser is not an attempt to separate the genres in terms of substantive characteristics, but in terms of the identifying acts of the writer and the reader. Thus, the writer identifies his/her actions as one of fiction through the use of cultural conventions ranging from linguistic signs to the context of presentation, and the reader acts in recognition of the genre, interpreting the work likewise. Barone describes these actions as "bracketing off the 'real' world of the text, seeing it not as a literal representation of reality but as presenting a credible . . . but hypothetical world" (p. 108). Barone notes that the



effect of this bracketing is to “stringently demarcate works of fiction and imaginative art from others that are decidedly not” (p. 109), a situation that is problematic for Barone, whose methodology of arts based research ascribes to “genre blurring” (p. 109, citing Geertz, 1974). Rather than employing this phenomenological approach of bracketing, Barone would prefer to maintain a hermeneutic gap in his narrative research, letting the ambiguity of genre present a “double reading,” a reading both literal and metaphorical, permitting greater resonance of meaning (pp. 109-110).

In the dynamism of its structural theories, arts based research is strongly hermeneutic. This is seen, above, in Barone’s espousing of genre blurring in research, as well as in Eisner’s article on the epistemological differences between science and art, wherein he states that aim of art is explicative, while that of science is predictive (1982, p. 8). Arts based research’s hermeneutic approach is also reflected in arts based research’s methodological aim of interpreting an issue while acknowledging the framework-dependency of one’s interpretation as well as in arts based research’s portraying educational criticism as the “re-education of perception” (2002a, p. 187; 2002b, p. 213).

Barone also adds the philosophical perspective of critical theory to arts based research as he acknowledges an inherent polemical and political aspect to narrative inquiry. In his 2007 article, “A Return to the Gold Standard? Questioning the Future of Narrative Construction as Educational Research,” he states: “For storytelling to be an ethical undertaking there must be an attempt to make obvious the connections between political forces and individual lives, connections not always immediately obvious to those whose stories are being told” (p. 457). However, as a critical storyteller, he also asks: “How can a narrative researcher successfully navigate the line between blatant propaganda and

stories with ideological integrity?" (p. 458).

In spite of the political overtones of Barone's use of critical storytelling in arts based research, it is significant to note that arts based research generally considers the researcher as an individual and likewise the works of art it looks to for insight and illumination are typically those of individuals rather than group or collaborative efforts. This focus on the individual brings an existential and humanist perspective to arts based research, one that differs from that of a/r/tography.

Although arts based research has never defined itself as postmodern, it has always recognized the influence of this philosophical approach. "The postmodern genie is out of the bottle," announces Barone in his 1995 work, "The Purposes of Arts-Based Research" (p. 171), but he makes it clear that he does not define himself through this philosophical approach. In his essay, Barone notes differing epistemological camps within postmodernism, one which would eliminate the quest for certainty, the entire "rational-logical, empiricist model of modernist social science, with its (and reason's) claims as privileged sources of knowledge," (p. 170) and another which would revise the quest for certainty, would "erase present boundaries so that the distinctions between science and non-science are difficult to discern" (p. 171). Barone distinguishes himself from either postmodern camp, preferring to leave art and art-integrating inquiry distinct from science, emphasizing, instead, art as open and indeterminate, as asking questions, prompting doubt or even the negation of previously held values, and, generally, of enhancing uncertainty (pp. 172-174). These characteristics Barone describes as heuristic rather than postmodern, and may quite aptly be described as hermeneutic. In their joint summary review of arts based research, Barone and Eisner describe knowledge as tentative, partial, and

multiple (2012, p. 53), all strong elements of a postmodern epistemology, yet the postmodern remains more of an influence than a subscription. The two greatest philosophical influences on arts based research, I believe, are structuralism and hermeneutics. A/r/tography, on the other hand, adheres entirely to a poststructuralist, postmodern philosophy, as will next be discussed.

### Poetic Excursus

#### *Fishing*

It's early spring and I know the fish are spawning. All I have to do is intercept their path and I've got fish for dinner. So tells me the Sunday paper.

√√√

It's a bold summer day and you didn't fly up to this northern lake for nothing. There are good fish out there, this is the Fish Bowl, you know. A Rainbow is what you're after.

This fishing camp has a lot of experience. They've done their research. They have the latest, best-test-ed technology. So you listen to them. Which line to choose, which tackle to choose, which cove to stake out.

√√√

It's a calm day and the lake's surface reflects the high, round sun and the crayoned cloud. Fishing rod in hand, I stand on the pier and wait.

I wait.

I            wait.

√√√

Sitting on the planked bench/your life jacket/an ultra-modern swiveling captain chair/ of this outboard/inboard motorboat, gives you lots of time to think:

Why am I here fishing for a rainbow?

What am I fishing for?

Why am I here?

Who am I?

Why?

√√√

I sit in silence, watching my line. I wait for that rainbow to bite.

What if it isn't a rainbow that bites? What if I hook a bony pike or a bottom-trawling catfish? What if I hook a diving loon? A jerry can? A beer can? A beer can? Another god-damned beer can. What if I catch a rubber boot, slick with slime, long-lost by a previous fisher? What will I do? What if I snag the bloated corpse of a drowned rat? What if my hook gets snagged on reeds? What if my hook gets snagged, but I can't see what it is snagged on, down in the water's depths?

√√√

What if you don't get what you came for?

√√√

On an evening, spring, summer, fall, after a rain, I love to stand on the top of the hill that overlooks the lake. Sun behind me and the wide wet tapestry of sky before me. As the sun sinks, it casts out long, long rays of light over the hilltop. And in that inbetween of sky and lake, the light lines refract, catch a rainbow, which jumps across the sky in a perfect arc of colour. There is a scientific explanation for this, of course, but for me, every time, it is a wonder.

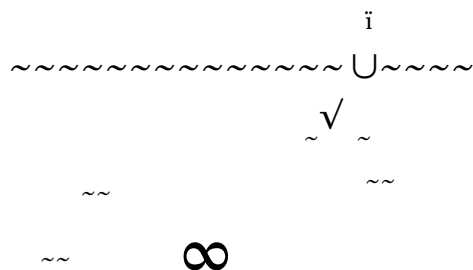
√√√

The way you catch fish around here is with a rod and a line. You cast out the lure, and you reel it back in. That's how it goes. It's the way it is done.

A neighbor of mine goes fishing with a night-light and a net. He slips out in the darkness with his pickup, and returns with a good few. This method is illegal. But he's Métis.

Historically, there are many ways to catch a fish. Many old men in the seas. Though Jack got swallowed by a whale. And sirens sang sailors to their deaths.

√√√



√√√

When I have a taste for something exotic, I go fishing at the supermarket. Off in the corner, beside the cans of tuna (low salt/no salt; Atlantic/Pacific; packed in oil/brine/tomato/dill) are thin, rectangular cans with a rainbow design. There are other designs, but the one with a fish jumping into a rainbow is, of course, the best. Along with a can, I purchase a box of saltines. It must be saltines. Back home, I make a cup of instant coffee. It must be instant. I pull back the tab on the can. There they lie, four fish, all glistening oil and brilliant scales. The tails are cut off, but not the heads. I take one out of the can and lay it on a cracker, place another one on top. I have a sip of coffee. I crunch into my sardine sandwich. Crumbs spill from my mouth and oil runs down my chin.

### **Philosophical Interpretation of A/r/tography**

Both arts based research and a/r/tography specifically state what they resist, epistemologically – positivism, the quest for certainty – and what they endorse. With arts based research, as pluralists, it takes some effort to configure their philosophical underpinnings; a/r/tography is much more assertive in that regard. Arts based research resists positivism's quest for certainty, opposes the correspondence theory of truth, yet still allows and incorporates scientific knowledge, as it holds knowledge to be a structure, albeit dynamically created, held, and interpreted. On the other hand, a/r/tography rejects outright positivism's quest for order. This is demonstrated, first of all, in an opposition to dichotomy, an opposition whose motives can be most easily understood through a brief historical orientation.

Dichotomy as an essential element of structure has been long been recognized in Western culture. Aristotelian logic, for example, is based on mutually exclusive opposites; indeed, to Aristotle is attributed the establishment of the principles of contradiction and the excluded middle (Horn, 2010). Dichotomy has been an organizational device in structuralist thought, which has focused on two major features thereof, categorical

opposition and marking. From the linguist Ferdinand de Saussure came the awareness of the arbitrariness in designation of linguistic signs<sup>17</sup> (1916/1986, pp. 67-68); that rather than present or imitate that which they signify, words distinguish themselves by difference<sup>18</sup> (1916/1986, pp. 117-118). Difference permits duality; from anthropologist Levi Strauss came the proposition that concepts within a structure tend to exist in binary pairs or oppositions (examples could be science/art; thesis, anti-thesis; mind/body; rational/ emotional)(Klages, 2006, pp. 54-55). Formalist theorist Jakobson, investigating structure, noticed that symbolic pairs tend to have a marked and unmarked items (Chandler, 2013). Literary theorist Derrida, investigating linguistic binaries, upended structuralist theory; noting that in Western metaphysics, binary symbolic terms tend to privilege one term over the other, the privileged term accorded to that which most signifies “presence” (Klages, 2006, pp. 54-55). However, Derrida pointed out that binaries are unstable as the meanings of their terms, of all signifiers, perpetually shift, slip, slide. He invented the *poststructuralist* methodology, called deconstruction, which aims at exposing binary contradictions in texts (Klages, 2006, pp. 53-60).

Returning to my epistemological interpretation: following Derrida’s line of thought, a/r/tography reproves structuralism’s dichotomy as fixed, hierarchical and thus prejudicial, looking instead to an epistemological process that allows contradiction; that allows the excluded middle; that allows dynamic, multiple meanings:

In the past, dichotomous thinking separated categories of thought and often placed one form above another, leading to hierarchical considerations. . . . If we resist this

---

<sup>17</sup> Thus, in English, “chat” is to talk; in French, un chat is a cat.

