All discourses put you in your place.

(Butler, Postmodernism, 2003, p. 51)

Modernity = creation; Postmodernity = recycling

(Bauman, Life in Fragments, 1995, p. 267)

Modernity was, after all, a promise of universal happiness and elimination of all unnecessary suffering (Bauman, Society Under Siege, 2002, p. 98).

An unpredictable aesthetic — a grunge aesthetic — is one that breaks its own rules to keep (its own) internal levels high and its relationship with chaos open.

guide—architect—for human affairs (p. 165)

The market is presumed to work as an appropriate thinking. Modernists in the "occidental" and transcendental is not that dissimilar to the postmodern interest in the "fragmentary and assaults. Both avoid grand narratives and noble themes for the girl and boy of everyday life, one subconsciously through the immediacy of impressions, the other self-consciously through the agony of reflections. Both intend to disturb the sediments of history and make the familiar strange, as Derrida might say, "impressionism. In this manner, a kind of "deconstructive" painting that takes the world apart and reassembles it in new arrangements of pigments and scenes dismantles the common sense of painting and transforms the world into a collage of interruptions and fleeting sensations.

Modernity = creation; Postmodernity = recycling

(Bauman, Life in Fragments, 1995, p. 267)

Modernists think of intellectual history as primarily the history of changing thoughts about the world for (Richard) Rorty it is primarily the history of changing language— the history of changing vocabularies or descriptions of the world. And whereas modernists believe that the scientific method, or a closer inspection of the human soul, intellectual history is essentially the progression toward greater truth about the world, for Rorty there is no such progress toward greater truth about the world. Instead there are only changing redescriptions which make possible a new kind of intellectual and social life (Linn, Postmodernism, 1996, pp. 45-46).

Redescriptions of inherited knowledge... an unpredictable aesthetic — a grunge aesthetic — is one that breaks its own rules to keep (its own) internal levels high and its relationship with chaos open.

An unpredictable aesthetic — a grunge aesthetic — is one that breaks its own rules to keep (its own) internal levels high and its relationship with chaos open.
Traces of an image...

1. Monet: Impression, Sunrise (1872)
2. Postmodern blur (Tues, 25 April 2007, 4:39:44 PM)

re-mix
an image in exile...
Impression: Winter (Tues, 25 April 2007, 4:58:26 PM)
Impression: Vagabondage (Tues, 25 April 2007, 4:59:12 PM)
Impression: Oblivion (Tues, 25 April 2007, 5:02:09 PM)
Impression: Sunset Oblivion (Tues, 25 April 2007, 5:03:55 PM)

morphing through simulacra...
...escaping an abject origin...
It has been part of the genius of neoliberal theory to provide a benevolent mask full of wonderful-sounding words like freedom, liberty, choice, and rights, to hide the grim realities of the restoration or reconstruction of naked class power, locally as well as transnationally, but most particularly in the main financial centres of global capitalism (Harvey, *Neo-liberalism*, 2007, p. 119).

"Palimpsest identity"

Many well-intentioned teachers work hard to clean up the mess, to bring order and clarity to language, presuming to halt uncertainties for [learners]. In these contexts school often becomes a tomb that cannot even be made to resonate (Low & Palulis, *A Letter from Derrida*, *Journal of Curriculum Theory*, Spring, 2006, p. 53).

"There is no harm in the will to knowledge; for the will to ignorance plays with it to constitute it— if we long to know we obviously long also to be duped, since knowledge is duping" (Spivak, *Of Grammatology*, 1967/1976, p. xlv).

"Derrida sees 'truth' as being constituted by 'fiction" (Spivak, p. lxiv)

"We think only in signs. (Derrida)"

Language speaks man. (Heidegger)
In an unstable environment, retention and habit acquisition—the trademarks of successful learning—are not just counterproductive, but may prove to be fatal in their consequences (Bauman, Liquid Love, 2006, p. 8).

"Solid" modularity was about turning "stability into durability, randomness into regularity, contingency into routine and chaos into order." "Liquid" modularity, on the other hand, is "mostly about swimming safely in tidal waves which cannot be tamed" (Bauman, Society Under Siege, 2002, p. 177).

