

(UN)CONFINING SPACES: RECONSIDERING CONTEMPORARY  
EDUCATIONAL ASSUMPTIONS THROUGH “PEDAGOGY’S HINGE”

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE DIVISION OF THE  
UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI‘I AT MĀNOA IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT  
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

MASTER OF EDUCATION  
IN  
EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATIONS

MAY 2014

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Keywords: Pedagogy’s hinge, Art, Education, Transitional Space, Experience, Becoming

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to take the time to thank the professors and staff of the Department of Educational Foundations for all their academic, intellectual, and emotional support. I would not have pursued this topic if not for all that I learned in each course that I took during my time in the program. I would also like to thank my committee, Professor Tavares, Professor Ericson, and Professor Xu, for their trust and allowing me the creative freedom to explore this topic.

Additional thanks must go out to the Collective for encouraging me to consider my topic from multiple perspectives. I am very lucky to be colleagues with such talented and considerate thinkers.

I am especially grateful for the support of my family, especially my parents Arthur and Janet, my friends, and Joel. Thank you for patiently discussing my topic, providing feedback, and for your continued confidence in me even when I doubt myself. I am forever indebted to you for your love and support.

## ABSTRACT

Contemporary educational assumptions that inform current social imaginaries are examined through the theoretical framework offered by Elizabeth Ellsworth's (2005) concept, "pedagogy's hinge". Described as a transitional moment during which the becoming self experiences the generation of her own "knowledge in the making" (Ellsworth, 2005, p. 1), the open space enabled by pedagogy's hinge allows for a multiplicity of experiences to inform the self's pedagogical agency and epistemological considerations. To assist in exploring pedagogy's hinge and its implications for reconsidering contemporary educational assumptions, Nic Nicosia's silver gelatin print, *Real Pictures #11*, was used as a catalyst to examine the meaning held by an experience with an artwork. Engaging with an aesthetic experience and pedagogy's hinge suggests that acknowledging the complexity of the learning self encourages recognition of multiple, rather than one, ways of approaching knowledge within the contemplation of contemporary educational assumptions.

Keywords: Pedagogy's hinge, Art, Education, Transitional Space, Experience, Becoming

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## CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION



Figure 1. Nic Nicosia. *Real Pictures #11*. 1988.

A catalyst is defined as “a substance that increases the rate of a chemical reaction without itself undergoing any permanent change” (Oxford English Dictionary Online, n.d.). With this information, what name does one give to the catalyst’s catalyst? My catalyst, which continues to propel me through explorations of artworks and education, is a photograph titled, *Real Pictures #11*, by artist Nic Nicosia. On view during an exhibition titled “Anxiety’s Edge” at the Honolulu Museum of Art, Nicosia’s silver gelatin print was among other contemporary artworks whose mediums ranged from painting to sculpture.

My encounter with *Real Pictures #11*, which induced a vicissitude of sensations and thoughts, became the inspiration for a previous reflection completed in the fall of 2012 (Sojot, 2012). The examination of these sensations evoked by my interaction with *Real Pictures #11* enabled me to give it a name—what Elizabeth Ellsworth (2005) calls, “pedagogy’s hinge.” Through the contemplation of the intersection of media, architecture, and pedagogy, Ellsworth focused on the learning experience’s moment of becoming—removed from the identifying coordinates of the beginning or the end—and the meaning this holds for the body in epistemological motion. For Ellsworth, pedagogy’s hinge incorporates a variety of seemingly contradictory characteristics. Describing different exhibitions and architectural spaces, Ellsworth noted,

At the hands of these designers, pedagogy becomes a dynamic that creates the *experience* of an idea, of a way of making sense of self, the world, and self in the world. It becomes the force that sets interior self-experience in motion to encounter the outside ‘not me.’ Pedagogy stages encounters with the unthought—encounters with the future as in the making. (p. 38)

This hinging or pivoting of self reflects the moving and becoming self, rather than the known self or made self. The hinge is concerned with the transitional space or emergent space (Ellsworth, 2005). The word hinge itself conjures up the sense of movement. Movement connotes the freeing space of transition. Not bound to the desk, to the imposed silence, or to the regurgitation of dead knowledge, the transitional emergent space wherein houses the hinge allows for the realm of possibility. Reflecting upon that particular moment, I recognize that a change had occurred within me. Somewhere within the transitional space of experience, the pivoting of my knowledge had transpired.

Within the transitional space offered by an interaction with a creative piece, such as an artwork, it becomes possible for the pedagogical pivot to occur. The image, *Real Pictures #11*, created an unstable space of learning. By unstable space of learning, I mean to suggest a milieu that is neither fixed nor does its purpose reside in inculcating a precise pedagogical message; the space is intentionally left open. Referencing Grosz and Eisenman (2001), Ellsworth stated, “The instability and fluidity of pedagogy hold the



potential for an unknowable and unforeseeable ‘more,’ and the actualization of that potential is what springs the experience of the learning self” (p. 55). The unstable place further informs the idea of a kind of experiencing knowledge that at its core essence abstains from the tendency to fixate on the linearity of a moment that creates learning. For me, the photograph and its surrounding environment created a space that encouraged the multiplicity of possibility—and thus the learning self experiencing pedagogy’s hinge. The ability to conceive of pedagogy’s hinge lies partially with these in-between spaces that are the transitions from the points on the grid describing identity and levels of knowing (Ellsworth, p. 188-119).

The consideration of the transitional space is illuminated through the ideas of D.W. Winnicott, who developed several observations of the transitional space and explored in depth considerations of the meaning held by these spaces and their consequences for becoming, which itself is a concept attached to Deleuze (Colebrook, 2002; Ellsworth, 2005). Winnicott developed the concept of transitional space as a way to conflate the “paradoxes of selves in the making” (Ellsworth, p. 29). Since, for Winnicott, the idea of the transitional space arises “inside” the self yet also through the interactions of the “outside” experience, a framework needed to be developed in order to conceptually conceive of its continuous shifting. And, as Ellsworth charged, the suggestive spaces created by these transitional areas allow for the potentiality of becoming. By becoming, I suggest the interaction within the transitional space that embraces motion, “the experience of being in motion across the porous boundaries between self and other in ways that reconfigure and rewrite their meanings” (Ellsworth, p. 65). Because the experiencing body is in motion, the sensations cannot be described as being, to be, was, or is—rather, the experiencing body is *becoming*. This transitional space is a location that is not unknown to the aesthetic experience. The focus on the concept of becoming also recalls Deleuze’s contemplations on the affect and effect of the becoming self (Colebrook, 2002), which will be discussed briefly in a later chapter.

My topic explores the meaning that Elizabeth Ellsworth’s concept of pedagogy’s hinge holds for contemporary educational assumptions. My primary argument

is that engaging with the possibilities created by pedagogy's hinge, as activated through the catalyst of artworks—unconventional spaces of learning—can create a space to critically evaluate dominant contemporary educational assumptions. Additionally, the embrace of these unstable places of learning complicates the narrowing of knowledge making that is perpetuated by the current educational assumptions guiding the landscape and current policies.

Ellsworth considers knowledge in the making in another turn of phrase: “living knowledge”. Living knowledge is an iteration of knowing generated by the becoming self, not knowledge that has previously been deemed important to pass on by another entity, whether that entity is a person or a societal structure. The development and creation of this living knowledge within the self enables an educational agency that empowers the becoming self and creates the space to acknowledge and question the prevalence of educational assumptions that guide the philosophies and attitudes of the social imaginary.

The dominant method of knowledge acquisition, which encourages the greater absorption of dead knowledge, reflects the influence of contemporary educational assumptions. If we use Ellsworth's explanation of dead knowledge as a springboard, then we can see how this is utilized in the majority of contemporary education, especially that education that is guided by the policies, both public and private, that steer educational discourses. By contemporary educational assumptions, I mean those assumptions that guide the discourse of education, in the sense of how it is conceived of and acted out. Current educational assumptions appear to have been mostly informed by the neoliberal philosophy that is infiltrating the corporations, private companies, governmental economic direction, schools, and overall general direction of the social imaginary. A focus on the neoliberal ideals of efficiency, accountability, and adherence to the firm belief of the success and necessity of the free market as a way to achieve utopia (for whom, though, I ask?), influence the educational assumptions that in turn infiltrate the ways we conceive of the discourse of what constitutes a proper and valuable education, the purpose of education, and the acceptable ways of performing educational research.

Art's ability to subsume with the space of the becoming body allows for the interaction between the boundaries of knowledge of the self and conscious awareness of the multiple shapes of knowledge. In the following chapters, I argue that it is this engagement in the artistic space, brought by the catalyst of the artwork that the self is interacting with, that allows the occurrence of the pedagogical hinge. This hinging moment allows for the conception and interaction with the transitional, becoming self, which in turns awakens the self to the possibility of living knowledge, and consequently, enables this becoming self with the ability to question the boundaries of contemporary educational assumptions that seek to limit and counteract the pedagogical power of the becoming self.

Engaging with the space of experience offered by an artwork, which by its very characteristic is an open space that is dynamic and already defies the handcuffing of possibility, it is conceivable to create an environment that allows for the critical observation and analysis of these educational assumptions and boundaries that seek to limit potentiality of the learning self. The pursuit of the amorphous space of art and becoming holds value for the conception and practice of education because it allows for this space to exist. It enables the presence of the pedagogical agency of the creative, learning self.

A more reflective acknowledgment of the boundaries that bind can allow for the vision and creation of fairer, more open, and ethical educational discourses. There are consequences of enacting and embracing the possibility of pedagogy's hinge for educational assumptions, policy, and for the social imaginary that influences how we think about education research in general—in that these assumptions, which guide the actions of the dominant educational discourses, can then be engaged with and made less fixed.

## CHAPTER 2. OBJECTIVES

The following question raised by Ellsworth is an important one and I suggest that the “face of human embodiment” affects not only the “activities of teaching and learning” but also the consideration of educational assumptions and educational policy discourses.

To think and speak about aspects of learning that exceed the realm of language presents educators and educational media producers with special difficulties. It challenges many of our assumptions and practices. In the wake of these difficulties and challenges, the following question remains desperately under-theorized: How does the fact of human embodiment affect activities of teaching and learning? (Ellsworth, p. 2)

Encouraged by the catalyst of experiences with art, exploring pedagogy’s hinge through the hinterlands of assumed educational attitudes, which are propelled by the system and policy, can expose a space that reevaluates these dominant mindsets. At a time when contemporary educational policy endeavors to replicate en masse a particular type of learning, the widening of possibilities approaches a sensation of political responsibility on the part of an engaged learner/educator.

This analysis has the additional prospect of exposing the transitional space wherein exists a space of fertile possibility and multiple epistemologies. Not an uncritical advocacy, this study encourages the space of conversation of the transitioning potential of the possible. This is a conversation that is contingent on recognizing the other, the unsaid, and calling out the false neutrality promoted by current power structures with their purposeful educational assumptions that influence the limited discourse in research, policy, and the larger educational social imaginary.

A specific set of contemporary educational assumptions guide not just the tangible examples of policy and consequence that we witness in our schools, but also the unseen pressures that inform and strengthen the particular paths these examples take. Though I posit that the widespread acceptance of a social imaginary informed by neoliberalism is a principle influence of these assumptions, this supposed authority is

much more nuanced than it may appear to be at first. What does it mean to pause these moments of the progressively sterilized and quantified notion of education, witnessed in the prevalence of an increasing focus on a particular version of empiricism, and instead reflect on the personal interaction of learning's transitional space?

The idea that objects, including artworks, have the potentiality present within them (Bennett, 2011) begins to blur the fixed linearity of the dominant spoken narrative and assumptive educational discourse. Instead of unquestioningly accepting worn pedagogical practices that adhere to the idea of an omniscient participant, such as a teacher, filling the "empty vessel" of a student up with the gift of knowledge, art allows for the own intimate experiencing of one's own grasping of knowledge and the hinging of the learning moment. The uniqueness that our present, past, and future contexts bring to the mode of experiencing does not allow for the mass-produced approach promoted and practiced by the current iteration of the education system.

Rather than remain steadfast to a notion of the fixed, pedagogy's hinge instead embraces the unknowable and the interaction with the perpetual possible and impossible. A fascination with the opening of possibilities and the refusal of the narrowing facilitates a comprehensive exploration of the effects, advocating for the conscious engagement of self and meaning. And as such, I recognize that I carry within myself my own realities: my past, my present, the collection of my possible futures, and my considerations of being. Responding to observations of the tensions between the desire to educate students within a critically conscious framework that understands the necessity of interacting with the shifting boundaries of literacy through a society subsumed by rapid-fire media and the educational system dominated by neoliberalism's ideology, Ira Shor (Critical Media Literacy Conference, 2013) said, "Name our allies." I take this statement further as a charge to also name our own allies of and within us. My experiences are my allies, and sometimes my challengers, pushing me to remember and confront the unknowable. They encourage me to continue to push back against the constant desire of dominant culture to fix me, to define me, and to narrow my epistemological possibilities.

Yet, what are these relationships we carry with certain works, certain words, certain images? Within the psychosocial, can the punctum (Barthes, 1980/2010) follow us from the initial interaction with a work of art? Can it haunt us throughout our learning selves, continuing to inform and guide? As a personal and private experience, the interaction with a painting, a photograph, a poem, a song, or a dance—how does it pierce our psyche and influence the possibility of our learning selves? The moment of this memory creates a hinge, a tension between our past self and the future self that has had this experience of learning.

By acknowledging this experience and examining what meanings it may hold for questioning contemporary educational assumptions, I hope to widen the space for discussion of other ways of engaging with current theoretical frameworks informing accepted educational attitudes through a critically reflective analysis of my interaction with my catalyst's catalyst, *Real Pictures #11*.

### **Research Questions**

Since this study relies heavily on theoretical conceptions of becoming, transition, and art, it becomes necessary to have research questions that will serve as analytical beacons. The following two questions guide my analysis of artworks and literature review:

- Through the lens of learning's unconventional spaces as described by Ellsworth's "pedagogy's hinge," what does the interaction with artworks hold for the challenging of contemporary educational assumptions?
- What does it mean for artworks to operate as catalysts—for whom and by whom?

A related subset of questions include:

- How does the neoliberal social imaginary inform how assumptions are conceived of and articulated within education?
- What are the interactions of transitional space within artworks and education?

- What are the qualities of the current iteration of the education system, its related policies, and its reach of defining what is acceptable and appropriate, and what consequences do these qualities hold for enriching further educational discourse?

What follows in my study is less of a specific formula to create a particular moment of learning and more of the opening of a space. Though this concept of pedagogy's hinge complicates the traditional definition of the rational subject, it does not regress into the dichotic opposite of irrationality, for an immediate reaction to the binary opposite already continues the adherence to the dominant framework.