<sup>18</sup> Thus, cat differs from bat, from mat, from hat, in spite of incorporating same morpheme *at* by a varying first consonant.

favouritism . . . we are moving to a more complex intertextuality and intratextuality of categories. . . . to a multilectic view that encourages thirdness, an in-between space that exists between and among categories. (Irwin, 2004, p. 28)

A/r/tography acknowledges its refutation of dichotomous thinking as a poststructuralist philosophical position (Sinner, Irwin, Leggo, & Gouzouasis, 2008, xxi) and takes its poststructuralist thought even further than an opposition to the dichotomous thinking it finds fault with, to a refutation of the entire positivist conceptualization of ordered, structured, certain knowledge:

I am fully conscious of a public desire to simplify the chaotic, structure the unordered, and deny the ambiguous. This harkening back to the Enlightenment is a search for certainty and predictability, standardization and conformity. Yet there exists a countermovement encouraging diversity, transformation, and innovation. . . . an aesthetic way of knowing appreciates the awkward spaces existing between order and chaos, complexity and simplicity, certainty and uncertainty, to name a few dialectical relationships. (Irwin, 2003, p. 63)

Refuting the linear, binary order of structuralism and positivism, a/r/tography looks instead to postmodernism (Irwin, 2004, p. 30; Springgay, Irwin, Leggo, & Gouzouasis, 2008, p. xxi). But is postmodernism actually a philosophy? Nel Noddings, educational philosopher, calls postmodernism “more of a mood than a movement”: a rejection of “capital-T Truth” and a challenge to the epistemology of the Enlightenment (2007, p. 72). Noddings is noting the reactionary character of postmodernism, that it challenges by deconstructing structure, by disrupting order. A/r/tography demonstrates its challenge to conventional knowledge structures by taking up the many disruptive literary techniques of

postmodernism that serve to challenge a linear, propositional, individualist, humanist model of knowledge. A/r/tography's diffuse, desultory, associative, sometimes lyrical, often abstruse writing style enacts its philosophical position. Through its disruption of the order of language (syntax, semantics), it seeks to disrupt conventional meaning and instead allow liminal/interstitial/rhizomatic/relational/metonymic meanings to erupt.

A/r/tography's disruptions of conventional meaning extend into a traditional concern of epistemology, the warrant for truth. The a/r/tographical documents I read mostly eschew this concept. For example, in the summative article, in *Being with A/r/tography*, Irwin and Springgay, in a commentary on the metaphorical attribute of excess, state:

Measurement is not a degree of magnitude, but rather magnitude itself is the infinite totality of Being – the measurement of no other. . . . In other words, measurement is not qualifying something against something else – the setting of criteria or an established norm. Rather, the conditions for measurement are contingent upon and exist with the structure itself. (2008, p. xxxii)

A/r/tography's disruptions enact a postmodern mood of challenge to positivism. And this mood of challenge extends not just to the positivist concept of knowledge but also to its paradigm of the world and of the individuals in it. In their summative article on a/r/tography, in 2008, the authors note that their arts-integrating research methodology stands "in contrast to rationalist thought which imposes system and order, classifying and categorizing the world in dualistic terms[,] where individual consciousness is viewed as private, self-contained, and invisible" (p. xxi). In this comment, a/r/tography not only posits itself as poststructuralist and postmodern, it also posits itself as post-existentialist



and post-humanist. Moreover, the comment exposes a quest: for a/r/tography, a reactionary mood is not sufficient; a/r/tography desires an alternate philosophy of being.

A/r/tography's search for an alternate ontology leads it to several poststructuralist theories, including not only Derrida's deconstructive theories, but also the relational theory of Bourriaud, the complexity theory of Brent Davis and Dennis Sumara, as well as Maurice Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology of perception. While a/r/tography does not dwell lengthily or delve deeply into any these theorists, it consistently appropriates their visual metaphors, appropriating images such as rhizome, fold, stutter, assemblage, and rupture to put forth a view of knowledge as networked, shifting, multiple, situational, relational, and event-oriented. In their 2008 summative article, the authors describe this epistemological understanding as embodiment, which does not at all correlate to arts based research's understanding of somatic knowing, as residing within an individual, but refers instead to an "intercorporeal space" (p. xxi). "A/r/tography," the authors note, "resides in this intercorporeal space, and attends to the forms and folds of living bodies. It is a thinking that reflects on . . . being(s)-in-relation, and communities of practice." In this article, the authors refer to Elizabeth Ellsworth (who in turn references Brian Massumi) for a statement on embodiment: "Embodiment puts us into a moving relation with forces, processes, and connections to other in ways that are unforeseen by consciousness and unconnected to identity" (p. xxii)

Embodiment sounds very much like the Deleuzian definition of *assemblages*, quoted earlier, in footnote 14. Indeed, a/r/tography's search for an alternate ontology leads it to the same philosophical position as that of Deleuze, and of that of Derrida, a position to which the term *differential ontology* has been applied (Cisney, n.d.). An

exposition of this philosophy is beyond the scope of this discussion; a short description of differential ontology must suffice. Differential ontology is a poststructuralist model of *being*, which considers *presence* – self-containment - as mere construction, and as a corollary, views identity as fabrication:

Differential ontology understands the identity of any given thing as constituted on the basis of the ever-changing nexus of relations in which it is found, and thus, identity is a secondary determination, while difference, or the constitutive relations that make up identities is primary. (Cisney, n.d.)

Instead of *presence*, differential ontology is premised on *absence*. Presence in thought is the construction of order, of system, of binary, of preferentially marked qualities. Absence, on the other hand, is the “without” or “between” that a/r/tography recurs to. Present knowledge is stable, even essential or transcendental. Differential knowledge erupts, flows, shifts, changes. So it is with a/r/tography.

### Poetic Excursus

#### *Abecedarium*

Concepts . . . are defined not positively, in terms of their content, but negatively by contrast with other items in the same system. What characterizes each most exactly is being whatever the others are not. (Saussure, 1916/1986, p. 115)

Consider cat.

We only know what cat is because of what it is not –

Cat is only cat because it's not autocrat, bureaucrat, coup d'état, democrat, épée de combat, fraidy-cat, great heat, ideat, jehosafat, kleptocrat, lumpen-proletariat, magnificat, neat old-hat, ploat, quat? redcoat, scapegoat, top-hat, unseat, video-chat, whereat, xanthomat-a, you-know-what, a ziggurat!

Does this abecedarium show that meaning is endlessly deferred?

Or that behind the chit-chat of

*that fat cat that sat at that mat, batting gnats*

*is a groaty gloating goat that bloats*

*on sweat and heat of great*

*caveat –*

we have only to take care of the sounds and the sense will take care of itself?

We have only to take care of the sounds and the sense

We have only to take care

We have only to

differ

defer

Brrr!

Hey!

Refer that fat cat!

~~~

*This Poem Is (Différance)*

“Il n'y a pas de hors-texte.” – (Derrida, 1976, p. 158)

This poem is myself:

one pure ode to self

expression --

my heart pounding, my eyes bulging,

my sweat dripping and staining the page.

This poem is two poems:

a shriek to draw your notice

and a shy, ironic whisper.

This poem is two poems:

what I say

and what you read.

This poem is two more poems:

what else I think, now, next;

and what else you think, now, next.

This poem is ten poems,  
 ten hundred,  
 ten million  
 poems.  
 Not that ten million will read this poem;  
 perhaps just one reader  
 and one poet,  
 their thoughts sliding endlessly;  
 a multitude of beliefs, none true, none false.

And yet this poem is writhing, reeling from all the readings;  
 realing in on itself as it realizes the swagger on which it was built.

This poem is the tear-streaked trace that's left behind  
 when all its oppositions have cancelled each other,  
 leaving only difference.

~~~

*Anatomy Lesson  
 (in a Deleuzian world)*

Ladies and Gentlemen:  
 I speak euphemistically, to address you as such. Be assured, I mean everybody, allbodies,  
 somebodies, and also nobodies. Welcome, sweet sisters, chicklets and broads; all my dear sods,  
 dudes, chaps and bruvv; all you birdies, foxes, cats and dogs; hacks and jacks; punks and runts.  
 Welcome, welcome, Ladles and Grunts to this first-time-ever,  
 this once-in-a-lifetime,  
 world premiere  
*auto-vivisection!*

*Rat-a-tatta-ratta-tatta-ratta-tatta-  
 TUM!*

Here she is: my SELF on display,  
 laid, splayed, out, today to be  
 excavated, anatomized, dichotomized, analyzed,  
 all in the name of knowledge.

*Yayayayayayayayayayayayayay!*  
 I thank you for your applause.

Now, my good friends, some of you may have attended, just last week, the peep show of my  
 acquaintance (former doctor and shrink), Jack O'Lacantern, in which he exposed his body  
 as a dynamo-powered gas-tap, from which a peacock's feather pops and tickles  
 the belly of the belle dame.

Well, he may as well have bared the body as a, a,

turnip, a teacup, a plastic, seismic hiccup,  
he still would not have shown you his full monty.

Whereas I –  
take a seat, do, there's still room in the top row of the amphitheatre;  
you are just in time as -  
I disrobe and bare *all* before you:  
hammertoe, hamstrings, ring-a-ding dong;  
dog breath, bread belly, polka ping-pong;  
served to you with stainless steel lab-ware,  
polished lance and probe.

Let us begin, shall we, with the surface  
tension -  
you think you see it all,  
but am I all here?  
Where indeed are my edges, my boundaries?  
Narrow your eyes, look closer and see again  
the wrinkles, the creases, bags, sags, slag;  
what was outside doubles over inside out.  
Not so clear where I begin and end  
when you consider  
FOLDings, unfoldings, enfoldings.

Follow through, shall we?  
Pick up your probe and prick your imagination,  
invigilate invaginations!  
Six, on the face of it:  
keyholes, peepholes, blowholes, cubbyholes...  
This here wormhole,  
this flow hole, this DESIRING MACHINE,  
note its rhythmic opening and closing  
as I suck the mead of sweet OTHER;  
gulp, gasp, grab, crab for more.  
DESIRE spills from here  
without forethought, without direction.

You expected a well-wrought system?  
You expected blood and gore and titillation?  
You are deluded, disappointed.  
Yes, there are vessels, valves, basins, chambers,  
Turkish saddles, crows' nests, snuff boxes,  
but the route is always already  
VIRTUAL, virtuous, viral  
this is my BODY WITHOUT ORGANS!

One thousand howling dogs race down driveways.  
A swarm of slime slugs the canals.  
A crew of shackled prisoners sit on sinewy ridges,  
heaving heady words that don't work anymore.

You didn't expect them to, did you?  
 The flow of desire leads no where but over wear and under wear.  
 What I wore is wored, wered, warred,  
 barred, bored, burrowed.

Skewered.