These journeys, then, are not journeys in the conventional sense, but anti-journeys (aventures) that seach the spaces between locations and cut across beyond reason and certainty, and go backwards and sideways rather than forwards and straight. In this sense, these itineraries (research against the grain of habit and convention to make different kinds of meanings and different kinds of sites. They search the borders of self and society and the gullies spaces in-between. They are fluid, not solid, like postmodern life (Bauman, 2002).

Pedagogy and pedagogies merge to form an itinerary pedagogy that makes meaning on the run. This is the pedagogy of the postmodern age. This is the pedagogy of spirit, body, and mind. This is the horseless figure on a small paddle surfing the waves of fluid modality. This is the postmodern pedagogy. This is...

Bauman (2002, pp. 76-77) writes: "Learning is a powerful, perhaps the mightiest of human weapons – not only in a regular environment, in which certain conduct is as a rule, always or nearly always, rewarded – while certain other conduct is as a rule punished. The human capacity to learn, to memorize and to institutionalize a type of conduct that has proved to be successful to that extent in the past may be suicidal, however, if the links between actions and results are random, short-lived and change without notice" which is precisely what happens in the fluid world of postmodernity. Learning, then, must be flexible enough to accommodate even more rapidly diffused and arbitrarily crafted scripts of information. Students must learn how to discard other than immediate information that is clear from the moment it hits the screen. Finally, students must learn how to learn and how to select.

In 1990, Jackson Pollock’s Autumn Rhythm (1950) sold for USD 1.4 million. In 1990, Auguste Rodin’s Imprisoned prince (c. Musée de la Couronne) sold for USD 875,000. Today, they are worth USD 120 million. This Cezanne is worth USD 19 million. And why not?

The Pragmatic Radical / Postmodern Pedagogy


The postmodern world is bracing itself for life under a condition of uncertainty which is permanent and inescapable (Bauman, Postmodernity and its Discontents, 1997, p. 21).

References


'The question for pedagogy is not Who speaks? But Who receives? – the reading or listening or spectating effect, in response to the double inscription of writing' (Ulmer, 1985, p. 249).

'An undecidable is a term, found or invented by Derrida, that does not fit comfortably into either of the two poles of a binary opposition. It is, as Derrida says of undecidables, both and neither.' (Deutscher, How to Read Derrida, 2005, p. 34).

As for me, when confronted with the enraged, engaged herd in the dictionary, I know that I have said nothing and will ever say nothing. And the words don’t give a fuck . . . .

(Jacques Derrida, 1974/1986, p. 233)
Wandering between two worlds, on dead.
The other powerless to be born,
With nowhere yet to rest my head.
Like these, on earth I wait for form.
Their faith, my tears, the world deride.
I come to shed them at their site.

(Mathew Arnold, "Strains from the Grange Chanters", 1865, as cited in Abrams, The Norton Anthology of English Literature, 1993, p. 1546, lines 84-90)

Hop

If but some vengeful god would call to me
From up the sky, and laugh: "Thou suffering thing,
Know that they sorrow is my ecstasy,
That thy love's loss is my hate's profiting!"

Then would I hear it, clench myself, and die,
Steeleed by the sense of ire unmerited;
Held eased in that a Powerfuller than I
Had unilled and made me the tears I shed.

But not so. How arrive it joy lies slain,
And why unblooms the best hope ever soon?
—Cress Casually obstructs the sun and rain,
And dicing Time for gladness casts a moon,
These purblind Doomstas hast us readily strown
Blisses about my pilgrimage as pain.

(Thomas Hardy, "Hop", 1866/1898, as cited in Abrams, The Norton Anthology of English Literature, 1993, p. 1894.)

Grammatology
Logocentrism
Writing
Différence
Trace &
Sous rature

Cactology (2005)
Grammar: Spoon boy.

Don’t try to bend the spoon. Remember, there is no spoon.

Spoon boy: Do not try and bend the spoon. That’s impossible. Instead … only try to realize the truth.

Neo: What truth?

Spoon boy: There is no spoon.

Neo: There is no spoon?

