

'Derrida wants to restore to writing the balance between design and symbol it had in hieroglyphics ... by assigning to ornamentation a generative role in text production' (Ulmer, 1985, p. 46).

"The classroom is now in a vital struggle for survival with the immensely persuasive 'outside' world created by new informational media. Education must shift from instruction, from imposing of stencils, to discovery—to probing and exploration and to the recognition of the language of forms" (McLuhan & Fiore, *The Medium is the Massage*, 1967, p. 100).

sonal, mono-modal, monological, and quasi-artefacts that merely *stand-in* for 'authentic' multimodal products (e.g. essays for articles; theses for books; presentations for lectures; talks for speeches; storyboards for films; descriptions for images; role-plays for life-acts; arguments for laments; paper texts for electronic texts; linear texts for hypertexts, and so on). By comparison, multimodal texts using multiple bandwidths and multiple voices can generate and access alternative knowledges and alternative knowledge-sources. They can also access alternative pedagogical orientations such as Gardner's and Ramos-Ford's (1997) **multiple intelligences**, Goleman's (1995) emotional intelligence, Pohl's (2000) **critical, creative, and caring thinking**, and Boomer's (1988), Ulmer's (1985), Freire's (1996), and hooks' (1994) *critical awakenings and counter-hegemonic perspectives*. They do so by refusing to submit to the rationalist discourses and linear realities preached by traditional pedagogies. In all, the *multi-modal text* – as a form of arts-based (Finley, 2005), narrative inquiry (Chase, 2005) – opens up unique pedagogical and *post-structural* textual possibilities. In this sense:

*Grammarology participates in the current trend, marking the close of an epoch of specialization, toward the formation of disciplinary syntheses... Grammarology cuts across the old divisions of knowledge, being concerned with all manner of inscription, with the question of how any form of knowledge or mode of knowing relates to writing.*

(Ulmer, 1985, p. 10, my italics)

The last line of the title – *The Postmodern Pedagogondage* – points to another strand of anti-thinking that informs this project.<sup>3</sup> As a **neologism**, the term *pedagondage* is made

<sup>3</sup> From this point on the writing will adopt a more openly grammatological and *pedagondic* posture.

**Multiple intelligences:** Howard Gardner challenged the notion of *general intelligence* (or IQ) in *Frames of Mind* in 1983. He advanced a 'multiple intelligences' framework instead to accommodate a range of abilities and talents previously ignored by traditional pedagogies and assessment processes (Ramos-Ford & Gardner, 1997, p. 55). Gardner identified seven intelligences:

1. Linguistic
2. Logical-mathematical
3. Spatial
4. Musical
5. Bodily-kinaesthetic
6. Interpersonal
7. Intrapersonal

He later added an eighth intelligence (*naturalistic*) and is considering a ninth (*existential*) if brain evidence can support it (Checkley, 1997).

**Critical thinking:** '... is the process used in evaluating alternatives, making judgments based on sound reasoning, or justifying a position, stance or point of view' (27).

**Creative thinking:** '... is bringing into being something which did not exist before, either as a product, a process or an idea' (47).

**Caring thinking:** involves caring about our own well-being, about others who share our lives, and seeing ourselves as concerned world citizens (65). (Pohl, 2000)

**pl. -gisms or -gies.** 1. a newly coined word, or a phrase or familiar word used in a new sense. 2. the practice of using or introducing neologisms.

**Neologise:** vb. to invent or use neologisms. (Collins, n.d., p. 1031)

Howard Gardner  
Valerie Ramos-Ford  
Daniel Goleman  
Michael Pohl  
Garth Boomer  
bell hooks

## The Little Vagabond

Dear Mother, dear Mother, the Church is cold,  
But the Ale-house is healthy & pleasant & warm;  
Besides I can tell where I am used well,  
Such usage in heaven will never do well.

But if at the Church they would give us some Ale,  
And a pleasant fire our souls to regale,  
We'd sing and we'd pray all the live-long day,  
Nor ever once wish from the Church to stray.

Then the Parson might preach, & drink, & sing,  
And we'd be as happy as birds in the spring;  
And modest dame Lurch, who is always at Church,  
Would not have bandy children, nor fasting, nor birch.

And God, like a father rejoicing to see  
His children as pleasant and happy as he,  
Would have no more quarrel with the Devil or the Barrel,  
But kiss him, & give him both drink and apparel.

(William Blake, *Songs of Experience*, 1794)

'Signifying absence or separation, the letter lives as aphorism [undecidable]' (Derrida, *Writing & Difference*, 1967/2005, p. 87).



The Postmodern Pedagondage: '... switching the educational process from package to discovery' (McLuhan & Fiore, *The Medium is the Massage*, 1967, p. 101).