Deep in my cavity,  
 what do you see?  
 Not what you expected?  
 Not what you came for?  
 You are shocked, *whadda-lousy* turn:  
 at the heart, there is no CENTRE;  
 at the centre, there is no heart!  
 Just a bricked up *virtue-wall*,  
 exit sign,  
 tangle of arrows,  
 five mechanics,  
 one engineer,  
 keeping time,  
 waiting to replace the valves;  
 open the faucets;  
 let the steam escape.

You don't wish to go that way  
 into the miasma?  
 Stay with me then.  
 Let's curl together in a fecal position  
 and I'll show you a secret of my MACHINIC self.

Look, deep in the cleavage twixt bricks and slag:  
 one tiny electric bee.

Speculate that BEE-ING  
 as it wanders through the flora of my gut,  
 bombinating, pollinating;  
 visualize the lude, rude, ruddy blooms;  
 imagine the fiery, feckless conception;  
 RHIZOMES rooting,  
 vines shooting,  
*upupupupupupuupupupupup...*

In my cranium  
 nests a green pod of peas,  
 sweet as lice, they roll and round.  
 Soon, for they are almost out of room,  
 the seed cage will dehisce and evisc-  
 erate this poem.

*Rat-a-tatta-ratta-tatta-ratta-tatta-tum!*

There. It's done.  
*Yayayayayayayayayayayayay!*  
Thank you, thank you, Lies teas unGender mine.

~~~

*What is in-between?*

There are spaces between and spaces between the in-between. (Irwin, 2004, p. 31)

Here, there, where line divides friend from foe.  
We laugh to show our nonchalance.  
We sing to the drumbeat of mortar tune.  
Streetfighters, we fist belief into rocks  
Socked backhand to no-man's land.  
Words loam our stonewalls of in-between.

A shared pallet, a tight darkness engulfs us.  
Words loam our stonewalls of in-between.  
I hear the rasp of your disappointment.  
We ache when we should sleep. We count breaths.  
We wrap ourselves in separate covers.  
But no sheet can hide the wounded sounds.

A curtain separates our bodies,  
But no sheet can hide the wounded sounds –  
Gaping, oozing, staggering heart-breaths.  
Silence separates soul from bones, quick from dead.  
We are dying without hospice.  
We laugh to show our nonchalance.

## Evaluation

The introductory methodological section of this thesis proposes a framework of four parts, based on Eisner's structure of educational criticism. As the description and interpretation dimensions are now completed, the work unfolds to the evaluative dimension. But what is to be evaluated and how? Ostensibly, the two arts-integrating research methodologies under study should be evaluated. However, other aspects as important to evaluate include the methodologies engaged in this study, as well as the study itself. How may this evaluation occur? This is a point that bears discussion.

When speaking of the evaluative dimension of educational criticism, Eisner describes evaluation as judging the merit or the value of a work (1991, p. 188; 2002b, p. 231). This view stands in contrast to the positivist view of research appraisal that emphasizes validity, posited as the "truth" of a research inquiry. (Seale, 2001). Arts based research, however, is interested in meaning rather than truth, and thus looks to meaningfulness rather than truthfulness in evaluation. In this regard, Eisner mentions the need for appropriately research-specific criteria of evaluation (Barone & Eisner, 2012, chp. 8). As presented in the descriptive analysis, above, arts based research has offered evolving criteria, beginning with "structural corroboration" and "referential adequacy," and moving on to a more flexible list of criteria including incisiveness, concision, coherence, generativity, social significance, evocation, and illumination (B&E, 2012, pp. 148-154).

The issue of validity of research has long been contentious in qualitative research, and the generation of alternative criteria for evaluation has long been an intense focus of qualitative researchers. In the 1980s, Guba and Lincoln (1981, 1985, cited in Guba & Lincoln, 1994) famously put forth four criteria for the evaluation of qualitative research,



criteria purposely set in parallel with the traditional concerns of positivist research. These criteria are credibility, in preference to internal validity (or accuracy of research); transferability, in preference to external validity (or generalizability of research); dependability, in preference to reliability, and confirmability, in preference to objectivity. Although these criteria have become standardized references, Guba and Lincoln later questioned their epistemological basis: “The former set represents an early effort to resolve the quality issue for constructivism; although these criteria have been well received, their parallelism to positivist criteria makes them suspect” (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p. 114). Guba and Lincoln sought validity criteria specific to the epistemological nature of their genre of work. Thus, in their contribution to the 2005 (third) edition of *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research*, Lincoln and Guba dropped these criteria in favour of what they termed *authenticity criteria*: fairness; ontological and educative authenticity; and catalytic and tactical authenticities (p. 207). Ravenek and Rudman, in their 2013 article, “Bridging Conceptions of Quality in Moments of Qualitative Research,” enumerate an extensive list of criteria that have been used in assessing qualitative research, which they group into categories of qualitative-as-quantitative criteria; paradigm-specific criteria; individualized assessment; and bridging criteria. These criteria range from expecting “systematic research conduct” (p. 449) to “social validity and adequacy of interpretation” (p. 449), and include a diverse range of qualities from “thoroughness” (p. 449) and “criticality” (p. 448) to “explicitness, vividness and creativity” (p. 449).

The above review shows both the contentiousness as well as the vast divergence in interpretation of research evaluation. My view, in keeping with the interpretive nature of my research, opposes a positivistic desire for an essential truth. That is, I am more

interested in meaning than truth, more interested in considering the value of research, than appraising it for an accurate, dispassionate, replicable representation of “reality.” I concur with Moustakas (1990) who says, “The question of validity is one of meaning” (p. 32). Thus, the criterion that I am putting forth as the guide to my evaluation is that of *value* itself, which I will now explicate with reference to the word’s semantic sense and derivation.

According to the Oxford English Dictionary (n.d.), from where this reflection is drawn, *value* is the root stem of *evaluation* and *evaluate*, and thus a perusal of the many senses of the former amplifies the latter. In this dictionary, *value* has two broad categories of meaning: “worth or quality as measured by a standard of equivalence,” or “worth based on esteem; quality viewed in terms of importance, usefulness, desirability, etc.” From these definitions, the first category would seem more useful in scientific inquiry, while the second would be more useful in interpretive inquiry. And yet, even in this first category, I note that many of the subset definitions of value (5a-f), are not measured quantitatively, but relatively, and point to the relative import of an element within a system, as in colour value (5c), or the value of a sign within a system (5f, after Saussure). The second category likewise emphasizes relative worth, as in value judged by usefulness (6a), effect (6c), moral standards (6d), or by the judgement of importance (6d).

These definitions confer the sense of value that I may apply to my research evaluation. That is, in my evaluation, as I judge worth, I am judging the significance of elements within a whole, examining qualities and conditions, importance and usefulness. So, as I evaluate the methodologies being studied, and the methodologies used for study, I may ask: What are the unique features, elements, or qualities of this methodology? How

does this methodology enable knowing? What does it enable? Does it make sense? How does it make sense? What is its purpose – does it succeed in its goal? What are its limitations? What is felicitous? What is perplexing? What might I do this with methodology? What is it good for? Such questions assist in judging the worth of a methodology; as for evaluating the study itself, similar questions will apply, as will subsequently be discussed.

Please note the following regarding my evaluative discussion. I am structuring it by isolating (and headlining) each category under discussion. However, as mentioned in the proposal and in introduction to this work, all of the methodologies integrate, and thus, a number of the points, motifs and themes will likewise reiterate.

### **The Unfolding Research Design**

The first practice to consider is that of the unfolding research design. The value of this design is that it recognizes research as a process: it recognizes that much study occurs even before the point of structuring the research design, that study is ongoing throughout the research project, and that the process of studying may prompt changes in the direction of research, in its expectations, its findings, and its applications. These are not pre-determined, nor fixed. In this project, there have been many unexpected discoveries, diversions and deviations. For example, detouring to comprehend the philosophical antecedents of the allusive and elusive methodology of a/r/tography was time consuming and expansive. Questions and feedback from readers have also opened doors to further investigations. As a result of the depth and breadth of such recursions, I have come to realize that the evaluative analysis of arts based research and a/r/tography, has expanded

to a scope beyond that of the master's thesis, and would be well served as a doctoral project, in itself. Thus, in this thesis, the evaluation of these arts-integrating research methodologies will be contained within a discussion of their heuristic and thematic dimensions.

### **The Critical Inquiry: Educational Criticism**

The critical inquiry of this work uses the methodology of educational criticism, developed by Eisner. I chose this methodology because, as a method developed from the critiquing of art, it seemed well suited to be applied to an investigation of arts-integrated research methodologies. I like that the framework is presented by Eisner as open-ended and integrative, that the steps may be porous, and also that they admit the inclusion of art as a means of study. I also like that educational criticism offers a simple format of four steps. I thought educational criticism would offer a strong framework to my study, a clear and accessible structure.

However, as my work has unfolded, and as I have received commentary from readers, I see different perspectives to this work. I have developed two concerns with this methodology. Firstly, I realize that the entwining of educational criticism, a research methodology, with arts based research, a methodology I am studying, does add an intricacy that may be confusing. Another concern I have is that educational criticism, as a critical framework, albeit an art-friendly framework, creates a dominantly critical tone to this work. I worry that the creative inquiry may be set aside as an ornament by an artistically disinclined reader.

I wonder what would happen were I to base my study on a creative structure, with