Spoon boy: They'll see, that it is not the spoon that bends, it is only yourself. (The Matrix, 1999)

Constructionism: ‘There are really two versions of this: [1] Instead of being born with a particular in-built substance, we become what we are through being acted on by a series of social factors. … [and 2] We more or less freely fabricate our identities for ourselves. We have a degree of choice about how to represent ourselves. … [3] It is safe to say that personal identity is formed out of the tension between the two.’ (Ward, Postmodernism, 1997/2003, pp. 136-137)

Consciousness: “Undecidability” is about opening options up rather than closing them down. Undecidability is about the always already to come — the prospect of ‘perfection’ and ‘impossibility’ emerging despite our best efforts to prevent their arrival. Undecidability is about keeping our options open and our questions un-answered so that debate and discussion can continue.

‘There is nothing outside the text.’ (Derrida)
Metacognitive: "Meta-cognition, according to Schunk (1996), refers to deliberate conscious control of one's mental activities. A student's metacognitive processes during learning are of two kinds: (1) thoughts about what the student knows, and (2) thoughts about regulating how the student will go about learning" (Barry & King, 2003, p. 616). In other words, a metacognitive teacher role-models thinking and learning strategies out-loud and initiates discussions about thinking and learning processes and strategies with students. Metacognition involves thinking about thinking and learning about learning. Ironically, many teachers never explicitly talk about thinking or learning even though these activities are at the heart of their work. A metacognitive teacher is explicit about their learning theories and practices.

Metafictional: "A term describing fiction [and nonfiction] which is about itself; which takes the processes and conventions of fiction writing... as its prime subject. ... It is the deceitful paradox of a conventional form which denies its own mechanisms that meta-fiction sets out to expose... Where many see postmodern 'paratextuality' as a sign of indulgence or mere play, Hutcheon views its frankness on the constructedness of history and 'the real' as a way of intervening in the politics of REPRESENTATION" (Brooker, 2003, pp. 160-161).

Robert Scholes has popularized metafiction... as an overall form for the growing class of novels which depart from realism and foreground the roles of the author in inventing the fiction and the reader in reinventing the fiction. Scholes has also popularized the term fabulation for a current mode of free-wheeling narrative invention. Fabulatious novels violate... standard novelistic expectations by drastic... experiments with subject matter, form, style, temporal sequence, etc. (Abrams, 2005, pp. 203-204, my italics).

Sel-f-reflexive: According to Moore (2004, p. 12), self-reflexivity is about critical self-removal from dominant discourses and practices (i.e. reading the world against the grain). Similarly, self-reflexive text-making incorporates into its structure (narrative, image, etc) the process of composing the text itself (Abrams, 2005, p. 244).

Critical reflexivity is the process by which the teacher or researcher reflects on their own theory and practice to reveal weaknesses, over-sights, omissions, assumptions, short-comings, etc. It is about interrogating theory and practice to improve theory and practice. It is about turning the critical gaze back on the Self (and the text) in order to reveal to the Self (and the text) what it doesn't know about itself. Reflexivity is self-critique.

The teaching (and research) text is not a mere sum of the sum-making text-making. Only partly because it is through making sense and making meaning that we also make non-sense and non-meaning out of the certainties that Habermas stood unquestioned and unchallenged before our unwary eyes. We make meaning, then, to un-make meaning and un-mean the world; we become less certain rather than more certain about the very things we previously took for granted. The familiar and comfortable world is suddenly revealed to revealing its constructed nature, its disguises and illusions, its hollow foundations and vested interests, its monstrosities and voids—perhaps for the first time—perhaps with our own eyes—the familiar world so we smear the unicorn's eyes and un-strange and un-named. We thus build the world rather than receive the world. We deconstruct the world we re-construct the world(s). We break the spell because we break the spell. We bend the arc because we bend the arc. We are the arc. We are the circuit and the artist of the most incredible kind and now we know it.

It is our language as much as the language of history.

The brain wallpapers
The space remains
and the marks grow on making and dissolving texts
because there is no meaning beyond or behind language and
literally, there are no facts—only interpretations, as Nietzsche might say—and you and I are what we imagine.
There is no linguistic sign before writing (p. 14).