Pedagondage could also signify the 'bondage' of traditional pedagogies and traditional schooling, or epitomise the fine and fragile line between subjugating and liberating pedagogies – where students consume information rather than produce knowledge. The vagabond, after all, has no choice but to drift, while the tourist willingly adventures. Put together, *pedagondage* symbolises the 'natural anarchy' at the heart of pre-packaged life—the *inherent Chaos at the heart of imagined Order*. We are both powerful and powerless—simultaneously.

by grafting the term 'vagabondage' onto the term 'pedagogy' to denote a *drifting* pedagogy that transcends notions of discipleship while recognising the importance (and inevitability) of planned and unplanned learning events. It also speaks of hybridity and chimera, the wilful merging of concepts and claiming of language: literally taking language into the hands and wringing the power out of it. Bending it into new shapes and new dreams. Pedagondage takes AG and catapults it into the Void of postmodernity and an anything-goes media culture. Developed in the early 1980s, AG could not have (completely) anticipated the cyber-textual revolution or postmodern dissolution to follow (as we can no more anticipate the future before us – however bleak or beautiful).

Pedagondage never loses sight of the intentionality of the learners at its helm (Boomer, 1988, p. 3) or the chaos at its bow. No pedagogy, no matter how austere and draconian, no matter how mechanical, can avoid the messiness of learning or the chaos of life. No curriculum or syllabus, no matter how hard it tries, no matter how hard it *lies*, can guarantee the transmission of a monological world view. There is always slippage. Pedagondage, therefore, no longer tries to hide the messiness of learning or the arbitrary nature of life and reality. It does not manhandle the intentions of learners to further its own power. Modernity may have been preoccupied with pasting over the Void and pretending it didn't exist (Bauman, 1995a, 1997), but pedagondage flies full faced straight at it. As a post-pedagogy, it abandons *pedagogies of bondage* and *pedagogies of mimicry* for the mayhem and excitement of semi-structured learning safaris, guided in part by the intentionality and confusion of learners and in part by the natural processes of anarchy that wobble the universe. It values the accidental learning excursion as much as the

**Vagabond:** *n.* 1. a person with no fixed home. 2. an idle wandering beggar or thief. —**vagabondage** *n.* —**vagabondism** *n.* (Collins, n.d., p. 1673)

'Vagabondage has no advance itinerary – its trajectory is patched together bit by bit, one piece at a time' (Bauman, 1995a, p. 94).

**Pedagogy:** For Freire, pedagogy is a *co-intentional* activity. 'Teachers and students ... con-intent on reality, are both Subjects, not only in the task of unveiling that reality, and thereby coming to know it critically, but in the task of re-creating that knowledge' (Freire, 1970/1996, p. 51).

**Critical pedagogy:** '... is designed to give students the tools to examine how society has functioned to shape and constrain their aspirations and goals, and prevent them from even dreaming about a life outside the one they presently know' (Giroux, 1991, as cited in Kriebel & Honan, 1998, p. 127).

**Void:** 'The notion of empty space (like that of endless time) proved repugnant to [many philosophers]. One reason for disliking the idea may be based on confusion about the allegedly paradoxical existence of nothing (for nothing is precisely what there is in empty space), others find it contrary to the plenitude of God that he should allow there to be nothing where he could have put something. ... In modern quantum mechanics, space is not empty, but seething with latent or virtual particles, ready to spring into being if various physical events occur' (Blackburn, 2005, p. 384).

'It is always at the edge of an abyss that something seems to happen. And I *want* the blind spots. I *want* the blind spots looking back at me' (Low & Palulis, A Letter from Derrida, *Journal of Curriculum Theorizing*, Spring, 2006, p. 52).

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# introduction

Exegesis

Eisegesis

EiseJesus





# Adiaphorization:

'The hub of postmodern life strategy is not identity building, but the avoidance of being fixed' (Bauman, *Life in Fragments*, 1995, p. 89).

pre-planned packaged tour. It drifts and it tours simultaneously. There are no destinations here, just stopovers and freefalls: partial maps and open learning, where learners stroll, drift, tour, and play on the currents of postmodern consumer life, while staking a claim to *define that life*. To own it, shape it, and call it their own.

**Adiaphorization:** the stripping of human relationships of their moral significance; disregarding the whole person for the fragment; floating responsibility (Bauman, *Life in Fragments*, 1995, pp. 133-134).

'[All four life-models] cast the Other primarily as the object of *aesthetic*, not *moral* evaluation; as a source of *sensations*, not *responsibility*' (Bauman, *Life in Fragments*, 1995, p. 155).

The postmodern *pedagond* is aware of the *life strategies* available to contemporary consumers (Bauman, 1995a, 1995b, 1997). According to Bauman (1995a, p. 91), there are four interrelated and unavoidable life strategies used by contemporary *flâneurs* to survive the horror and glamour of postmodern culture: *strolling*, *vagabondage*, *touring*, and *playing*, all of which involve detachment from moral life, window shopping, and leaving each episode behind and carrying no moral baggage (*adiaphorization*). *Pedagondage* welcomes the voyage but not the moral evasion. It seeks the enduring relationship and earnest communication. It yearns for love. It stands *for*, not *over*, the Other (as Lévinas or Bauman might say). But it does so knowing that it cannot enter the same relationship twice – that each new encounter *is a new encounter*, and moral obligations need to be renewed, not abandoned.

