

International Journal of Education & the Arts

Editors

Christopher M. Schulte
University of Arkansas

Peter Webster
University of Southern California

Eeva Anttila
University of the Arts Helsinki

Mei-Chun Lin
National University of Tainan

<http://www.ijea.org/>

ISSN: 1529-8094

Volume 20 Number 9

May 31, 2019

Portrait of an A/R/Tographer: Theory as Conceptual Medium

Amy Ruopp
University of Missouri, USA

Citation: Ruopp, A. (2019). Portrait of an A/R/Tographer: Theory as conceptual medium. *International Journal of Education & the Arts*, 20(9). Retrieved from <http://doi.org/10.26209/ijea20n9/>.

Abstract

The following article explores how one researcher blended verbal and visual literacies to disrupt conceptualizations of traditional qualitative research. Engaging visual modalities as a research tool, the author invites readers into an a/r/tographical multimodal post qualitative journey that deeply explores the power and value of visual research. Here the author shares a dynamic encounter with post theory that disrupted habits of knowing, thus creating tensions and nuanced understandings of theoretical engagement. (Re)imagining theory as a conceptual medium, readers are invited into the process through both visual and verbal means, to inspire investigation into previously unknown territory, thus discovering new ways to know differently. What is offered here moves the reader beyond the text based manuscript to a documentary film, (hyperlinked) screenplay, and artwork.

(RE)searching Research

“Nothing will unfold for us [me] unless we [I] move towards what looks like nothing” (Barad, 2007 p.39).

As an artist in an academic world, I have poured myself into making the elusive invisible of how something is known, *seen*. I have asked myself continuously; ***What does research “DO”? What does the process of (re)searching, (re)vising, and (re)visioning, produce?*** The following narrative explores my research process for a period of one year as I immersed myself in autoethnographical, multimodal research that deeply explored the power and value of visual research in a verbally driven world. Therefore, what is offered is moves beyond the written manuscript to include a video documentary as well as artwork and various other artifacts produced during this process. They are intended to work together in conversation, rather than be a direct translation or outcome of the other. In other words, the writing does something different than the video, the drawings offer meaning beyond the words, and together they co-produce something more than they would individually.

Knowledge and understanding, in my case, manifested through a collision of literacies, tensions, and encounters. Unexpectedly, I found myself at the threshold of *becoming theory*. In thinking with and theorizing through a combination of verbal and visual literacies, I might have as Deleuze and Guattari (1987) suggested, realized new realities. The blending of literacies produced a more dynamic encounter with knowledge. This was revealed within and through attention to process. I cannot explain to anyone *how things are* rather, I explore *how things become*. Theory becomes research becomes theory (with)in an ongoing experimental disposition with inventive creative inquiry. Theory, in my case, became through continuous aesthetic creation, it was an assemblage of noticed unknowns which emerged through dialogues with artist materials, video, and academic text. I envisioned to understand. This paper shares my experiences as an artist/researcher/teacher, specifically attending to the research process. It does not claim to be a new methodology, or seek to be replicated. However, it is an offering to imagine research differently. As such my research questions appear in italicized bold throughout the paper, mimicking the process of unfolding, emergent questioning that occurred during my study. As questions were explored, they led to additional lines of inquiry which inform my artistry, research, and teaching practices. My purpose here was not to make generalized statements about artistic process as research but to dig deeply into my practice, which is different from previous conceptualizations of research that privilege the verbal and written texts as a research products . As such, I am interested in the ‘how’ of ***how artistic post qualitative inquiry research unfolds, informs my practice, and how new theory develops***. My intention is to invite readers into the process through both visual and verbal means, to inspire investigations into something previously unknown, and to discover new ways to know differently. I offer an opportunity to (re)imagine theory as a conceptual

medium, and explore the (re)visioning of thought, producing another possible approach to research in academe.

