Art Education and Disability Studies

John K Derby

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John Derby
The University of Kansas
Department of Visual Art
E-mail: johnderby@ku.edu

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Abstract

This article explores the field of Art Education as a valuable contributor to Disability Studies. Art Education has longstanding ties to disability research and pedagogy, and recent advancements in Art Education as well as Disability Studies closely align the two fields. Their mutual investment in visual culture studies engenders the possibility for a transdisciplinary space in which disability can be explored in new pedagogical ways to yield unique artifacts. Through several Art Education perspectives, I propose strategies for interjecting meaningful art activities into post-secondary, humanities-based Disability Studies curricula.

Since its inception, Disability Studies has circumvented the ivory tower's barricades to establish an accessible hall, drawing from "intellectual roots in the social sciences, humanities, and rehabilitation sciences" (Albrecht, Seelman, & Bury, 2001, p. 2). As Disability Studies has gained stature and confidence as a "fully legitimate area of study" with a "strong sense of identity" (Davis, 2006c, p. xiii), it has expanded its boundaries, with increasing attention to art and visual culture (Crutchfield & Epstein, 2000; Davis, 1997, 2006a, 2010; Davis & Smith, 2006a; Eisenhauer, 2009; Haller, 2010; Kuppers, 2003, 2007; Millett-Gallant, 2010; Roman & Frazee, 2009; Siebers, 2000; Snyder, 2002). However, Disability Studies has continued to develop within traditional disciplinary spaces, yielding a multidisciplinary (http://www.dsq-sds.org/about/editorialPolicies#focusAndScope; http://www.rds.hawaii.edu/) rather than a *transdisciplinary* (Choi & Pak, 2006) composition, in which disciplinary boundaries would be transcended. Transdisciplinary scholarship is not synonymous with multidisciplinary or interdisciplinary scholarship—it invites scholars across disciplines plus layperson stakeholders (Flinterman, Teclemariam-Mesbah, Broerse, & Blunders, 2001) to

establish new, holistic (Soskolne, 2000) ideas and new artifacts that do not resemble disciplinary boundaries. Furthermore, as English emerges as the dominant site of scholarship (Millett-Gallant, 2010), the arts are increasingly framed within humanities discourses, and disproportionate attention is given to formal written texts over others, including fine art and visual culture.

This article invites Disability Studies scholars to partner with the progressive field of Art Education—a reciprocation of my case (Derby, 2011) for Art Education to embrace Disability Studies. Art Education impacts a broad constituency of learners spanning preschool through life in a variety of settings including museums, public schools, private and parochial schools, community centers, hospitals (e.g., art therapy), homes, and higher learning institutions. K–12 arts education is mandatory in most U.S. states (Arts Education Partnership, 2008), and art programs attract learners of diverse cognitive, perceptual, physical, and psychological abilities. Art Education's extensive development of critical visual culture pedagogy and its recent investment in Disability Studies (Derby, 2010, 2011; Eisenhauer, 2007, 2008a, 2008b, 2010a, 2010b; Wexler, 2011) suggests the field holds considerable potential for expanding the reach and praxis of Disability Studies.

To connect the fields, I first introduce Art Education's historic investment in disability and current research trends that are pertinent to Disability Studies, including recent creative research that dynamically unites the two fields (Derby, 2010; Eisenhauer, 2009, 2010b). Thereafter, I explore five Art Education perspectives that carry potential for transdisciplinarity among the fields. I offer practical pedagogical suggestions for including art in humanities-based Disability Studies curricula.

Enabling Dialogue: Art Education Research on Disability

Disability Legislation, And Inclusive Education

Art Education research has been interested in disability since the 1930s (Blandy, 1991). Viktor Lowenfeld—affectionately revered as "the father of Art Education"—devoted his early career (1926–1938) to teaching at a school for blind children in which he developed a passion for therapeutically using creativity in art (Efland, 1990, p. 234), which was grounded in psychoanalytic constructs (Efland, p. 235). Lowenfeld dominated the field's thinking until his death in 1960 (Efland, p. 236), and his legacy left indelible impressions that art can remediate, rehabilitate, and socialize disabled children, but also that disabled learners are important.

The field's stubborn persistence of medical model principles (Blandy, 1991) and language (Eisenhauer, 2008a) beckons a Lowenfeldian tradition, but it intimately reflects the enduring bond between art educators and special educators that followed the "Education of All Handicapped Children Act" (EAHCA, 1975). In response to the mandate of special education for nearly all disabled young people (United States Department of Education (USDE), n.d.), art classrooms were historically among the first sites open to mainstreaming (Causton-Theoharis & Burdick, 2008; Gerber, 1994), often primary placements

(Guay, 1994b; Schiller, 1999; Wexler, 2005b) for certain disabled students, sometimes arguably their best possible learning environments (Eubanks, 1999; Gair, 1980). Despite isolated resistance to teaching disabled learners (Kraft, 2001; Loesl, 1999), the historic welcoming of disabled students into art classrooms (Causton-Theoharis & Burdick, 2008; Gerber, 1994; Guay, 1994b; Schiller, 1999; Wexler, 2005b), persists. In addition to my extensive interaction with art teachers, the overwhelming success (personal communication with National Art Education Association (NAEA) press, August 18, 2009) of recent books dealing with Art Education and disability (Gerber & Guay, 2006; Gerber & Kellman, 2010) suggests art educators regard teaching disabled people as a top priority.