*Pedagondage* is therefore a semi-guided form of *constructivism* that offers no guarantees and no homecomings, but offers love. By abandoning predetermined outcomes, the learning trajectory is fractured and multi-sited, free to follow the path of the curious dilettante who delights in multiple discourses and multiple practices, but not so curious as to get bogged down in the mindsets and vested interests of specialists or experts. Free, instead, to cross boundaries and to explore the margins and vagaries beyond the veil of modernist certainty and neo-liberal rationality. There is no certainty in this de-mythologised

**Postmodern life strategies:** 'I propose that in the same way as the pilgrim was the most fitting allegory of modern life strategy pre-occupied with the daunting task of identity-building – the stroller, the vagabond, the tourist and the player offer jointly the metaphor for the postmodern strategy moved by the horror of being bound and fixed' (91).

'[All four strategies] favour and promote a *distance* between the individual and the Other and cast the Other primarily as the object of aesthetic, not moral evaluation...' (100).

'It is ... the old truth all over again: each society sets limits to the life strategies that can be imagined, and certainly to those which can be practised. [Our society] leaves off-limits such strategies as may critically and militantly question its principles and thus open the way to new strategies...' (104). (Bauman, 1995a)

**Constructivism:** '... a school of thought ... that emphasises the subjectivity of experience and the role of individuals in actively constructing their world' (Slee, 2002, p. 469).

'The important assertion of constructivism is that reality cannot be revealed to us in only one true way. It is through the process of constructing that we come to know reality. Constructivism emphasises a proactive view of the individual, who as an observer participates actively in the process of observation. It is through this process of active participation that the co-creation of meaning occurs. Such a proactive view of the person contrasts with much of mainstream psychology, which views the individual as reactive' (Slee, 2002, p. 74).

'In the wake of the world kept in bounds by God's commandments, and another one administered by Reason, here comes a world of men and women left to their own smartness and cunning' (Bauman, *Life in Fragments*, 1995, pp. 35-36).

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## Entering (eis) Understanding (egesis) and emptying history of meaning along the way

In the tension between form and possibility, the artists strive to augment the possibilities of information by means of an "organized disorder." "In consequence, information associates itself not with order, but disorder, or at least with a certain type of order-not-habitual-forseeable. Could we say that the positive measure of such information (distinct from signification) be entropy?"

(Obra, as cited in Ulmer, 1985, p. 309)

*Épéeist* is an *épatant* place to begin (Collins, n.d., pp. 511-512). It has nothing to do with the text that follows or the methods I use. In fact, I never intended to start with such a term or such a sentence. It just happened, like the sidebar to the right, through accident and experimentation. Basically, the term *épéeist* caught my eye (or poked my eye) in an old dictionary (cited above) when I was looking for another word and another beginning. The term was a found-object, of sorts, stumbled upon by chance, appropriated, and recycled. It was selected on *appearance* not meaning. It became a *key* to opening up the text and opening up the creative process (*eis* + *egesis*). It allowed me to think once again like an artist and collagist rather than an essayist and writer. It allowed me to think about writing in terms of painting, about composing texts in terms of sculpture, and about thinking and feeling the *aesthetic* and assembling artefacts from junk. This text, then, is not so much a 'text' as an object, an artefact, an assemblage, a bricolage, a movement, and a performance. It is all of these things and not quite any of them. It is visual writing and visual thinking. I am becoming the artist I left behind in 1990.<sup>1</sup>

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Crafting continued: 4.3.07  
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Crafting continued: 9.3.07

**Rosetta stone** *n.* a basalt slab discovered in 1799 at Rosetta, dating to the reign of Ptolemy V (196 B.C.) and carved with parallel inscriptions in Egyptian hieroglyphics, demotic characters, and Greek, which provided the key to the decipherment of ancient Egyptian texts.

(Collins, n.d., p. 1327)

'The meaning of postmodern art, we may say, is to stimulate the process of meaning-making and guard it against the danger of ever grinding to a halt...' (Bauman, *Postmodernity and its Discontents*, 1997, p. 107).

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floating responsibility.



## De-sedimentation

'Every sign, linguistic or non-linguistic, spoken or written (in the current sense of this opposition), in a small or large unit, can be *cited*, put between quotation marks; in so doing it can break with every given context, engendering an infinity of new contexts in a manner which is absolutely illimitable' (Ulmer, 1985, pp. 58-59).

world. The vagabond-tourist no longer expects it. The postmodern-pedagond no longer teaches it. The *Void* extends all the way from the earth to the sky to the skin on our faces. We breathe it in. We enter it.

The world is, in the end, a collection of texts, a *logosphere* (Barthes, 1973/1990) and *docuverse* (Nelson, as cited in Snyder, 1996/1998, p. 49), crammed with *heteroglossic* half-truths. People and places are constructed from incomplete stories and *intertextual* exchanges, narratives that evolve and mutate and reproduce and die. The drifting tourist picks and chooses among the *bric-a-brac* of postmodern life for scraps that make sense, a collage of half-truths to bring meaning to chaos. Meanings only need to hold up for a few moments, before they too de-form and re-form into new takes-on-reality. The thesis, too, collated and structured over years, a document of linearity and logic, no longer makes sense in such chaos, for it too has expired by the time it has begun. Like this text, which is a series of evocations (the poetic mode) and assertions (the scientific mode) displaced by subsequent evocations and assertions: the next sentence replaces the last (Ulmer, 1985, p. 213). *Palimpsest*. Double inscription. Contra-bands (p. 190). But, as one bearded bushranger once said, *such is life* when life is lived in the shadows of the gallows. So we stare at *death* to know life. And it is only in this context, however cruel, that we can build a notion of 'life' and 'care' at all. Of 'hospitality' as Derrida (2001) might say.

