

The Educational Researcher as Artist Working Within

Presented for Publication to

Qualitative Inquiry

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Abstract

This article discusses the complexity of arts-based educational research and arts-based autoethnography and presents a concrete example of an installation tableau which investigates the regulation of the human body and human sexuality in a junior high classroom of a Roman Catholic school in the 1960s. In this article the modern abstract expressionist painter Jackson Pollock serves as an example of an artist using the unconscious to direct his work. Pollock's interest in Surrealism and Michel Foucault's discussion of the work of the Belgian Surrealist Rene Magritte figure prominently in the theoretical foundation for this article. Pollock provides a parallel to the process of the arts-based educational autoethnographer as researcher working within.

The Educational Researcher as Artist Working Within

“The source of my painting is the unconscious.” Jackson Pollock (Cernuschi,1992, 1)

“Like modern painters, my students and I have come to feel that we rarely need to refer to subject matter outside ourselves. We work from a different source. We work from within.” William Pinar (1972, 331)

“I seek out ways in which the arts can release imagination to open new perspectives, to identify alternatives. The vistas that might open, the connections that might be made, are experiential phenomenon; our encounters with the world become newly informed. When they do they offer new lenses through which to look out at and interpret the educative acts that keep human beings and their culture alive.” Maxine Greene (1995, 18)

“We hear the multiple voices within the contexts of our sustained collaboration, and thus recognize that ‘finding voices’ is not a definitive event but rather a continuous and relational process.” Janet Miller (1990, x-xi)

"It is not enough to place concepts in opposition to one another in order to know which is best; we must confront the field of questions to which they are an answer, so as to discover by what forces the problems transform themselves and demand the constitutions of new concepts." Gilles Deleuze (1991, 95)

“The meaning of a word to me is not as exact as the meaning of a color.” Georgia O’Keeffe (2000)

Jackson Pollock and Working Within

I have always felt a symbiosis with the modern abstract expressionist painter Jackson Pollock. Even though Pollock has been enshrined in both popular culture and elitist art circles as an icon among Twentieth Century painters, I consider Jackson my personal mentor and creative muse. I never met Jackson Pollock in the flesh—he died in a drunken automobile accident on Long Island, New York, August 11, 1956, when I was one month shy of my third birthday—but I have always known him in my imagination and in my soul. Jackson Pollock is a constant companion in my work as an educational researcher and university professor.

I have written previously about my first encounter with Pollock's massive canvas *Autumn Rhythm* in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City in 1971 (Slattery, 1995). Prior to this encounter, I had never formally studied art history, Pollock's method of drip painting, the New York School of Art, or Abstract Expressionism. Rather, calculus, physics, Latin, theology, and football dominated the classical curriculum of my all-male Roman Catholic high school in New Orleans in the late 1960s. I unconsciously considered painting to be a woman's leisure pursuit—not only because the positivist patriarchal milieu of my high school mandated a hegemony of the “hard” sciences and “hard body” sports, but also because my mother was an artist, and my younger brothers and I were sometimes embarrassed by the huge life drawings of plump naked women hanging in our home. When I traveled with my classmates to the Met for that field trip in 1971, I was a cocky high school senior reluctantly tagging along on a mandatory tour of an art museum. I was not looking for Jackson Pollock, but we serendipitously found each other in a crowded gallery of the museum. There was something

mythic about my first encounter with Pollock's *Autumn Rhythm*; my rebellious adolescent worldview felt a seismic jolt. That moment of jarring intensity in the Metropolitan Museum of Art continues to disrupt my life and my work as a restless professor of curriculum theory and philosophy of education. It also informs my nascent understanding of the educational researcher as artist working within. Following the lead of Jackson Pollock, I turn to the unconscious as the source of my arts-based educational research.