As a (re)searcher, I think with theory (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012), through performative creative process in my artist's studio. Theory produces something, it is an action. To think with it is to immerse oneself with/in that action. In my studio, theory is engaged with as a conceptual medium. The actions of theory intersect and matter through artist's marks as well as the written word. The two literacies are in conversation with one another as I move through the space of my studio. Barad (2007), believes "humans are neither pure cause nor pure effect but part of the world in its open-ended becoming" (p.148). Barad offers in an interview with Van der Tuin & Dolphijn (2012) that matter arises and materializes through intra-action. *Material* expresses agency. "Agency is not held, it is not a property of persons or things; rather, agency is an enactment, a matter of possibilities for reconfiguring entanglements" (p.55). Barad goes on to explain that agency requires attention to *response-ability*. In cultivating the capacity to *respond* to theory with artists materials, I am *able* immerse myself as part of the process. In my studio, I am intra-actively engaging in the phenomena of emerging theory. It becomes visible *as* matter through artistic encounters. Thus, the artist, movement, media, paper, iPad, video, and theory materialize through intra-active responses, therefore, "matter and meaning are mutually articulated" (Barad, 2007, p.152). Intra-action with material is a *doing* (a verb), a dialog that uncovers realizations with(in) theory as it relates to my data across all of my research. The performative act of art making while thinking with theory about/with data, generates deliberate tensions in both logical and affective modes of knowing as they reciprocally disrupt the habits of one another. Image interrupts and troubles text, text disrupts image. Research becomes about emergent process.

For me, the action of doing/making art moves in a multidirectional, rhizomatic exploration of discovering something not sought. The rhizome does not privilege any one way of knowing over another (Sauvagnargues, 2016). There are many possible paths for which meaning may arise, thus, the nonlinear structure of the rhizome affords not only multiple entry points in and out of process, but also invites inquiry into the margins and (in)between spaces where the unexpected may lurk. Working intuitively, introducing new art materials to explore theory, and working outside my comfort zone create tension. These active tensions disrupt the habitual traditional trajectory in such a way that new realizations are afforded agency within the emerging visual.

(Re)visioning Process

While I do not want to make sweeping generalizations about how or why artists create, it is important to discuss my artistic process here as a practice of rigorous investigation in order to

draw parallels and simultaneous intersections with my conceptualizations of scholarly research. As a visual thinker and artist, my intention is not to create an artwork (a product) but to plug into the process as conceptual understandings about the world reveal themselves (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987). To focus on the product using tried and true tools and materials, speaks to an anticipated projected end. Privileging a consistent aesthetic displaces attention from the emergent moment and projects attention to another place, an end point. Product focused attention then, is more linear in its trajectory, ignoring the margins, the in-betweens, the whispers of the now/not yet. Remaining present in the process cultivates a different experience. In attending deeply to process, time becomes a tool of contemplation and tensions which fuels transformation. For example; I've discovered that my visual aesthetic is what maintains an onto-epistemological *stuckness*, a habit of being with what I believe, how I know, and finally create. As an artist, being comfortable with my ability to draw and produce imagery in a certain style is pleasing, the results are predictable and I can safely explore meaningful ideas. However, I believe great art does not arise from habit and comfort. It has been my experience as both an artist and an educator of twenty-five years that powerful imagery surprises and is born of fearless play, risk taking, discomfort, and re-thinking *how* ideas make meaning. Conversely, research conducted using highly structured methodologies such as a bounded case study (Stark, 2005) pinpoints a specific unit of study. Such methods are likely to produce more predictable outcomes as the focus is narrower and tools and structures are consistently applied. While bounded case study is appropriate for answering questions of quality within distinct boundaries, it does not serve my aims. I wish to move beyond established artistic and qualitative methodologies in order to uncover new ways of making, knowing, and doing. In other words, a comfortable aesthetic is to art as conventional methodologies are to qualitative research. By relaxing the structured architecture of traditional methodologies, conceptualizations about making can wander into new territory creating a space for something different to arise. Disrupting tried and true artistic processes and research methodologies echoes the intention of St. Pierre's call to "PRODUCE DIFFERENT KNOWLEDGE and PRODUCE KNOWLEDGE DIFFERENTLY" (St. Pierre, 2011b, p. 613, emphasis in original).