Again, the direction of this study seeks the recognition of multiple epistemological notions, each with their own set of complexities. Using art, and *Real Pictures #11* in particular, enables the conception of an epistemological gradient rather than duality because it speaks to the complexity of experiences and how that in turn interacts with the pedagogical self.

### **Limitations of Study**

Limitations of this endeavor include that it cannot prescribe a specific path; currently, it can only explore and suggest the existence of other possibilities for the expanding the conception of the educational social imaginary. Specific recommendations for curriculum or policy development and implementation will not be found in this study. Instead, the examination of artwork's intersection with pedagogy's hinge and the consequences it holds for reevaluating educational attitudes will reveal unstated assumptions that guide contemporary dominant educational ideology.

Hoping to find the "one true way" to create the ideal educational landscape is another reflection of the effects of contemporary educational assumptions. I would potentially argue that the existence of this one specific path does not exist, this one way of solving and dealing with the perceived problems of the education and its related aspects. To have an attitude that it should be fixed in a particular way is something I am not comfortable with, and I feel that doing so would mimic the structure that I am already

positing as problematically limiting. The premise of this study, which includes Ellsworth concept of pedagogy's hinge as a primary foundation, accepts the possibility of a multiplicity of ways that can encourage a greater awareness and engagement with the complexity of attitudes towards education; it does not arrive through the framework of narrowing, but rather that of the open consciousness.

Another limitation of this study is that it focuses on the larger scope of conceptions of education, those assumptions, rather than focusing on the particulars or acted out assumptions that are readily observable. I find that focusing on the more conceptual aspects of the accepted discourse that influences these educational assumptions can create a helpful and constructive space to acknowledge the assumptions.

Additional research into the tendencies of the education *system*—not education—will be necessary to discern the complexity of the system's nature.

Some may argue that this study's very nature as open rather than closed already negates its veracity; I would counter this claim with the question, "What is so harmful about the opening of possibilities?" If the self can come from the perspective of acknowledging unsaid assumptions, privileges, desires, and fears, then the self can know more about his or her own spaces of hinging.

While an analysis of Nicosia's *Real Pictures #11* will comprise part of the study, additional examination of related facets will augment the understanding of pedagogy's hinge and its meaning for educational assumptions. These sections include: Intersections of Art and Education; The Narrowing of Education's Purpose; and Reconsidering the Transitional Space in the Learning Self and Policy.

The hope of this discussion is not to disregard and to permanently dismantle the dominant power structures that inform the assumptions utilized in the educational landscape, but rather to allow a space to be explored that allows and even encourages the possibility of the questions of the dominant space to occur. Right now, there is not enough of that.



## CHAPTER 3. THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

*He said, Marie,  
Marie, hold on tight. And down we went.  
In the mountains, there you feel free.  
(Eliot, T.S. *The Waste Land*, ll. 15-17)*

The framework of pedagogical hinges primarily informs and guides this study. Additionally, I use Derrida's interpretation of deconstruction to unpack these questions and coordinate within their complexity. Using pedagogical hinges and deconstruction offers a way to guide my interaction with artworks because these two frameworks in particular accentuate the purpose of problematizing and acknowledging 'differences.'

### **Pedagogy's Hinge**

Ellsworth's notion of pedagogy's hinge offers a strong response to the idea of rejecting the narrowing of knowledge. Perhaps this concept speaks to an internal conflict: the awakening of questioning and of the realization that it is possible to create one's own interpretation of knowing. Seeing the generation of knowledge as limitless rather than limiting provides a path of hope that a multiplicity of experiences can be heard in this vast reality/social imaginary wherein exists education.

Succinctly, pedagogy's hinge describes the moment of the learning self. That is, the "hinging" or "pivoting" moment when the self is aware of the transition between the place where something was not known before to a place where something is now known. It is this turning place where something is now known. Yet this turning space has an incorporation of a spot for intentionality, thus the "pedagogy" component of the hinge; the turning space does not only interact with the visceral pleasure of the turning moment, but rather there is a purposeful potentiality of learning.

In Ellsworth's application of pedagogy's hinge, there are several components beneficial to understanding this concept. Ellsworth described pedagogy's hinge as

incorporating multiple facets that seem at first to be contradictory. However, upon additional reflection, it is possible to see the rich interaction between these amorphous components. Almost in an imitation of the experience itself where there is not a specific definition, the occurrence of the pedagogical hinge can be described in several facets. These pieces fit into an understanding of what pedagogy's hinge can entail somewhat through a less direct approach by also describing what it is not. The main components of "pedagogy's hinge" can be identified as living and dead knowledge, the learning self, the transitional space, and the notion of becoming.

A valuable concept in understanding pedagogy's hinge is the discussion of living and dead knowledge, or also, "knowledge in the making." Ellsworth identified this as, Knowledge, once it is defined, taught and used as a "thing made," is dead. It has been forced to give up that which "really exists": its nature when it is a thing in the making, continuously evolving through our understanding of the world and our own bodies' experience of and participation in that world. (p. 1)

This recalls the idea of the traditional instructional model of direct transmission. Ellsworth further describes the differentiation between knowing, or "getting" previously determined knowledge even though the a-ha moment may appear to be generating new knowledge (p. 16). This is not to devalue that person's moment of connecting an understanding and instead expands on the difference between comprehension and the generation of the self's own learning experience. Ellsworth wrote,

Each of these other looks hinges on the comprehension of a particular kind of knowledge—a knowledge already gotten by someone else. For various social, political, economic or pragmatic reasons, someone has deemed this knowledge to be in need of being grasped, passed on, and repeated yet again and in ways that are clearly mapped and understood. (p. 16)

In a way, this is recognition of the perpetuation of knowledge. Not to say that it is completely unworthy, but rather that the unconscious perpetuation, devoid of meaningful interaction and purposeful questioning, of this type of knowledge fills the room and

squeezes out any available space for the generation of living knowledge from the experience of the self.

For Ellsworth, pedagogy's hinge centers on the experience of the learning self and how that self interacts within the case of living or dead knowledge through the environment created by art, architecture, and media. Living knowledge is considered knowing that one generates for or within the self. Conceiving the idea of living knowledge is aided through the comparison of the description of dead knowledge. Dead knowledge is considered the knowing that is already taught. It is the knowledge that has not germinated within the self, but rather that knowledge, which has been deemed important or relevant by someone else. Such a statement describes the majority of educational latitudes seen in contemporary schooling practice today. Though rote learning may appear to be a thing of the past, the continued practice that 'true' knowledge comes from someone other than the self continues to manifest as an assumed accepted practice, through the discourse that influences the educational assumptions that in turn give weight to how concepts of education are acted out in schools, policy, and theoretical applications. Textbooks teach, the lesson plan teaches, the teacher teaches, tests then measure the extent to which that teaching was communicated, and policies are put in place to ensure that all students are indoctrinated in the knowledge deemed appropriate.

Rejecting this model, Ellsworth calls into being the notion of living knowledge, a form that embraces the contextual reality of the individual life. Ellsworth also connects the concept of living and dead knowledge to its commoditization in current practices. Seen a 'thing made', dead knowledge eschews a uniquely personal experience that cannot be exactly replicated for one of a commoditized nature where its mass-production is easily attained. Traded, bought, and sold on the educational market, this view of knowledge's value reigns supreme. However, the embrace of the knowledge encouraged by the pedagogical pivot rejects this fixing and imposed market value of epistemology. Living knowledge refuses readymade knowledge based on the industrial model of education and instead thrives on experiences that speak to the evolving self. However, an attempt to purposefully manufacture this experience can prove inaccessible. Though a

learner's pedagogical pivot place cannot be forced, the environment can be modified to increase the likelihood of an authentic experience.

I would push this discussion of Ellsworth's concepts of living and dead knowledge to beyond a sense that one is necessarily better or more valuable than the other. Rather it is the absence of a space that allows and nurtures the component of living knowledge that is a concern. Narrowing learning's potential, however one chooses to define 'learning', limits the conceptual space for living knowledge to occur. An educational focus on transmitting solely 'knowledge that is gotten' without a reflection of what that knowledge actually is and what it entails, takes away from the agency of the student and his or her learning self.

Again, in a continuing motif, there is a pulling away from a dichotic sense of argument. It is not one or the other, especially when the definitions are in motion and the boundaries are already in question. By operating within an assumption that knowledge is not fixed and is instead fluid, the possibility exists to be aware of and explore the nuances of boundaries that are put in place with how knowledge and learning are conceived by dominant and subtle influences from society, history, politics, and identity.

### *Loss, and the Idea of Giving Up and Parting*

The idea of pedagogy's hinge also explores beyond the concept or practice of "learning as compliance" and engages with the learning self in motion. Ellsworth's reflection on the learning moment as incorporating the idea of loss is also key in understanding the focus of the possibility pronounced by the pedagogical pivot,

Upon encountering something outside herself and her own ways of thinking, she is giving up thoughts she previously held as *known* and as a consequence she is parting with a bit of her known self. The look of the learning self that concerns me here gives form to the sensation of simultaneously being with oneself *and* being in relation to things, people, or ideas outside oneself. (p. 16)

The idea of being within and without of oneself calls the idea of the learning self *becoming* in the transitional space.

I think further attention must be applied to this statement by Ellsworth. Ellsworth provided a facet of description of dead knowledge through the phrase “previously held as known”. In this, I believe that it is not so much a violent rejection than recognition of the increased complexity not just of what is taught but also *how* this knowledge is taught. This moment can occur as a reflection on the acquisition of knowledge. Awareness of the many layers of dead knowledge and of what was previously thought to be known can encourage reflexivity of the conscious self. Here is a movement from superficial reflection to one of a more intense and interactive acknowledgement. The reflection becomes critical in intent, asking and penetrating past experiences for reasons.

Additionally, to confront this idea of something previously held as known creates a space to question and evaluate that previous knowledge’s authority and authenticity. This is not to say that giving up or parting with this previously held knowledge is a direct negation of that knowledge: it is not. Rather the investigation of the knowledge previously held as legitimately known embraces the nuances, the implications, and the context of what was taught. This is an appreciation of the gradations and present multiplicities of epistemology.

The idea of being both inside and outside of oneself further speaks to the fluidity of boundaries viewed by Ellsworth. To state plainly, her viewpoint does not operate within fixed definitions, but rather the transitional and moving space of pedagogical becoming. There is a range of meaning in words, art, language, and knowledge. This leads into question the fluidity of definitions and the consideration that words and concepts are not as exact in their portrayal, allowing for additional recognition of context and possibility.

Thinking of the idea of parting or leaving, what traces of our memories or previous ways of thinking are left behind and what becomes of the residual trace? This trace, or residue, is reminiscent of hauntology as utilized by Derrida and also Nick Peim (2005). To this I ask: is the previous knowledge, though taught and gotten

already by someone else, truly lost or has it changed? Does the essence remain somewhere in some form?

This brings the inquiry to another component helpful to understanding pedagogy's hinge: the idea of the transitional space. Drawing heavily upon Winnicott's work and Deleuze, Ellsworth explored how the transitional space relates to her concept of pedagogy's hinge. Often, Ellsworth reflects, we are engrossed with describing the "points" or identifying signposts without a consideration of the spaces in between. These spaces are dynamic. They reflect a being in transfer from, crudely put, Point A to Point B, if we accept those points as in fact stable entities. In transfer, dynamic, in motion—how to describe characteristics of this consciousness? What is it like for this subject in motion? In a space from previously known to creating known, there possibly enacts the pedagogical hinge.

#### *Possibility, Motion, and Becoming in the Transitional Space*

Ellsworth's attention to the transitional space is valuable in the conception of becoming in-between. The transitional space intimates motion and possibility. As stated above, the simplest way to define the transitional space is that which occurs between Point A and Point B. Some sort of measurement determines these Points, for they are reference points of identification. Identification exists as a method of classification to differentiate between modes of existing; this compartmentalization of identification, though existing in the moment as way to conceptualize perceived notions of the other, are fluid in the hindsight and perception of critical awareness.

While the endpoints exist as identifiable markers, the space in between represents a motion from one to the other. Winnicott identified the transitional space "as the time and place out of which experiences of the learning emerge" (Winnicott, 1989; Ellsworth, 2005, p. 17). The body is in motion when it is creating knowledge.

The idea of becoming within, without, and through pedagogy's hinge is a reaffirmation of Deleuze's thorough consideration of becoming. Discussing Deleuze's use of cinema to give form to the conception of becoming, and how this conception

relates with motion, time, and possibility, Claire Colebrook (2002) commented, “With each movement what a thing *is* changes, thus producing new possibilities for movement and becoming” (p. 45). The becoming being in motion is not just a set of one ultimate ‘becoming’ but rather a multiple occurrence of becoming within movement (Colebrook, 2002). In the transitional space that is generated through the creative force that is art, it may be easier to consciously grasp the epistemological and ontological motion of the becoming self.

Because the transitional space is ripe, possibility emerges. The transitional spaces open up the possibility for interacting through sensation, a more fluid and less authoritatively fixed structure currently imposed on the possibility of the learning self (Ellsworth, p. 29). Drawing from Deleuze, Kennedy, and Rajchman, Ellsworth wrote of “experience beyond language” (p. 29) and how these sensations have the ability to challenge assumed ways of approaching the ways of acquiring knowledge. Since this description extends outside of the scope of what is defined, it can be challenging to the dominance of particular educational institutions and I argue, to the larger considerations of educational assumption. By considering an artwork’s productive power rather than what it concretely *is*, the space opens to contemplate its multiple possibilities and how it can encourage moments of becoming.

## **Deconstruction**

A secondary supplementary framework that continues to inform is Derrida’s interpretation of deconstruction. Derrida speaks to the idea of recognizing and interacting with limits in order to better understand the act of moving beyond what was and is thought regarding that thing (idea, object, thought). Derrida’s use of deconstruction is used as another method and secondary guiding theoretical perspective to frame and initiate the exploration of pedagogy’s hinge’s meaning through the use of artwork and consequences that meaning entails for educational assumptions. Used as both a theoretical framework and a method, deconstruction enables the loosening of related parts to then examine the potential meanings beyond what is physically encountered.

Like pedagogy's hinge, deconstruction is a concept that resists a static definition because by doing so it negates the very spirit that the concept entails. The application of deconstruction is an integral, if subtle, component of my interpretive and reflective examinations of art, the educational system, policy and the larger social imaginaries and ideologies (which influence the philosophy of narrowing and fixing in the psyche). To use deconstruction, inclusive of its nature and practice, is to readily accept the multiple identities, meanings, and possibilities within the item being examined. Deconstruction takes into account the expanding complexities rather than seeking the one true meaning. Derrida (Caputo, 1997) remarked of the tensions that deconstruction inquires about,

That is what deconstruction is made of: not the mixture but the tension between memory, fidelity, the preservation of something that has been given to us, and, at the same time, heterogeneity, something absolutely new, and a break. The condition of this performative success, which is never guaranteed, is the alliance of these to newness. (p. 6)

A conscious examination of the tensions and an understanding that things are not constructed via strict definitions, instructions, or inadequate and false binaries, corresponds with the notion of pedagogy's hinge and the welcoming of the becoming. The unpacking used in deconstruction embraces and interacts with the complexity of items and reality. Deconstruction is beneficial as a method and methodology since it questions the boundaries and recognizes the ambiguity involved with interacting with these concepts.