The Jungian Connection

Jackson Pollock entered therapy in early 1939 with Dr. Joseph Henderson, a Jungian psychoanalyst practicing in New York City. The traumas of life took an exacting toll on Pollock's spirit, rendering him alcoholic, suicidal, and emotionally paralyzed. He could not speak about his desires, disappointments, and demons, even to his therapist. Pollock biographers Steven Naifeh and Gregory White Smith attribute Pollock's demons to more than his alcoholism. They write:

Even when it began with beer in the morning and ended with bourbon at night; even when its roots reached back to junior high school, or further, to an alcoholic father; even when his life dissolved, as it had several times over the last twenty years, into a series of drunken binges punctuated by hospitalization, drinking alone could not explain what was happening to Pollock. It couldn't explain the long plaintive discussions about suicide with friends....There was something behind the drinking that was pushing at Jackson from within, tormenting him, even trying to kill him. Jackson Pollock had demons inside. (Naifeh & Smith, 1989, 1-2)

With the help of Joseph Henderson, Pollock soon discovered that he could express his deeply guarded

secrets in improvisational drawings. These “psychoanalytic” sketches became haunting visual metaphors of the inner life of a tortured soul. In 1943 Pollock produced a drawing titled *The Guardians of the Secret*¹ which typifies his symbolic style, but now he was working on large scale canvases (Varnadoe & Karmel, 1999). Such representations presented many hazards for Pollock. Naifeh and Smith explain:

Images resonant and powerful enough to energize a painting proved also deeply threatening.

They were the very images—of devouring females, charging bulls, and ambiguous sexuality—that

Jackson needed most to suppress. Throughout his life the periods of greatest emotional

upheaval were also the periods of most explicit imagery. (1989, 435)

In the finished painting *Guardians of the Secret* two figures are apparent, one at either end of a table.

Other figures are faintly suggested, obscured beneath a profusion of shapes and colors. Naifeh and

Smith contend that this painting represents a group portrait of the Pollock family at a dinner table—with

Jackson conspicuously absent. His parents, Roy and Stella Pollock, are reduced to abstract motifs

unrecognizable even as human beings. They are transformed into featureless totemic figures, or, as

Naifeh and Smith suggest, “stark amalgams of lines and shapes and colors that merely suggest a human

precedent” (1989, 436). Why was Jackson not included in this family portrait? Was he still alienated

ten years after his father’s death? His “secret” is carefully “guarded” by the totemic anima and animus

figures protecting a maze of black and white calligraphy that covers the tabletop around which the

Pollock family has gathered.

Jackson Pollock’s unconscious directed his symbolic improvisational sketches and paintings—

and his huge abstract expressionist canvases—which shocked the art world as well as the pretentious and

repressed post-World War II American society. Pollock’s drawings and canvases compel a response.

This aesthetic experience creates a context in which both the “reenchantment of art” (Gablik, 1991) and “releasing the imagination” (Greene, 1995) become possible. Such aesthetic experiences that emerge from the unconscious and move toward reenchantment, imagination, social change, and educational renewal also describe the work of “the educational researcher as artist working within.”

Poststructural Notions of “Self” and “Autobiography”

Poststructural investigations problematize notions of self-formation, multicultural understandings of difference, the politics of recognition, and autobiography—as well as proposals to advance the notion of autoethnographic research. I begin this paper by reviewing the poststructural critique in order to locate this investigation of “the educational researcher as artist working within” in a postmodern philosophical context. We must understand the complexity of notions of the self and autobiography before launching an investigation into the role of the unconscious in autoethnographic educational research or in Jackson Pollock’s abstract expressionist sketches and paintings.

In academe the notion of an individual subject has been called into question as these provocative themes emerge: “the disappearance of subject,” “the death of individual,” and “the disappearance of the author.” These themes problematize modern notions of the cohesive subject and the conscious self, challenging scholars to look at the world without the disposition of textual authority and without any subjective intervention by the power of language (Foucault, 1972; Barthes, 1977; Burke, 1992). Scholars have suggested that language forms do not assert anything; rather, language reveals the tentativeness of all discourses, universal and totalizing discourses in particular, and demonstrate the essential insufficiency of words for expressing truth. Critics of poststructuralism argue that the loss of universal rationalism and a turn toward the unreliability of the unconscious will entail the

loss of all ability to distinguish good from evil and the beautiful from the grotesque, which can only lead to tyranny, to anarchy, to nihilism, and to the end of civilization as we know it.