Beyond the necessary practical framing of disability according to orthodox special education discourses which monopolize K–12 institutions, the sociocultural conceptualization of disability underlying the "Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990" (ADA, 1990) is evident in Art Education scholarship. Blandy and colleagues (Blandy, 1989a, 1989b, 1991, 1993, 1994, 1999; Blandy, Branen, Congdon, & Muschlitz, 1992; Blandy, Panscofar, & Mockensturm, 1988) were the earliest to routinely emphasize disability culture, social justice, and self-advocacy. Since ADA, Art Education scholarship has called for greater disability awareness (Blandy, 1989a, 1991, 1994, 1999; Eisenhauer, 2008b; Loesl, 1999; Wexler, 2009), better teacher education training regarding disability (Blandy, 1994; Guay, 1994a, 1994b; Lund & Massey, 2004), environmental changes that address ableism (Andrus, 1994; Arnold, 1999; Blandy 1989a, 1989b, 1991, 1993, 1999; Blandy et al., 1988; Guay, 1993, 1994b, 1995, 1999; Schiller, 1999; Wexler, 2005b, 2009), collaboration among stakeholders to provide greater learning accessibility (Causton-Theoharis & Burdick, 2008; Keifer-Boyd & Kraft, 2003; Kraft, 2003, 2006; Lund & Massey, 2004; Wexler, 2005a), and disability-centered sociopolitical pedagogy, activism, and advocacy (Blandy, 1989a, 1989b, 1991, 1994, 1999; Clements, 1999; Derby, 2011; Eisenhauer, 2007, 2008a, 2008b, 2009, 2010b). As Blandy (1999) noted, "inclusion" in Art Education is not limited to physical accommodation of people with disabilities—it is "the accommodation of the cultural expressions of this community" (p. 40).

Shifting Paradigms In Art Education

Since the EAHCA (1975), Art Education has undergone two major paradigm shifts that repositioned the field close to Disability Studies. In the 1980s, the Getty Foundation established a major endowment that propagated *Discipline-Based Art Education* (DBAE) (Efland, 1990; Hausman, 2007). DBAE research and curriculum advocated intellectual rigor and strict attention to the disciplines of criticism, history, aesthetics, and studio art production (Greer, 1984). While DBAE was often implemented through a Eurocentric, elitist filter, one of its chief motivations was to dissolve frivolous art teaching traditions, including those which favored remedial aims and ignored Art Education objectives (Blandy, Pancsofar, & Mockensturm, 1988; Carpenter & Carpenter, 1999). Much DBAE literature was inattentive to the socialcultural advances

that engendered Disability Studies (Derby, 2011), but basic DBAE theory suggests that all learners should be provided with authentic, comprehensive arts experiences. Some curriculum scholars have expanded DBAE—also called comprehensive Art Education—to include critical and creative responses to global contemporary art and learners' everyday diverse multimodal experiences. Such scholarship offers rich opportunities for expanding Disability Studies pedagogy.

A second major paradigm shift emerged in the late 1990s as many Art Education scholars adopted a visual culture studies platform. Tavin (2003) described this shift as a transdisciplinary pedagogical project that focuses on lived experiences with intent to "disrupt, contest, and transform systems of oppression" (p. 198). This transdisciplinary movement mirrors trends across the humanities and social sciences that advance social justice through critical and creative research and the blurring of genres regarding hegemony among postmodern paradigms (Guba & Lincoln, 2005). Art Education scholars continue to work out the paradigmatic implications of visual culture (Duncum, 2009) as an indication of academia's disposition of "multivocality, contested meaning, paradigmatic controversies, and new textual forms" (Guba & Lincoln, 2005, p. 212). Significantly, the visual culture movement and emerging interests in Art Education, such as arts-based research, rely heavily on humanities perspectives while integrating and expanding traditional modes of communication.

Disability Studies—Art Education: Emerging Literature

Following the important proliferation of multidisciplinarity between Disability Studies and visual culture (Barounis, 2009; Benin & Cartwright, 2006; Candlin, 2006; Davis & Smith, 2006b; Davis, 2006b; Garland-Thomson, 2006; Grigely, 2006; Kleege, 2005, 2006; Kristeva, 2006; Mirzoeff, 1997; Serlin, 2006; Smith, 2005) and the aforementioned research on disability, Art Education scholars have begun to recognize the importance of engaging Disability Studies (Derby, 2011). In particular, Eisenhauer has introduced Disability Studies to several Art Education journals (2007, 2008a, 2010a, 2010b). Eisenhauer perenially discusses projects that blur boundaries of everday and scholarly expression, and written and visual media, such as autobiographical *zines* and other "'underground' artistic practices" (2010b, p. 29) which are routinely omitted from Disability Studies discussions. Through the process of sharing zines, Eisenhauer surpassed the stigma of her clinical diagnosis to embody her identity within a community of disabled people. Her zine demonstrates how disenfranchised disabled communities communicate through creative, expressive, nontraditional texts. Zines, which comprise an important part of the conceptualization of the disability arts movement, exemplify the transdisciplinary erosion of inaccessible publication boundaries that segregate word and image; scholar, writer, artist, and layperson.