Deconstruction: "Derrida acknowledges that the desire of deconstruction may itself become a desire to reappropriate the text actively through mastery, to show the text what it ‘does not know.’… The desire of deconstruction has also the opposite allure. Deconstruction seems to offer a way out of the closure of knowledge. By inaugurating the open-ended indefiniteness of textuality – by thus placing in the abyss the text – it shows the lure of the abyss as freedom. The fall into the abyss of deconstruction inspires us with as much pleasure as fear. We are intoxicated with the prospect of never hitting bottom" (Spivak, ‘Preface,’ Of Grammatology, 1967/1976, p. lxxvii).

Deconstruction is not a method, but a practice (p. 168). ‘… deconstructive practices are also and first of all political and institutional practices’ (p. 168). (Derrida, ‘But, beyond…’, Critical Inquiry, 1986, 13.)

Teachers as form-givers: The teaching profession was destined to become the major vehicle of the new order of modernity, an order unlike any other known in the past. Modern order was unique in the sense that from the start it was conscious of itself as a human product; as an artificial form to be moulded in the raw, pliable, yet awkward stuff of society. It was a self-reflexive and self-monitoring order, viewing blind meaningfulness nature as its only alternative, and itself as the only – forever precarious – protection against chaos (Bauman, Life in Fragments, 1995, p. 226-227).

The Postmodern Pedagogy, alternatively, would not disguise this ‘form-giving’ and ‘order-building’ project, but would help students see the constructed and situated nature of all knowledge production. Students are encouraged to build their own worlds, critically and creatively, rather than passively receive the worlds of others. Writing in the common sense is the dead letter; it is the carrier of death. (Derrida, Of Grammatology, p. 17)
The organizing principle of applied grammatical is the alignment of writing with the visual arts.

Yet we can take a dogmatist to Ogyemang’s monolith and make faith from straw (Henry Shelly, ‘Ogyemang,’ 1817, as cited in Atlantis, 1995, p. 472). We can question the dangers and reconstructions. We can make new toys from old ones.

But can we re-claim the human ‘being’ (though its unity is a rather clear one we have built up the loss of? Would we imagine it? What would the non-human consumer look like?...

Derrida ([1974], 1981) writes: ‘What this institution [the university] cannot bear is for students to name, to appropriate, to invent a name for it. It cannot be taken over by its users. I’d like to use the metaphor of languages being inscribed into all the jurisdictional boundaries that it passes.’

…through this sequence of supplements a necessity is announced: that of an infinite chain, ineluctably multiplying the supplementary mediations that produce the sense of the very thing they defer: the mirage of the thing itself, of immediate presence, of originary perception.

…there has never been anything but writing; there have never been any words but supplments…’ (p. 159).

All signs (thoughts, remarks, events) rely on endless differences and deferrals of meaning to allow meaning and language to occur. We could not have ‘language’ if signs could not be plucked from one context and grafted into another.

Sign = Tenancy / Writing = Grafting

Deconstruction juxtaposes the ‘declared’ and ‘un-declared’ text: the intentional and unintentional aspects of the same text to produce a different text and different reading. (Deutscher, How to Read Derrida, 2005, p. 28).

This is not a spoon (REST)


‘NO, the undisputed champion of the IT revolution is not email, nor even the computer, but the mobile phone. With each new refinement, its users become more admiring, more astonished, and more addicted…’ The mobile phone has reinforced their natural tendency to hang loose – keep your options open – so this is dream technology for them’ (Mackay, Advance Australia Where, 2007, pp. 117-119).

‘AG assumes that teacher-scholars will not only perform double inscription in the classroom but that they will turn to film/video [multimedia] as the means most adequate for a postmodernized academic society’ (Ulm, 1985, p. 266).


References


This page contains textual scraps and traces: a textual collage of quotations grafted into the borders of a page, of pages within pages; a collage of pages containing a collage of quotations. Polysomy. Palimpsest.

Tests cited:

**Neographism: the virtual word**
A ‘neographism’ is a new word or phrase, a new sense of a word, or even a new doctrine (Macquarie Concise Dictionary, 2000). According to Hahn (2002, p. 44), Derrida uses neographisms ‘to disrupt the opposition of »ordinary language«, which are the sedimentations of logocentrism.’