John D. Caputo (1997) reflected on Derrida's discussion of deconstruction, recognizing that it is very difficult—and could even be argued, undesirable—to firmly define what is deconstruction:

The very meaning and mission of deconstruction is to show that things—texts, institutions, traditions, societies, beliefs, and practices of whatever size and sort you need—do not have definable meanings and determinable missions, that they are always more than any mission would impose, that they exceed the boundaries they currently occupy. (p. 31)



The meaning that utilizing the possibility offered by deconstruction's fluid perspective, which seeks the underlying complexity of items and beliefs commonly seen as purposefully fixed and impervious to any questions of its actual legitimacy as a thing or belief, holds for this study is twofold: one, it allows for the exploration of the beyond and the possibility held by pushing past readily accepted assumptions of attitudes within and towards education and two, it coexists in a complementary manner with the engagement of experience with artworks. Discussing the multiplicity of deconstruction's meaning and purpose, Caputo provides another angle to view deconstruction: "Deconstruction is the relentless pursuit of *the* impossible, which means, of things whose possibility is sustained by their impossibility, are actually nourished and fed by it" (p. 33). This impossibility does not venture into the realm of the inexplicable. Rather, reflecting and actively engaging with the impossible—that which is beyond the limits defined by assumptions—provides a space for understanding the multitude of possibility. Through the boundaries of possible and impossible, the complexity of knowledge, and how we confront the meaning this complexity holds, is given a space to form and then be reformed.

As David Carroll (1987) discussed in his book, *Paraesthetics*, Derrida's use of deconstruction within the context of literature—which can be considered as another form of aesthetics—explores the tension and "complexity of the question of writing" (p. 86). A key component of Carroll's discussion of Derrida's approach to literature is his observation of literature's particular use to Derrida. The text is not the end within itself; as I use in my paper, the image or artwork is also not the end within itself (Carroll, 1987). These aesthetic impressions are not closed systems. To be conscious in this fact and to reflect on the meaning that our own experiences of self place into aesthetic representations removes that aesthetic work outside of a cognitive vacuum. The runes are not merely read within an image, word, or sound, but the affects (Colebrook, 2002) offer the ability to play with the idea of its representation and how it provokes, based on our own contexts, our interactions with the artwork. Meaning and purpose is not necessarily inherent within the artwork. While I do argue that artworks—those with an aesthetic facet—do have the potentiality of disruption (Butler, 2000; Carroll, 1987), I do not

purport that aesthetic works are solely disruptions within themselves. Their level of potentiality is activated accordingly to the own meaning we place within them and our own interactions—a constantly moving relationship of meaning.

Additionally, using this as a framework to guide the conscious interaction, not dichotic actualization, of art, becoming, and its meaning for education acts as a reminder to intermingle with all aspects of the meaning it holds, not just its aesthetic potentiality or absence of theory: “Literature does have strategic, critical value for Derrida. But like writing in general, it cannot be taken as *the alternative* to theory or philosophy: the way literature serves as a support for transcendental authority is just as important as how, in certain contexts, it disturbs and destabilizes it” (Carroll, p. 88). In discussing the “transcendental authority” as used by Derrida, Carroll communicated that texts themselves can hold a sense of authority beyond the actual time that they were created. It is important to recognize the movement of the piece itself; its meaning and potentiality do not remain static and defined.

Carroll further examined the use of deconstruction in the literary critical sense and cautioned against a flat use of deconstruction, “any treatment of deconstruction as primarily a model or methodology for reading literary (or philosophical) texts is certain to have these restrictive effects—even if it initially challenges and disturbs more conventional forms of literary criticism and techniques of reading” (p. 89). Though Carroll focused more on Derrida’s interpretation of literature and writing, rather than another aesthetic form, his caution against a flat reading of the text can be applied to visual forms if we accept the image as a interpretation of a text as well.

The restrictive effects Carroll referred to are those Derrida identified when a reflection of literature or text does not push the philosophy and the literature into a “double transformation” (p. 89), meaning that all involved parties or concepts should experience some sort of turning in the open use of the deconstructive capability. Again, to remove one component from the other negates their intertwined relationship. For my usage, this alert is useful because it reminds me when I am looking at the artwork to

deconstruct the experience of the hinging moment, to not consequently disregard what meaning that artwork and experience holds for additional views on the philosophical and other effects on the assumptions within education.

Engaging with the frameworks of pedagogy's hinge and deconstruction allow me to explore the nuances offered by the turning of the interaction with the artworks. Since pedagogy's hinge and deconstruction already establish a moving frame, a safe place to go beyond what is commonly assumed to be true or not true, adequate or inadequate, it provides the range of possibility that my inquiry requires. A move away from a fixed definition of appropriateness keeps the space open for a constantly forming discussion and enables me to work with conceptual questions.

Furthermore, these theoretical guideposts speak to the creativity and complexity, not just of art, but also of the conception of education as a whole. When I say that I am considering the boundaries and pushing beyond these educational assumptions, it would foreclose the possibility of exploration by adhering to a theoretical framework focused on an empirically meticulous approach. Though these types of frameworks do have meaning and purpose in other avenues of research, this study instead seeks the space that encourages the establishment of a space that welcomes multiple ways of consideration and contemplation. Opening a space for the possibility of epistemological multiplicity within concepts of education holds value for the discipline as a whole because it can allow for engaging with ways of knowing that are frequently left aside by the dominant forms of knowledge acquisition because these methods or ways of knowing cannot be neatly placed within the structure of the assumed framework. Expanding this conceptual space can help prevent the foreclosing of paths within the many considerations of what constitutes 'education'. The recognition of working with amorphous conceptualizations necessitates a theoretical framework that allows for the nuances and the movement between possibilities that we may not even know is there yet. Speaking of experience, Caputo (1997) discussed Derrida's interpretation of what experience entails:

Then 'experience' means running up against the limits of what can *never* be present, passing to the limits of the unrepresentable and unrepresentable,

which is what we most desire, namely, the impossible (PdS 221, 387/*Points* 207, 373). The impossible is more interesting than the possible and provokes more interesting results, provided that anything at all results. (p. 33)

There is a return to the idea of boundaries, and how art has the ability to purposefully recognize, push, expand, and engage with those boundaries. When dealing with the notion of educational assumptions and how these assumptions affect the multiple levels with how education is dealt with and conceived of in contemporary society, theoretical perspectives that allow for the interaction with the many facets of conceptualizing the issue are indispensable.

## CHAPTER 4. METHODS AND DATA

What we *can* acknowledge is that art is not about knowledge, conveying ‘meanings’ or providing information. Art is not just an ornament or style used to make data more palatable or consumable. Art may well have meanings or messages but what makes it *art* is not its content but its *affect*, the sensible force or style through which it produces content. (Colebrook, 2002, p. 24-25)

Artworks, because they can be encountered outside and beyond traditional locations for education, act as a lens for learning’s unconventional space. Art’s aesthetic nature appeals beyond the boundaries of what is logically assumed and encourages an interaction with the emotive and the impossible aspects of being. In particular, the decision to use artworks provides an open space for multiple interpretations and eases the latent possibility of cognitive dissonance, which can occur in the articulation and conceptualization of ideas that seem contradictory but are instead very fluid and complex.

I argue that these spaces offered by artworks, whether encountered in a museum, through public art initiatives, in a private moment with a book, or even inadvertently with an interaction with a mural on the street, become possible for the unintended catalyst that propels the self into the becoming and learning self. Artworks, loosely defined as something that encourages an aesthetic experience (de Bolla, 2001; Dewey, 1937), which allows the use of words, sound, and movement to be considered within the artistic environment, creates the moment of transition that is vital to the possible experiencing of the pedagogical hinge.

In particular, further examination of Nicosia’s *Real Pictures #11* serves as my aesthetically inclined data source, or catalyst, to examine the unstable notion of being suggested by Ellsworth’s pedagogical hinge and the meaning this potentially holds for the consideration of education and educational assumptions as a whole. As a continuation of Ellsworth’s prior exploration into the meanings that media, architecture, and artworks

hold for the meaning of pedagogy's hinge, I explore in depth *Real Pictures #11* and how its interpretive and reflective analysis seeks to persist the unstable moment of being.

More so, this image as my primary aesthetic catalyst shows how engaging with pedagogy's hinge enables the conceptualization of the consequences of the narrowing of education's purpose. Additional interaction with Nicosia's *Real Pictures #11* in greater detail is important as I feel that this particular artwork operates, on many levels, as a powerful catalyst to explain the experience and consequences of the pedagogical pivot. The purposefully vague rendering of supposed reality in the image incurs questions of authenticity, authority, and what constitutes the "real" real.

The analysis of *Real Pictures #11* serves as its own iteration of a catalyst to critically examine the ramifications pedagogy's hinge holds for the considering the moving and learning self's relation to the boundaries presented by contemporary educational assumptions. Art's dynamic power enables a space to explore difficult conceptualizations of assumptions, which are slippery to grasp because of their subtle and intertwined characteristics with the many components that influence the ways of thinking and approaching education.

As well, other data sources include literature related to my exploratory subtopics. The range of literature mimics the range of conceptualizations that contemporary educational assumptions inhabit. However, more specifically, I do focus more on literature that concerns aesthetics, art, philosophy, and educational policy, especially that literature which works within a poststructuralist and postmodernist framework.

An interpretive and reflective methodological approach to the analysis becomes a way for the contextual application of history, political, artistic, and personal to arrive at the intersection of art, possibility, and presence. Interpretive and reflective methods find their space in the pedagogical pivots of the analysis. The analysis of an artwork burrows deeper than its outward appearance; as Derrida remarked, the value of deconstruction comes from the interaction of the within and without of the item in analysis. Not a dichotic existence, the use of deconstruction encourages the spatial recognition of the components that may not be exact components, and the conceptualization of the meaning

they hold for and of the item as a whole. When “reconstructed” after the deconstruction of the item’s meaning, there is something different, possibly for both the item and the learning self who engages in the process of deconstruction. The examination of a work is multilayered. The different facets of analysis begin to provide a somewhat understanding of the piece. However, is it ever truly possible to get at what the artist ultimately desired as the message? I would argue not. The multiplicity of being, existing, and becoming is veiled in the interpretations that the viewer brings to the art piece. The existence of so many possibilities and so many different paths of becoming elucidate rather than hinder the pedagogical hinge.

## CHAPTER 5. *REAL PICTURES #11*: THE CATALYST

Nicosia's gelatin silver print *Real Pictures #11* depicts a scene suggestive of the environment of suburban anonymity. It is a black and white image that would not be out of place either in a newspaper or an art gallery. Three children, two boys and one girl, stand with their backs to the image's viewer and instead face a small tree. A cursory glance of their surroundings reveals that the lawn is manicured, the fence in the mid-ground of the photograph is not in disrepair, and the house in the background is well kept. The three children are wearing what appear to be clean, nice clothes. Though the two boys, on either side of the girl, look at the tree, the girl turns her head to look back at the viewer, almost in a direct confrontation of the gaze. In an additional breaking of the stillness, the tree the children regard is on fire. The boy on the left holds a gas container.

The photograph is rather large, especially in comparison to the surrounding artworks, measuring roughly 6.5 feet by 4 feet. Located in a small alcove immediately to the right of the exhibition's entrance, the very architecture of the exhibition encouraged an instant interaction with the artworks. *Real Pictures #11* faced the entrance directly; on the adjacent wall was a mix-media collage piece and directly across from *Real Pictures #11* was another photograph. This photograph located across from *Real Pictures #11* was smaller in size but extremely saturated in color, in contrast to the strong black and white imagery of Nicosia's work. Fittingly titled, "*Untitled*", the work by Gregory Crewdson (1994) depicted a fox, lying motionless on the ground underneath a grape arbor; this setting evoked memories of Aesop's fables.

Though the technique involved saturated color, a touch of soft light suggested a dreamlike quality. The image appeared obviously staged, as if Crewdson wanted to clearly communicate an artificial actuality in order to have the viewer concentrate more on the possible interpretation of the Aesopian allusion. Yet in contrast, Nicosia's *Real Pictures #11* continued to play on the interaction of realism and artifice.

*Real Pictures #11* purposefully shifted what it means to exist as authentic, as the photograph is also a part of the genre of staged images. Other artists that have created



works influenced by these guidelines include Cindy Sherman, Jeff Wall, and the artist whose work was exhibited opposite of Nicosia's, Gregory Crewdson. As an artwork of staged imagery, *Real Pictures #11* follows certain identifying guideposts. Coleman (Wells, 2004) noted that staged imagery "refers to the creating of a scene for the camera (as in staging within theatre)" (p. 279). These purposefully "falsified documents" play on our notions of the real/unreal and the true/false. This teasing out of what constitutes as tangible meaning counteracts the false binaries created by dichotic thought.

In a further referent to the questionable interpretations of reality, *Real Pictures #11* also evokes remembrances of photojournalistic and documentary qualities, thus imbuing some sense of the actual real within the photograph. The choice of black and white for the image, rather than color, recalls journalistic approaches to photography witnessed in newspapers and other forms of informational media. The purposefully journalistic quality of the image imbues with it all the connotations associated with that detail: the bearing witness to an event, the neutrality of the observer who records a moment of truthful happening, the idea of capturing an event rather than staging it. Wells (2004) again commented, "Photojournalism and documentary are linked by the fact that they claim to have a special relationship to the real; that they give us an accurate and authentic view of the world," (p. 71). Upon first glance at *Real Pictures #11*, there exists some sense that the moment depicted by the image could actually be a real, unscripted moment. Moreover, as a photograph, instead of a drawing or painting, the semblance of veracity is communicated by its very format. Similar to Wells, Strauss (2003) observed, "The relation of these photographs to belief is often not bound by their objective veracity," (p. 74). *Real Pictures #11* plays with our conceptions and acceptance of legitimacy through the simple presentation of an occurrence resembling an uncomfortable possible truth. This unstable space is troubling as well full of possibilities of growth for our methods and context of interpretations.

The identifying labels that both Nicosia and Crewdson use to designate their photographs, "untitled" and "real", purposefully play off of a refusal of fixed definition. Nicosia's piece, as well as Crewdson's, is a component of a series of works that explore

staged imagery: how real are our conceptions of real? For Nicosia's image, the conscious labeling of the photograph as "real" suggests a tongue-in-cheek projection of veracity. It acknowledges that a simplistic definition of authentic is problematic. By labeling it real, is it in fact real? This is a question that I will come back to later as it is helpful to explain how this particular image acts as a catalyst to shift the moment of the pedagogical hinge's happening.