In another article published in *Disability Studies Quarterly*, Eisenhauer (2009) provides an interesting example of transdisciplinary scholarship. She

discusses her artwork about mental illness experiences, which challenges ableist conceptions of art by "mental patients" as Outsider art, therapy, and other terms that aim to excuse the recklessness of "madness." Eisenhauer's installation exhibit *Admission* revisits timeless art themes of "landscape" (Figure 1), "self-portrait," and "still-life" (Figure 2), by soberly juxtaposing photographic images of historic psychiatric hospitals (which one viewer of the exhibit ironically remarked was "beautiful") with artifacts alluding to its ignominious practice: restraining belts, straightjackets, hospital gowns, pill bottles, and so on. In her article, Eisenhauer (2009) presents this work through a Deleuzian theorization of "(be)coming out" with mental illness, not as an encounter of "*coming out to*" the audience, but as a processes of "the *coming together of*." Her intertextual (Snyder, 2002) accounts of subjectivity organically merge Disability Studies and Art Education scholarship through the creative intermingling of visual and linguistic texts. Her amalgamation of theory, prose, and visual art provides promising examples of transdisciplinary scholarship between Disability Studies and Art Education.

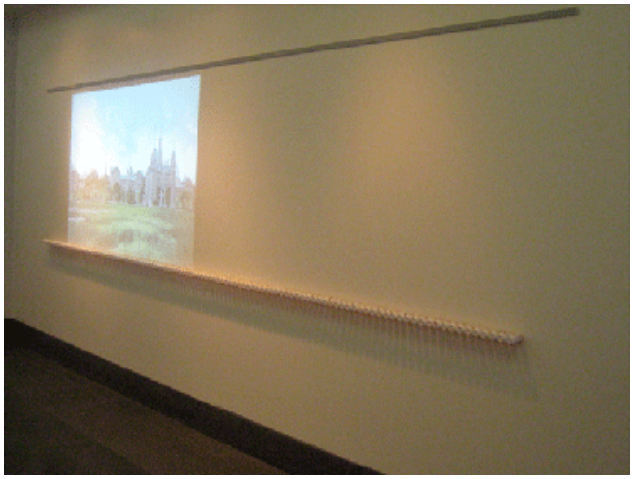

Figure 1*. View of "Landscape," from the installation artwork *Admission*, 2008, by J. Eisenhauer. The work juxtaposes a digital projection of a postcard of the since demolished Ohio Lunatic Asylum with a "baseline" of psychopharmacological pill bottles collected by the artist-author. Used with permission of Jennifer Eisenhauer and *Disability Studies Quarterly

Curriculum Suggestions from Art Education Perspectives

Eisenhauer's (2009, 2010b) work is responsive to Freedman's (2003) concerns that students have difficulty transferring critical analytic skills on linguistic texts to visual texts (p. 93) and that Art Education should be fundamental to all cultural studies (p. 127). As our culture becomes increasingly multimodal, it is important to examine multiple modes of expression, and we should consider *responding* through multiple modes as well. While Disability Studies scholars have criticized art and visual culture (Crutchfield & Epstein, 2000; Haller, 2010; Millett-Gallant, 2010; Sandahl & Auslander, 2005; Siebers, 2000, 2010) and have examined performative arts expressions of disability (Crutchfield & Epstein, 2000; Kuppers, 2003, 2007; Sandahl & Auslander, 2005), the pedagogical connection between visual analysis and art production has been neglected.

Figure 2*. View of "Still Life," from the installation artwork *Admission*, 2008, by J. Eisenhauer. The work juxtaposes lab coats with a digital projection of belts that bear the implication of involuntary restraint practices in psychiatric hospitals and the disabling experience of mental illness. Used with permission of Jennifer Eisenhauer and *Disability Studies Quarterly

The remainder of this article extends Eisenhauer's (2009, 2010b) transdisciplinary work by exploring how recent "mainstream" Art Education scholarship can provide pertinent pedagogical perspectives for Disability Studies classrooms. In this section I offer five non-hierarchical perspectives that emerge from the multivalent trends that shape contemporary Art Education. I do not suggest that Disability Studies must always incorporate Art Education pedagogy, nor do I ask humanities instructors to abandon traditional practices; rather, I propose Art Education strategies that can enhance Disability Studies curricula, particularly within disciplines that espouse creative pedagogy (e.g., critical race studies, English, dance, design, theatre, women's studies).

1. Art Addresses Identity

Throughout Art Education, the paradigm shifts from creative self-expression to DBAE to visual culture (Tavin, 2010) have maintained that art practices foster identity formation. The creative self-expression movement heralded individual expression, and DBAE curricula often mimicked the styles and techniques of modern artists and promoted the modern mythology of artists as extreme individuals (Freedman, 2003) of mad-genius (Foucault 1965/1988; Jamison, 1996). By contrast, "[a]n important educational aspect of visual culture is its effect on identity, in terms of both art-making and viewing, which is perhaps the greatest issue in education" (p. 2). Freedman (2003) explains that identity is corporeal, and that it is interactively accomplished through participation in visual culture. As postmodernism shifts the question of knowledge away from *what we know* to *who we are*, the notion of external truth "becomes increasingly evasive and seems to collapse back to the one form in which we have confidence: our bodies" (Freedman, p. 91). Freedman contends that visual culture is essentially a reflection of who we are and that viewing and

making art molds our thinking about ourselves and the world (p. 91). Siebers (2010) extends this claim, arguing that all human-made objects are "in some way a making and remaking of the human," and that "[i]f aesthetics and the human are inseparable, it is because art is the process by which human beings attempt to modify themselves" (p. 136).