In Derrida’s ‘Preface’ to Of Grammatology, Spivak goes so far as to suggest that Derrida’s term ‘difference’ is not so much a neologism as a ‘neographism’. She writes: ‘Since the difference between ‘difference’ and ‘difference’ is inaudible, this ‘neographism’ reminds us of the importance of writing as a structure. The a ‘represents to remind us that, even within the graphic structure, the perfectly spelled word is always absent, constituted through an endless series of spelling mistakes’ (Derrida, 1967/1976, p. xliii). The ‘a in difference is ‘graphic’ not ‘phonetic’—seen not heard.

**Difference: differing-decentering**
According to Deutscher (2005, p. 29), the term ‘difference’ ‘…arises from [Derrida’s] appropriation of Saussure’s concept of the ‘sign’ in addition to his strategy of reversal. Derrida finds or invents new concepts that can’t be contained within overthrown hierarchical oppositions. Difference is one of these terms. In relation to the opposition between presence and absence, difference is neither present, nor absent. Instead, it is a kind of absence that generates the effect of presence.’ And Hahn (2002, p. 65) reminds us that difference is a hybrid term involving ‘differing’ and ‘deferring’ as formal requirements for the production of language:
1. All signification and meaning is by difference, by difference rather than from the difference of other significant marks. Linguistics is the study of the differences between words, rather than the differences between the words themselves.
2. ‘Presence’ of meaning is an always deferred phenomenon as each sign in a significating chain, each mark, takes its meaning only in the unfolding of other oppositional marks that never fully converge to the meaning that is always deferred and that is always ‘in discourse.’ Difference, then, attunes to both ‘difference’ as distinction and difference as delay (Umer, 1985, p. 46).

**Deconstruction: re-establishing certainty**
Deconstructive reading involves the de-sedimentation of historical assumptions. For Derrida (1986), deconstruction is a practice—not a method—that collapses logocentrism and makes critical interventions in inherited knowledge (p. 165). It is an act of love and faith that is achieved by challenging the power of the past. It suggests that the ‘authorial’ text is a product of greater structure and that the text has no absolute meaning (p. 167). This signals, for Derrida, the end of linear writing and the end of the book, even if a new form of ‘postmodernized academic essay[s]’ is written on the back of the book (p. 86). The closing of the book signifies the opening of the possible (1967/2005, p. 371). For Ulmer (1985), grammatical writing involves the reordering of writing with the visual arts (p. 266) and the meeting of verbal and non-verbal systems (p. 288) that multimedia performances (p. 268) where ‘teacher-scholars draw upon electronic media to not only teach but to create ‘postmodernized academic essay[s]’’ (Deutscher, 2005, p. 266).

**Sous rature: burning under erosion**
In the ‘Preface’ to Of Grammatology, Spivak translates Derrida’s sous rature into ‘writing under erasure’ (1967/1976, p. xiv): ‘This is to write a word, cross it out, and then print both word and deletion. (Since the word is inaccurate, it is crossed out. Since it is necessary, it remains legible).’ (p. xiv) That the terms means, myself, and I are fictional constructions, necessary for me to make sense of myself as an entity in the world, in this instance, write my identity under erasure. The same goes for the authorial praxis guiding this PhD.

Derrida (1967/1976) locates his inspiration for erasure in Heidegger’s crossing out of the word being (e.g. Leib). For Derrida, ‘[t]his deletion is the final writing of an epoch. Under its strokes the presence of a transcendental significate is effaced while still remaining legible. Is effaced while still remaining legible, is destitute while making visible the very idea of the sign, in as much as it destitutes into itself. The autopoiesis, or tracing, and logocentrism, this last writing is also the first writing’ (p. 23). According to Spivak, Derrida is asking us to change our habits of mind: ‘the authority of the text is provisional, the origin is a trace, contradictory logic, one must learn to read and erase the language at the same time’ (p. 123).
I hadn't enjoyed such height and space in weeks, and the dining room seemed a good perch from which to survey the voyage so far, and to try to see if anything resembling a pattern or a story was discernible in its tumble of places and events. Not much, not yet. While a number of wispy narrative strands had begun to emerge, I knew that journeys hardly ever disclose their true meaning until after – and sometimes years after – they are over.