A/R/Tography as fluid architecture

Artists are researchers and teachers. "Artists, researchers, and teachers do not simply do art, research, or teach; they live through these embodied experiences and make sense of them in purposeful ways" (La Jevic & Springgay, 2008, p.71). The identities within a/r/tography are not fixed, rather each identity is its own mapping of understanding and brings a unique lens and perspective. All three are present and at work within the space of this research. The three interconnected identities create an entangled web of experience, investigation and complicate ways of knowing as data is plugged into theory through simultaneous multimodal investigations in the space of my studio. Irwin (2004) offered that a/r/tography invites all of us

to “live a life of deep meaning enhanced through perceptual practices that reveal what was once hidden, create what has never been known, and imagine what we hope to achieve” (pp. 35-36). For me, this manifests most vividly as I engage with research in my studio.

My experience with A/r/tography emerged through practice and intra-action. Focus shifted away from who or what was being researched and became post-structural in nature, centering on the how. Attending to process shifted the emphasis from an end point to the present. In tending intensely to process, decentering my artist self gave way to a larger conceptualization that disrupted my comfortable ways of knowing and creating. (Giddens, 1987). As an A/r/tographer, I located key moments and emergent potential within and (in)between data to expose events, ideas, and objects in new ways. In my own research, this became a reciprocal collaboration between the artist/researcher/teacher with the material, theory, data, time, and spaces.

Leggo, Sinner, Irwin, Pantaleo, Gouzouasis, & Grauer (2011) suggested that a/r/tographical inquiry describes and creates virtual experiences so that others can directly perceive, feel, or have a clearer grasp of an affective encounter. One artifact of this (re)searched research is expressed through a video documentary, engaging the sense of sight and sound and inviting the viewer into the content. In addition, the video’s edited structure visually echoes the wandering anatomy of an entangled map as layers of sound, image and text intersect and grow from and into each other. “A/r/tography is a research methodology that entangles and performs what Deleuze & Guattari (1987) refer to as a rhizome” (Irwin and Springgay, 2008, p. xx). The rhizome lends itself beautifully to both the artistic and video editing process, offering lines of flight (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987), countless points of departure and diffractive intersections setting the stage for emergent knowing. Diffractive encounters entangle literacies, allowing them to be seen and engaged with through one another (Barad, 2012). Key to a/r/tography is its capacity to tend to simultaneous use of multiple literacies [and multiplicities which are associated with the rhizome] within space and time (LeJevic and Springgay, 2008).

A/r/tography is about multiplicities that co-compose (Manning & Massumi, 2014) to create deep and meaningful understandings. The slash (“/”) in-between each letter becomes a nomadic space or a threshold for lines of flight, diffraction, disruption, and the creative unfolding of new knowledge. For me, it is (in)between each identity and literacy, where theory is woven and performed. In the assembling, mapping, and layering the a/r/tographical identities of the artist, researcher and teacher, the nature of the rhizomatic structure is “open and connectible in all of its dimensions; it is detachable, reversible, susceptible to constant modification” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p.12). Each identity comingles and inter/intra-acts with data and theory differently.



Figure 1A



Figure 1B

My primary data source for my current research is visual, in the form of video, and artwork Theorists, Barad (2007), Deleuze & Guattari (1987), Braidotti (2013), Irwin (2004, 2008), and Manning & Massumi (2014), arrive in my company in the form of written text. In thinking through their theories visually, I am able to experience meanings and live the phenomena of theory, which is very difficult to understand by words alone. In this way, the art becomes a modality of research and an intra-active conversation with theory. My studio is a space for visualizing, reading and writing, the space itself becomes the slash (“/”) where meaning emerges as I move between literacies. As I read, I am inspired to think visually and I then draw, which produces new realizations which move me to write and to more reading. For example, as evidence of thinking with Barad’s theories of diffraction, figures 1A through 1E exhibit a progressive intra-active dialog with verbal and visual text, material, time and space. This image emerged THROUGH me as I conceptualized the action and mattering of diffractive theory and its’ doing within the context of questions I was asking in my research. Deliberately working with imagery and art materials that were unfamiliar, cultivated discomfort and tension. It disrupted what I thought I understood and made a space for something else. Only though relaxing my expectations and remaining present in the moment did understanding diffract and *become* as I worked with the emergent conceptualizations and their intersections with my research.