The decision to create an open space of naming allows the viewer to bring her own meaning to the artwork. However, this opportunity of meaning making also comes with the responsibility of recognition: what does it mean for the viewer to consciously interact with the image, possibly identifying it in her own way based on her own body's previous interactions with the world, and yet confront the understanding that the artwork's purposeful non-title relays its refusal to remain fixed in any one particular definition of meaning? The creation of a place of instability opens up an area for pedagogy's hinge to occur.

In my previous analysis of the image (Sojot, 2012), I observed that the pedagogical pivot's moment of instability, as created by my encounter with Nicosia's *Real Pictures #11*, generated several different paths that led me to a different understanding of my relationship with the idea of education as a whole entity. These paths revolved around notions of authenticity, authority, and the transitional moment. Reflecting on my interaction with the artwork and my continuous return to the image, there is something about that particular unstable moment and hinge of learning that consciously changed some aspect within myself. To deconstruct this insular moment and understand its multifaceted contexts and consequences helps to engage with pedagogy's hinge, and see what it holds for further interaction and consequences in education.

If the surrounding context had been print on paper, arriving on the doorstep in the morning instead of existing on a museum's wall, would this elicit a stronger pull on reality? I experienced this imbalance of supposed reality upon my first interaction with the image. The image engaged the possible of the real, although logically the content of the image could not be considered 'true' in the accepted sense. The informational label

reiterated what my logic told me to be the truth: this was a staged image created by Nicosia. The children depicted were not pyromaniacs bored with suburban existence, but instead neighborhood children of the Dallas community Nicosia had just moved to. He had asked them to participate; they did. The resulting image is a creation of an idea, fashioned into the reality of the photograph.

However, I would suggest that greater attention to the notion of what is real is needed in this context. Though the authenticity of the image has been challenged based on one interpretation of what it means to be true, does this mean that the actual moment of the photo is completely inauthentic? False dichotomies of real/unreal, authentic/inauthentic, true/false, disallow for interpretations that venture into the transitional territory of the indefinable. For the artist and for the children as subjects, this moment happened: it existed. It may not have existed as a spontaneous gesture, but it did occur as a real moment for the participants, albeit a moment that was generated towards describing a narrative rather than an impromptu capturing. Additionally, the viewer's own interaction with the image is an authentic moment sparked by the instability of the image. Sontag (1973) reminded to view these types of interactions as examples of the multitude of interpretations of authentic and real. Within deconstruction, Derrida also cautioned against the blind acceptance of the dichotic existence.

Questioning the authenticity of an image encased in a material taken for granted as a purveyor of veracity in turns challenges the authority of the image. The unstable moment, triggered by this wondering of what is considered authentic of *Real Pictures #11*, continues to drive the viewer along the transitional experience, thus encouraging the encounter with pedagogy's hinge. The image's legitimacy is challenged and put into the similar motion as conceptions of authenticity. What questions does this encounter raise? How does putting the image's authority into a transitional space influence the internal transitional space of the personal pedagogical moment? Or does the internal pedagogical pivot influence the interaction with the image's authority?

It is within this moment of pedagogy's hinge, provoked by *Real Pictures #11*, that the questioning, the challenging, the critique of power becomes possible and necessary.

The image serves as a catalyst allowing for this space to occur. The multiple readings of an image, especially after the authenticity is already questioned, delegitimize the linearity of the one, 'true' way of knowing and instead embrace the possibility of multiple epistemologies. Though Sekula (1981/1988) remarked that messages within the image speaks with an authority that eliminates its rejection thereof (p. 453), the experience created by an interaction with *Real Pictures #11*, and on a larger scale other artworks, can be utilized as a springboard to critique and question the systems operated by dominant attitudes in education.

## CHAPTER 6. INTERSECTIONS OF ART AND EDUCATION

*What are the roots that clutch, what branches grow  
Out of this stony rubbish? Son of man,  
You cannot say, or guess, for you know only  
A heap of broken images, where the sun beats,  
(Eliot, T.S. *The Waste Land*, ll. 19-22)*

The educational component of the interaction and catalyst of an artwork comes through the hinging experience. It is the interaction with the hinging moment that provides a reflection of the experience, not necessarily the artwork itself. I would argue that the artwork does not necessarily contain, that is, it is not inherently the answer or the endpoint, but rather a tool or the means to reach or interact with the pedagogical pivot. As discussed in the previous section, the questions raised were not generated through *Real Pictures #11* representative imagery but rather the experience itself. The artwork was a catalyst for the moment of my pedagogical hinging.

### **Art as Catalyst, Disruption, and Engagement**

By engaging with the fluid self we interact with possibility. This concern with engaging with what develops within the process rather than transmuting a previously held and created notion is to embrace pedagogy in motion: the hinge. Ellsworth quoted Kennedy, “for example...the body, dance, movement, and process might be [rediscovered by education] as ways of articulating ideas, feelings, attitudes, and experiences in ways outside of written or oral language” (Kennedy, 2003, p 32; Ellsworth p. 29). The refusal of art to abide by a specific set of limiting definitions disrupts the assumption of the accepted way of performing as proper in the society. By doing so, art’s prospect as a stimulus or gateway to another potential way of considering the learning self engages with that self’s moment.

Ellsworth’s (2005) description of de Bolla’s interaction with the poem “We Are Seven” relays the tension of how art presents an alternate ways of describing and

considering reality. In recognition of the blurring of boundaries of what is said to be determined and defined, de Bolla and Ellsworth relate the cognitive dissonance that can emerge when thinking of between what is thought to be static and what is actually considered—not according to another way of conceiving that thought:

Art bends under its chosen burden of *trying to make shareable a knowledge that cannot be explained*. Art assumes the burden of a knowing that is anything but literal and will not be reduced to the explainable through socially encoded grids of categories, names, and numbers...Although it lies beyond language, *what the aesthetic knows* can be painted, sculpted, danced, or sensed in and through music, moving images, architecture, and poetry. What poetry ‘knows’ is a way of knowing rooted in the movement of our learning selves as they pass into and through the space between the literal and the figurative and *experience one reality passing into another*. (p. 157)

Pulling into the idea of art as a catalyst to encourage the interaction with the possibility of the pedagogical hinge consumes this idea of porous boundaries and movable limitations of knowledge and education.

Though there is a desire to hold back from a strict set of directions to initiate some sort of possibility of a guided encounter, it can be helpful to demonstrate how it could possibly occur. There could occur first a general recognition of the limits placed on thinking. Helpful in this sense is Ellsworth’s idea of living and dead knowledge, which again, is not necessarily a binary opposition but rather can occur on a scale—she does mention how some knowledge can be ‘half-dead’—to begin the inquiry into how to think is taught, as well as what is appropriate and ‘valuable’ knowledge to reproduce. It is within the scope of the creative, such as artworks, that the conscious awakening to the presence of boundaries can be more easily attained.

Pedagogy’s hinge is even more hauntingly engaging because of its inherent inability to become fixed; the characteristics and environment that allow for the possible occurrence of the pivot are not static. In a society where assurance and fixed notions of

reality exist as the normative social imaginary, the purposeful *unfixing* rejects the linearity of dominant power structures that attempt to continuously infiltrate the very core of our beings. Within the experience of pedagogy's hinge, I am *becoming* unstable. My whole preconception of what it means to learn, to know, to be a student, to be a teacher, is purposefully flipped—and not for the sole purpose of destruction, but rather to awaken my kinetic epistemological and ontological self into the possibilities of the moving sense of knowing. This idea of turning, of moving—but not according to the linear path espoused by accepted notions of being—frees the subject from the structural restraints operated by the educational assumptions.

By witnessing a painting or listening to a musical arrangement, the artwork becomes a catalyst and the pedagogical hinge becomes the environment to challenge these preconceived notions of validity that are contingent on the current power structures remaining in place. The fluidity of the boundaries of what is accepted as appropriate learning is apparent. Even the notion of appropriate is questioned. The space is opened to ask, “Who uses this term, how and why? What meanings are imbedded within this experience?”

### **Pedagogy's Hinge, Real Pictures #11, and the Educational Experience**

Sometimes there exists a certain *je ne sais quoi* about particular works of art—loosely defined—that will follow you, ‘haunt’ you, long after the initial experience with that particular piece. What is taken away from the interaction with the artwork is a constant reminder of an experience, a relationship consumed by the memory and potential of the continued reflection of each different moment and facet of the piece.

My first interaction with Nicosia's *Real Pictures #11* occurred more than a year ago, yet the memory of the hinging moment remains. In essence, something about the moment continues to act as a catalyst to pursue additional interactions with the experience and ways to apply that to considerations of education. Though a thorough aesthetic analysis could be completed, how does that approach the recognition of my multiple varied experiences of the image's ability to stimulate that continue to twist

through the semblance of time? The different approaches time and time again to the poem elicit the different experiences. Again, it is not so much that there is a particular meaning inherent in the work, but that it is able to elicit a dynamic experience.

The skill of the artist to draw you into their work and momentarily be able to glimpse something of the impossible within the possible is a mark of creative endeavors. Engagement with the creative encourages curiosity of the fluxing moment: what draws me here and why? A feeling of change and turning of the self's own conception of knowledge requires reflection to discern the change's particular nature. The mystery of the moment incites growth and perplexity. This is the hinging moment that provokes the learning self to grapple with the moment of in-between the previously known and the possibility of knowing something new.

Art, through its interpretation, allows for the existence of multiple ways of being and thinking. Though an artist may guide the viewer or 'reader' of their work to feel a certain way, or devise a certain narrative or reaction, the artist recognizes that they cannot ensure the specific universal narrative. For the viewer, that creation becomes the viewer's hinge. Because the self is thrust into the moving moment of the engagement with the artwork, the transitional space from one identity to another, from myself of the previous past to myself of the immediate future, the becoming self has the ability to question the authority of knowing. Who says what I need to know? Who determines this? What boundaries determine the decision of what is appropriate to know and learn? Why am I made to know certain things while shied away from other things? The tumultuous psychic moment extends out to my past, present, and future selves. The multiplicity of possibility, here it exists.

Using art as the medium of pursuit speaks to the longing of the aesthetic and creative experience. Remarking on the give and take relationship of art and the aesthetic experience, de Bolla (2001) wrote, "What elicits *aesthetic* experience is an artwork is defined as an object that produces *aesthetic* experience" (p. 9). Within the act of creating an aesthetic object or experience, some intent of a message is imbued within the material. Yet it is acknowledged that the specific message, if it ever existed as a purposeful intent



in the first place, cannot be known in its entirety. Nicosia reflected on his collection of works and the generation of purposeful ambiguity in the pieces in a 2004 interview: “Well, since *Real Pictures*, the most effective work for me is when I present an image and let the audience complete it through their own experiences. That is still what I prefer doing—just presenting a picture” (Jankauskas, 2004). The possible meaning is not inherent in the image. *Real Pictures #11* evokes a sensation through its rendering of an unstable moment whose borders of reality and imagination are fluid.

Where exactly does the intersection of art and pedagogy’s hinge fit in the context of education? While the exact spaces shift according to the experiences brought to the transitional space by the body, incorporating the transitional epistemological spaces offered by creative endeavors allows for a critical interaction open to the many possibilities of the pedagogical hinge’s expansion. As a catalyst, artworks encourage the interaction with pedagogy’s hinge. Interestingly, the discussion of experience recalls Dewey’s own reflections on art and aesthetics. Experience factors heavily into the consideration of the intersections of art and education. Art, as “a quality that permeates an experience; it is not, save by a figure of speech, the experience itself” (Dewey, 1934, p. 339) acts as the catalyst to encourage the agency of the individual to create her own moments of meaning making, learning, and of becoming. Attention must also be given to the idea of what exactly is an aesthetic experience and those interactions in order to help highlight how the analysis of the experience can possibly move beyond just an aesthetic analysis.

The nuances of an artwork resist the fixing of its potentialities of meaning and interpretation. Though there can be intention or a type of message within the piece specifically inserted by the artist/creator, the specific experience of the viewer or engager cannot be specifically prescribed or replicated. Examining this experience through the perspective of pedagogy’s hinge creates a space to reinterpret the relationship of art and education on different levels. Pedagogy’s hinge highlights the characteristic ability of artworks to open up a space that challenges educational fixing and instead

encourages a living educational experience aware and engaged with the presence of epistemological complexity.

Pedagogy's hinge highlights this characteristic of art by giving another name to the aesthetic experience as well as demonstrating the educational component of such an experience. My interaction with *Real Pictures #11* is not just an aesthetic experience. To quote Carroll's (1987) determination of the borderlands of what defines aesthetic and beyond, this interaction resembles a crossing into what he called 'paraesthetics': "Paraesthetics describes a critical approach to aesthetics for which art is a question not a given, an aesthetics in which art does not have a determined place or a fixed definition" (p. xiv). By using the emotive aspects created by the relationship with a creative work, it is possible to acknowledge and work within that experience. The pedagogical pivot enacted by the interaction with *Real Pictures #11* encouraged an intentional space to learn from the porous borders of educational conception.

The multiplicity of names to be given to experiences reflects the many ways that an experience could be held. The experience induced by aesthetic interaction portrays this. Dewey's exploration as art as experience is useful in the endeavor to follow. Though there is significant discussion of his interpretation as being both too broad and too narrow (Shusterman, 2003), Dewey's focus on the experiential potential of the experience of the artwork as what identifies it as an artwork is a useful definition. Shusterman reflected on Dewey's definition, stating "Defining art as experience also has value in widening the realm of art by challenging the rigid division between art and action or real life, a distinction supported by theories that define art as *mimesis* or *poesis* or as the narrow practice of fine art defined by the institutional artworld" (p. 405). Here, the identification of the "rigid division" illuminates how art or the definition of it is in actuality, in continual flux. Shusterman further states that "Dewey's definition of art as experience is then extremely useful for deepening and transforming our understanding of art, for reminding us that art's value is in its rich and dynamic experience, and not primarily in collecting or connoisseurship or scholarly interpretation" (p. 405). The concept of the

experience holds much importance in the consideration of education, because it is the experiencing self that creates moments of learning.

A focus on the idea of the aesthetic interaction as experience, and as having that experience give shape to what determines the quality to consider something within the artistic realm aligns with the idea of the pedagogical hinge as describing another facet of the experience through the catalyst of an artwork. The pivoting of the body's knowledge through the catalyst of the artwork's experience allows the person to experience her own dynamic learning self. Speaking to the essence of the creative spirit which encourages the construction of dynamic spaces filled with the intent of engaging an aesthetic, or some type of, experience—and thus the pedagogical pivot—Ellsworth (2005) wrote, “At the hands of these designers, pedagogy becomes a dynamic that creates the *experience* of an idea, of a way of making sense of the self, the world, and self in the world. It becomes the force that sets interior self-experience in motion to encounter the outside ‘not me’” (p.38). This reinterpretation of an experience is liberating and challenges authoritarian based pedagogies dependent on the specific delineation of what is assumed and appropriate. Within the current iteration of the educational system, control exists not through the embrace of the individual experience, but through the imposition of dead knowledge.