In this contested terrain we must ask: What is the self? What wisdom can we glean from philosophers, poets, and artists about the nature of the self? What useful information or insights can emerge from the projects of educational researchers working within? Investigations of the self have often centered on romantic notions of an ideal or perfect form, modern notions of embodied structures that define the essence of the individual person, or psychological notions of latent identity controlled by an ego or superego waiting to be gradually uncovered or healed. Some scholars propose a Hegelian dialectic to negotiate a true self. Here the self is situated between the lost and lonely individual ("The Minimal Self") or the romanticized ideal individual ("The Imperial Self") and capable of inherent narrative unity (Lasch, 1984). Recent discourses reject these conceptions of the self and challenge scholars to either reconceptualize their understanding of the self or give up the quest for the holy grail of self awareness because the self does not exist. Working within the unconscious is another alternative.

Postmodernism views the self in terms of a multiplicity of ironic and conflicting interdependent voices that can only be understood contextually, ironically, relationally, and politically. Poststructuralism goes further and rejects the notion of the self because the search for the true and lasting self is a metaphysical dead end. While postmodernism proposes a radical eclecticism of "both/and," poststructuralism rejects the project to delimit in any way by contending that the self is "neither/nor." The educational researcher as artist working within must engage the postmodern and poststructural philosophies in order to contextualize her or his research and release the imagination. Jackson Pollock modeled this process when he engaged Surrealism, the psychoanalytic aesthetic manifesto of the early

twentieth century, to conceptualize his aesthetic vision.

The Influence of Rene Magritte and Surrealism on Jackson Pollock

Frederich Nietzsche (1968) concluded in *The Birth of Tragedy* that we have our highest dignity in our significance as works of art. In light of the Nietzschean and poststructural critiques, let us consider the work of the Belgian Surrealist Rene Magritte as a precursor to Jackson Pollock's Abstract Expressionism and to the notion of the educational researcher as artist working within. Magritte's painting *La Trahison des Images* [Treachery of Images], popularly known as *Ceci N'est Pas Une Pipe* [This is not a Pipe], and Michel Foucault's (1983) commentary on Magritte's painting in his book *This is Not a Pipe*, provide an aesthetic insight into the poststructural philosophy of the self.

Recently I visited the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. I stood before Magritte's *Trahison des Images* with the large scripted words *Ceci N'est Pas Une Pipe* below the almost photographic image of a smoker's pipe on the two foot by three foot canvas. Many visitors passed through the gallery as I meditated on this painting. Some paused for a moment of confused appreciation and others glanced quickly as they passed at a distance. As I observed the viewers and their multiple responses, one young couple particularly intrigued me. Locked in an intimate embrace, the young man was forcefully explicating the meaning of Magritte's painting to the young woman. His logic and her intuition were not in sync. Finally, in frustration he insisted, "It says This is Not a Pipe!" I could not resist the urge to turn to the couple and interject, "Mais non! Il dit *Ceci N'est Pas Une Pipe*." Of course, the words on Magritte's painting, like my purposeful response, were in French and not in English. The couple was startled and walked away perplexed.