Figure 1C



Figure 1D

All the work was created over stratified durations and in conversation with each other. For example, I began one piece working with a specific theory, and then would pause that piece to begin another. As I worked, moving (in)between them, the two informed each other; however, the second work was completed before the first. In this way, the works are simultaneous and stratified.

Intuition and Tension. As an artist, I actively engage the intuitive. It is the invisible and the fundamental thread that interconnects media, conceptual thinking, and artistic process. Intuition requires an inner trust, which is also saturated with tension, discomfort and productive confusion when new understanding is emerging (Atkinson & Claxton, 2000).



Figure 1E

Confusion slows process down. Resisting confusion and tension to ease the discomfort of not knowing produces predictable results over and over, be it imagery in paintings or conclusions in research. In sinking into the relationship of the intuitive within the act of creating, it is at its essence, the embodiment of what Barad (2007) describes as agential realism. I co-exist in relationship with the artist materials and the studio space. Materials push my thinking as I engage with them. Its unfamiliarity produces tension within the process of visualizing. The artist/researcher intra-acts with data and imagery, each informing the other. Data, imagery, and artist enter the conversation on equal terms.

Although this process is autoethnographic in nature, I wish to decenter the “I” and honor other actors on this journey with me, which include the nonhuman as active participants. Paint, paper, books, spaces, etc. all have agency. Jackson and Mazzei (2008) cite Brown (2003) in proposing a different production of autoethnography, one that studies “the processes of truth production” that “attend[s] to the tensions between the real and those things left outside the real” (p. 304). In this way, the narrative unfolds in an intra-active manner. Voice is conceptualized as visual text, movement, and a blending of spaces.



Figure 2. Studios space with verbal text (left wall) in conversation with visual text (right wall)

Studio as Prehensive Space. Prehension as a philosophical concept speaks to “an interaction of a subject with an event or entity which involves perception but not necessarily cognition”(In *Oxford Dictionaries online* Retrieved from, <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/prehension>). With that, the studio as a prehensive space suggests a complex orchestration of events in which understanding may not be readily apparent. My studio is a space of nonsensical sense making. Walker (2015) quotes William James by sharing; “Put simply, his [Deleuze’s] arguments are not that nonsense is the absence of sense, but rather the presence of an important kind of sense that can only operate through nonsense” (p.233). In the space of my studio, discursive texts move diffractively through the expression and nonsensical sense making of imagery. My creative unfolding and enfolding of research captured on video, has no orderly progression. It is a surrender to the moment, a

complete sinking into and participation in the process, with attention paid to sensation, realization, and the noticing of something that would otherwise be missed if I had a destination in mind. The artwork produced is inconsequential. The process *is* the product.

During my encounters with art making, diffractive thinking erupts in the space of my studio revealing *how* diffraction troubles data and how diffractive thinking interrupts what I think I know. It moves from linear to multi-dimensional engagement and blurs habit. As drawing with theory progresses, my work transforms through tension, new marks, and color. Words harass my comfortable aesthetic. I am forced to slow down and intra-act differently, allowing the drawing to guide me. I resist employing materials the same way and relying on techniques I have become too comfortable with. In this manner, I can directly engage with qualities of the theory and contemplate my data, all the while, video recording the unfolding process.

Data: the undoing and doing of an emerging post qualitative artistic inquiry. For 15 months, I collected video footage, photographs, verbally recorded thoughts, music, sounds, drawings and interviews, documenting the process of making research visible. I was researching, my own research process.

The verbal-recordings were personal musings. It was important to capture the immediacy of a thought as it occurred because often, it arose in motion, while driving, walking, drawing, etc. and I could not write in that moment. If left, the thought evaporated. Recordings captured *significant* moments of excitement or new conceptualizations about what researching differently does. The recordings were transcribed, totaling 75 pages. These were read through the lenses of time, space, matter and movement. My marks on the transcription echoed a map and became an entangled rhizome, intersections became points of diffractive seeds. Different from traditional coding which seeks similarities and themes, diffractive seeds act as disruptions, points, or intersections where something different was happening. I conceptualized these *diffractive seeds* as potential. These seeds acted as ripples AND as points of departure for lines of flight and new questions. This large document was then edited from 40,000 words to 6,000 with an emphasis on those concepts. This distilled document then went through several additional iterations of multilayered visual mapping. Five larger doings/actions arose from the mappings and seeding's. These included new questions, tensions/discomfort, realizations, reflexive moments, and doings. The seeds were intersections on a complex rhizome, offering multiple ways to engage and interpret.