critical, exegetical aspects embedded. Would the creative structure become contrived, dampened, strained by critical academic exigencies? What would happen were I to base my work on a creative structure, with all critical exegetical aspects annotated, such as I did with my poetry gloss? Would this pass academic muster? I am by no means opposed to critical inquiry, yet I would like to see creative work accepted as a bona fide means of knowing.

### **The Creative Inquiry: Intuitive Inquiry and Poetic Inquiry**

As I initiated this study, I proposed engaging both critical and creative inquiries. I wanted my creative inquiry to balance the weight of the critical inquiry, to hold its own by offering knowledge not otherwise available. I think my creative work has succeeded in this regard. What the creative inquiry proffers is a connection to holistic, embodied, emotive, intuitive, and aesthetic ways knowing. Without the poetic inquiry, this thesis would be a “talking head,” limited to engaging intellectual, rational knowing.

The poetry gloss explicates the themes of each poem, the epistemological elements they explore, as well as the artistic devices employed in their creation. I would like to point out that the desire for the poetry gloss was another unfolding element of this work. Initially, I preferred that the creative work stand alone, as a tribute to the significance of art in itself, and to emphasize that all art must be able to stand alone or it fails as art. However, as mentioned in the methodology section of this work, I decided that for the value of knowledge dissemination, particularly that of facilitating art connoisseurship, it would be better to add an exegesis to the poetry.

However, I continue to think it is important to honour the art as art. The art cannot

be thought of as a reiteration or extension of the critical work, albeit in a code that requires decrypting. Even with the exegesis, it is important to remember that the art presents the possibility of multiple interpretations. Moreover, the art asks questions even as it answers. In its ambiguity, the art tantalizes. I think this is an inherent and essential component of art – art *should* tantalize, delight, excite, and/or provoke. And all of this underlines the point mentioned above that validity in art, or arts-integrating research, is based on value, rather than on proof.

Regarding the actual methodology and methods involved in the creative inquiry, these too should be evaluated. One issue that arose in my creative inquiry was in the categorizing of creative methodology and method. Originally, I thought to categorize poetic inquiry as a methodology and intuitive inquiry as a method. Then, because of the divergent and unconsolidated theoretical constructs involved in various researchers' use of poetic inquiry, I decided to label my use of poetry as the method of my creative inquiry. This is a useful hierarchy, however, I do recognize that this division here between methodology and method is rather arbitrary, and is based more on an attempt to fit my research tactics into conventional expectations. Both the intuitive inquiry and poetic inquiry are useful tools. Intuitive inquiry helps to understand both the kind of knowing gained from art as well as the process of art making. However, it is not an exclusive account of art making. Other constructs are available, videlicet, the other methodologies engaged in this study, which emphasize other aspects of creation. As I further my study of poetic inquiries, and of arts-integrating inquiries, my model of poetic inquiry will concomitantly develop. Incidentally, one thing I have noticed in the course of this study is that my description of intuitive inquiry makes it sound sequential and separate from rational thinking. As a creative

practice, it may be thus structured. However, I have noticed, creative reactions occur simultaneously with rational reactions. Sometimes, one or the other reaction is suppressed, depending on the “mode of thinking” in which I am working. Other times, I “code-switch,” moving back and forth, from analytic notes to poetic commentary.

### **The Heuristic Inquiry**

Heuristic inquiry has been a very important aspect of my research. However, on completing my written report, I realize that a reader might wonder where this heuristic inquiry sits, as a superficial look at my work exhibits a pattern of interposed critical and creative work. Where is the heuristic inquiry? The answer is, that because the heuristic inquiry guides the process of research, rather than its structure, it is integrated into the other forms of inquiry, and may take some connoisseurship to notice.

The heuristic inquiry is most strongly integrated into the creative work of this thesis, in the poetry, which most obviously demonstrates a “subjective process of reflecting, exploring, sifting, and elucidating the nature of the phenomenon under investigation” (Moustakas & Clark, 1985, p. 40). Each poem subjectively, intuitively, and yet critically, considers an epistemological issue prompted by my study. Many of the poems demonstrate an arc of heuristic processes from incubative indwelling to insightful illumination. For example, in “Anatomy Lesson,” I dwell imaginatively with Deleuzian theory, allowing my imagination to make intuitive insights into the nature of this rhizomatic theory, and through the use of my images, metaphors and other poetic creations, I allow the reader to likewise indwell and make intuitive associations. Elsewhere in the poetry gloss, I use the poem “ten thoughts” to explicate its heuristic nature and the use of heuristic inquiry in the creative process. Note that heuristic inquiry is not

synonymous with, nor necessitates personal narrative or auto-ethnography and I would not classify my poems as either genre.

Heuristic inquiry also emphasizes intuitive discovery (Moustakas & Clark, 1985, p. 42), which has been a strong aspect of all components of this research, including the critical, analytic inquiry. Nonetheless, on reviewing the critical (discursive) sections of this work, I do note that the heuristic element is not strongly felt here. I do not think that this is because the critical inquiry lacks heuristic elements. Note that the use of intuition, even in positivist, scientific, or argumentative thinking is well documented. Many scientific understandings have emerged through intuitive illuminations. Examples of this include Kekule's conception of the benzene molecule (in a dream) and Plunkett's invention of Teflon (through an experiment gone awry) (Roberts, 1989, pp. 75-81). The very word, heuristic, is etymologically related to the legendary cry of Archimedes' – Eureka! – as insight into hydrostatics came to him while sitting in his bath. Heuristic inquiry, the making of intuitive discoveries, has been a strong force in my critical inquiry; however, such heuristic elements are masked in this written report. I reason that this is due to the nature of the conventional academic report, which is generally written in the past tense, *after* the phases of indwelling and incubation, *after* insights have been gleaned, as a summative document that presumes conclusions rather than process. However, the written report of a research document might be better visualized as a palimpsest with previous versions – versions written, scrawled, discussed, spoken, visualized, thought – overwritten, obscured, or subsumed. I have attempted to counter this opaqueness through the use of the first person pronoun and the present and present perfect progressive tenses, but still, in the critical work, the heuristic elements remain suppressed. Although I highly



appreciate the cogency of the critical inquiry, I am disappointed at its dominance and its dryness. I regret the subsuming of personalization, of emotive dynamism, of the revelation of excitement in discovery, as well as the frustration and disappointment of perplexity. Fortunately the creative work does enact such aspects. Still, I imagine an academic work that embraces a fuller integration of the heuristic with the critical.

### **The Arts-integrating Research Methodologies**

To follow from the commentary made above, in this evaluation of the methodologies of arts based research and a/r/tography, I will forefront the heuristic, discussing how these arts-integrating research methodologies have been of personal value to me. Later, I will offer a more analytic, conceptual commentary.

In my thesis introduction, I noted that my motivation for, and my goal of, this study was to gain an understanding of art as a way of knowing and to be able to apply this understanding in my creative and pedagogical work. Although I have not yet completed the entire arc of my study, there is much I have gained from my research thus far, not only from my comparative inquiry into arts based research and a/r/tography, but, notably, from my search for a means to go about this inquiry.

What have I learned? Firstly, I have learned constructs that have enabled me to conceive the artistic process of knowing, and, as importantly, I have learned a reference language with which to think and speak about this knowing. Ironically, at the same time, I have also gained an awareness of the limitation of language, particularly discursive language, in explicating the epistemology of art.

Thus, although my critical inquiry has allowed me to systematically describe and

interpret the epistemologies of arts based research and a/r/tography, my creative inquiry has allowed me to instantiate many of the epistemological elements under study; to open them to an experiential level, to sensation, perception, emotion, and intuition, in addition to that of the intellect. Thus, the creative inquiry has allowed a more holistic inquiry, one that includes embodiment, with its inherent ramifications of subjectivity. My personal exploration and insights regarding the epistemological concepts of the methodologies studied in this thesis are demonstrated in my poetic inquiry, explicated in the poetry gloss, and commented on in the paragraphs above. To further demonstrate the application of my personal learning in this research, I shall imagine – and extemporaneously sketch (heuristically describe) – myself planning a collaborative art project, one that involves me in both creative and teaching roles, both of which have been influenced by my study of the epistemology of art.

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### *Shall We Dance?*

A collaborative art project, eh? Me as facilitator? How might this unfold? I imagine we would gather together to collaboratively create – what kind of art? Creative movement? Yes! All right then, I would like to start by remembering that knowledge is embodied. So, it would be important to engage the body. We could begin with movement exercises, or with sensory exercises – perhaps some receptive walking exercises. I certainly wouldn't jump into theoretical discussions; I wouldn't want to bog down the creative process or end up with a dance of talking heads. As Eisner notes, the language of art is non-discursive and its entire process could also be non-discursive. The dance would begin with somatic knowing. It would engage epistemic perception: using the aural, tactile, visual, and kinaesthetic senses to perceive aural, tactile, visual, and kinaesthetic qualities. What qualities? In our dance, we would work with time,