Barney (2006) provides a pedagogical example of this. He describes a high school photography assignment in which students literally construct virtual identities with Adobe® Photoshop® software (Figure 3). Using photographs of each other, students digitally build composite portraits that look like real people. Then they add digital landscapes and objects, creating virtual portraits that represent imaginary identities. Finally, students write biographies for their virtual identities and discuss them. While most Disability Studies students probably lack access to Photoshop®, this project could be modified. Using magazine images, personal and public domain photographs, and printed images of artworks including those depicted in Disability Studies literature (Crutchfield & Epstein, 2000; Millett-Gallant, 2010; Snyder, Brueggemann, & Garland-Thomson, 2002), students could construct narrative self portraits (Amburgy, Knight, & Keifer-Boyd, 2006; Cummings, 2006), situational representations of disabled people they know or admire, representations of each other, stereotypical and anti-stereotypical portraits with text (Cummings, 2006), or other collaged "portraits." Beyond single portraits, students could create diptychs or triptychs representing intersecting or conflicting aspects or representations of identity, or identity *tags* such as virtual, fantastic, stereotypical, desired, professional, alter ego, outed, and so on. Such portraiture activities could build on existing text-based critical strategies common in Disability Studies classrooms as a means of advancing students' understandings of disability identity.

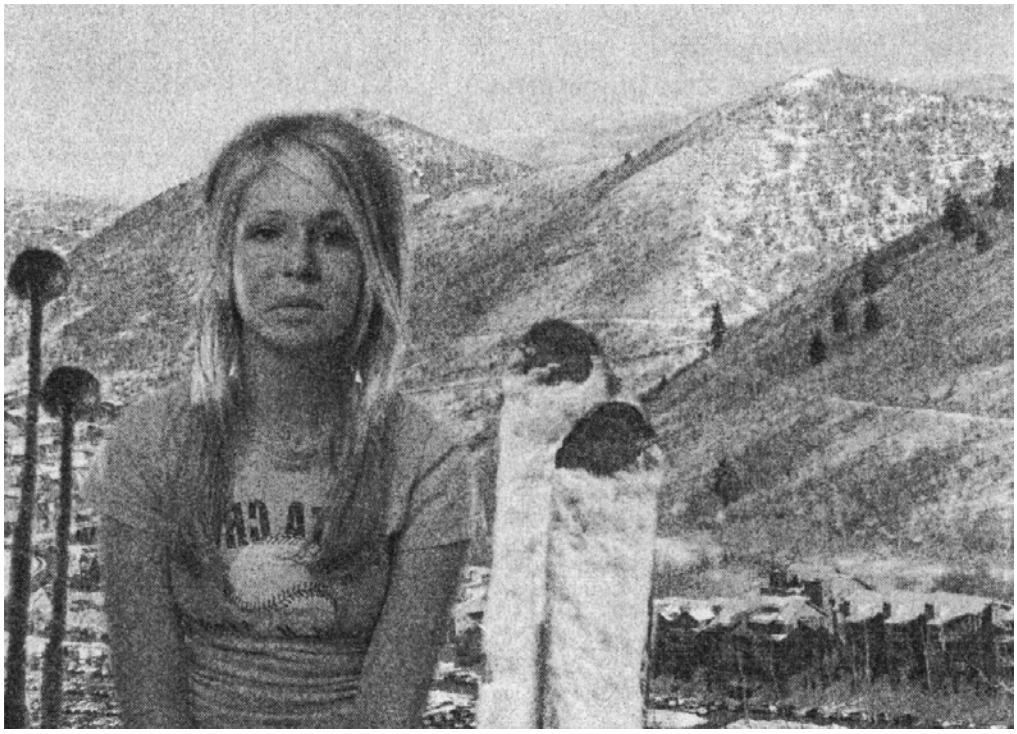

***Figure 3*. Unidentified student work, *Skier Girl,* 2004. A virtual identity created by using multiple photographed portraits and an original background [digital image]. Used with permission of Daniel T. Barney and the National Art Education Association.**

2. Art Practices Are Social, Cultural, And Critical

Ideally, identity formation through Art Education is a form of social production (Freedman, 2003, p. 4) rather than an individualistic pursuit. Students critically investigate "the ways in which knowledge is constructed and used to shape identity" (Freedman, p. 91), including how "social groups and cultural issues are visually represented and judged" (p. 154). Additionally, collaborative art making and classroom discussions about student art build community (Cummings, 2006; Plummer-Rohloff, 2006), engendering "personalization of social issues" (Freedman, p. 148). For example, Plummer-Rohloff's (2006) students conduct *visual ethnographic research* through such practices as logging media exposure, writing about the aesthetics of stores, surveying peers, analyzing television, photographing diverse styles within schools, saving packaging from purchases, and interviewing people at shopping malls (p. 69). Research findings are subsequently discussed to help learners to critically verbalize their knowledge. Through these and other "socially interactive experiences" (Freedman, p. 118), students learn how knowledge and meaning are constructed, enabling them to make informed decisions as consumers and producers (Freedman, p. 110).