A non-traditional screenplay was written and is the textual complement to the documentary film produced from this research. Within the screenplay are excerpts from interviews, which also act as data. The footage for the 30-minute documentary was edited down from over 200 hours of video.

Like the rhizome, the data here was not created, encountered or analyzed in a linear manner; it all *mattered* through a weaving of conceptual threads tangling from every direction, mattering as this interactive document.

Reading within: An invitation to engage data, analysis, and form conclusions; Entering the assemblage. Each piece in this next section is an assemblage of data, analysis, discussion, and initial conclusions (as there is no real end). It is offered as a multimodal encounter for the viewer. It invites participation into the lived experiences from multifarious perspectives. Woven into the screenplay are the voices of the theorists who have been in my company for the past year. Their voices (with)in the narrative of my lived experience makes research visible while inviting readers into the text through different sensory experiences. The video, screen play are interconnected. Reading and encountering each in different sequences will produce different responses. This is deliberate. This multi-hypermodal data invites you into the fold to experience *with me*.

Link to documentary.

https://drive.google.com/open?id=0B7YJd8oETS_TFIXakhvbVJORWs

Link to screenplay/transcription

<https://drive.google.com/open?id=12MBNcpYMmGt7HTgXCqxANCPiWOnuNSQMQXgRyCyuXU>

A guide for encountering: How does reading differently disrupt knowledge encounters and open spaces for knowing differently? Creative and artistic thinking very much echo the conceptual structure of hypermodal text in that they all jump from place to place in a non-linear fashion. Artistic thinking conceptualizes and reads across literacies, finding inspiration behind what is known, making connections across time and intersecting lines to materialize theory. Lemke (2002) explains that hypermodality invites interaction through multiplicative combinations of language, imagery, and sound. Hypermodal assemblages move beyond the multimodal in that in that hypermodal text creates layered intersections (Lemke, 2002), and blurs the boundaries of the traditional research encounter (Ulmer 2016). Audiences of multimodal and hypermodal texts can engage reading in a non-linear manner. Thus, providing opportunities for multiple encounters with texts, invites each reader to make individual choices as to what they encounter, when and how.

I believe that deep meaning is difficult to express, encounter, and construct through a singular linear text. As such, to capture the nuances of the lived experiences of post qualitative artistic inquiry, multiple texts are offered to invite the reader *into* the experience, which offers multi-sequential intra-actions with(in) and between the readings. There is a myriad of ways to

engage the data and emerging analysis offered below.

Engaging the transcription. The link to the screenplay (above) includes the transcription as a single document. The right-hand column is populated with the edited transcription described above. It shares the raw, lived narrative of the researcher covering a period of one year during her dissertation journey. The transcription has been deliberately left in its diffractive-seeded state. Each diffractive color represents a potential *line of flight* (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987). Color delineation invites you, the reader, into a zigzag of thinking. Lines can be read separately by color to achieve a more in-depth sinking into. For example, reading only text highlighted in pink takes you on a journey of verbs, skipping rhythmically through the text, denoting the “doing” of this exploration. It can also be read by space (where the thinking occurred). This is differentiated by font. It can also be read as a whole, and, and, and. In reading this way, the process of understanding is made visual AND participatory. To visually differentiate aspects of a text with color also interrupts how reading informs and how meaning might unfold. The addition of color provokes a different encounter that asks for a commitment to reading differently.

Color key for reading.

Doing/Verbs Questions Tensions/Discomfort Realizations Reflexivity/Bias

Screenplay. The left-hand column is populated with the screenplay, which is the textual rendering of the 30-minute documentary. It parallels the transcription in that the themes in the transcription live through and emerge within the screenplay and video documentary.