space, shape, weight, distance, speed and maybe other aspects of human physics. The dance would work with these qualities, using qualitative reasoning. We might play with being orderly, random, smooth, rigid, empty, full, large, small, heavy, light, fast, or slow. Remember, the dance would be created using the creative medium of the body. This medium, or form of representation, would offer possibilities, as well as constraints. For example, it would be difficult to create certain images with the body; a painting might be better at that. On the other hand, the very constraints of the medium might prompt creative ideas. Would we want to make images with our bodies? Hey, we could use *shadow puppetry*! Using light, a screen, and shadows, our bodies could be engaged to create incredible, startling shapes, outlines, forms – images. (Digression – Google search – ooh, see what Raymond Crowe has done – <http://youtu.be/m8yb4hnA2dI!>) Using shadow puppetry, we might start by playing with this medium, letting images and ideas emerge from the creative play. Or we might start with an image, a feeling, or a theme, which we would heuristically develop through the process of working with the form. Maybe we'd be given a prompt, such as, "How is art a way of knowing?" Feelings and images would incubate, link to poses, gestures and phrases. We could, actually, transact this whole thing without ever speaking. Though we might want to use words, lovely and imperfect as they are, to further share our feelings, and our thoughts, fragmented and wandering as they are. We'd try some shadow puppet effects. We'd realize that we're projecting three dimensions onto two. We'd realize that this means that things apart might seem to touch; things the same size might change their relations. See, my left hand looks like a baby, my right hand, a father. Ever neat! What are we talking about here? A theme, a motif, of mentorship? Personal growth? The child is father to the man? How do we want to play with this motif? What tone do we want? What rhythms, what dynamics? What kind of sound accompaniment? Eventually, a creative movement piece, a shadow dance, would be formed. The completeness of the art would be gauged by a sense of rightness of fit, rather than a checklist of criteria. Likewise, its meaning wouldn't depend on how clearly its point is conveyed. In fact, the

meaning might be ambiguous, uncertain, or multiple. Asking us to put into words what we have created, to explain what we have done, could be frustrating for us. But we could do this. We could relate our ideas, our feelings, and our associations. We could speak about themes, symbols, and metaphors. We could speak about phrases and gestures, about negative and positive space, about levels, directions and paths. (I could point out epistemological features, strains of Hawkins, Moustakas, Eisner and Irwin.) We would hope that would help. But it would never be unequivocal. And it wouldn't substitute for the holistic act of the art itself.

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While the description and interpretation sections of my thesis demonstrate the epistemological explanations of arts based research and a/r/tography for how art is a way of knowing, the above sketch demonstrates my own adoptions of such constructs, and reiterates that such appropriations have been gathered not only from the arts-integrating research methodologies under study, but also from the methodologies applied to my study thereof. The sketch shows appropriated constructs in the understanding of the art process, in the facilitation and creation of art, in the communication of art, and in the terminology used to describe art and the art process. The sketch also shows a preference towards certain methodologies and their constructs. The processes of intuitive inquiry, heuristic inquiry and arts based research are favoured, along with their terms of reference. The framework of educational criticism is hardly evidenced in the above sketch, not surprisingly, as this tool is more useful as a means of academically critiquing a work than of creating it. However, the concept of connoisseurship is alluded to, as a means of referencing or discussing a work. Least evidenced are the constructs and terminology of a/r/tography, although this methodology is engaged in the awareness of tangential, nomadic thinking. Clearly, and intriguingly, I have not found a/r/tography as valuable a

theory when it comes to the explanation and explication of art. Although I can see meaning (referential adequacy) in epistemological constructs such as rhizomatic knowledge, fragmented knowledge, and lived inquiry, I do find a/r/tographical terms of reference esoteric and hard to apply. On the other hand, I find the a/r/tographical terms, such as liminality, thirdness, and in-betweenness, very provocative and provoking of creative exploration.

Explication versus exploration: the differences between arts based research and a/r/tography extends beyond their pragmatic value and personalized meaning; there is an opposing philosophical variance between these two methodologies, a discussion of which elicits themes for further study, and so is referred ahead to the final section of this thesis, that of thematics.

### **The Study Itself**

The last element of to be discussed in this evaluation is that of my study itself. Again, as above, the idea of “value” guides my discussion. How is my study of value, to myself, and to others? And how shall I gauge this value? This is an issue I discussed in my original thesis proposal. There, I offered two lists of questions, one for internal and another for external validation<sup>19</sup>. These lists are reproduced in Appendix E.

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<sup>19</sup> It is intriguing that I employed the word *validation* as this word serves as a bridge between the terms, *evaluation* and *validity*. Validity, as noted above, is used in positivist epistemology to denote the truthfulness of research. However, etymologically, the word *validity* is derived from the adjective *valid* which originally referred to “the quality or state of being physically strong or sound; robustness, strength” (“valid,” 2014). This original sense is still reflected in its antonymic noun, *invalid*. The words *valid* and *validity* then evolved...

Reviewing these questions gives me a sense of satisfaction. I am pleased that my study has accomplished its goal of furthering my understanding of arts as a way of knowing, an understanding which, at the same time, I extend to the reader. Examining these questions, I note that some aspects of the evaluation of my study have already been broached in my discussion of the nature, affordances, and limitations of the methodologies I used for my inquiry, and what I might imagine differently, another time. I have also synthesized, in my heuristic sketch, how the epistemological constructs studied may be of pragmatic use to me in my work as an artist-educator. This synthesis alludes to my developing poetics of art, my personalized, subjective construction of art as a way of knowing. As I continue my study beyond my master's, my poetics will concomitantly develop. At the moment, as I look at the constructs I have appropriated, I am more able to interpret my epistemological position, than when I began this inquiry. I can see that my poetics is strongly hermeneutic, enjoys semiotics, and is piqued by poststructuralist ideation. It sees art as the creation and expression of meaning, intra-personally and inter-personally, individually, transactionally, collaboratively, interpretively, intuitively, imaginatively, and somatically. These adverbial descriptions could go on! I believe that discursive language will always be at a loss to reductively pinpoint how art is a way of knowing. It seems that art requires the very experience of art for its value to be known.

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to confer this idea of strength into a sense of "soundness of argument" and "legal force" ("valid," 2014). The word *validation*, although it may mean "to check the correctness of," returns to the idea of strength and good health in its common psychological connotation of "corroborat[ing], substantiat[ing], support[ing]," and especially in its sense of "causing (a person) to feel valued, significant, or worthwhile" ("validation," 2014). So, in evaluating a work, one might validate its value: consider *how* it is hale, whole and hearty. (And if it is ...

Notwithstanding, let me summarize the external value of my work. I believe my critical inquiry offers a lucid, comparative and concise epistemological description of arts based research and a/r/tography. This is particularly useful with respect to a/r/tography, an abstruse methodology that has not elsewhere been analytically described and summarized. Furthermore, my critical inquiry, offers an insightful positioning of the philosophical frameworks of arts based research and a/r/tography, an interpretation that gains breadth by its comparative format. This inquiry has allowed each of these arts-integrating methodologies to be viewed more distinctly. I believe these revelations would be of assistance particularly to researchers, new and sympathetic to arts-integrating inquiry, who are searching for an epistemologically appropriate methodology to employ. Furthermore, these revelations will be of assistance to me as I unfold further inquiry into the epistemology of arts-integrating research methodologies.

As useful as my critical inquiry is, I believe that my creative inquiry is the more exciting aspect of my work. I greatly enjoyed writing the poetry; I think the poems are interesting, creative and evocative. Furthermore, I believe that the poetic inquiry explores and evokes issues and themes of the research in a way that the critical work cannot. Thus, the poetry of my thesis expands the work's breadth of knowing, incorporating a holistic, embodied, and intuitive dimensions. The poetry has allowed me to engage and reflect personally and subjectively on the epistemological issues that have arisen. While the critical inquiry isolates and reduces meaning, the poetic inquiry expands meaning. Note, for example, that the poetry gloss gives one translation of the poems' meanings; another reader, or another reading, may result in additional understandings. For example,

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invalid, perhaps it needs assistance to recover its strength.)

regarding the poem, “Philosopher’s Lament”: in the gloss, I wrote about its metaphysical import; I am now seeing new meanings in this poem. In particular, I see a poignant desire to be personally and relationally understood, along with a melancholic ache of not being understood. I would have liked to include more poems in my thesis report, but space restrictions obliged restraint.

### **Thematics: Conclusion and Preface**

Thematics is presented by Eisner, and in my methodological section, as the final dimension of educational criticism. I offer thematics here as the last section of my thesis, but not as the end to my study. Eisner presents thematics as the stage of deriving generalizations or conclusions from one’s study (Eisner 2002a, pp. 188-189; 2002b, p. 233). My master’s work, however, has not completed the arc of my study into art as a way of knowing, so I feel that conclusions are inappropriate. Instead, I see and interpret thematics as a distilling of the issues and themes of my investigation, and as a prompting of the questions arising for further study. While this view of thematics does not offer a reductive end to my study, I do not hold the deriving of reductive conclusions as a goal of research. Furthermore, the concept of thematics as questions arising is not out of keeping with Eisner’s description of thematics. Although Eisner describes thematics as “general observations and conclusions derived from what has been observed, described, interpreted and evaluated,” he also describes thematics as “extract[ing] from the detail of particulars the larger ideas that might guide the perception of other situations like it” (2002a, p. 189). In my case, larger ideas propel bigger questions.