All people produce visual culture, even if they aren't aware of it. Through everyday performances, images and products we select, display, distribute, and make in our cars, offices, homes, syllabuses, fashion, and so on. Critical art making strategies encourage learners to actively and consciously respond to the visual culture in which we are immersed (Darts, 2006). The melding of individual visual culture and art production, collaborative art practices, and critical dialogue could fit comfortably into Disability Studies pedagogy as part of an *integrated curriculum* (Beane, 1997; Stewart & Walker, 2005) that actively builds communal knowledge about the cultural diversity of the disability community and the disciplinary diversity of Disability Studies.

3. Art And Visual Culture Can Be Transdisciplinary

Furthermore, Freedman (2003) argues that "the relationship between images to diverse disciplines, including their sociopolitical contexts, are vital to understanding visual culture" (p. 119), and art pedagogy should incorporate sociological, anthropological, feminist, and other sociocultural methods (p. 154) in order to understand these relationships. The thrust of transdisciplinary art pedagogy integrates theory and praxis from multiple disciplines and interrogates the sacred modalities endemic of the arts (and "letters"). Unlike artists of the past, contemporary artists and other visual culture producers typically work with multiple media (Freedman, 2003), integrating drawing, sculpture, design, sound, video, performance, and writing. Many esteemed

university art programs have moved away from media-based foci to multimodal experiences with attention to thematic issues (Freedman, 2003; Stewart & Walker, 2005; Walker, 2001) that are socially and culturally important. As a response to this trend and in conjunction with cognitive research that suggests humans learn through integrated rather than separate tasks, Stewart and Walker (2005) propose pedagogy that deeply explores *enduring ideas*, such as "communication," as a means of procuring meaningfully integrated curricula, and Freedman (2003) suggests that all art courses should incorporate reading, writing, and art production (p. 115).

To the extent that text and performance-based humanities courses already encounter graphic novels, book covers, illustrations, photographs, graphic design, theatre, dance, film, digital viewing devices, and so on, I argue that such courses should incorporate critical and expressive art and visual culture production. In the same manner that art students cross media to deepen their ideas (Freedman, p. 119), Disability Studies students could incorporate visual art and design strategies.

4. Visual Culture Is Narrative

As contemporary artists have reworked traditional media approaches and incorporated linguistic text into their works, art educators have increasingly called for narrative art that mingles text, object, and image. Mixing images and objects with text is nothing new, but their newfound egalitarian relationship is. The technologies of the Renaissance that forged an enduring schism between text and image/object has dissolved in our present, digital age. However, the valor of print remains noticeable when it is irreverently encroached upon in academic literature. In a special issue of *Studies in Art Education* titled "Debating the Field of Art Education and its Disciplinary Territories," Carpenter and Tavin (2010) "sketched out" (p. 327) a graphic novel style discussion of the field's history, current state, and possible reconceptualization—the product of which (perhaps intentionally) is more unnerving in its "premier journal of the field" home than it is refreshing. The experimental essay pays homage to the lineage of postmodern art and visual culture, including the increasing popularity of graphic novels, in which image and text are exceedingly juxtaposed, blurring the boundary between text and image (Keifer-Boyd & Maitland-Gholson, 2007, p. 110). It promotes dynamic potential for critical storytelling through the (re-)union of language, image, and possibly object.

Amburgy, Knight, and Keifer-Boyd (2006) discuss "revisioning" traditional art genres of still-life and self-portraiture "as visual culture explorations into identity, representation, and cultural narratives" (p. 73). In one exercise, students examine 40 disparate magazine portraits. Each student selects one image with which they identify and another with which they do not, and they discuss their reasons as a class. In another exercise, students "draw attention to what is *not* represented" (p. 75) in print media images by applying various revisionist techniques such as adding text, pairing atypical images, changing peoples' skin color, and so on. Similarly, Cummings (2006) discusses three

projects, two of which were paired within a unit on stereotypes in advertising. In one unit, students built sculptures on styrofoam heads to critically respond to research on stereotypes, which they concluded through revelations gained in the art making process, were falsehoods constructed through "the interplay between text and image" (p. 94). Afterwards, these students created advertisement campaign posters that (a) illustrated their stereotypical messages and (b) depicted a self-portrait. Interestingly, students regarded their sculptural projects as self-portraits while they disregarded the posters as self-portraits; perhaps this was because of the tactile, personal, narrative process of the sculptures in contrast to the formulaic posters. Finally, Cummings taught a "Storyteller of Life" unit in which students explored identity through the theme of family. Students critically examined television families, noting how their own lives differed, and they examined how family portraits and photo albums tell stories of selected life experiences. Students responded by critically examining their family lives through various media, including graphically altered books.

As Cummings's (2006) class became a "community of learners working together," the many revisionist processes described above could be adapted for Disability Studies classrooms as group or class projects. Students could collage or otherwise modify simple visual media such as photographs, drawings, and found images; they could design simple picture books, magazines, book covers, or posters. Such exercises could encourage students to better understand their own and others' identities.