The postmodern pedagondage—as a pedagogy, as a research method, as a means of surviving the neo-liberal world—is openly ideological and openly antagonistic. It challenges the common sense and its own complicity in the system. It seeks a variety of perspectives and textuali-

**Heteroglossia:** '...Bakhtin's view that no sign system is entirely self-enclosed, since each and every utterance takes rise from a heteroglossic multitude of meanings, values, social discourses, cultural codes, etc. [Thus linking the formal features of texts to their conditions of cultural production and reception]' (Payne, 1996, p. 244).

**Intertextuality:** 'A term proposed by Julia Kristeva ... to indicate a TEXTS construction from texts: a work is not a self-contained, individually authored whole, but the absorption and transformation of other texts, "a mosaic of quotations" (Kristeva, 1967)' (Payne, 1996, p. 258).

'Intertextuality refers to the network or web of relationships linking all the texts produced by a culture' (Moon, 2004, p.78).

**Palimpsest:** 1. Paper, parchment, or other writing material prepared for writing on and wiping out again, like a slate. 2. A parchment or other writing-material written upon twice, the original having been erased or rubbed out to make place for the second; a manuscript in which a later writing is written over an effaced earlier writing. (Oxford English Dictionary, 1989, p. 95)

Palimpsest also refers to Gilbert and Gubar's notion of *textual duplicity*, where female writers in the nineteenth century buried 'deeper' stories under 'cover stories' to get their work published (Childers & Hentzi, 1995, p. 218).

**Death:** *n.* 1. the act of dying; the end of life; the total and permanent cessation of the vital functions of an

## Iconoclasm

"Now, at long last, we 'stand up straight and confront Chaos'. We have never done it before. Merely to confront Chaos would be off-putting and upsetting enough. But the novelty of the act – the total absence of any precedent to go by, be reassured by, be guided by – makes the situation totally unnerving. The waters we leaped into are not just deep, but uncharted. We are not even at the crossroads: for crossroads to be crossroads, there must first be roads. Now we know that we *make roads* – the only roads there are and can be – and we do this solely by *walking them*" (Bauman, *Life in Fragments*, 1995, p. 17).

The opening sentence also represents a detour, which is to say that the term *épéeist* jabbed me in the eye and led me bleeding down a blind alley into confusion and uncertainty. I recognised the shape of a word, a collection of letters, but I couldn't pronounce or read the signs. It was a sign that had lost its meaning, a mark, several marks, 'signifying nothing' (to quote Macbeth). I could no more make meaning from it than it could make meaning for me. We had reached a stalemate, an impasse, where no message could get through (Derrida, as cited in Ulmer, 1985).

And yet, the term, in all its mystery, does *point* to something of the ideology and 'praxis' (Freire, 1970/1996) that underpins (or slices through) this project. It points to the chaotic and volatile nature of my learning theory and practice: the foraging for meaning through de-contextualised scraps, the aesthetic and conceptual re-assembly, and the meaning-making that results. To *collage*. In this sense, the text starts at precisely the right place, at the point where prior knowledge opens out, exhausted, and learning begins, renewed. The detour becomes a fortuitous and unexpected encounter with mystery, where the synapses of knowledge end and the inchoate possibilities and alternatives begin. It is a pedagogical orientation that begins with the known and *habitual* and moves to the unknown, *irrational*, and *unthought*. I was looking at a word that wasn't a word. Whatever it was it contained too many anomalies, accents, and e's to be understood in (my) English. This process, this groping about, this need for meaning, is a semi-guided form of constructivism (of drifting), where only the most subtle of parameters are set in place to restrict the curious mind from its search for meaning and

'...postmodern art brings into the open the perpetual incompleteness of meanings and thus essential inexhaustibility of the realm of the possible' (Bauman, *Postmodernity and its Discontents*, 1997, p. 107).

## De-construction

**aesthetics** The study of the feelings, concepts, and judgements arising from our appreciation of the arts or of the wider class of objects considered moving, or beautiful, or sublime.

(Blackburn, 2005, p. 8)

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**Collage** [Fr. *coller*: 'to stick, glue']. Art form and technique, incorporating the use of pre-existing materials or objects attached as part of a two-dimensional surface. ... [C]ollage is closely associated with 20th-century art, in which it has often served as a correlation with the pace and discontinuity of the modern world.

(Dictionary of Art, 1996, p. 557)

'The letter ... never belongs to its author or to its addressee...' (Derrida, *Writing & Difference*, 1967/2005, p. 224).

## Para-DOXA

## De-mythologise

## Mythoclasm



# The birth of the reader must be

'Derrida in fact takes this possibility of cutting free and regrafting as his (de)compositional principle. Iterability, as a mode of production, may be recognized as *collage*. ... The effectiveness of collage is that, like metaphor, the piece, displaced into a new context [as done here], retains associations with its former context. The two operations constituting the collage technique – selection and combination – are the operations characteristic of all speaking and writing' (Ulmer, 1985, p. 59).