Throughout this study, I have been teased, puzzled, annoyed, discomfited, surprised, and gratified. I have been equally illuminated and perplexed. I have scrutinized the



methodologies of arts based research and a/r/tography, a fairly smooth unfolding with the former and a tangled tracing with the latter. Here is what I have found.

Arts based research and a/r/tography, arts-integrating research methodologies, offer explanations for how art is a way of knowing. In their epistemologies of art, both arts based research and a/r/tography resist positivism, although for different reasons. Arts based research refutes objectivity and the quest for certainty. Art is offered as a way of knowing that “enhances uncertainty.” Arts based research is proposed as a methodology of cognitive pluralism and as a constructivist, hermeneutic tool that engages body and mind in the process of transacting meaning, using both non-discursive (presentational) and discursive (representational) symbolization. A/r/tography, on the other hand, not only refutes positivism’s quest for certainty, it also rejects structuralism’s expectation of order, particularly the order of dichotomous thinking, which privileges presence and can result in a prejudicial favouritism. Instead, a/r/tography is poststructuralist; it employs a postmodern methodology, deliberately choosing and enacting disruption as a challenge to positivism. While arts based research accepts a generalizability of knowledge; a/r/tography rejects the stability, essentialism, transcendence – the presence – that generalization implies. Instead of accepting knowledge as present, a/r/tography looks to knowledge in absence, in rupture, in between and without, in rhizomatic relationality, a differential ontology.

The above conclusion tidily summarizes the epistemologies of arts based research and a/r/tography, but as methodologies themselves show, knowledge is never tidy, nor certain. This study goes a long way towards explaining art as a way of knowing, yet this investigation also prompts numerous disputes, discordances, difficulties, uncertainties,

curiosities, intrigues, interests, issues, and themes. Here are some questions arising.

Regarding arts based research: this methodology resists positivism, focusing on the value of nondiscursive qualities, reasoning, and expression. Is this methodology cogent only because it is familiar? In its use of discursion, of linguistic communication, does it hold on to an inherently prejudicial structural, whose antiquated reign must be toppled? The issue is structure, stability, presence, transcendence: does arts based research hold on to a centre that does not hold, does not even exist?

Regarding a/r/tography: this methodology resists positivism, but has it really gone beyond what it tries to resist? Do its views suffer from the attempt to put them into an academic box? Would a/r/tography be better expressed as art, in the lyrical format into which it slides? As a deconstructive, post-structuralist practice, has a/r/tography really gone beyond the use of privileging dichotomies? Is it any less divisive and/or dialectic in the in-between? As a post-structuralist practice of rhizomatic relationality, do the researchers really do away with the existential subject position? As an ontology of difference, does a/r/tography offer a valid alternative to a system that structures, and thus, stabilizes identity of time, place, language and self? Does a/r/tography go far enough? Does a/r/tography go too far? Is loss of coherence an inevitability, an exactitude, of accepting a multiplicity of knowledge?

Do the works of the arts based research and a/r/tography practitioners reflect the epistemologies of the methodologies they have chosen, or do they embody distinctly individual perspectives thereon?

What questions do readers ask?

How do the methodologies and epistemologies of arts based research and

a/r/tography relate and contribute to my own arts-integrating research methodology, and my own (still developing) poetics of knowledge?

Do I look for knowledge in presence or in absence? Is knowledge presence or absence? How is knowledge presence, or absence?

Questions such as these relate to the relative merits and demerits, discordances and resonances, concerns and issues of each of these two methodologies. As such, they deal with value, with how these methodologies may be evaluated. In a subsequent study, at the doctoral level, I would like to engage in a more in-depth evaluative critique of arts based research and a/r/tography.

### Poetic Excursus

#### *Philosopher's Lament*

Time is gone  
 is god  
 does not exist-  
 dance is perception  
 is a matter of touch  
 not matter but space  
 has no centre

and also the center  
 cannot hold still  
 the only constant is change  
 is all that time is  
 gone  
 and does it

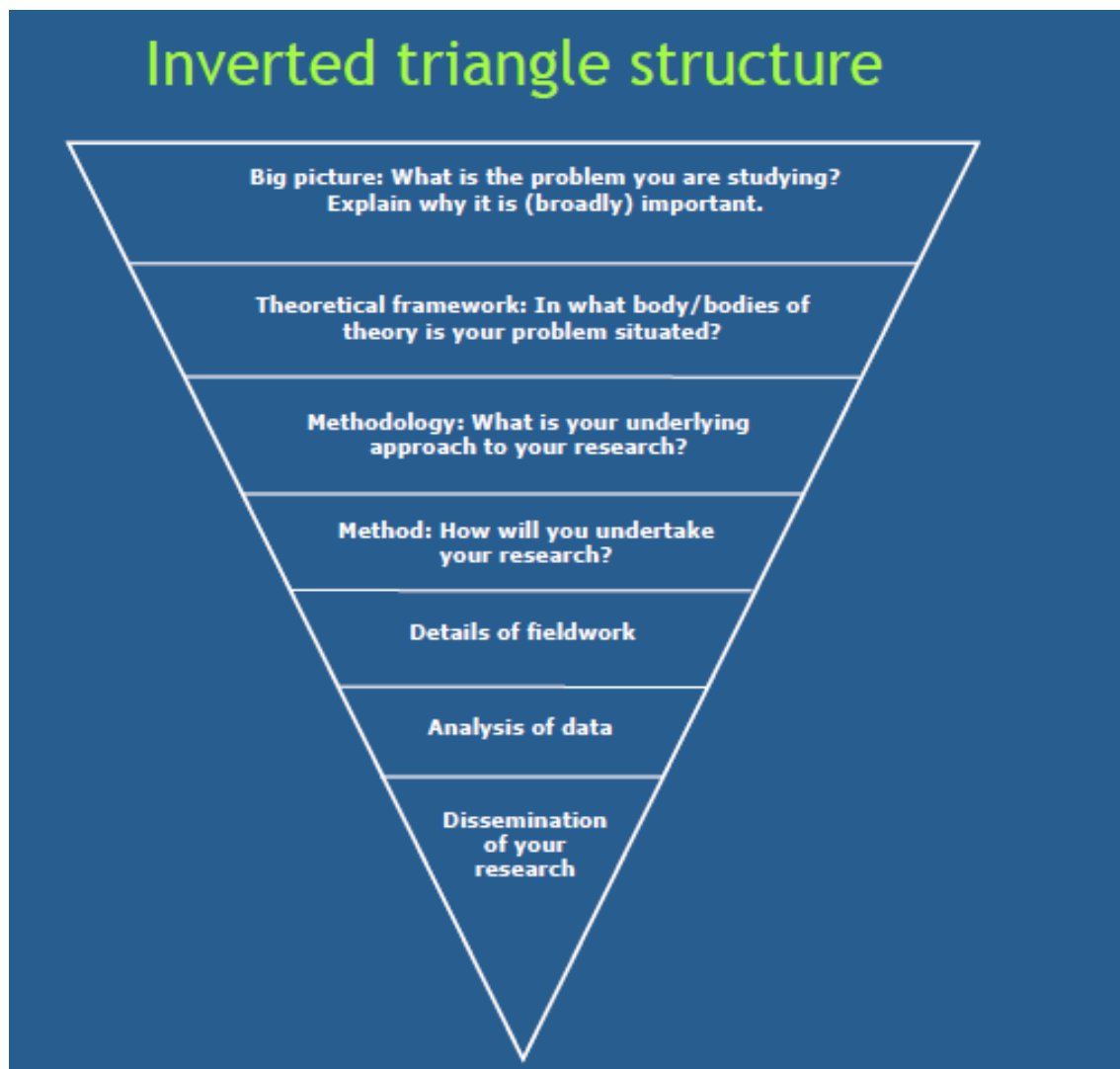
matter?

## Addenda

### Appendices

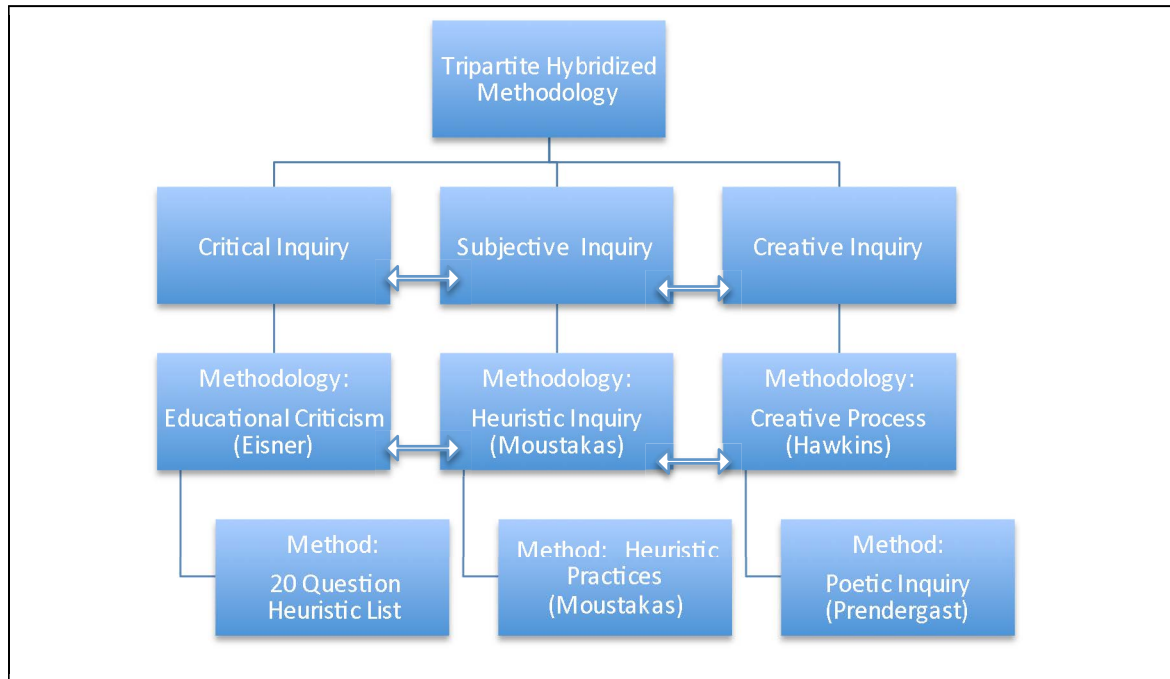
#### Appendix A

*Funnel Model, a.k.a. Inverted Triangle Structure (Russell, 2012)*



## Appendix B

### *Research Design for Investigating the Epistemology of Arts Based Research and A/r/tography*



## Appendix C

### *Questions For Considering The Epistemological Views That Underlie The Research Methodology Presented In An Authored Document*

1 How does the author (authors/text) conceive of research? How may this author's methodology be described?

2 How may this author's view on knowledge be briefly and clearly summarized?

3 Does the author name or claim membership in particular paradigms of knowledge? Can the author's theory be described through the use of a paradigm/camp/strategy/approach/tool?

a. Some Isms: foundationalism, essentialism, structuralism, reductionism, positivism, Marxism, humanism, postmodernism, constructivism, pragmatism, subjectivism, relativism, empiricism, universalism, rationalism, critical rationalism, scepticism, idealism, realism, social constructivism, etc.

b. Some tools: Semiotics, phenomenology, hermeneutics, structural analysis, etc.

4 What specific statements does the author state with respect to the knowledge that comes from arts-connected research? What implicit statements does the author make? (Do they jive?)

- 5 Does an understanding of the author's view of knowledge come from:
- A discussion of knowledge;
  - A description of research methodology;
  - Examples of research;
  - Other?
- 6 How does the author's view of knowledge/of knowing fit on the following axes that underlie major paradigms of knowledge? (Does it fit it to any, or is it novel?)  
Truth is . . .
- abstract, concrete
  - acquired, innate (active, passive)
  - analytic, creative
  - centre, margins
  - constituting, constituted (passive product of social place)
  - distance/presence
  - essential/universal/generalizable, relative/local
  - eternal, provisional
  - expectation of sense, expectation of nonsense/chaos
  - explanation, meaning
  - explanation, understanding (meaning)
  - explicable, inexplicable
  - found, constructed
  - heuristic, algorithmic
  - internal, external
  - intrapersonal, interpersonal
  - knowledge, knower
  - logical, non-rational
  - material, immaterial (spiritual)
  - mind, body
  - neurological, mindful
  - objective, subjective
  - propositional (knowledge that), procedural (knowledge how)
  - rational, emotional
  - rigorous/systematic, intuitive/revelatory
  - simple, complex
  - singular, plural
  - spatial, non-spatial
  - structured, loose
  - tacit, explicit (know-how; know-why; know-who)
  - temporal, atemporal
  - unbiased, biased
  - unified, contradictory
  - analytic, phenomenological
- 7 What other descriptors illustrate the author's concept of knowledge?
- 8 Does the author see knowledge as a cognitive entity, or one that exists in thoughts; in the "mind"? Or does the author have another conception of knowledge? Or does the author perhaps resist the very concept of knowledge/knowing/truth?
- cognitive/rational/empirical/psychological/neurological/ vs
  - semiotic, symbolic
  - linguistic (language or medium determines knowing)
  - imagistic

- e. experiential (lived experience)
  - f. sensory, embodied
  - g. aesthetic
  - h. useful, pragmatic, ethical, righteous
  - i. privilege, power, cultural capital
  - j. resisting of dominance
  - k. political action
- 9 What metaphors or images does the author use to describe knowledge?
- 10 What does the author's view of knowledge espouse? What does it resist? Does the author see the arts-connected knowledge as a distinct entity or part of/subsumed into another entity; complementary, or at odds?
- 11 How does the author conceive of art?
- 12 What conditions does the author feel are necessary for "truth"? For example,
- a. Does the author believe that knowledge is justified true belief?
  - b. Does the author believe that knowledge is warranted assertion?
  - c. How does the author warrant or justify his/her view of knowledge?
  - d. Does the author feel that knowledge requires warrant or justification?
- 13 How does the author suggest that the quality, value, worth of research, or of a knowledge claim, may be assessed/judged?
- a. reliability, probability, falsifiability
  - b. reduction to the indubitable, the self-evident
  - c. correspondence to the empirically obvious
  - d. plausibility, rationality, explanation
  - e. representativeness
  - f. resonance, coherence
  - g. connection, correspondence to or representation of emotional, physical, or spiritual domain
  - h. possibility
  - i. utility, function
  - j. authenticity
  - k. persuasion
  - l. other
- 14 Who are other researchers that this author makes reference to?
- 15 What is unique about this author's arts methodology and/or conception of knowledge?
- 16 Does the author's theory of research, knowledge and art seem justified?
- 17 What are areas of limitation, contradiction, inconsistency, dilemma, or paradox in the author's views?
- 18 Where do I, or others, disagree with the author?
- 19 What is inspiring or illuminating about this author's views?
- 20 What elements prompt poetic or artistic consideration?

## Appendix D

### *Poetry Gloss*

Notes:

1. All of the poems in this thesis are instantiations, explorations, demonstrations, or representations of epistemological concepts considered in study. This poetry gloss is written as an aide in comprehending such meanings.
2. In all of the poems, meanings reverberate. Although the poems are strategically placed to offer commentary at certain places in the report, their poetic meanings are much less linear; they may be read, and reread, in a different order, time, or place.
3. These poems emerge from personal experiences and contemplation, but are not ethnographic research. Their autobiographical elements do not promise to correspond to facts of reality. Nonetheless, they are all true.
4. *Caveat lector!* Poems play. There is a danger that in annotating that play may eliminate sensory, affective, and ambiguous qualities that proffer aesthetic delight.

#### *Knot* (p. 3)

While the traditional abstract summarizes my thesis project in discursive language, this poem summarizes it in literary language, allowing the heuristic and creative aspects of the journey to be described connotatively. This poem picks up on a metaphorical theme that threads throughout the work, that of the fold, of folding, and unfolding. The poem presents an image of the knowledge I am researching as a fold so complex it has become a knot. What does one do with that knot? Deem it a problem to be untangled and straightened? Let it be? Admire its complexity? In this poem, the image of the knot suggests that that research is not a linear process that results in a complete, definitive answer, but a deviating route that results in as many questions as insights.