In the film industry, the traditional task of a screenplay is to *show, don't tell*. While I follow some of the conventional guidelines of screenplay etiquette, I also took liberties in sharing theoretical contemplations with(in) the action descriptions; after all, there is *action* in my thinking. In thinking with theory as a conceptual medium, it matters as I move within my studio, making choices and intra-acting in response to and with my research. These narrative sequences offer context and rationale for the clips selected as significant for inclusion in the film.

The screenplay offers a narrative a/r/tographical account of an artist/scholar confronting new knowing in a rigorous research setting. Its intention is to partner with the video to more deeply illuminate the complexities of thinking with theory and invite validity to the conversation. It is an a/r/tographers method for rich thick description and offers up lines of flight for speculation and discussion.

Artwork. Included in the left-hand column following the screenplay is the progression of

images I created as data was visualized and theory was explored over the course of a year. Each image includes the date started and date completed. These are included to illustrate the time frame, as many were developed at overlapping times as I moved in-between theory. It also makes visible the transformation of marks and aesthetic as deliberate tensions were encountered.

Documentary video. Finally, this research experience is explored through a 30-minute documentary film, further exploring how visual research methodologies are lived as valid forms of research. Jackson and Mazzei (2012) pointed out, “we don’t obtain knowledge by standing outside the world; we know because we are of the world” (p.1 20). My intention is to make research visible, to illuminate an artist’s way of thinking with/through/and becoming theory.

Editing as research: a documentary’s (un)doing. I struggled with tremendous tension in the creating of the video and screenplay. For months I labored over the writing of the screenplay, imagining it must come first, privileging verbal text without realizing it. The radical realization that I could start by visually composing the story before writing was absurdly obvious, but my habits and conditioning prevented me from seeing it until I moved through the tensions of academic expectations and trusted my visual voice to guide me. My intra-action with the documentary including working from the visual to verbal and transcribing the imagery and interviews after creating the initial video, revealed HOW and why I made choices; (re)watching, (re)viewing, (re)searching the documentary illuminated my thinking process. As the screenplay developed, theory and text emerged as a response to the multimodal telling and I understood the significance of the choices I made as I made them. Every intersection in the process became a cyclical conversation between the artist, researcher, and teacher. As the action of theory was visually (re)viewed in the video clips, it became a teaching, offering me insights into details I missed during the lived moment. I (re)searched how the process invited new insights into my questions, noting what was happening with an emerging image and how it inspired a different thought about a theory or question. In sinking so completely into the process and devoting myself to thinking with and through theory something *different happened*. (Re)living and seeing the process validated my thinking and contributed to my capacity to more clearly articulate the elusive unseen. Through the layered multiplicities, something new emerged. In plugging *theory as conceptual medium* into active mattering, the conceptual palette of verbs materialized through the performative assemblage of the documentary film. The conceptual palette, populated with theory and action, is much like an artist’s paint palette. Much the way Lather (2006) makes color analogies to research paradigms, I draw textures with the rhizome, blend and blur with diffraction, assemble narratives with collage and so on. The conceptual medium became a creative metaphor for HOW thinking matters. The film framed as both data and outcome then

invites others to engage, interpret, and connect with process.

Harris (2016) explains that video editing is a form of analysis. The video, in conversation with the screenplay, is the analysis and simultaneously the discussion embedded within the research. The editing process reflects choices influenced by value, research questions, genealogy, realizations etc. all of which express agency as the narrative unfolds. Editing is an assemblage of subjectively conscious privileged moments. There is nothing quick or easy about the process. (Re)visiting, (re)viewing, and (re)searching video footage is a herculean endeavor. For every minute composed in the final video, 25-30 hours of time was spent watching raw footage and selecting clips and moments that wove a narrative of making research visible. I questioned whether video is art or research, this became irrelevant as it is both. Mitchell (2011) said “video-based research (and other arts-based approaches) is putting pressure on the traditional structures and expectations of the academy” (as cited in Harris, 2016, p, 8). It is the art of and within research, which offers a compelling experience designed to provoke more questions. Finally, the writing of this paper offers insights and additional explanations, fleshing out the process, offering an additional entry point into the research.