With more complexity but perhaps also more familiarity to humanities scholars, art educators have built pedagogy from narratology and sibling fields. As traditional narrative modes such as nonfiction and creative writing reveal that "the idea of the story is ever-evolving," multimedia technologies are creating newer *modes of narrativity* (Ryan, 2007) that are integral to visual culture (Keifer-Boyd & Maitland-Gholson, p. 110). For example, computer games commonly employ the *simulative mode* of story creation, in which sequential events are implemented by a computer in real time according to its internal rules and user input (Ryan, p. 10). Computer games also utilize the *participatory mode* of story creation involving real time role playing (Ryan, p. 10), as the player-as-author tells "stories of place" that draw from the embedded stories of the game, emerge from the author's interpretation of those narratives, and in the case of multiplayer game is coauthored by others (Keifer-Boyd & Maitland-Gholson, p. 112). As an exercise to "examine the impact of human-designed spaces on human behavior and social relationships," Keifer-Boyd and Maitland-Gholson (2007) assign learners to conceptually design computer or board games that represent how experiencing power imbalances shapes decisions, behaviors, and beliefs (p. 113). Given problematic spaces, students contemplate how they could re-envision spaces through simulative and participatory modes. Students design and generate storyboards or narratives, produce virtual or real spaces such as drawings of spaces within the virtual game, dioramas, and stage sets, and present their concepts to the class.

In a Disability Studies classroom, groups could consider how preexisting or conceptual games could be disabling to players with specific impairments. They could redesign these games to accommodate players with diverse abilities, and groups could discuss each others' designs according to different disability perspectives. A more tactile option would be to have students create actual board games that represent environmental places, such as campus and other local sites. The games could be "played" by students whose "pieces" have specific impairments; the act of playing would expose disabling aspects of the game, and rules (and graphic layout) could thus be revised democratically and continually, similar to how Wikipedia's user community authors its content and hypertextual structure.

Plummer-Rohloff (2006) addresses narrative in art through Denzin's *performance ethnography* approach to classroom pedagogy, in which students co-perform multiple voices as a means of procuring shared ownership. Students respond to visual research on artworks through reflective narrative interventions such as creative non-fiction, rhythmic spoken word, memoir, and storytelling (Plummer-Rohloff, p. 70). Beyond the important discussions in Disability Studies on individual performance artists (Mitchell & Snyder, 2000; Garland Thomson, 2005) and group dance and theater performances (Kuppers, 2003, 2007; Smith, 2005), Plummer-Rohloff's version of performance ethnography alludes to the rich tradition of collaborative performance art. It speaks to the potential of performance art as an exploratory research strategy, and it alludes to the uncharted potential of performance art as public interaction with spaces and people beyond the halls and galleries devoted to arts events and their limited audiences.

5. Art Making Can Performatively Interact With Spaces As Tactics

Art educators are becoming increasingly interested in invigorating public spaces beyond classrooms, through community art and nontraditional urban art *tactics* (Sweeny, 2004; Richardson, 2010). Of particular interest is research (Darts, 2004; Derby, 2011; Keifer-Boyd & Maitland-Gholson, 2007; Richardson, 2010) that addresses the lineage of Situationist International (SI), an activist (anti-)art moment initiated by Guy Debord in the late 1950s. SI, following the critical, unconventional ideals of Duchamp and Breton, challenged the art world's indifference to political activism through art tactics that involved exploring everyday public environments, often spawning drawings, writings, collages, and other tangible artifacts. They recognized that human-designed environments are complicit to power imbalances, and that inaccessible environments suppress basic human rights. By "reading" the stories of places and retelling them in public performances, SI disrupted the spectacle of visual consumer culture that embodies capitalistic values (Keifer-Boyd & Maitland-Gholson, 2007)—a tradition that lives on through contemporary tactics of *détournement*, which "turn around" (Darts, 2004) public spaces and presumptions about them.

For example, I implemented a series of tactical exercises that reflect the evolution of *détournement* and *psychogeography* (kanarinka, 2006), an SI tactic that intermingles urban wandering, social theory, and cartography. The aim of the exercises was to elaborate Lewiecki-Wilson and Brueggemann's (2008) recommendations for composition learners to respond to an essay by journalist John Hockenberry (2008). As a visibly paraplegic wheelchair user, Hockenberry "wired" himself to document an experiment in which he dragged his wheelchair through the inaccessible New York Subway system. Most White people avoided and ignored him, but Black and Puerto Rican people unexpectedly offered help and conversation, apparently identifying with his Otherness. One of Lewiecki-Wilson and Brueggemann's recommendations is to map public transit routes and consider how they are accessible and inaccessible (p. 261). To this end, I gathered several visual public relations documents from the Ohio State University main campus, which I re-worked to express concerns of inaccessibility, or, in the case of medical facilities, the exclusion of perspectives of disabled users. For instance, the document titled "Finding Your Way to Harding Hospital" (Figure 4), which provides directions to the University's psychiatric hospital, in no way represented my non-consensual hospitalization experience. My project *Finding My Way to Harding Hospital* (Figure 5) documents my turning the map around through a long-term process that involved literally and figuratively retracing "my way" to the hospital, collecting and analyzing medical records, negotiating large medical bills, conversing with others who experience mental illness, and coming to terms with the complexities of my illness and identity.

Although I have had the fortune to share this project (Derby, 2011), Richardson's (2010) research on SI implicates my work's limitation, as I missed the opportunity to actively engage the campus through social dialogue. Richardson notes that the essence of *interventionist art practices* essentially happen outside typical art venues and they involve social dialogue. To the extent that Hockenberry's performance functions as interventionist art, the pedagogical suggestions of Lewiecki-Wilson and Brueggemann's (2008) and my *détournement* retreat from the disrupted public sphere to the tranquil spaces of academe. Unlike Hockenberry, whose performance mirrors his professional public persona and his frequent travel difficulties, I was unable to muster the courage to enact a personal, confrontational display. Even disabled performance artists sometimes find the publicizing of their own disabled bodies disconcerting, as Carrie Sandahl and others reveal in the disability documentary *Vital Signs* (Snyder & Mitchell, 1996).