#### *Getting It* (p. 4)

I wrote this poem early in my research journey, as I was formulating the questions that would guide my study. The poem begins with my passion for trying to understand art as a way of knowing, as I ask what it is that I do when I “en-art”? All the while questioning *how* art is a way of knowing, the poem is also very insistent that art *is*, in itself, a way of knowing. The poem uses rhyme, assonance, paronomasia (punning) and other verbal disruptions to creatively play with the semantics of the word, *art* and, in doing so, to contemplate the meaning-making of art. The poem sets up an extended metaphor of fishing, suggesting that the purpose of art is to “catch some sense.” The poem is written in first person as I implicate myself: not only do I want to contemplate what may be essentials or universals in the meaning-making of art, I want to make sense for myself, and share this sense with others – as Eisner (1981) says, to offer a generalization from a sample of one. The poem ends with a metaphor of fish vision, noting that piscine di-ocular vision allows and accepts diplopia – seeing two objects at the same time. In humans, diplopia would be considered a malfunction of our binocular system. This metaphor offers my intuited idea that having “fish eyes” could help one understand the inherent ambiguity in art, and in life.

#### *Wholly* (p. 24)

This poem may serve as an example of Hawkins’ creative process, described in the methodology section of this thesis and entailing generally consecutive processes of sensing; feeling; imagining; transforming, and forming. “Wholly” externalizes these processes, something not always evident in a poem, which may only reveal a synthesis or consequence of these creative processes involved. The poem’s use of these creative processes is enumerated as follows:

1. *Sensing*: In this poem, I describe using my senses, seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting and touching, and likewise the reader to engage sensually.
2. *Feeling*: In this poem, I show that sensings are not merely physiological events, but are linked to



emotional reactions. I compare, for example, the smoothness of a glass windowed corporate office with the smoothness of a baby's bum.

3. *Imagining*: Imagining involves taking those inner sensings and using processes such as association or projection to image anew. In "Wholly," none of the sense experiences were actually experienced in the course of creating the poem; some have never been experienced; yet, all were imagined as vivid sensory images. The poem offers several emotionally charged images such as "an aspiring stuck sick in the back of the throat" and the de novo "snail snot."

4. *Transforming*: In this poem, the various images are collectively transformed into ideas, namely, the idea that knowing is a personal, embodied, and holistic process.

5. *Forming*: The final phase in Hawkins' creative process is forming, expressing the sensed, felt, and imagined images and ideas in an outward communicative form. In writing poetry, this involves using literary devices. The description of images is itself a literary device, one of many in this poem; another is the use of repetition for rhythm and emphasis. One device I would like to point out is the repeated onomatopoeic sibilance of the *w* and *wh* sounds, which serves to create the sound of breath, linking the kinaesthetic sense of breathing to an insight of knowing as a living, and thus embodied, inquiry. Notice the paronomastic summary of this conception in the title of the poem. Written in first person, this poem is a very personal description of my experience of knowing, yet at the same time reiterates Hawkins' creative process, and, as an exemplification of embodied knowing, relates to some of a/r/tography's concepts.

ten thoughts (p. 28)

Written early in my research journey, this haiku poetry sequence offers an exemplification of heuristic inquiry. The poetry sequence admits a view of the earlier phases of heuristic research, something not revealed in the thesis' post-reflective critical writing. The poetry sequence demonstrates the exploration, questioning, and uncertainty of my initial engagement and immersion into my study. While not providing any research conclusions, the poems also demonstrate the heuristic process of leaping from contemplation (indwelling) to insight (gestalt). Furthermore, these poems also demonstrate heuristic investigative qualities identified by Moustakas as *identifying with the focus of inquiry; self-dialogue; tacit knowledge; intuition; indwelling; focusing; and the internal frame of reference*. Starting with that last quality, these haiku display an internal frame of reference; in them, my research questions are personalized, dealt with holistically, as lived inquiry. The haiku embody self-dialogue: the poems ask questions, respond, comment, reflect, wonder and assert. The confessional, intimate tone of the self-dialogue invites you, the reader, into the conversation. Tacit knowledge is demonstrated in the poems' lived inquiry; I place my existent knowledge, experience, beliefs, passions and values into the research questions and study. The haiku are created from a contemplative focus that allows indwelling; allows me to incubate the research issues; allows them to touch me on many levels. The haiku are created from intuition, from a creative exploration, from making associations, connections and comparisons, from which I can leap into an insight.

I think the haiku form is quintessentially heuristic. Haiku are easily identified by their visual form of three short verse lines, yet the simple form of the haiku belies its exigency. To work with the haiku's poetic expectations within the constraint limitation of three lines of 5-7-5 syllables, respectively, requires attentive, contemplative focus, a heuristic quality. The most heuristic aspect of haiku, however, is the expectation of a *volta*, or *turn*, a significant shift in feeling, thought or argument (Theune & Addonizio, 2014). In haiku, this shift often happens between the second and third line, with the first two lines offering a lyrical description or experience and the third line making an intuitive jump to a new image or thought, thus offering insight. This poetic insight doesn't entail a world-changing epiphany, a rational solution, rather, an awareness perceived from lived experience. This process of contemplation turning to insight is present in all of my haiku. In some of them it occurs with a very sharp turn, as in the fifth haiku: "many times i've known / truly what will come to pass / every time i've cried," while other times the turn is less obvious, as in the tenth haiku, where the question tag, "why" marks the turn.

As representations of lived experience, haiku are humble. Each brief haiku is one moment, ephemeral, but not random. In my haiku, I relate the fragility and uncertainty of my human

experience through use of lower case punctuation. Although each individual haiku is evanescent, collectively, the sequence of poems creates movement, as in a journey, a metaphor directly stated in the first haiku, and continued by the numbering, which works as signposts, as well as by many references and images related to travel (e.g. map) and to the passing of time (e.g. “across the sky”; “come to pass”). The image of a journey or a voyage is a metaphor depicting research as a transpersonal passage.

Either it will rain tomorrow or it will not rain tomorrow (p.46)

In this poem, I compare, as Eisner (1981) did, the epistemological assumptions of science versus art. In particular, I examine their differing conceptions of the term, *tautology*. As a linguistic device, a tautology is an unnecessary repetition of word, idea or logic. Tautologies often appear in colloquial speech in expressions such as “absolute perfection,” “more complete,” “crimson red lips,” “azure blue sky,” where their existence is considered weak, even annoying. In science, however, a tautology is a non-excepting truism. Notwithstanding Karl Popper’s theory of falsifiability, the totalizing of theory is generally considered a good thing in science, which desires theories that unequivocally explain mechanisms and causes, verifiable through empirical repetition. Thus the proposition “either it will rain tomorrow or it will not rain tomorrow” would be considered a needless redundancy in writing style, but as a scientific theorem could be considered a desired proposition of certainty that defers to no other possibility. In my poem, this particular proposition becomes the prompt for my imaginative rant over the difference between science and art. In this poem, I play with the idea of tautology. Using neologisms and surrealism, I push the concept of tautology to the edges in order to question the limits of scientific thinking (logical positivism and scientific realism), beyond which other means are needed to respond to life’s existential questions. In this poem I offer some autobiographical examples of such questions.

*Stutter* (p. 65)

A/r/tography’s methodology draws many concepts and metaphors from the philosopher, Giles Deleuze, including the concept of the *stutter*. Although a/r/tography uses this metaphor of the stutter, it does not explicate its meaning. Epistemologically, the stutter may be considered to be the new knowledge that incurs when language is pushed to the disequilibrium of its limits, as might happen stylistically in postmodern literature or in the appropriation of a dominant language by minority speakers (who “break” language with their “broken English”) (Stevenson, 2009; Hardcastle Jones, 2014). In my poem, I explore how the stuttering of language might look. As this concept is enjoyed in postmodern theory, in this poem, I deliberately employ several postmodern literary devices that are intended to disrupt language. I use the slash, a device that both negates and doubles meaning (Springgay, Irwin, & Kind, 2005, p. 904). In addition to this, I use a number of contradictory or oxymoronic phrases such as “openly we hide,” “cower within joy,” as well as jarring adjectives, such as “itching sobriety” and “high noon grace” to disrupt expectations and encourage alternative gleanings. For me, the effect of these disruptions is existential, conveying a pessimistic ontological perspective.

Fragments (p. 66)

These poetic observations were written and collated during a self-directed research/writing retreat in which I was trying to glean a comprehensive understanding of a/r/tography’s methodology and epistemology, which was difficult for me as I found the writing diffuse and desultory. A/r/tography appropriates with scant explication many metaphors from other poststructuralist theorists and in this poem I was exploring what might be meant by their assertion that knowledge, that knowing, is fragmentary? And what is meant by their concept of knowledge and a methodology that is liminal, at the edges, both inside, outside and in-between? I decided to explore these concepts by working artistically with fragmentary thoughts. (Aside: In addition to a/r/tography methodology, notice features of Hawkins’ intuitive creation, Moustakas’ heuristic inquiry, and Eisner’s artistic cognition in the depiction of my poesis.) From walking meditations, I allowed chance sensory experiences, especially those with qualities of being inside, outside, or in-between, to carry into thoughts and ideas, which I jotted down as they occurred, and later transformed more artfully