Another interesting component in the consideration of the aesthetic experience and the possible pedagogical connections, to the learning experiencing of the learning self is Barthes' attention to the idea of *studium* and *punctum*. The effects of the learning self's interaction with the aesthetic experience proffered by an artwork recalls Barthes' discussion of *punctum*: that which pierces. Though *studium* encompasses the context of a photograph or other work of art, the *punctum* is an individual's own connection to the piece (Barthes 1980/2010). The *punctum* allows for a distinct experience of one's own pedagogical pivot place and creation of living knowledge. I would suggest that using the idea of *punctum* allows for another perspective or description of the possibility of what the hinging moment is like for the learning self. Because the *punctum* allows for each

individual to incorporate a different aspect of that art piece to discover that which pierces them, it opens up a space for the multitude of interpretations of learning.

However, in this discussion of studium and punctum, though helpful, I would posit that utilizing this perspective as a tool to give shape to the possibility of pedagogy's hinge would benefit from not being as insular as it was used by Barthes. For studium can encompass more than the context within the photograph; it can incorporate the life experiences of the viewer as a participant. Enlarging the scope of the studium to exist and interact beyond the physical limitations of the artwork allows for a more nuanced consideration of the hinging moment. Though Barthes dealt primarily with his own solitary relationship to the particular artwork or photograph in this context of the moment of viewing, understanding this perspective is helpful in fully realizing the potential of pedagogy's hinge to enable the questioning of educational assumptions limiting current epistemological interactions with the dynamic self and considerations of that self's relationship to the larger social imaginary.

Yet, why consider and use the aesthetic experience? This supposed characteristic of art, as articulated by many people—Dewey, Ellsworth, de Bolla, and Carroll—engages with the space beyond the boundaries of the artwork through the elicitation of the experience. Artworks' ability to open up a space for multiple experiences and open conversation is not necessarily universal in a literal sense. One cannot approach any artwork and expect to experience the pedagogical hinge. This description purposefully shies away from specific limitations. The fluidity of boundaries in art is its disruptive power (Butler, 2000; Carroll, 1987). Incapable of being permanently fixed, art can continuously reinterpret itself. It does not adhere to binary oppositions of good/bad, etc., and instead glides on a moving continuum of interpretive meaning. Pedagogy's hinge, elicited through the aesthetic experience from art's catalyst, inhabits and provokes the recognition of unknowing. Furthermore, it puts the body in epistemological motion and opens the learning self to the dynamic potential of pedagogical agency.

This experience is a key component of understanding the educational ramifications of the aesthetic interaction and pedagogy's hinge. Operating within

Dewey's definition of experience and Elizabeth Ellsworth's (2005) concept of the "pedagogical pivot" (p. 38), three questions direct the following discussion: 1) What is an experience; 2) Where does art fit in with the concept of experience; and 3) What are the consequences for education and the forces which guide its current purpose? The intersection of art, experience, and democratic conceptions of being calls attention to several issues apparent in the current educational system. Expanding an interpretation of experience, through art as an exploratory catalyst, allows for an individual to embrace his or her pedagogical agency.

For Dewey (1916/1944), experience is "trying to do something and having the thing perceptibly do something to one in return" (p. 153). Dewey's concept communicates an active interaction, rather than a passive relationship, with an experience: through experiencing, an individual loses and gains *something*. The loss of an old understanding is counteracted with gaining of new knowledge. The authentic experience for an individual is unique (Dewey, 1934, p. 37). However, Dewey notes that it is possible to proceed without conscious engagement of experiences; these particular instances do not allow for perceptive growth of self, for they are inauthentic. Each encounter with an experience depends on the individual's own past experiences and the process by which those experiences inform additional interactions. Furthermore, experiencing may not necessarily exist as a pleasant process. Since it implies loss, it also "involves surrender" (Dewey, 1934, p. 55). Dewey continued, "But adequate yielding of the self is possible only through a controlled activity that may well be intense" (p. 55). The self experiences through a disciplined relinquishing of control (Hinchliffe, 2011) in order to consciously engage with an authentic experience.

For both Dewey and Ellsworth, the interaction with art can provide the conditions for an individual's authentic experience through the pedagogical pivot. As a gateway, artistic works encourage transitional epistemological spaces instrumental for this experience. Additionally, Dewey and Ellsworth approach art as advocating for an experience in *motion*. Such an approach rejects the linearity of the modern educational model, promoting instead the individual's unique acquisition of knowledge through

authentic experience. Describing how artists create spaces to encourage the transitive moment through the unbalancing of space, both physical and theoretical, Ellsworth (2005) wrote,

At the hands of these designers, pedagogy becomes a dynamic that creates the *experience* of an idea, of a way of making sense of the self, the world, and self in the world. It becomes the force that sets interior self-experience in motion to encounter the outside “not me.” (p. 38)

This reinterpretation of an experience is liberating and challenges authoritarian pedagogy. Within the educational system, control exists not through the embrace of individual experience, but through the imposition of dead knowledge. Dewey (1916/1944) illustrated the role of experience in education as “the idea of continuous reconstruction” that “is marked off from education as preparation for a remote future, as unfolding, as external formation, and as recapitulation of the past” (p. 80). Implying perpetual movement, this type of relationship with experience and the pedagogical pivot encourages constant reflexivity. Promoting the conscious interaction with these experiences further extends the grasp of knowledge.

Any pedagogy that encourages the meaning-making agency of the individual rather than the perpetual absorption of dead knowledge challenges the legitimacy of the dominant narrative. These interpretations of experience, expressed through the interaction with art, endorse the beneficial and genuine participation of an individual in society. Such pedagogy supports the exploration of the transitional space of knowledge and meaning making: “Authoritarian order, the authorized answer, preempts conflict, and a superiority of knowledge preempts pedagogies that are for knowledge in the making” (Ellsworth, 2005, p. 94). In an era where economic efficiency is touted as the primary purpose of education rather than social responsibility or civic duty (Carpenter & Hughes, 2011), inequities abound, not only in the educational system, but also within larger society.

Through opening up the notion of experience within pedagogy’s hinge as experienced by the catalyst of art, it challenges dominant and commonly accepted conceptions of acquiring, interpreting and placing value on dead knowledge. The moment

of the pedagogical hinge is not within the artwork, but rather the experience that is set in motion through the catalyst of the creative piece. The self's *experience* of an artwork, whether creative vehicle of the experience is visual, oral, sensations through the body, or aural, speaks to the possibility of the creating moment. Artworks enable a space where the multiplicity of possible experiences can occur because the interpretation of the creative piece is influenced by each subject's individual collection of experiences and experiencing. A specific interpretation, or to put in Ellsworth's terminology—the communication of dead knowledge, of an artwork is confounded by that artwork's expression of creativity interfacing with the self's being in and of experience. The many experiences that become possible through engaging with an artwork recall the numerous ways of engaging with epistemological sensation and acquisition. In the intersections of education, providing for the space for a greater interpretation of the pedagogical experience opens up the possibility to conceive of other ways of determining how knowledge in the making and the experience of the learning self can occur. This mindset expands the setting of experiencing knowledge and of the becoming self: it takes the confines of the limits of approaching education and enables the perception of possibility.

Encouraging an individual's interaction with understanding knowledge through the experiencing self can be construed as a challenge to dominant forms of pedagogic control. It can threaten the authoritative approach and reject the imposition of dead knowledge. Since experience is accessible to all members of society, it cannot be relegated to particular few. The exploration of the experiencing self through art provides an individual with the agency to effectively participate in society's complexity. Rather than adhere to the limiting philosophy of profit and accountability, which dominates current educational narratives, the embrace of experience as a key component to generate knowledge expands opportunities for communities to engage with diversified and democratic ways of learning.

Pedagogy's hinge opens up a space to dissipate the fixing tendencies in educational assumptions; artworks contribute as catalyst. A focus on the experience of my actual and continued encounter with *Real Pictures #11* is able to illuminate how the

experience itself represents an educational moment. Ellsworth's discussion of Winnicott's concept of the transitional space, that which evokes, brings up an idea of the aggressive aspect of the loss and turning to living knowledge. Although I do not believe the experience to be as jarring or as aggressive as described, there is a sense of dynamic turning. "A heap of broken images" wrote Eliot. Could my experience with the poem suggest recognition of the images that are shown, these assumptions that are assumed, and then to understand that it is a pile of non-critically examined components? What happens when it is possible when engaged in the hinging pedagogical moment to reflect on the possibility that these images and assumptions portrayed in the social imaginary are not in fact as put together as they are portrayed? What if it is a heap of broken images?

Focusing on the purely aesthetic qualities of creative works inhibits the other pedagogical possibilities that these artworks have as creative catalysts. Creative works, because they have the ability and potentiality to disrupt normative notions of being, encompass more than visual and emotional pleasure, which can bring the experience of them beyond aesthetic appreciation and into an educational space that critically reflects on the ramifications of that experience. Their exploration of various contexts—within and exterior of the piece—and the ability for them to conjure particular experiences with the self who experiences the creative piece has the possibility of the moment. This possibility is the powerful component of the piece. Since it can or cannot be possible, it can push the boundaries of our conceptions of the possible and impossible, and where exactly we limit these definitions of learning, the self, and appropriate knowledge.

By considering artworks' ability to catalyze a possible moment between viewer and creative work, it allows for an abundance of possible moments with pedagogy's hinges. The experience with the pedagogical pivot place cannot be prescribed or replicated and instead opens up the space to consider the confining spaces of predetermined ways of knowing. In *Paraesthetics*, Carroll discussed the use of art and literature within the philosophies of Nietzsche, Lyotard, Foucault, and Derrida, but not through the use of strictly and limiting aesthetic theory: "Interested in the philosophical, historical, and political issues raised by the question of form or the problem of beauty



rather than in form and beauty as narrow aestheticist questions” (p. xiv). I would say that this reflective study of my own intertwines the motivation for Carroll’s text with the ideas of the pedagogical hinge raised by Ellsworth. Aligned with part of Carroll’s prerogative, my study is not particularly focused on the specific form of the artwork or creative work, but more of how the artwork has a capability to enact the engaging moment. The experience of the becoming self in her moment of creating living knowledge is what interests me, not the search for answers of the potentiality of epistemological multiplicity within an artwork’s representations of reality. And it is at this moment that I concur with Ellsworth that it has the pedagogical power of movement and dynamic learning.

If educational assumptions persist by an ability to fix its conceptions, then an activity which encourages the non-limiting of the becoming and learning self challenges those very assumptions. To plant the seed of an idea that it is possible to move beyond the boundaries, to push and interact with these assumed and put out there boundaries, disputes the approach of linear and accepted knowledge. Seeing and experiencing knowledge as a thing or construct that can be engaged with on multiple levels disrupts the assumed notion of knowledge as static, fixed, and something to be received. Living knowledge, which the becoming moment of the self in relation to the pedagogical hinge generates through the experience of an artwork’s affect, creates that space to encounter possibilities other than the imposition of dead knowledge.

I find it very interesting to think of the interaction with an artwork and the ensuing experience as having a possible pedagogical power. What can we learn from the experience of the becoming self?

Another thing that I find very interesting while pondering this process is that the process itself is not ensured with each experience of a creative work. The experience connects with an individual and gives variety to the possible threads of thought and action. By embracing the differences, it is possible to then engage with other differences exposed in our lives and thoughts with others. Educational assumptions seek to limit the possibilities of the other and multiple ways of approaching thought and action. Unquestioningly adhering to the assumptions enacted every day by the systemic approach

to education belies these possibilities. To open up the pedagogical space to consider the possibilities of other ways of the epistemological and ontological ways of the being in becoming holds much promise for current reflections of educational assumptions.

The engagement with the catalyst of art's power creates a space for purposeful reflection of the self and what the possibility of the learning self holds. The space that is created enables the critical analysis of what living and dead knowledge can mean, and what it means to generate one's own living knowledge.

Though much of this discussion has focused on the idea of the individual's experience with the artwork, I would suggest that the engagement and self-reflection of the individual is not limited to the solitary self. On the contrary, purposeful and critical interaction can enable the learning and becoming self to enact compassion and the social responsibility aspect of the learning self. Reflecting on this idea, Ellsworth commented, "The capacity of pedagogy to access and acknowledge our sensations of being in relation is crucial to efforts to teach about and across social and cultural differences" (p. 135). Moving the idea of the individual's experience to the much wider net of experiences of all beings and things again creates a space to acknowledge the possibilities beyond assumptions of self and appropriate ways of being.

As discussed above, the experience created by the catalyst of art has the capacity for an educational interaction, but what defines this particular interaction as a living educational experience? This comes back to Ellsworth's consideration of living and dead, or even half-living, knowledge. Living knowledge is the experience of generating something that was not known before, nor was purposefully instructed and necessary to be known. By being put into motion, the becoming self, the subject is encouraged to interact with the becoming moment and to be open to the possibilities of understanding something that was not known before to their own self but now is. The dynamic learning self does not adhere to a static, fixed moment of assumption. The assumption that knowledge is a thing to be held and gotten as a static endeavor does not speak to the complexity of the dynamic moment.

The pedagogical hinge, as experienced through the catalyst of art, is encouraged by the process to expand definitions previously held—education, art, process, learning, multiplicity of knowing, defining, context—in a conscious interaction with the boundaries placed by an adherence to the authority of the placed definitions. The moment of living knowledge allows for the possibility of the questioning of these boundaries, which also are complicit in the continued legitimization of educational assumptions.

Additionally, a consideration of living knowledge touches upon the creative aspects of the teaching pedagogical experience. If we take teaching to be an artistic practice within itself, that is, to expand our notions as Dewey did regarding the definition of what art is, to play with the boundaries of commonly assumed definitions, then the experience for all participants can be educational. It conjures up an idea of the fluidity of pedagogy and a resistance to purposeful and limiting definition.

The conversation in this section establishes, though this may seem contradictory, how art, education, and pedagogy's hinge can intersect not in the realm of curriculum, but rather in the consideration of the larger assumptions that guide our educational journey in the U.S. Offering a possible guidance in further considerations of the living educational moment creates this space for questioning. Because art's latent potentiality characteristic as "disruptor" shifts what is previously known and possibly known, engaging with artworks holds meaning for education as a way to question the assumptions guiding attitudes within the system. This is the potential power of art and other creative works, within which is literature. The inability to firmly define what art is initiates questioning of what it could be, what it does, and what art has the potentiality to activate, whether creatively or epistemologically. Accepting the fluidity of this existence opens the possibility of the other ways of knowing and allows for as Ellsworth said, a process to engage with the multiple gauges of meaning socially and culturally. Thinking of this experience as a tool to (un)confine these spaces, the pedagogical hinge incorporates and encourages ways of thinking, a process that has the potential to challenge unhelpful educational assumptions. Art evokes a sense of emotion, and to

analyze and dissect the meaning of the experience holds power and agency for the self to explore his or her own notions of obtaining and engaging with knowing.