As evidenced in the tensions arising from this project.

ties to give it some hope of disturbing these fixtures and some hope of seeing a new world, a world that matters, a world that cares. Everything else can come and go, but love must remain to hold us together. The *noumenon* (p. 27). Unknowable, but feelable. Present, but absent.

As Richard Shaull suggests in the 'Foreword' of Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*,

There is no such thing as a *neutral* education process. Education either functions as an instrument that is used to facilitate the integration of the younger generation into the logic of the present system and bring about conformity to it, or it becomes "the practice of freedom," the means by which men and women deal *critically and creatively* with reality and discover how to participate in the transformation of their world. The development of an educational methodology that facilitates this process will inevitably lead to tension and conflict within our society (and our educational institutions). But it could also contribute to the formation of a new (human) and mark the beginning of a new era in Western history.

(as cited in Freire, 1970/1996, p. 16, my emphasis)

And as Ulmer (1985, p. 189, my bold) suggests,

To reiterate, the strategy of [AG] Writing is not to eliminate speech, representation, science, or 'truth' from the academic discourse, but to put them in their place, to break their dominance by bringing them into balance with a **nonverbal element** that is not associated with the virtues of classicism – clarity, simplicity, harmony, unity. The practical question, then, is *how* to talk, lecture, [and] mount a discourse in a grammatical classroom [and a grammatological research journey].

Title: summary

In all, the title outlines the methods, interests, ambitions, and rationale of this project. It indicates three *levels*, three

animal or plant. (*Macquarie*, 2006, p. 308)

'Birth and death, the entry of the new and the exit of the familiar, are two gaping holes in the presence of order which no effort ever did or ever will plug' (Bauman, 1995a, p. 14).

'...death becomes an offence, a challenge, and an aperture through which the Absurd seeps into life; an unlockable window in the cosy yet cramped house of sensible existence – opening onto the infinite expanses of non-sense' (Bauman, 1995a, p. 16).

**Noumenon**: 'A term ... denoting things as they are in themselves, as opposed to things as they are for us, knowable by the senses (phenomena). The noumenal lies behind the mind-imposed forms of time, space, and causation, and is therefore unknowable' (Blackburn, 2005, p. 255).

**Cornucopia**: noun 1. the mythical horn of the goat Amalthaea, which suckled Zeus, represented as overflowing with flowers, fruit, etc., and symbolising plenty. 2. an overflowing supply. (*Macquarie Dictionary*, 2005, p. 327)

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hope. Such a mind(set) is free to parry with shadows, to sink in the mud, to grope in shit, and to emerge, soiled and uncertain, with new knowledge and *new questions*.

*Always one step away from illumination.*

*One concept short of certainty.*

*Living with ambiguity and never quite knowing anything.*

*English, the language of imperialism, of seeking.*

*More, always more.*

By opening with such a sentence (a sentence that contains 7 words, 2 emphasised words, 30 letters, 12 syllables, 14 vowels, 16 consonants, 3 acute accents, 1 full stop, and 1 reference containing 1 word, 11 letters, 6 numbers, 3 full stops, 2 commas, 1 hyphen, and 2 brackets—a plethora of signs) I am also generating a 'crisis in representation,' for the dictionary containing the terms *épéeist* and *épatant* (a *Collins*) cannot be correctly referenced. It too has lost its bearings: its biography, birth certificate, and origins. And given that each reference must lead back to a source (other than God), and every refugee must have a number, a passport, and a place to call home, leaves me in a quandary. Do I leave the reference in—or do I take it out? Do I be honest—or do I lie? Such a lie would be undetectable to the reader, but I would know. I would know that a plagiarism of sorts had occurred, a cover-up of convenience, to humour the authorities and to obey a particular 'doxa' (Barthes, 1973/1990). That said, **plagiarism** is the foundation of every text. After all, all texts share common conventions and codes; all texts cannibalise other texts; all texts allude to, and collude with, each other; and all readers and writers submit to and protect this language in order to communicate. To reject language (by ear, by mouth, by eye, by thought, by nose, by touch) is to choose oblivion. To choose exile.

I will therefore stick with the *dateless* citation—(i.e. *Collins*, n.d.)—and move on to another mystery. If memory serves, it was Rastas, the dog, that tore out the relevant pages from the dateless dictionary many years ago (and why not?). It was this bite,

'[Postmodern artists] quote, collate, reposition, recompose, and above all copy and multiply the already authored icons, floating the question of authorship and originality, and seeing to it that the question cannot be raised again in any meaningful way' (Bauman, *Postmodernity and its Discontents*, 1997, p. 160).

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Barthes: 'Thus is revealed the total existence of writing: a text is made of multiple writings, drawn from many cultures and entering into mutual relations of dialogue, parody, contestation, but there is one place where this multiplicity is focused and that place is the reader, not, as was hitherto said, the author. The reader is the space on which all the quotations that make up a writing are inscribed without any of them being lost; a text's unity lies not in its origins but in its destination. Yet this destination cannot any longer be personal: the reader is without history, biography, psychology; he is simply that *someone* who holds together in a single field all the traces by which the written text is constituted. ... the birth of the reader must be at the cost of the death of the Author' (p. 148).