(poetically), considering force of image and emotion. However, I made no effort to link any of the individual poetic expressions until I collated them on the page, at which point I allowed myself to place them according to where I saw imagistic or thematic connections and sensed a “rightness of fit” (Eisner, 2002a, pp. 75-76; discussed in the thesis section on somatic knowing). Still, I spaced them erratically to emphasize their fragmentary nature. Fragmentary as they are, I think that connections are unavoidable. A *Kuleshov Effect* occurs: this is a psychological effect named after the early Russian filmmaker, Lev Kuleshov, who noted the tendency of the human brain to link consecutive images into a temporal and emotional plausible narrative (Murray & Hoyle, 2011). It seems that knowing both is, and is not, fragmentary.

*Fishing* (p. 74)

This poem, “Fishing,” harkens back to the poem “Getting It” in that both use the extended metaphor of fishing to explore epistemological properties. While the previous poem wonders how art is a way of knowing, how art “catches sense,” this poem explores the many ways of trying to gain knowledge through the analogy of trying to “catch a rainbow.” In this poem, the use of multiple narratives, techniques, and perspectives regarding fishing for that rainbow may be compared with the multiplicity of knowing, in particular, the influence of philosophical perspectives, ideologies, cultural mores, and personal values on how one knows. Because of its exploration of philosophical orientations to knowing, “Fishing” is placed in the middle of the philosophical interpretation of arts based research and a/r/tography. Meanwhile, interpreting the meaning of this poem is a hermeneutic exercise for the reader, as s/he applies her/his own perspective to decipher significance of each narrative vignette. Emphasizing this choice, the poem alternates from first to second person, with a digression into third person singular. And at another point, the poem jumps entirely from word to image. For myself, the poem ends in a lyrical rejoicing at the wonder of art, of knowing, of learning.

Abecedarium (p. 81)

The epigraph of this poem relates the Saussurian structuralist theory that meaning in language arises from phonemic differences. The poststructuralist Jacques Derrida questioned the stability of meaning so derived. Derrida coined the term *différance* to represent his awareness of both the qualities of difference and deferring in language, the former relating to his awareness of the privileging of certain linguistic meanings and the latter to the endless deferring of linguistic meaning. It is important to have an awareness of the theories of structuralism and poststructuralism in order to place the philosophical basis of a/r/tography. “Abecedarium” relates my study in this regard. This is a nonsense poem that revels in word play. The word play itself is an artistic instantiation of Saussurian and Derridian theory. Ask yourself, beyond the word play, is there meaning to this poem, or does it just endlessly de-fur?

This Poem Is (*Différance*) (p. 82)

This poem could be considered a sequel to “Abecedarium.” It, too, explores philosophical aspects of poststructuralism, namely Jacques Derrida’s concepts of *difference*, *deconstruction*, and *trace*. *Différance* is noted above. *Deconstruction* is a method of literary critique in which one notices contradictory meanings in a text. Derrida’s *trace* reverts to binary conceptualization, where the “trace” is the absent ghost lurking behind a signifier’s (word’s) present meaning, or the opposing non-meaning behind a signifier’s meaning. Philosophically, all three relate to an ontology of absence as Derrida disputes meaning as present, centred or certain. In “This Poem Is (*Différance*),” I apply these Derridian concepts at a personal and relational level. Thematically, this poem is a lament for loss of innocence, for a lost belief that one’s poetic expression could be an unalloyed expression of self, wholly understood. Instead, interpersonal, poetic meanings are in doubt, in dispute, in/different.

Anatomy Lesson (in a Deleuzian World) (p. 83)

As I tried to understand the philosophical underpinnings of a/r/tography, I noted the strong allusions to and appropriations from the philosophy of Giles Deleuze, such as the metaphorical concept of knowledge being rhizomatic. However, this influence was never explicated, so I made an

effort to understand Deleuzian philosophy in order to better comprehend the philosophical basis of a/r/tography. This entailed a lengthy research detour in which I was mostly befuddled. Like Derrida, Deleuze espouses an ontology of absence and is deliberately circuitous and concealing. Deleuzian scholar and blogger Brendon Holt on his site, *Differentiations*, through the catharsis of humour, describes his efforts to read Deleuze as a “relentless Death March” and “an exegetical pain in the ass” –

You really have to read the text back into itself in order to unravel what is happening . . . . you have to get used to the feeling of wandering through the text without any idea of what is happening until you hit moments of clarity which you can then read into the previous pages to illuminate them. (Holt, 2014)

“Anatomy Lesson” explores Deleuzian philosophy through the conceit (elaborated metaphor) of an anatomy lesson – through a “once-in-a-lifetime, world premiere, *auto*-vivisection! The lesson employs a number of Deleuzian terms, capitalized for reference, including *self*, *fold*, *desiring machine*, *other*, *desire*, *body without organs*, *virtual*, *machinic*, *being* and *rhizomes*. Most of these terms are referenced in *The Deleuze Dictionary*, edited by Adrian Parr (2005). However, do not expect definitions, here. Rather, each entry, as noted in the introduction by Clare Colebrook, is a “disruption, violence or dislocation of thinking” (2005, p. 4). Colebrook points out that Deleuzian philosophy resists systematization. Holt, above, describes his vagarious approach to reading Deleuze. Like, Holt, I need the catharsis of humour to handle Deleuze and with this approach, I think that my poem captures the tone, if not the tenor, of the Deleuzian belief system. “Anatomy Lesson” is delivered as a dramatic monologue, and the personification of Deleuzian theory allows it to be conceived within a personality, a voice and a body – a peculiarly disembodied body, the irrationality of which is in keeping with Deleuzian theory. I think that the playful nature of poetry is much more apt at conveying Deleuzian theory than a dictionary could ever be and it certainly abated my frustration. As you read this poem, enjoy the whimsy, the wit, the allusive puns, and the irreverent neologisms of our *Anguish Languish* – and allow this anatomy lesson to give you a Deleuzian perspective to a/r/tography.

What is in-between? (p. 86)

This poem explores another spatial metaphor employed by a/r/tography, that of the *in-between*, the space that exists between and among categories. (Irwin, 2004, p. 28). With this spatial metaphor, I think that Irwin is trying to trouble the classical logic of the excluded middle, which suggests that propositions are either true or false. Irwin adamantly refutes dichotomous thinking of structuralism (Sinner, Irwin, Leggo, & Gouzouasis, 2008, p. xxi) and suggests that, in fact, meaning is often uncertain and ambiguous. This metaphor also suggests that a/r/tographers work in an uncertain place, without a clearly accepted academic position. But as I have done in other poems, here, I am exploring the existential and psychological meanings of the metaphor. If a/r/tographers feel they are in-between, who else might feel this way, and how and why? (After all, it is clearly a large space, with “spaces between and spaces between the in-between.”) In writing this poem, I mused on situations where a person or persons might feel “in-between.” But, interestingly, my meditation mostly brought up images of feeling isolated *because* of something in that in-between that prevents interpersonal connection. So in this poem, it is the excluded middle that excludes the poles. In this poem, what is it that lies in-between, excluding and disconnecting? Sometimes, it is words that “loam our stonewalls of in-between.” Other times, it is silence that “separates soul from bones.” Elsewhere, appropriating from the Deleuzian concept of the fold, Springgay, Irwin, and Kind note that “the outside of something is the inside of another” (2008, p. 83). What we have here is a fold, or inverted meaning. Note that the poem visualizes an endless fold by repeating the last line of a one verse as the second line of the next. Perhaps there is consolation in this connection.

Philosopher’s Lament: (p. 88)

This thesis ends without a definitive statements or conclusion. Rather, it ends with outstanding issues and further questions. Some might find this difficult, yet it is in keeping with the findings thus far in my study of arts based research and a/r/tography. Neither of these methodologies espouses a determinate, reductive view of knowledge. There are many answers to the

question of what is knowing. “Philosopher’s Lament” is written as overlapping statements, suggesting a plurality of voice and perspectives. It ends with a metaphysical question, which may seem, at first, to have little bearing on the research topic, and to deal, rather, with the type of issues that a physicist might be absorbed with, with the nature of time, space and matter, but these are eminently cosmological, and thus ontological. Nor do I think one can separate being from knowing, an issue I hope to explore in my continuing study.

## Appendix E

### ***Research Validation***

Please find below a list of questions I developed as criteria I and others might use in evaluating my thesis. Note that the enumeration of validity criteria in catechetic form follows an established research practice, employed, for example, by Barone and Eisner (2012, pp. 148-155), Knowles and Cole (2008a, p. 65), Richardson (2005, p. 964), and Sameshima (2007, p. 309).

#### Internal validation

- Has my research work been personally meaningful, transforming and generative?
- Have I answered my research questions to my own satisfaction?
- Have I satisfied my objectives? Have I gained a greater understanding of how an arts practice may be a research methodology and a way of knowing? Will the knowledge gained assist me in my work as an artist-educator?
- If I have not answered my questions or satisfied my objectives, has the work, nonetheless, been valuable? Has it provoked unanticipated insights or learning? Has it provoked further questions?
- Has my research encouraged me to pursue further study?

#### External validation

- Does the project fulfil its stated objectives: does it coherently describe, compare and critique arts based research and a/r/tography?
- Does the project further an understanding of the epistemology of arts-connected educational research?
- Does the project contribute useful ideas, commentary, judgements, or questions to the field of arts-connected educational research?
- Does the critical inquiry present well-reasoned arguments and judgements? (Are the assertions warranted?)
- Is the creative inquiry evocative? Can the reader/audience connect to the issues through the imagery and the emotion conveyed? Is the artwork aesthetically satisfying?
- Is the personal reflection inviting, thoughtful and interactive?
- Does the work provoke further questions for discussion?

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