If we allow ourselves to open up the idea that meaning has the possibility of being fluid according to our own collection of experiences, it could have the consequence that allows the space for complicated discussions of assumptions, whether it be in the educational system itself through enacted policies, or through curriculum itself in how Ellsworth address the idea of social and cultural interactions. The experience I had with *Real Pictures #11* enabled a pedagogical hinge that enabled me to critically question assumed borders of authority of educational boundaries; this resembled the shattering of assumptions previously held. Though the previously held knowledge that was taught to me is not necessarily of no value, it were my own interactions with pedagogical agency that was provided by a conscious experience with the catalyst of the image of *Real Pictures #11*. Pedagogy's hinge liberated an ability within the self to question the authenticity and legitimacy of the educational assumptions guiding much of contemporary attitudes today.

## CHAPTER 7. NARROWING OF EDUCATION'S PURPOSE

In fact, university work has been more directly construed to serve not only corporate-profit agenda via its grant-suppliant status, but universities have become franchises in their own right, reconfigured according to corporate management, labor, and consumer models and delivering a name-brand product... The traditional idea of the university as a not-for-profit institution that offers a liberal education and enfranchises citizens of the republic, not to mention the more radical view that the university foster a socially critical if not revolutionary class, has been evacuated without much of a fight. (Williams, 2001, p. 18)

As the rise of corporate culture reasserts the primacy of privatization and individualism there is an increasing call for people to surrender or narrow their capacities for engaged politics for a market-based notion of identity, one that suggests relinquishing our roles as social subjects for the limited role of consuming subjects. (Giroux, 2001, p. 30)

If the transitional space is acknowledged through the enabling catalyst of the interaction with an artwork, and the observation of the in-between turning point incorporated into the theoretical analysis of pedagogy, what does this hold for larger educational assumptions? Again, by educational assumptions, I mean those narratives and practices of language that are unquestioned as part of 'the way things are done.' Opening up physical, academic, and emotional spaces for the possibility of pedagogy's hinge generates discourses to counteract the myths of the grand, normative narratives.

Earlier, I began the discussion with how experiencing the pedagogical hinge through the interaction with *Real Pictures #11* enabled the recognition of questioning authenticity and authority of dominant educational assumptions. In this section, I examine the framework that supports the existence and continuation of these contemporary assumptions.

Currently in contemporary U.S. policies, there appears to be a fixing or narrowing of education's purpose in a direction that values the systematic devolvement of the open creative space and, in its place, a grater incorporation of the neoliberal philosophy to guide 'development'. This direction seeks to shape, fix, and legitimize a particular assumption of what education entails, to the detriment of other ways of approaching education. In this section, the witnessing of actuality's landscape shows another facet of the same concern of the previous section, but slightly removed from the previous section's discussion of how art and education intersect in ways that allow for the multiple possibilities of generation, interpretation, and exploration. By understanding how the continued contemporary move towards an ideological fixing of education's purpose that does not and willfully disregards the multiplicity of becoming through the learning self, a more thorough understanding of the educational assumptions that shape our social imaginaries and suggest, as Carroll discussed, a purposeful exploration of the boundaries that can inhibit the interaction with the possible's impossible.

However, an exercise of deconstructing these myths via the catalyst of art and pedagogy's hinge requires a reconsideration of what these myths necessarily entail. Though some linearity of the prior iterations of traditional modernism still remains, I would suggest that these narratives have changed to reflect the current variations of societal ethos.

The views of education's purpose have altered in the U.S. from one of the creative and social responsible individual to that of a purpose informed strongly by a neoliberal capitalist version of that overriding philosophy (Carpenter and Hughes, 2011; Giroux, 2002). This shift in purpose has created a direction of policy and larger assumptions that influence not just the curriculum and method of schools, but also our language and general approach to what meaning education holds in U.S. society. With education's purpose now seemingly geared to highlight more of an economic vision of success, where students are trained and put out in a factory model type institution and have more value placed on subjects with quantifiable results such as STEM—science, technology,

engineering, math—the ‘value’ of those subjects deemed as ‘creative’ or unquantifiable because they are not easily assessed are lowered.

While there is a substantial amount of literature focused on the specific effects of neoliberal globalization, this section will focus more on how the neoliberal philosophy underpins much of what is driving educational assumptions.

First, the fixing of education’s purpose is partially apparent through the increasing utilization of the philosophy of privatization, a form that Patricia Burch (2009) labels the “new privatization”, in the attitudes and assumptions, which guide creation and implementation of things that influence education. This can include who is involved in the decision making process, who implements educational decisions, the language that is used to approach educationally related aspects, and how the general social commentary regarding these decisions plays out in the media and general social commentary. This particular variety of privatization is also reflected as a corporate culture and influenced by the neoliberal underpinnings of that has informed much of the addressing towards policy and economic attitudes since when it gained traction in the latter half of the twentieth century.

Rizvi and Lingard (2010) explored this variation through the language and conception of the social imaginary. In their exploration that touches upon the relationship between the ideology of globalization and neoliberalism as the dominant expression of this ideology, they discussed the concept of the social imaginary. Referencing Taylor’s (2004) determination of what constitutes a social imaginary, Rizvi and Lingard (2010) stated,

A social imaginary is a way of thinking shared in a society by ordinary people the common understandings that make everyday practices possible, giving them sense and legitimacy. It is largely implicit, embedded in ideas and practices, carrying within it deeper normative notions and images, constitutive of a society. (p. 34)

A social imaginary is distinguished from ideology in the sense that ideologies become enacted through our social imaginaries; that is, the ideologies materialize through actions.

Currently, neoliberal globalization operates as the dominant ideology (Rizvi and Lindgard, 2010). However, this is not to say that other facets of globalization or even other ideologies do not exist; they can operate within our living lives, yet they may not have as much dominance. Again, it is necessary to state that even in consideration of this dominantly expressed ideology that there are still multiple social imaginaries that do not conform to the dominant ideology. To accept neoliberal globalization as the dominant and only form would be to commit the same mistake abided by previous linearities.

Contemporary educational discourses, informed by neoliberal philosophy, enter into the social imaginaries in visible and not quite so visible ways. Valuing efficiency, accountability, and the primacy of the free market above all, an adherence to neoliberal ideals comes at the cost of social services previously taken for granted. Education no longer becomes a right of the public and instead is traded on the private market to the highest bidder.

Steger and Roy (2010) identified three facets of neoliberalism as “ideology”, “mode of governance”, and “policy package” (p. 11). In consideration of neoliberalism as an ideology, those whom Steger and Roy identify as the “codifiers” of “public discourse” advocate for the validity of adherence to free market to not only ensure economic strength but to also provide for the ‘betterment’ of society. ‘Betterment’ in this sense is a value that assists by being a specifically defined value for a few, not actually all of society. According to Steger and Roy, the neoliberal ideology in this sense operates on a successful public relations campaign in an attempt to steer the accepted vernacular to one that values economic efficiency over social and ethical responsibility.

The modes of governance give form to methods of control at both the individual and structural level; focusing on individual success instead of striving for a common social good, the modes become ways that the self and other entities operate. Within this facet we see a greater absorption of corporate language within the social imaginary. Students become customers and it becomes not just acceptable, but expected, for test scores to represent the actual commoditization of knowledge.



The third component, the policy package, is the physical materialization of the ideology and mode of governance. Policies are developed and implemented with the intent to turn the tide from a socially responsible community to that of one that adheres to the ideals of the *laissez-faire* market.

In education, this neoliberal philosophy is enacted on multiple levels. While Burch (2009) observed that private interaction in the public sphere of education is not anything new, that there is a historical background for this relationship, the new form of privatization is much more aggressive and threatens to erode what is considered a public good through successive maneuvers that take away what the power of the public good and then places it into the hands of private interests where the primary motivating factor is profit. Profit is then ensured through measures such as increased accountability, efficiency, and other methods valued by neoliberal ideology.

The main characteristics of this privatization on steroids ideology in the educational sphere, specifically within the United States, is economic efficiency, the vast amount of money that is steadily increasing on the educational market, and the adaptation of the very philosophy into our common everyday vernacular, as an unconscious seeping in of the neoliberal ideology. Giroux (2002) condemned the stronghold of neoliberalism in the public sphere, calling it the “most dangerous ideology of the current historical moment” (p. 428). He further remarked that “what becomes troubling under such circumstances is not simply that ideas associated with freedom and agency are defined through the prevailing ideology and principles of the market, but that neoliberalism wraps itself in what appears to be an unassailable appeal to common sense” (p. 428). This appeal grants a sense of unquestioned legitimacy to the prevalence of neoliberal ideology within the purpose of education.

When considering the educational landscape through the lens of the neoliberal social imaginary, a factor that is sometimes given attention to, but mostly escapes the conscious reflection, is how this neoliberal ideology influences our everyday language. The seeping in of corporate vocabulary and language structures has an exacting influence on the way that we think and conceptualize the purpose and meaning of education, what

education can and should do, and the possibilities of that vision of education. When participants in the educational system are referred to as consumers or customers rather than what their essence is as students and learners, the attitudes of the privatization seep into the general conception of how we view life. It shapes the dominant social imaginary. Seen as a thing that is paid into, education becomes a product, specified by outputs and inputs, and with easily quantifiable and discernable outcomes. Rather than incorporate the complexity of meaning that is imbued by a consideration of education's potentiality, an overage of a vocabulary that has its place in the corporate sphere enter into other areas that at worst, pushes them out, or at the very least, partially delegitimizes and devalues the presence of other ways of defining the multiple purposes in the potentiality of education.

Another way that the language and associated framework of philosophy of the corporate world is introduced into the educational sphere is how university support is now framed in terms that would not be out of place in a boardroom meeting with corporate stockholders (Giroux, 2002). How can faculty make money for the university through prodigious grant applications? How can students be brought into the university that has declining public financial support in order to ensure that they pay enough to keep the university running with higher and higher administrative costs? These types of questions are what push through the boundaries imposed by a system that desires legitimacy and authority and the buy in to this specific system or way of doing things.

An important point must be made about the consideration of additional money being spent in the educational market and the appearance of declining public governmental financial support for education, especially in higher institutions of learning. The general consensus is that there is additional funds being spent on an increasingly top heavy administrative approach to education. Though it can be argued that the increased bureaucracy is to bear the brunt of the increased amount of funds being spent in the educational sphere, it is not the sole reason. There are increased amounts of funds going towards contracts performed by private providers for actions previously performed by public actors, such as management and curriculum considerations (Burch, 2009). The

presence of federal initiatives such as No Child Left Behind encourages this type of action (Burch, 2009). With increased money being spent on other parties to do the position, it raises the question of who actually benefits from this. Many people are asking these critical questions. However, when the definition of what the purpose of education becomes so limited, it inhibits the ability for the presence of these questions to gain traction and validity.

Gaining money for the operations of the university comes through increased partnerships with corporations. These partnerships assume that education and the private sector are aligned with the view of what the other thinks education should provide and prepare for. Giroux (2002) identified a bleak outlook of several related issues of the increasing partnerships between corporations and universities:

Corporations increasingly dictate the very research they sponsor, and in some universities, such as the University of California, Berkeley, business representatives are actually appointed to sit on faculty committees that determine how research funds are to be spent and allocated. Equally disturbing is the emergence of a number of academics that either hold stocks or other financial incentives in the very companies sponsoring their research. As the boundaries between public values and commercial interests become blurred, many academics appear less as disinterested truth seekers than as operatives for business interests. (p. 433)

Humanities are increasingly at risk of being put into a basket of items that are not deemed valuable for this current society. Increased adherence to a view of scientism (Baez & Boyles, 2009) limits the space for these types of disciplines that do not necessarily provide a visible, and immediately quantifiable value. Since these types of disciplines, such as art, by their very nature seek the indefinable, and create a space for the multiplicity of interpretation, this cognitive and philosophical complexity challenges a system that runs according to an ideology that values the streamlined profitable business model.

Baez and Boyles (2009) have a constructive analysis of the increased importance placed on empirical research within education and what concerns this focus has for the discipline as a whole. It is not so much that empirical research should not be done, but unquestioning acceptance of the purported and encouraged assumption that this is the only valid and valuable form of research ignores the critical potentiality of other forms of research and thinking and considerations of problematic questions. Additionally, too much of focus on a narrowly accepted consideration of empirical and positivistic research can also lead to questions of social and cultural awareness.

Scientism is another topic that Baez and Boyles explore as contributing to the larger unquestioned assumption that empirical research, with firmer definitions and absolutes, is the best way to research for all components of education. Baez and Boyles stated that this assumption “privileges scientism over scientific inquiry” (p. 7) and lacks the general pathways to ensure some sort of research capability that science generally rigorously demands, and instead accepts a specific interpretation scientific method and arrangement as precision. This dogmatic approach belies the actual value that science holds for research, when it is in balance with other forms of educational research.

An adherence to the scientism aspect of empirical research is also shown by greater occurrence of accountability methods, testing, and evaluative measures that focus on a supposedly quantifiable aspect or return on the educational experience. Dismissing the complexity of the educational experience and the many variables that can influence these results, this approach has shown that the implementation of specific policies that enact the neoliberal ideology’s encouragement of strict accountability does not fully help the subjects in the educational sphere. However, it does benefit those who stand to gain by keeping these assumptions in continuance.

It is important to note that empirical research within education is not problematic within itself. Rather, it is when the dominant assumption becomes cultivated that empirical research is the only valid form of acceptable research that adherence to this form becomes problematic. Focusing too much on any one form of research as the right form of research forecloses the possibilities that are enabled by the exploration of the

multitudes of research and ways of thinking. The swinging of the validity of research pendulum to an extreme end negates the richness that is offered by many forms of research, and the critical engagement with maintaining an ethical and moral consciousness while performing such research.

This discussion of partial assumptions in the contemporary educational landscape highlights the underlying framework and motivations that support the continuation of this particular ideology. Because this ideology is communicated in ways that continue to legitimize it, in that if it is repeated enough and believed, then it becomes legitimized and not challenged authoritatively. This momentum towards alienating the acceptance of other forms of thinking as valid contributors to the epistemological landscape reflects the increasing prevalence of the neoliberal social imaginary.