The goal of interventionist tactics, fortunately, is not to confront strangers, but to collaborate with an unsuspecting public. Richardson (2010) discusses a five-minute art event that Improv Everywhere enacted in 2007 titled *Frozen Grand Central:*

> The frenetic pace of New York's Grand Central Station is frozen in time. Eating a banana, a young woman stops mid-bite and stands motionless. A young man bends to tie his shoe and remains in this

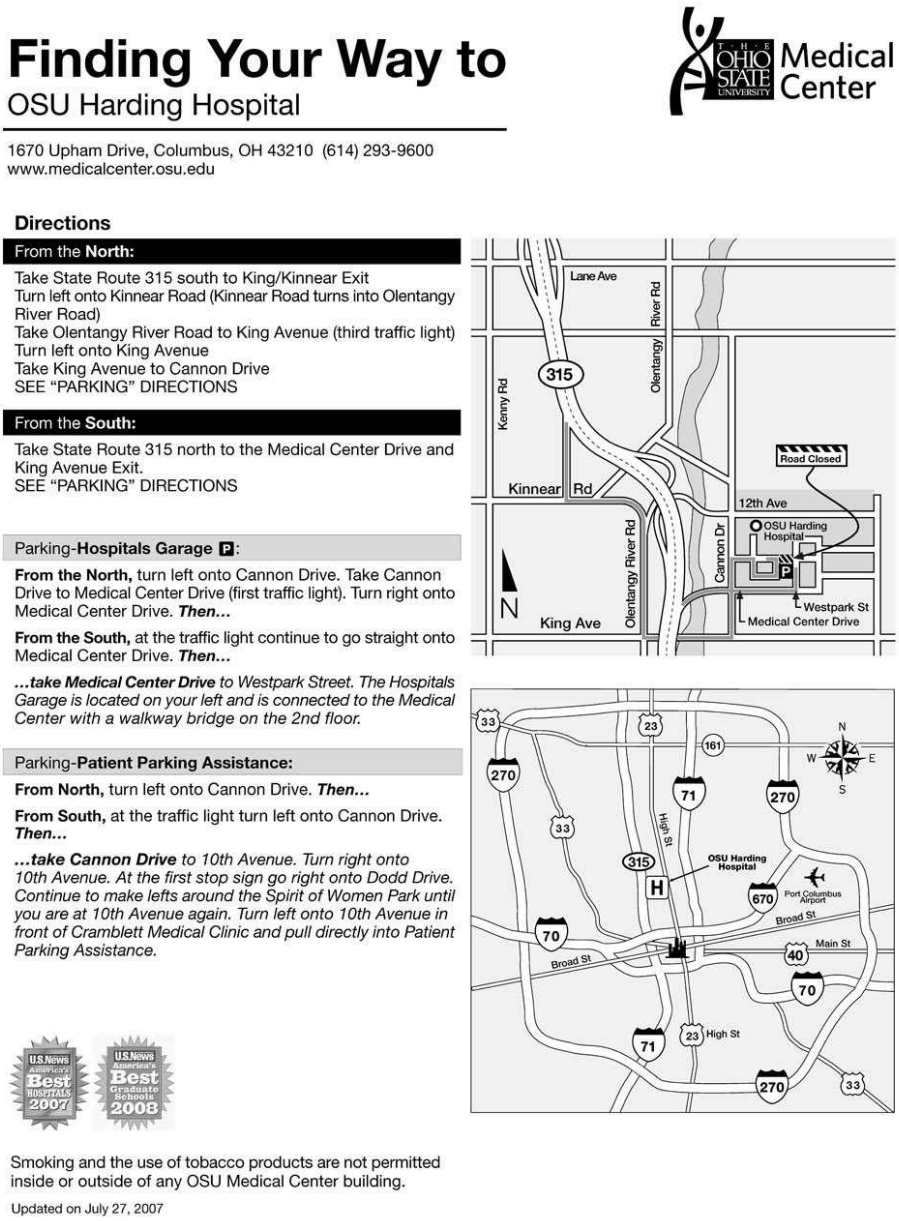

***Figure 4. Finding your way to Harding Hospital* [digital map] by The Ohio State University Medical Center, July 27, 2007. Copyright 2007 by the Ohio State University Medical Center.**

> position for the next five minutes. A businessman drops an armload of papers on the floor. Though he does not move, no one comes to his assistance. Tourists stand in frozen disorientations, staring at their maps. The typical afternoon flow of Grand Central Station defined by the trajectories of business, tourism, and necessity is momentarily put into disarray. Conversations, stares, curious touches, and changes of direction prompted by this unusual occurrence each alter the spatial arrangements, social interactions, and familiar movements that typify this space. (pp. 23–24).