How this work represents innovative emergent research. During my graduate studies, I sometimes encountered an attitude that visual artifacts as research objects were too difficult to use because everyone sees/reads them differently therefore interpretation is subjective and validity impossible. I invite readers to consider that everyone sees/reads words differently too. We all read through the culturally diverse lenses of our unique experiences. What images do, particularly multimodal pieces, is offer lenses beyond the readers’ experiences. Rose (2012) as explained by Harris (2016) addresses critical approaches to for working with video. She explains that researchers must take images seriously and spend time carefully exploring visual text. “Visual representations have their own effects” (Rose, 2012, as cited by Harris, 2016, p.152). In other words, images do something. This research empowered my voice and validated how I come to understand, which is different from traditional academic approaches. Both theory and research became visible while moving my thinking in different directions. Engaging in this process has also cultivated a deeper sense of how to guide my students, to support them in the cultivation their own unique academic voices, and to help them to embrace a state of tension and ambiguity. It is OK not to know.

This work is not meant to answer a question, rather, it raises questions of what research does and how to intra-act with it. Additionally, this work offers nuanced understandings of engagement. Harris (2016) suggests that video “plays a radical role as an emerging method” and “as a method and a methodology, video is far more than simply another visual tool” (p.156).

Because there is no end... (AND...And...And...and...and...and). St. Pierre (2014) offers that engaging in *post analysis* requires a different, and I would offer, unknown approach from the beginning (as if there were a beginning). There is reciprocity between theory and data that blurs boundaries and it is in this blended space that imagery emerges and informs knowing. This blended space is the slash, the in-between. There is tension in this place and it is uncomfortable. However, this tension becomes a site for diffraction and is a space of multiplicities. At the end of the day, many researches may remain guided by preconceived notions of what they believe; unaware of opportunities to explore intersections of thinking, behavior and perception, which interweaves all lived experience. The interconnectivity of all things is elusive and requires pause.

The complexity of today's research needs to echo and serve the complexities of our interconnected global society. It is in constant motion and saturated with tangled layers of multimodal thinking and doing. We need to ask ourselves, "***How can research engage audiences in such a way that readers come away having lived within the experience, even if only for a little while? What might that produce? What new questions might that raise?***" Engaging texts differently affords opportunities to engage with content and subsequent meaning making, perhaps making research more accessible to a broader audience, becoming more inclusive rather than exclusive. Forging a new path requires trust and a pioneering sense of rigorous adventure. An a/r/tographical exploration incites the desire to investigate authentically and to discover complex ways of knowing. When audiences engage with research, they come away with the lived sensation of what it is to know differently adding unique perspectives to new knowing.

References

- Atkinson, T., & Claxton, G. (2000). *The intuitive practitioner: on the value of not always knowing what one is doing*. Buckingham [England]; Philadelphia, PA: Open University Press, 2000.
- Barad, K. (2007). *Meeting the universe halfway: Quantum physics and the entanglement of matter and meaning*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Braidotti, R. (2013). *The Posthuman*. Cambridge, England. Polity Press.
- Deleuze, G., & Guattari, F. (1987). *Capitalism and schizophrenia: A thousand plateaus* (B. Massumi, Trans). Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.
- Giddens, A. (1987). Structuralism, post-structuralism and the production of culture. In A. Giddens & J. Turner (Eds.). (1987) *Social theory today*, (pp. 195-223) Stanford, CA, Stanford University Press,