The pervasive effects of this ideology is also witnessed in Carpenter and Hughes' (2011) study that looked at the shifting meaning of education's purpose, as seen through the state of the state speeches completed by governors from multiple states over several years. They looked at the state of the state speeches because it reflected the direction of policy that the governor will seek for that length of time for their particular state. Their findings listed a problematic shift from an educational purpose concerned with social responsibility and civic duty to one mostly focused on the germination of economic efficiency of education and of the students. The streamlining towards an increased corporate educational landscape may have dire consequences. There is a risk that too much focus on increased economic efficiency as the driving factor of education's purpose in American society leaves many other just as legitimate factors or components of meaningful education behind. This assumption that a focus on corporate model will ensure the economic growth at the cost of the presence of multipliable creativities fixes, assumes, and limits. A strict boundary keeps out other forms of epistemological exploration.

The 'what is lost' is unknowable, but the possibility must be maintained to allow and encourage the possible interaction with the impossible, to generate the living knowledge within the self and not depend solely on the imposition of dead knowledge,

that knowledge that someone—and increasingly this someone is made apparent to be a participant highly involved with generating profits through the education market for the private rather than the public good—has deemed necessary for knowing. This notion is concerned with the idea of fixing the assumptions of what drives education's purpose and or purposes. By acknowledging the limiting currently taking place, and the firm delineation of boundaries in education, we can further understand the pedagogical power and almost rebellious characteristic that engaging the pedagogical hinge through an interaction with the catalyst of an artwork has.

The fixing of education's purpose to that of one defined by a neoliberal ideology can be problematic because if we take education as a creative endeavor, then the fixing closes off possibilities for the other. However, it can be acknowledged that this particular exercise may be desirable for those who profit and benefit from the status quo, or the dominant ways of approach. However, in a conversation that focuses on the idea of educational assumptions, it is necessary to recognize that such a statement does have a tinge of another assumption: that more possibilities may be better than fewer possibilities. Some criticism can occur of the flowering of multiplicity, the interaction with this multiplicity in that it does not perceive a necessary endpoint, and that its possibility is less concerned with the limiting or identifiable. I do not feel comfortable saying that more is necessarily a better alternative than less, but I do feel comfortable with acknowledging the usefulness of an attitude that allows for the experience of the many selves to at least be able to be part of the conversation with what considers the educational factor.

The fixing of education's purpose contributes to the larger sense of educational assumptions by reinforcing the legitimacy of dominant culture and not wholeheartedly encouraging the critical analysis and acceptance of other ways of approaching knowledge. Valuable and accepted research becomes that which confirms the empirical or positivist aspect (Baez & Boyles, 2009). This creates a tension between other forms of approaching knowledge and discerning the experience of the learning selves. Though the influence of neoliberal ideology is not obviously apparent, its ideology manifests itself in

many subtle and intricate ways in the educational outlook of the system. The increased privatization of the educational sector seeks to confine the existence and interpretation of a fluid relationship with the possibility of being in education. Adopting the idea of the social imaginary aids in the discussion of how exactly the neoliberal ideology is able to increasingly input itself in varied networks to increase its authenticity, authority, and legitimacy as a valid and projected way of existing and “doing business” in the contemporary society.

The catalyst of Nic Nicosia’s image conjures up the pedagogical hinge that enables a space to reflect on complex understandings of forces interacting in dominant culture and the power of the pedagogical agency of the learning self to push these conceptual and physical boundaries. The narrowing of education’s purpose finds a way to express the boundaries, to make the act of narrowing more readily visible through art and the possible interaction with pedagogy’s hinge. Art’s very nature has the potentiality of disruption and the questioning allowed by this space enables it to engage with the conception and dealing with of the narrowing of education’s purpose. As long as the possibility to express beyond everyday traditional methods of communication is continued, then artworks have the potential to create a space for the catalyst through which pedagogy’s hinge might be possibly experienced because this nature is not hindered by strict predefined notions of what entails art. The conscious learning experience of the self, through the catalyst of art, engages the critical reflection of assumed ways of knowing and learning. If the conjecture of art’s possible anti-authoritative power is accepted, then it is possible to see why purposefully nurturing such an attitude would be undesirable to the continued legitimacy of the dominant powers profiting off of the current iteration of the contemporary educational landscape.

Within this understanding of neoliberalism, ideology, and the social imaginary, another concept offered by Rizvi and Lingard (2010) is useful and revisits the idea of the transitional space: positionality. Rizvi and Lingard (2010) define positionality as the actual position of the researcher to the particular policy, the “theoretical and methodological” position of the researcher to the policy, and what authors refer to as the

“spatial location” of the researcher, meaning the geographical situation. Positionality also contributes to the reflexivity of the researcher (pp. 46-47). Yet this focus on positionality and reflexivity calls into question the supposed neutrality of the researcher as also discussed by Baez and Boyles (2009).

While this concept of spatial location is useful as a stepping-stone, I would suggest that another interpretation could be considered: the metaphoric space, or the transitional space explored by Ellsworth and my interactions with artworks like *Real Pictures #11*. As stated earlier, the spaces in-between the grid marks identifying the ante and post become the space of possibility. Analysis of this space can create a greater understanding of the motivations and contexts that guide creation of the learning self. Engaging with the in-between proffered by an enriched conception of positionality combined with reflexivity engages with the further complication of education policy narratives. Again as a rejection of the linearity espoused by dominant myths, the interaction with the spatial between reiterates the presence of ideologies, positions, motivations, histories, and contexts—nothing is as neutral as it seems. The very ideas of neutrality and objectivity become disrupted.



## CHAPTER 8. RECONSIDERING THE TRANSITIONAL SPACE IN THE LEARNING SELF AND POLICY

Through my interaction with Nicosia's *Real Pictures #11*, I was able to situate and acknowledge the transitional space in which pedagogy's hinge occurs. It is not so much that the answer to questions I did not know I had were inherent in the art piece, but that the image was able to push me into a conceptual environment through which the pedagogical pivot could occur. This pivoting enabled me to give voice to questions and concerns I have about the dominant contemporary educational landscape and analyze the complex relationships between authenticity, authority, and legitimacy, including how those interact in the common vernacular and relationships of day to day life actions. By engaging with my learning self in the moment of the pedagogical pivot, I had recognition of my transitional self, my becoming. Neither here nor there, the transitional space is ripe with the possibility of the possible.

The contemplation of alternative conceptions of transitional, in-between spaces also extends out to educational policy reflections. Webb and Gulson (2013) argued for the application of spatial theory to the considerations of policy implementations. By adopting this approach, they concluded, it becomes possible for the policy subject to enrich their own relations and understandings; essentially, it complicates the conversation. If I can reflect more on the transitional becoming self, then I can also use that process to understand how it could then affect notions of educational policy in literature and life. By education policy, I am in particular referring to the larger social imaginary that influences how policy is seen, researched, and enacted—the motivations and boundaries of what is assumed to be acceptable. Freed by the catalyst of art, pedagogy's hinge creates a space to not see the self or the subject as a fixed point on the grid. It embraces transitional spatiality and unconfined notions of the learning self and the meaning that self can create and hold.

The stronghold dominant narrative operates through the veil of neutrality contributes to an idealized market vision of neoliberalism. The promotion of the disinterested researcher, one who remains objective, legitimizes the supposed authority of

that research. To act as anything other than neutral within research is to become irrational and therefore illegitimate. Acknowledging these in-between spaces and the unreliability of supposed objectivity has the possibility to critique and question the dominant ideologies that wish to remain in authority. Again, engaging with the in-between, remembering the sensation of pedagogy's hinge enables one to question the authenticity and authority of what is said to be true.

The consequences of the assumption of neutrality and focus on neoliberal values of efficiency and profit within educational attitudes are shown to be problematic. What meaning does this hold if policy decisions are devised and implemented according to research that is influenced on some level by the contextual attitudes of those performing said research? Additionally, what other assumptions does such an exploration, again, evoked by the interaction with pedagogy's hinge, illuminate? An interesting question to emerge concerns the idea of the transitional subject as considered by the dominant narratives defining the conduct of research and policy. Ellsworth (1989) raises the question of the rational subject in an exploration of the missteps of critical pedagogy, but I feel the question of the rational, or more applicable in this study—the transitional—subject also has its place when considering the manner in which the individual subjects are approached according to the system and policy (Webb & Gulson, 2013). The concept of pedagogy's hinge, however, causes one to reconsider the very idea of what meaning the subject holds in the transitional space. The *unstabling* of identity and epistemological assurance during the encounter of pedagogy's hinge engages the reevaluation of rationality.

A commonality exposed by this reconsideration is the transitional space. The pedagogical pivot, or pedagogy's hinge, already embraces the motion of transition because it is by its own definition a component of the dynamic learning self. Changing the perception from the known and learned self, to that of a knowing, a becoming, and an emerging self envelops within the moving space to pedagogy's hinge. In discussing Massumi's "explorations of embodiment" (p. 118), Ellsworth (2005) interprets the discussion, determining,

When we codify bodies in terms of the coordinates of their start- or endpoints of movement and verbalize an understanding of change only in terms of the positions that have been modified, we eliminate the possibility for grasping the realities and meanings of bodies in the making and knowledge in the making (Massumi, 2002, pp. 3-4). (p. 119)

Pedagogy's hinge, thus, becomes a place for the body and learning in motion. Reflecting on my interaction with *Real Pictures #11*, the questioning and the instability provoked by the image put me into that motion. It is as if the motion is unpreventable once it begins. Within this transitional space of knowledge, all the possibilities are present: I have no idea where, how, or what the endpoint will be, if there even is an endpoint.

What this suggests is that time, space, and experiences don't necessarily strive 'forward' in a linear motion. The self is in motion, but not necessarily as a commonly assumed linear motion. Opening up the contemplation of the learning self requires the confrontation of multiple notions of existence. No longer fixed, these reference points of judgment (be it identity, space, methods of measuring time) dissolve into the transitional space. Within this transitional space, fertile for the encouragement of the pedagogical hinge, time becomes fluid: it can operate as horizontal, vertical, cyclical, or in another conception of the way time operates. It can repeat as the spectre (Peim, 2005), the transition continuing to haunt the self's pedagogical interaction moments after the initial confrontation. More so, it is this turning of space and time that has an important consideration in the interpretation of the meaning of pedagogy's hinge for macro-considerations of educational assumptions, and their effects on the political considerations of education.

By paying attention to this in-betweenness created by the environment of pedagogy's hinge, it is possible to interact with the transitional space rather than focusing solely on the identifying endpoints as the description in and of itself as the person. What are the ties that bind, the spaces that connect and disperse? Critical observation of this holds much interest for a further reflection of the assumptions that policy within the educational sphere draws upon. Even more so, it is not just policy and politics within

education that is influenced, because to say so only further compartmentalizes the influencing factors of the social imaginary within which we exist and interact. The policy and politics involved with education are not distinct from other influences. The learning self is not “is”, “will be” or “was”; it is “becoming”.

The transitional self has two effects in the consideration of the ways that education policy is conceived of, generated, implemented, and considered in contemporary society: one, the agency that the interaction of the pedagogical hinge and its ensuing possible generation of living knowledge means for the agency of the self in question, and two, how the transitional, dynamic becoming self influences a static conceptualization of educational assumptions and how they are enacted through policies. These considerations of the transitional and emerging self forces those users to acknowledge any present boundaries and reflect critically upon the existence of those boundaries and assumptions that led to those boundaries. Who created these boundaries and why? What assumptions led to the implementation of these boundaries of thought and identity and attitudes that guide the social imaginary?

Drawing attention to the problematic boundaries of educational assumptions, acted out in ways like direction of educational policy, which is legitimized through the common vernacular and support of the social imaginary and media, and declaration what actually constitutes the considered valued appropriate research method and subject, allows for the critical reflection of those boundaries. I argue that this consideration is considerably aided by the engagement of the pedagogical hinge through a purposeful interaction with an artwork.

By boundaries I mean the physical, mental, and identifying boundaries that are used by the larger concept of the educational faculties. When we speak, there are limitations in the extent of what meaning can be construed. The words and spaces in-between utilize a sort of unspoken but present specificity of meaning and intent. Not enough attention is brought to the conscious interaction of these boundaries. A boundary can be a specific definition of an identifiable concept, this definition whose interaction we have with does not preclude the conscious and critical questioning. Acknowledging

and observing the boundaries acts as a way to identify educational assumptions. The boundaries that are currently in use show the operational dichotomies of what is declared as good or bad in the educational social imaginary.

An issue observed with the idea, generation, and implementation of policy, specifically in relation to education, is that it assumes that the subjects or actors of the policy are static and not in motion. This assumption is necessary, according to that particular method of operation, because the complexity of actual reality—especially the possibility of many realities constructed according to the plethora of experiences, both past, present, and future, whether physically mentally or emotionally—then it runs the risk of being truly overwhelming. How to create a uniform an effective policy to apply to numerous subjects when each of those subjects is continuously in motion, whether physically or of the mind?

The application of policy depends on an assumption of the uniform subject in order to enable efficiency of implementation. The complexity of the dynamic individual is difficult to capture in a model of policy designed to operate successfully for an entire system. Additionally, when it is acknowledge that policy is actually multiple layers of previous policies in motion in a system, then implementation becomes even more difficult.

The meaning for the learning self to be in the motion of becoming holds a transitional spot whose identities are in flux. Difficult to pinpoint and place in the constraints of compartmentalization, the becoming self's identity moves up to and beyond borders of assumption. The motion of transition offers a freeing sense of the self and the body, allowing it to push past previously assumed position and defining characteristics. The potentiality of the moving and becoming self is immense.

For the learning self to be a participatory actor in the moment, process, and becoming moment of learning calls into question assumed attitudes of power and hierarchy in education. The becoming action gives agency to the learning self. Because the learning self is initiating living knowledge, it casts off the imposition of dead knowledge in order to engage in the pedagogical hinge. In the process of generating

living knowledge, that which has the possibility of the impossible, and creation of the experience of the artistic catalyst, the self engages the hinge through its creative environment. This knowledge, which is not taught but rather generated through the pedagogical hinge of the learning self, is what provides agency to the living and learning self's ability to push the boundaries put in place by contemporary educational assumptions.

In the context of the conceptual basis and considerations of educational policy, the intimation of the becoming self's agency has considerable ramifications for assumed attitudes of the process of implementation and conceptualization of educational policy. If bodies are in fact moving and are in transitional within boundaries that are permeable and elastic, then what does that mean for the conception of policy as a static and implementable thing? The agency of the learning self also hints at the unpredictability of the learning self. The unpredictability of the transitional learning self poses difficulty for the strict definitions that is proffered by some iterations of policy conceptualization in contemporary politics and considerations.