The brief, five-minute event engages the public with an immediate and

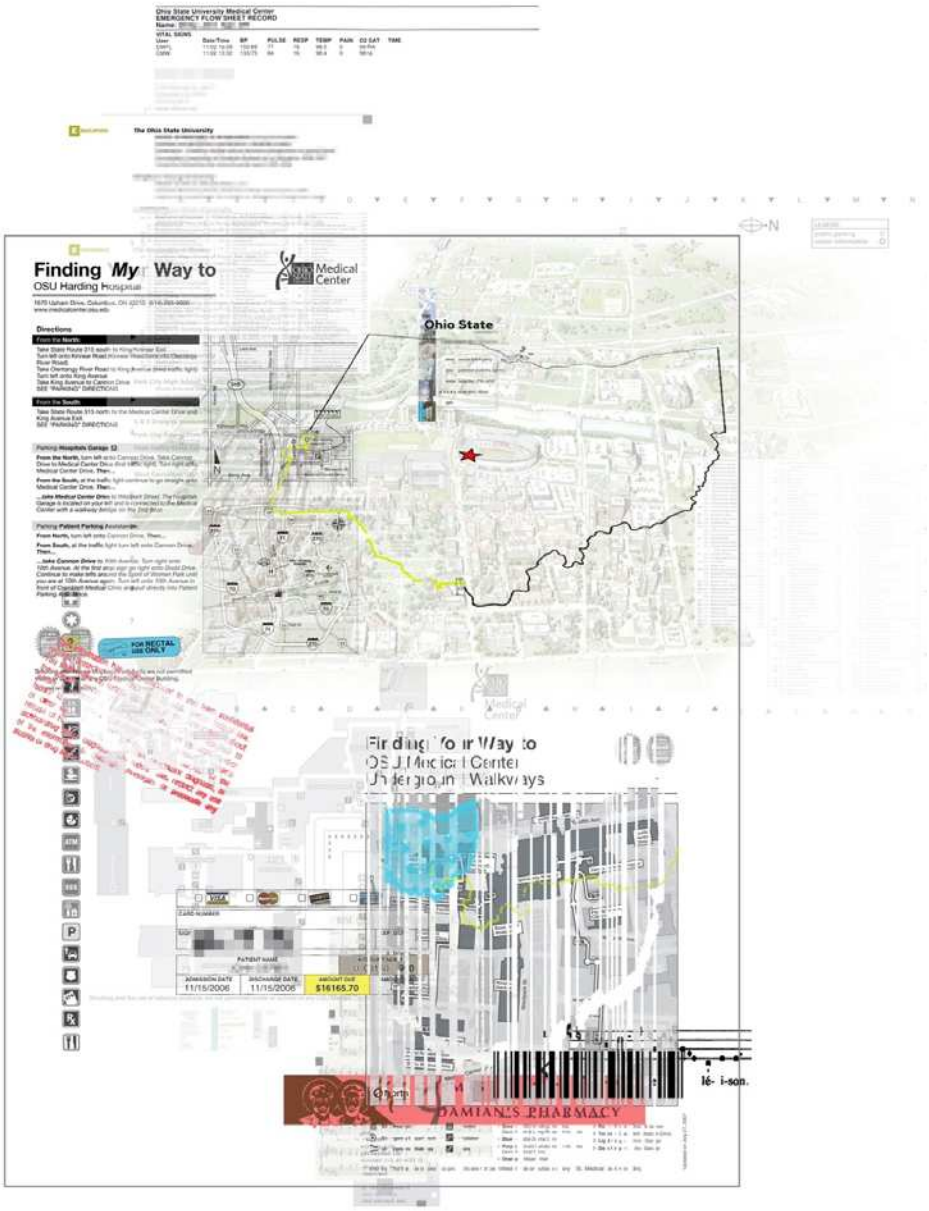

Figure 5. Finding my way to Harding Hospital **[digital image] by J. Derby, 2007-2009.**

lingering effect on the environment which amounts to what Richardson calls a contingent community. Unlike traditional art, the value of interventionist tactics is not on what it *is* or what it *means* but what it *does* (p. 24).

If we treat Hockenberry's performance as a kind of intervention, we might ask Disability Studies students what the performance does, and how they might organize their own interventionist tactics to socially engage ableist spaces. By interacting with each other and the public through interventionist tactics, students could expand their understanding of ableism in human-designed environments. As tactical research (Richadson, 2010), interventionist exercises could be inspired by or contribute to the development of

conventional creative artifacts.

Conclusion

The inclusion of Art Education perspectives in Disability Studies promises to work beyond multidisciplinarity toward transdisciplinarity. Like Disability Studies, the field's scholarship is richly informed by an array of disciplines in the arts, humanities, and social sciences. The research outlined above indicates how the field is moving toward a transdisciplinary space that sheds the limitations of its parent disciplines, evidenced by the innovative artifacts it calls for. The pedagogical strategies I offer draw from Art Education perspectives to procure transdisciplinary possibilities for Disability Studies classrooms. These suggestions aim to encourage critical expressions by diverse post-secondary students, including those not majoring in the arts or humanities and students who experience various disabilities. Some of the proposed strategies are conventional and others are novel; some could be implemented immediately and others demand time, thought, and a commitment to erode disciplinary boundaries between the arts and humanities, which sometimes amount to inaccessibility. As such, I envision these strategies being implemented to incorporate new visual and performative strategies into existing curricula in ways that will diversify the voices of tomorrow's scholars, activists, artists, and supporters of disability perspectives and rights. Insofar as the field of Disability Studies and its artifacts are unique, we should strive toward a trandisciplinary concept of disability. In the spirit of the current direction of academe to dissolve disabling disciplinary and paradigmatic boundaries (Guba & Lincoln, 2005), Disability Studies should use its multidisciplinary connections to pioneer transdisciplinary expressions that mingle traditional scholarship, theory, and creative expressions, including performance, visual, and literary arts.

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