('The Death of the Author,' *Image – Music – Text*, 1977)

**plagiarise** vb. to appropriate (ideas, passages, etc.) from (another work or author). (*Collins*, n.d., p. 1171)

*It is therefore safe to say that I am a plagiarist. The question is: is it possible not to be a plagiarist? And would I want to be a non-plagiarist if I could?*

# at the cost of the death of the Author.



aspects, and three bands—the *text*, *inter-text*, and *sub-text* levels; the *visual*, *verbal*, and *textual* (tactile) aspects; and the *picto*, *ideo*, and *phono* bands—thus providing three sets of vantage points from which to *make texts*, *make meaning*, and *extend pedagogy* (aka, three equally valuable *outcomes*). ■



Ned Kelly, Glen Rowan, 1977  
Photo taken by Andrew Miller, age 7

'Email (or text, or whatever's next) can never do the whole job of communication because the human stuff – the emotions, the nuances, the things you'd normally convey through tone of voice, rate of speech, posture, gestures, eye movements – is all lost' (Mackay, *Advance Australia Where*, 2007, p. 100).

**Butterfly Effect:** "... The modern study of chaos began with the creeping realization in the 1960s that quite simple mathematical equations could model systems every bit as violent as a waterfall. Tiny differences in input could quickly become overwhelming differences in output... In weather, for example, this translates into what is only half-jokingly known as the Butterfly Effect—the notion that a butterfly stirring the air in Peking can transform storm systems next month in New York" (Gleick, 1990, p. 8).

The term Butterfly Effect stems from Edward Lorenz's paper: 'Predictability: Does the Flap of a Butterfly's Wings in Brazil Set Off a Tornado in Texas?' in 1979 (Gleick, 1990, p. 322).

this playful act of iconoclasm and joy, that inadvertently led me to the term *épéeist* today (1.3.07). It was this torn page that poked me in the eye and steered me away from other terms and other pathways. It was (is) the *Butterfly Effect* of text and meaning across time and space (Gleick, 1988/1990). The dog bit (*bites*) the book which poked (*pokes*) my eye which prompted (*prompts*) this mess(age). Possibly, then, I need to reference the dog as the ultimate source of this introduction (e.g. Rastas, personal communication, 1993). But then again, maybe it was another dog (Bubby, for instance)

that bit the book that poked my eye that led me here today (e.g. Bubby, personal communication, 1999). And this is the problem: I don't recall. I know that both dogs, at different times, attacked this dictionary. (Did these dogs ever meet? Never.)

'...books always speak of other books, and every story tells a story that has already been told' (Eco, *Reflections on 'The Name of The Rose'*, 1985, p. 10).

*Did it happen then, or did it happen now?  
Which dog, which bite?*

I know I bought the dictionary in the late 1980s or early 1990s (at BigW) and that the publication date was about that time—say 1989 (the same year, incidentally, that Samuel Beckett and Patrick White died: [source(s) unknown]). And herein lies the point: *Referencing is all very well if you remember your sources and meticulously catalogue each source as you go, which is easy enough for recent and obvious sources (such as books and articles), and easier still if you are engaged in research, which requires habitual citation, but it doesn't help catalogue the millions of sources (most of which are not books) that go into making the average (Western) human being over time (such as films, conversations, customs, pictures, gestures, practices, fashions, ideologies, songs, discourses, smells, habits, eras, adverts, relationships, melodies, traumas, textures, emotions, billboards, dreams, lessons, and other such*

'There is no present text in general... Everything begins with reproduction Always already: repositories of a meaning which was never present, whose signified presence is always reconstituted by deferral...' (Derrida, *Writing & Difference*, 1967/2005, pp. 265-266).

'... a model of writing irreducible to speech would include, like hieroglyphics, pictographic, ideogrammatic, and phonetic elements' (Derrida, *Writing & Difference*, 1967/2005, p. 262).



# It is language which speaks, not the author.

'Double-valued Writing: balancing ideographic and phonetic elements' (Ulmer, 1985, p. 75).

## Levels:

1. Text level: *making texts to make meaning* (semiosis)
2. Inter-text level: the *visual, verbal, and textual* (tactile) aspects of text production
3. Sub-text level: the pedagogy and ideology that informs (and arises from) this process (pedagondage)

## Aspects:

1. Visual (aesthetics)
2. Verbal (discourses)
3. Textual / tactile (products & outcomes)

## Bands:

1. Picto (pictures, images, & art)
2. Ideo (ideas, ideologies, & literary examples: figurative) (fictional)
3. Phono (commentaries, theories, & inner speech: discursive) (non-fictional)

## Outcomes:

1. Homemade and handmade artefacts / texts / artworks
2. Meaning / learning / personal growth
3. A workable pedagogy for classrooms and research — and a means of survival in a neo-liberal age.