- Harris, A. M. (2016). *Video as method*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Irwin, R. L. (2004). A/r/tography: A Metonymic Metissage. In , R. L. Irwin & A. De Cosson (Eds.). (2004). *A/r/tography: Rendering self through arts-based living inquiry*. (pp. 27-38) Vancouver, Canada: Pacific Educational Press.
- Irwin, R. L., & Springgay, S. (2008). A/r/tography as practice-based research. In Springgay, S., Irwin, R. L., Leggo, C., & Gouzouasis, P. (Eds.). *Being with A/r/tography* (pp. xiii-xxvii), Rotterdam, The Netherlands: Sense Publishers.
- Jackson, A. Y., & Mazzei, L. A. (2008). Experience and “I” in autoethnography. *International review of qualitative research*, 1(3), 299-318.
- Jackson, A. Y., & Mazzei, L. A. (2012). *Thinking with theory in qualitative research: Viewing data across multiple perspectives*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- La Jevic, L., & Springgay, S. (2008). A/r/tography as an ethics of embodiment visual journals in preservice education. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 14(1), 67-89.
- Lather, P. (2006). Paradigm proliferation as a good thing to think with: Teaching research in education as a wild profusion. *International journal of qualitative studies in education*, 19(1), 35-57.
- Leggo, C., Sinner, A. E., Irwin, R. L., Pantaleo, K., Gouzouasis, P., & Grauer, K. (2011). Linger in liminal spaces: a/r/tography as living inquiry in a language arts class. *International journal of qualitative studies in education*, 24(2), 239-256.
- Lemke, J. L. (2002). Travels in hypermodality. *Visual communication*, 1(3), 299-325.
- Manning, E., & Massumi, B. (2014). *Thought in the Act: Passages in the Ecology of Experience*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.
- Prehension [Def. 2]. (n.d.). In *Oxford Dictionaries online* Retrieved February 24, 2019, from, <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/prehension>
- Sauvagnargues, A. (2016). *Artmachines: Deleuze, Guattari, Simondon*. Edinburgh, United Kingdom: Edinburgh University Press.
- St. Pierre, E. A. (2011). The Critique and the coming after. In Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (Eds.). *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 611-635). Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Ulmer, J. B. (2016). Photography interrupted: A hypermodal assemblage. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 22(3), 176-182.
- Van der Tuin, I., & Dolphijn, R. (2012). *New materialism: Interviews & cartographies*. Ann Arbor: Open Humanities Press. Retrieved from http://openhumanitiespress.org/books/download/Dolphijn-van-der-Tuin_2013_New-

Materialism.pdf

Walker, S. (2015) Creativity after Deleuze: Possibilities for art education, theory and practice. In Bastos, F., & Zimmerman, E. (Eds.) *Connecting creativity research and practice in art education: Foundations, pedagogies, and contemporary issues* (pp. 229-235). Reston, VA: National Art Education Association.

About the author

Amy Ruopp is currently a Visiting Assistant Professor at the University of Missouri in Art Education. Identifying as an A/R/Tographer, Amy performs her creative scholarship through the three discrete yet interconnected lenses of the artist, researcher, and teacher. Her research focuses on: (1) exploring disruptive visual research methodologies, which challenge traditional paradigms of knowledge acquisition, and (2) developing innovative theoretically based curriculum's which value both verbal and visual literacies. As an artist educator, Amy recognizes and celebrates the value and power of bringing diverse knowledge bases into service of one another. Both Amy's artistry and research directly support her curriculum design and teaching.

Recently, Amy spent 12 months actively video documenting her arts based and a/r/tographical research methodologies. Conceptualizing theory as a palette of *performative doings*, her studio became a place of 'mattering' as data and analysis were put into conversation with her artistic production. From this, she produced a 30-minute auto/ethnographical documentary film, making artistic research visible. This led to her current grant funded research working with graduate student researchers who are pursuing alternative research modalities that honor artistic modes of thinking and expression.

International Journal of Education & the Arts

<http://IJEa.org>

ISSN: 1529-8094

Editor

Christopher M. Schulte
University of Arkansas

Co-Editors

Eeva Anttila
University of the Arts Helsinki

Mei-Chun Lin
National University of Tainan

Peter Webster
University of Southern California

Media Review Editor

Ann Clements
Pennsylvania State University

Managing Editor

Christine Liao
University of North Carolina Wilmington

Yenju Lin
Pennsylvania State University

Associate Editors

Kimber Andrews
University of Cincinnati

David Johnson
Lund University

Shari Savage
Ohio State University

Heather Kaplan
University of Texas El Paso

Deborah (Blair) VanderLinde
Oakland University

Alexis Kallio
University of the Arts Helsinki

Christina Hanawalt
University of Georgia

Advisory Board

Full List: <http://www.ijea.org/editors.html#advisory>