Again it is necessary to reiterate that the unpredictability of the learning self is in some part also influenced by the fact that the occurrence of the pedagogical hinge cannot be dictated. Though the environment can be provided to possibly encourage the happening of pedagogy's hinge, it is not ever guaranteed. What we have here, with so many layers of unpredictability, is that the notion of learning and the becoming self is very fluid. For educational matters, this presence or characteristic of fluidity, this state of flux, means that the learning self can possibly be always in a state of perpetual imbalance. Ellsworth (2005) described the this conception very well, in the sense that we are conceptually balancing several conceptions of thought, being, and becoming, likening it to a person balancing numerous spinning plates. Are we balancing them because they were already spinning and we are trying to keep them in motion, or was it the self who started the spinning of the plates? And what would happen, she asked, if the plates were allowed to be dropped (p. 118)?

The acknowledgment of the potentiality of the learning self becomes the recognition of the influential aspect of our experiences, if the time is set aside to absorb and learn from these alternate spaces of learning. Additionally a consideration of thoughts and motivations in the context of the learning self ties into the encouragement of the agency of the learning self. It gives power to the learning and becoming self to continue the pursuit of living knowledge, as well as the motivation to question the validity of forms of dead knowledge that are readily used by the educational system.

The assumed attitudes of power and hierarchy in education are reflected in the ways that the conceptualization of education is approached. As the previous discussion of the shifting purpose of education from one of a more socially inclined intent to that of a profit minded business model showed, the assumptions of education are starting to focus not just on a career based or economic efficiency model, but that of a specifically considered definition of how to create jobs, what jobs to go into, what jobs are realistic and valuable, and how there are now appropriate ways of thinking or developing ideas and completing research. This hierarchy leaves out the multitude of ways of thinking. When policies are enacted that utilize this type of framework, it both unintentionally and intentionally legitimizes the system of power created and wanted to be continued by the dominant ways of thinking that currently try to oversee the system and continue its dominance as the only correct way of thinking.

The authority of these educational assumptions can be perpetuated through the matters of schooling, including the actual physicality of the school, the government, the teachers, the communities, and the students. The authority of the knowledge that is deemed as necessary to pass on can also be in consideration of the various forms this authority takes. When things are taken to be deserving of some authoritative power, questions of the legitimacy of that power are in consideration. As Noam Chomsky (2002) cautioned, the semblance and assumption of authority should always be questioned, not for the sake of being contrary and to only question for questioning's sake, but rather to determine if that authority is indeed legitimate. An analysis of this form is encouraged by the interaction with the shifting landscape of art and how it's fluidity of meaning engages

the pedagogical hinge. The disruptive power of art and its tendency to push the boundaries of meaning of the learning self's conceptions of reality and assumptions, contributes to the developing of conscious agency of the self in relation to policy.

The direction of policy is influenced by the strength of the neoliberal perspective, in economics and in government. The federal and private influence of approaches to and considerations of evaluating educational policy is strong. The neoliberal focused direction of policy, observed by the continuing influence of privatization, from increased occurrence of private-public 'partnerships', private contractors carrying out educational functions previously performed by the government, the number of corporate members that are heading universities and sitting on the boards of educational institutions, increased philanthropy from business moguls that then influence the direction of educational policy, to the movement of people high up in the governmental sector then taking advanced positions in the private companies intent on generating much profit in the educational market (Burch, 2009; Giroux, 2002; Puiggrós, 1999).

Weakening government support of higher institutions of learning leave the assumption that the only options are to increase tuition and to find other sources of funding from partnerships with private companies or corporations, even those these partnerships obviously come with strings attached.

Additionally the determination, though sometimes explicit and sometimes left unsaid, of what constitutes appropriate research is another factor of the push of the borders of assumptions to align with the neoliberal and academic capitalist framework. The moving subject poses too many potential issues of noncompliance with a carefully constructed ideology of privatization and corporatization of the educational landscape. The agency and positionality enabled by the subject's awakening to the pedagogical hinge's potentiality poses problems for the dominant way of doing things, if it is assumed that the dominant way can continue.

Webb and Gulson (2013) bring up the transitional subject within the consideration of educational policy. In the context of the moving self, Webb and Gulson consider "policy intensions" that "signal how policy is affectively encountered" and "are *prior* to



understanding or recognition of policy intentions” (p. 57). Remarking on the consideration of specifically educational policy, they further comment that “educational policy is frequently engaged with folding subjects along numerous affective lines, if not twisting them into knots” (p. 57). Utilizing Ellsworth’s conception of the pedagogical hinge, in conjunction with the catalyst of art, enables another perspective of how the transitional subject can be conceived of. If bodies are in motion, the need to think and consider other perspectives that are not static and allow for the conceptualization this meaning holds for the effects of policy on the system and the bodies in that system.

Furthermore, it should be again recognized that this particular line of analysis stems from a belief that questioning, and a healthy reflection of experiences and boundaries is what encourages greater intersections of the self, learning, and becoming.

Though we have examined the consequences of the learning and hinging self, through the catalyst of art, in the context of educational policy, both for the self and also for the conceptualization of policy, what does the meaning of the transitional hold for the context of the educational system?

### **A Brief Consideration of the System**

Green’s (1997) examination of the behavior of the educational system is useful in this context. Recognizing that the system exists as an ambiguous structure, Green provided three parameters to discuss the system’s main characteristics: one, the system is a set of schools; two, this set of schools operates through a “medium of exchange” (p. 4) that allows participants to transfer between schools with relative ease; and three, the first two characteristics of the system abide by the “principle of sequence” (p. 8). This principle of sequence,

States that the system of schools is organized into levels, so that if a person has completed the  $n$ th level of the system, that will constitute a sufficient reason for concluding that he has completed the level of  $n - 1$ , but not a sufficient reason for concluding that he has completed or will complete the level of  $n + 1$ . (p. 8)

These three characteristics operate as primary guidelines for the system; the system also can be described by derivative elements including size, “system of control”, and “distribution of goods” (p. 9).

Furthermore, the exploration of transitionality within the context of the unstable moment creates an opening to examine a small component of the educational system’s behavior. If the system operates rationally (Green, 1997, p. xx), then the effects of redefining the rationality, or more particularly, the transitional nature of its actors can be reexamined. Utilizing practical rationality, Green recognized the difficulty of applying a concrete definition to the nebulous nature of the educational system, stating, “The best we can say, at the outset, is that ‘the system’ is a social structure and, at the same time, a kind of social process the rationality of which is heavily circumscribed by that structure” (p. xx). Given the discussion of the transitional space of the pedagogical pivot and questions of rationality (Ellsworth, 1989; Webb & Gulson, 2013), how does this influence the actions of the educational system, if it does at all?

It is also necessary at this point to state that this particular intersection of pedagogy’s hinge, art, and the system will explore a facet concerned more with the theoretical aspects of a system, rather than the particular educational value of engaging pedagogy’s hinge; that conversation will occur in other sections of my study. The discussion of pedagogy’s hinge and the use of art as a possible set of means to encourage the learning self does open up another viewpoint through which to consider the educational system. Using Green’s examination of what constitutes an educational system will provide a foundation from which to explore other characteristics, such as rationality, as well as the possible meanings these characteristics hold and the consequences they may engender.

In consideration of the educational system, here again we see the problem of not incorporating the system’s operational tendencies to idealizations of those within. It may not be so much a question of rationality of the subjects, but more so the transitionality of the hinging self, when it encounters the potential disruptive power of an artwork. It is more so that the subjects are far more complex than what dominant contemporary policy

considers them to be; in essence, the attitude towards them is similar to the concept of the subject as a fixed entity, immobile and unmoving.

It is interesting that in the discussion of the educational system, it is easier to define what it is not, or give an amorphous description of what it could be, rather than to concretely provide a static description. As Green acknowledged, the system isn't static: it is in motion. This is similar to the discussion of pedagogy's hinge—it is easier to describe its context but not the exact moment of the hinging. It is like what you can see out of the corner of your eye but when examined directly, when the application of a limiting framework is attempted to be placed upon it, then it vanishes.

Using the framework offered by pedagogy's hinge can possibly encourage the interaction with these delineated boundaries in the educational system. The flux of the transitional subject further complicates the implementation of policy that could be argued is bad enough already when the educational system is already in constant motion. I would say that it's not necessarily a question of influencing the system, but more of taking into consideration the operational tendencies of the system and the implementation of policy, when it does not take into account moving selves that possibly have their own agency and are moving within and without their bodies. The boundaries of the political body, set in motion by the agency offered by the engagement of the learning self, endowed with the consciousness of the capability of experiencing living, creative knowledge, have much more meaning for those who create these policies while disregarding the system itself. The consideration of the transitional subject further complicates the understanding of the complicated behavior of the educational system as described by Green.

I find it very valuable to pull together a brief comparison of the educational system and the transitional subject as seen in the consideration of the pedagogical hinge because of the combination of loose and particular definitions. When we think of what meaning this holds for education as a whole, it can be to reconsider our conception of the moving self, and to take that into consideration when developing policy so that the particular policy has a greater potential to be more understanding of social needs and

cultural attitudes. By operating within a looser framework that allows for this consideration of the dynamic, learning self, we can appreciate the disruptive force of the pedagogical hinge through the use of art.

The potential this possibility holds is that it enriches and could even open a door for more thorough and philosophical considerations of obtaining a fairer education system. These are political spaces, whether confined by illegitimate boundaries or unconfined through the moving and becoming self. Green identified that, “Educational policy is policy for the educational system” (p. 160). Identifying the complexity of the becoming self as it moves in the transitional learning conceptual space holds the possibility of creating policy that is not so focused on the economic efficiency of knowledgeable human robots but instead the holistic and ethical learning environment that values the creativity of the learning dynamic self.

In an earlier paper I considered the lack of success of a junior kindergarten program in Hawai‘i because it did not acknowledge the behavior of the educational system when developing and implementing the policy. Though on a moral and common sense level that there should be an early education support system this argument holds great weight, it unfortunately could not gain traction because of the disregard of how a system operates. If we are to envision a better educational system, better in the sense that all students have the opportunity and support for a well developed and holistic education, then I would suggest that one of the steps would be to consider what the hinging self, in the moment of living learning through the catalyst of art, means in the consideration of policy development that acknowledges the boundaries of the system and by acknowledging and recognizing these boundaries, is able to push and interact with them. Maybe then, it will be possible to have a meaningful and equitable educational system.

### **Transitioning as Self**

Even now, my interactions with *Real Pictures #11* take me to a space that enables the transitioning and learning self, though each moment represents a new meditation on the problematic presence of particular educational assumptions. The experience of the

pedagogical pivot, through the catalyst of artwork, engages with the transitional space of the learning self. The meaning this holds for the learning self and education policy includes how the learning self is then able to interact with other ideas inside and outside of the considered body. For the pedagogical pivot by its described nature already embraces the feeling and motions of transition, it then places the learning self as a participatory actor in the process of learning. Now, this is a consideration of learning in the physical, mental, and emotionally applicable sense. It also calls attention to and enables the critical reflection of the boundary spaces and assumptions in education policy. Encouraging the critical reflection of the boundaries holds importance for the conscious interaction and analysis of meaning behind the assumptions that guide the flow of discourse in the educational landscape. Engaging with these border spaces inherent in artworks, enabled by the support of pedagogy's hinge, creates an opening to question the dominant linearity of knowledge acquisition. This acknowledges the concept that knowledge as fixed is problematic, and prompts us looking, to reconsider the consequences of such an attitude on the current dominant perception of what constitutes proper education and research, and how that in turn affects considerations of the policy and politics of education.

## CHAPTER 9. CONCLUSION

Regarding pedagogy as experimentation in thought rather than representation of knowledge as a thing already made creates a profound shift in how we think of pedagogical intent or volition—the will to teach. (Ellsworth, 2005, p. 27)

This politic, then, is used to disorient subjects and reorient their relations with themselves in various ways once policy is sensed, embodied, and enacted. (Webb & Gulson, 2013, p. 64)

The continued departure from the purpose of education as primarily civic and socially driven to that of an education defined by adherence to economic efficiency (Carpenter & Hughes, 2011) reiterates the narrowing of education's purpose. As long as policies, influenced by research that adheres to the semblance of the disinterested researcher, remain informed by the neoliberal ideology that values profit over community, then the narrowing of education's definition and purpose will continue to occur. While the question, "What do we lose by persisting along this path?" can be asked, it remains important to not come to this situation from a position of loss. To arrive at the question from loss already partially cedes the ability to encourage and promote the multiplicity of possible epistemologies.

In a similar vein, it is important to problematize the narrowing of education's definition through a consideration of the pedagogical hinge supported by an interaction with artworks—but not from a framework that seeks to challenge as a way to legitimize a different perspective of thinking as the primary perspective. Again, to act in such a manner continues power's cyclical occurrence and does not allow for the acceptance of multiple ways of being.

Further opportunities for research, or the continued contemplations of art's pedagogical potential through the hinging moment include an in-depth approach to the consideration of the transitional space, especially in educational policy and politics or

through the conception of the self, loosely defined. Webb and Gulson (2013) have explored a version of the transitional self in relation to policy through the concept of Deleuzian space, in that “space as relationally constituted” (p. 58), and as “territorialization events” (p. 59). Delving into the idea of geographies of the body and identity in a fluid state has potential consequences for interaction with art in educational discourse. Additionally, though I briefly touched upon the consideration of implications of the transitional self as evoked through the experience of art within the educational system’s behavior, greater focus on this section could provide a helpful space to reacquaint policy participants with an enhanced awareness of the macro-considerations of all angles of policy.

The use of art in curriculum and as a way to approach critical thinking has a profusion of literature in the context of education. However, additional recent scholarship of art’s potential with the involvement in applications social justice in educational matters is also a possible fit for the continued contemplation of the meaning pedagogy’s hinge holds for education (Verner Chappell & Cahnmann-Taylor, 2013; Osei-Kofi, 2013).

Additionally, though this journey through art, the hinging self, and educational assumptions focused on one particular artwork, Nicosia’s *Real Pictures #11*, I have considered what an exploration not as focused on the aesthetic objects created by human hands would mean for the interaction of pedagogy’s hinge. If it draws upon Dewey’s consideration of experience and aesthetics, could this space of becoming be widened to greater considerations of movement and nature? Though this recalls Emerson, I feel that this potential route could also have meaning for considerations and approaches for culturally relevant educational literature and contemplations.

The exploration of the ways that pedagogy’s hinge and art intersect with assumptions within education opens up a space for these conversations to occur in vigorous and dynamic ways. Though the artwork’s creator frames the experience in some way, the message is not didactic, instead allowing for the viewer to experience her own hinging of the learning experience. Pedagogy’s hinge operates as the personal turning place of learning for the person in question. Encouraging these conversations, and a

conscious interaction and confrontation with the learning and moving self, allows for more in-depth questions to be asked and constructive critiques to be made. Opening a space for these conversations can help conceptualize what meaning this holds for policy, the system, and our own private, personal relationships with what determines education. It is within here, awakened by pedagogy's hinge, that conversations contingent on recognizing the other, the unsaid, calling out the false framework of objectivity promoted by current power structures that influence education research, and embracing the moving space of the learning self, can occur.



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