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Adso: "Now I realized that not infrequently books speak of books: it is as if they spoke among themselves. In the light of this reflection, the library seemed all the more disturbing to me. It was then the place of a long, centuries-old murmuring, an imperceptible dialogue between one parchment and another, a living thing, a receptacle of powers not to be ruled by a human mind, a treasure of secrets emanated by many minds, surviving the death of those who had produced them or had been their conveyors" (Eco, *The Name of the Rose*, 1980/1998, p. 286).

textual phenomena). And this, in turn, doesn't account for the innumerable brainwaves stimulated when knowledge is made and texts are (mis)read. In other words (and there are always other words), no referencing system can ever live up to the ambition of listing every source that ever contributed to the making of the text it hopes to represent, let alone the brainwaves stimulated (or de-stabilised) through (intertextual) textual encounters, both within and beyond the brain (and body) (and book). The endeavour itself is simply too big.

How, for instance, can I cite every source that ever contributed to this text (and this person) when such a list would amount to millions (and zillions) of references? The world, after all, can be viewed as a *logosphere* (Barthes, 1973/1990) or *docuverse* (Nelson, as cited in Snyder, 1996/1998, p. 49) made up of zillions of orbiting texts, most of which are not recognised as texts, such as schooling and social context. Do I, then, need to reference my early schools for teaching me English and the alphabet (e.g. Belair Primary School, personal communication, 1978-1983)? Do I need to reference my Father for bringing me up (e.g. Dad—aka *Bilisy*, personal communication, 1970-1993)? Do I need to reference my social context (e.g. my family, friends, environments, electorates, economic conditions, customs, beliefs, and other social discourses and practices specific to my situation)? Do I need to reference my historical location? Do I need to reference the thesaurus I used earlier (1.3.07) to look up synonyms for 'explanation' (*Macquarie Budget Thesaurus*, 2004)? Do I need to reference **YOU** for scaring me (e.g. [your name], personal [indirect] communication, [date])? And this ignores the millions (and zillions) of sources that pre-date my existence and stretch all the way back to hieroglyphs and beyond. Should I reference the **Rosetta stone** outlined on page 1 (e.g. Rosetta stone, 196 B.C.)? Where, indeed, does the network of allusions end? It doesn't—does it? The endeavour is so fantastic that my doctoral foray into (among other things) *eclecticism* and *messy texts* (Marcus, 1998) as legitimate forms of inquiry—as counter-hegemonic, **heteroglossic**, and (semi)random methods of discovery, knowledge-construction, disruption, subversion, and (re)searching—suddenly seems more sensible than absurd, and more achievable than the practice of referencing itself.

**The Alphabet:** 'The alphabet ... is a technology that is absorbed by the very young child in a completely unconscious manner... Words and the meaning of words predispose the child to think and act automatically in certain ways' (McLuhan & Fiore, *The Medium is the Massage*, 1967, p. 1). Hence, we are shaped more by the media by which we communicate than the content of communication.

**Barthes:** '... it is language which speaks, not the author; to write is, through a prerequisite impersonality (not at all to be confused with the castrating objectivity of the realist novelist), to reach that point where only language acts, 'performs', and not 'me' (p. 143).

'The text is a tissue of quotations drawn from the innumerable centres of culture' (p. 146).

(Barthes, 'The Death of the Author,' *Image – Music – Text*, 1977)

**Heteroglossia:** For Bakhtin, heteroglossia represents "the perception that meaning depends on a host of factors unique to a given moment, rather than merely to structures [Structuralism] inherent in language itself" (Childers & Hentzi, 1995, p. 135).

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'... pure perception does not exist: we are written only as we write...' (Derrida, *Writing & Difference*, 1967/2005, p. 285).



'Double-valued Writing: balancing ideographic and phonetic elements' (Ulmer, 1985, p. 75).

'As soon as a sign emerges, it begins to repeat itself. Without this, it would not be a sign...' (Derrida, *Writing & Difference*, 1967/2005, p. 374).

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Let's be more obvious. We all know that referencing is (ideally) about citing 'obvious' sources for the sake of reader convenience and academic integrity, and not about cataloguing every source back to the beginning of time (although this would be a noble endeavour). That seems obvious (but to who? And why?). Yet it is precisely the *excluded and invisible* sources—the *other* sources, the *mischievous* sources, the *not-so-obvious* sources—that interest me the most. It's the hidden sources, like the hidden curricula, that circulate in secret, with full diplomatic immunity, that puzzle me (literally). It's the way politicians talk at cameras, make no sense, speak in riddles, avoid disclosure, and yet dictate ideology. It's all those texts that work on me, in me, and through me without (or with) my explicit consent: those naturalised habits and assumptions that operate *below* the level of consciousness (*un*-consciously and *sub*-consciously, like worms). How is it, for instance, that the practice of referencing came to be emptied of meaning, made invisible, commonsensical, and habitual, to the point where the very ideology of referencing (the colonial impulse, the name-dropping, the ellipsis) escapes critique? Can I get through an entire doctoral study without citing Foucault, for instance (no menace intended)? In keeping with a poststructuralist agenda, can I, instead, refer to Foucault by way of second- and third-hand allusions only, as a matter of strategy and principle? Can I do the same with Derrida by using only the trace of Derrida found in other people's perceptions of Derrida, such as Ulmer (1985)? The usual practice is to discard (or erase) secondary sources in favour of primary sources, even when the discarded sources are the 'real' sites of learning and thinking. This type of palimpsest (i.e. legitimised erasure) is common practice. It goes without saying. We (who reference) all do it.