(Raban, Passage to Juneau, 2000, p. 366)

You and I will need to imagine how the other entries could have looked had the 'pedagondage' continued. This, then, temporarily concludes one example (one text made from multiple texts) of how The Postmodern Pedagondage played out in both theory and practice. No doubt other experiments with this pedagogy will turn up different outcomes again — and thank goodness, because who wants a one-size-fits-all curriculum that produces the same result every time you engage it? Not me!

If the successive [entries] add up into an itinerary, it happens only retrospectively, when a logic is discovered or imputed which did not guide the wanderer at the time of his wandering. When still on the move, no image of the future state is at hand to fill the present experience with meaning; each successive present, like works of contemporary art, must explain itself in its own terms and provide its own key to read out its sense” (Bauman, Postmodernity & its Discontents, 1997, p. 90).

An event which in principle has no consequences outlasting its own duration is called an episode; like the tourists themselves, the episode – so says Milan Kundera – breaks into the story without being part of it. The episode is a self-enclosed event. Each new episode is, so to speak, an absolute beginning, but equally absolute is its ending: ‘not to be continued’ is the last sentence of the story...” (p. 91).

These entries, then, are not to be continued...
Dear Barbara,

As promised, here is my PhD Proposal (which I will be submitting in the coming days). This copy is yours to keep – but I do look forward to your impressions / feedback via email when you get a chance, etc.

This copy is in black and white but the 4 copies I make available to the PhD Panel will be in colour to better sell my project and encourage them to support my call for funding.

I’m off on a houseboat trip in a few days and will try – probably unsuccessfully – to clear my head and relax. The river is still my home, really, and I look forward to seeing it before it deteriorates further. When I get back I will put my Proposal PowerPoint together and prey myself up for the presentation. I look forward to getting it out of the way!

This has been a strange year. I have a work space at unit (main campus) but spend very little time there. It’s almost like I’m not a unit student. I work mainly at home and spend a lot of time by myself – and too much time in the house can be dangerous. At the same time, I have done plenty of work, even if my social life is lazydude as a result. Recently, I was spending some time with a very beautiful woman—Sarah—who shocked me by declaring that she only goes for guys who abuse and disrespect her, not guys who treat her well. In other words, that I don’t fit the bill as I was the first guy who had ever looked her in the eye (other than a BBQ) and listened to a single word she had to say. While I appreciated her honesty, I was flummoxed. That’s a discouraging way to be rejected, not only for what it says about her past associations with men but for what it says about her future associations with men. Most disturbingly, she knew what she was throwing away and said so! Very sad, and I am still reeling a bit from the whole situation. But anyway, I shouldn’t be so selfish. She wants me to be the “real thing” she has never had, while she continues on her not-so-merry way if I’m spiritually fitting. I would say yes to this situation and recognise it as an incredible honour, but as far as I have made myself amenable to fully in touch (which isn’t it a kind of rejection and itself a kind of passive revitalisation).

It seems to me that there is no escaping responsibility (and its penalties) and no escaping the impossibility of living up to the full potential of the conscience. The reality is that I don’t know how to ensure the relationship or offer, particularly as I feel romantically drawn to her. So I don’t know how to proceed. Either way, I hurt someone: her or me (unless, of course, I become more spiritually capable and more spiritually loving). It goes to show how limited my love for her really is. Unconditional love seems genuinely beyond me. I can imagine it but I can’t deliver it.

Anyway, I hope this letter finds you well, lots of love,

Andy

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Reply from girl:
Wow! Thank u 4 ur honesty. I am v flattered. I hope we can still b frenz. I really enjoy hanging out with u. u r a great guy. Have a fab day, i off 2 yoga. :)

Sender: Sarah
[phone number]

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“When people first encounter postmodernism, the negative seems to dominate—e.g., no truth, no self, the terrible problem of the Other, the ugly will to power, and reason leading only to terror. But once again, truth is a burden, and throwing it aside opens up the possibility for a less rigid, more playful, aesthetic organization of human life. Without the burden, all things are permitted—even an artwork which consists of a desert-dry countryside filled with thousands of human beings playing around with some giant yellow umbrellas [and PhD texts that subvert the conventions of the dissertation]” (Linn, 1996, p. 112).