Throughout my university years I have been asked to cite (my) sources, and yet no-one has ever opened up a discussion about the grey areas and absurdities that plague the practice. No-one has ever offered anything other than the most obvious, taken-for-granted, superficial, and stock explanations (e.g. "direction to a ... book" [*Collins Australian Dictionary*, 2005, p. 688]) to describe the referencing system, which itself privileges certain texts (and certain voices)

**Common sense** is the embedded, incoherent and spontaneous beliefs and assumptions characterizing the conformist thinking of the MASS of people in a given social order ...

[C]ommon sense is established by a process of consent to ruling CLASS attitudes and interests, which are thereby accepted by society at large as being in its own general interests. What is specific and partial is therefore universalized and what is cultural is naturalized to the point of being taken for granted in a view of the world as simply 'the way things are'. In a connected and extremely influential concept in Gramsci's writings this process is then understood as vital to the maintenance of economic and political HEGEMONY.

(Gramsci, as cited in Brooker, 2003, p. 39)

**Hidden Curriculum:** "The 'hidden curriculum' refers to the values and patterns of behaviour, including language use, that are often not formally taught, but are integral parts of the education system, such as: the teaching method; type of assessments used; the tone, language and behaviour of the teacher; and the attitudes and behaviour of classmates" (Groundwater-Smith et al., 2001, *Secondary Schooling*, pp. 71-72).

The university is no more immune to the hidden curriculum than the school.

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**Scatter-textual = messy-confused-unsustained-compulsive-distracted**



'For a sign to be a sign ... it must be repeatable, must already be a repetition (hence the mystery of origin, the paradox of the first sign)' (Ulmer, 1985, p. 81).

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**Why? Because we are language.** "As [Richard] Rorty once put it while talking to a group of high school students: 'The oppressed must always realize that they are fighting the way previous generations have described things'" (Linn, *A Teacher's Introduction to Postmodernism*, 1996, p. 62).

while excluding and disqualifying others. It also suggests something of the ideology of ownership and property. As a teacher, this is precisely the place I would (like to) begin the inquiry process: right at the point where the mind no longer asks questions. *Right there. Right at the heart of common sense. Right at the heart of mindless habit.* This is what teaching (and learning, and questioning) *against the grain* is all about (Boomer, 1988). It is about questioning the insidious (invidious) forces that rule the world by ruling the word: *culture wars*. I will therefore make it a point (a polemic) to use secondary and post-secondary sources: to use reference libraries (e.g. dictionaries, encyclopaedia, readers, catalogues, etc); to use alternative texts and voices; and to play on the intertextual nature of all knowledge. I will also indulge in a kind of *anti-logocentrism*, whereby I don't so much as reverse the referencing hierarchy as *level it out* (Derrida, 1967/1976; Ulmer, 1985). This way, secondary sources, personal communications, reference texts, chance encounters, and ready-made objects occupy the same location as peer reviewed articles and books. *Why?* To challenge the politics of representation and my own complicity with (and indoctrination by) the system.

For me, it's all about *remembering* to ask the question: *Why? Why anything? Why am I making this text?* What forces are acting upon me and through me as I hit the keys? What monsters are hiding in the seemingly innocent and natural everyday banalities that govern (rule, order, and control) my life? Who am I *really* beneath the layers of influence and mystique? Do I read for pleasure or for pain? Do I really know anything—anything at all? After all, I am yet to construct a text that actually speaks for me. I am always at odds with the very texts I am struggling to produce. Why is this?

**axis of evil** *n.* a grouping of regimes that advance a shared cause by the use of terrorism, especially as used to refer to Iraq, Iran and North Korea by US president George W Bush. [used by President Bush in his 2002 State of the Union address to link Iraq, Iran and North Korea as states he believed were prepared to use weapons of mass destruction against the US and its allies. [Compare myth-making]

(Macquarie, 2006, p. 74)

It just so happens that an *épée* is a kind of sword and an *épéiste* uses such sword to fence (Collins, n.d., pp. 511- 512). The *bricoleur* (Lévi-Strauss, 1966), too, is an *épéiste* (of sorts) who cuts and splices discourses and practices to make new texts (e.g. collages, bricolages, reportages, montages, ménages, etc); who fences, parries, and postures to blur genres and to (con)fuse meaning; and who cuts and slashes all manner of common sense to extricate secrets and *non-sense* (at least for me).

**Culture wars:** The battle over the 'common sense' of cultural attitudes and behaviours by rival ideologies, usually involving the battle over who has the right to 'articulate' the dominant discourse in society. It is a battle over who gets to 'name' the world and dictate social norms, values, beliefs, behaviours, etc.

**drollery:** *noun* (plural *drolleries*) 1. something amusingly queer or funny. 2. a jest; a facetious tale. 3. droll quality; humour. 4. the action or behaviour of a buffoon or wag; jesting (Macquarie Dictionary, 2005, p. 436).

Épéiste = fencer = jesting / fencing / parrying.

Entry-based research = entries or drolleries.

**droll:** *adjective* amusingly queer; comical; waggish. — **drollness, noun** — **drolly, adverb** (p. 436).