Surrealism, the school of painting associated with Rene Magritte and Salvador Dali, among

others, challenges the assumption that art (or any aesthetic artifact or text) is a one dimensional portrayal of reality. Magritte's paintings startle the viewer and demand a reexamination of a host of assumptions, including space, time, dimensionality, relationality, and, of particular interest here, notions of the self and the unconscious. Surrealism provides an opportunity for viewers to reconsider their own preconceptions of familiar objects and experiences by presenting reality in new and often disturbing ways. Some surrealist work, especially that of Joan Miro, is called automatism because ideas are expressed as they flow forth unfettered by logic or conscious structure. Surrealists sought meaning in destruction and hope in rebuilding—a reflection of their social context in the interwar years in the 1920s and 1930s. Surrealists established a context for Jackson Pollock and other the Abstract Expressionists who portray an inner world of energy and motion. Stephen Polcari (1991) writes:

Pollock's statement that he painted with visible energy and motion, organic intensity, memories arrested in space, and human needs and motives is a near-manifesto of Bergsonian vitalism. For Henri Bergson, life is striving, a need for invention, a creative evolution. Through the human body, vital movement courses and pursues moral life. Bergsonian philosophy describes an organic consciousness in harmony with Pollock's (and Thomas Hart Benton's [Pollock's mentor]) implicit understanding of natural action. For Bergson, life is imbued with organic consciousness, a sense of spirituality beyond mere biological or physical determinacy. Organic consciousness is seen in continuous movement. [As Pollock writes,] "Consciousness is co-extensive with life....matter is inertia....But with life there is free movement." (53, 256)

Here visual efforts unite time and space, and Pollock reflects this journey into the unconscious in his search for generative forces and cycles of human existence. No longer does a symbolic figure or a

mythical god represent the potency, vitality, fertility, and transformative power of the world and the self.

Abstract forms and relationships represent this vitality for Pollock.²

Both Pollock and Magritte reflect a disgust for their times and a distrust for traditional practices. They were both products of and cultural critics of their social milieu. Social and personal conflict provide nourishment for the aesthetic expression of both Magritte and Pollock. The self is no longer a mirror image of reality, rather it is a challenge to the very assumptions of totalizing images, boldly announcing "This is not what it appears to be!" When asked why he did not paint pictures of nature, Pollock responded, "I am nature." The canvas, nature, life, and self all merge in a phenomenological encounter, a "visceral rather than a visual experience of art" (Bernstein 1992, 1). The irony of a person proclaiming not to be a self is as startling to the casual observer as Magritte confronting us in the museum with the words *Ceci N'est Pas Une Pipe* on his painting of a pipe.

Foucault's Commentary on Magritte and Autobiography

Michel Foucault (1982) comments on Magritte's painting in the book *This is not a Pipe* on three levels: First, the drawing that you recognize as a pipe is not substantially bound to nor does it cover the same material as "a pipe," that is, the word from your language made up of pronounceable sounds that translate the letters you are reading as pipe; Second, "this," meaning the statement arranging itself beneath your eyes in a line of discontinuous elements, of which "this" is both signifier and the first word, is neither equal nor could substitute for nor adequately represent "a pipe," that is an object whose possible rendering can be seen above the text because it is inaccessible to any name; Third, "this" as understood as the entire assemblage of the written statement and the drawn text is not compatible with "a pipe."

Foucault's deconstruction of Magritte's painting parallels my deconstruction of traditional notions of the self in order to reconceptualize the educational researcher as artist working within. When I reject a unifying rational narrative in favor of the complexity and multiplicity of the unconscious and conclude, in the spirit of Magritte, that "This is Not a Self" I am asserting three possible levels of irony: First, this physical assemblage of chemicals in a three dimensional form does not constitute "a self," a unique spiritual, emotional, biological, and psychological entity that is irreducible to a mere physical form; Second, "this," meaning a logical or rational statement about the nature of the self cannot constitute the meaning of "the self," for to so describe would delimit and obfuscate the complexity of the whole being; Third, the dual assemblage of both our physical entity and the attempt to construct the spiritual and psychological dimensions of this assemblage together cannot constitute "a self," for in the construction a new self does not emerge. Must we now conclude that there is no self? Is the reconstitution of the notion of self possible? Are there multiple interrelated selves? What is the "self" that is excavated and expressed by the educational researcher as artist working within? Let us explore further.

To study the self is "to forget the self" (Bukhsbazen, 1977). To forget the self is to detach oneself from nature and at the same time to be enlightened by all things in nature. This paradox is the heart of Zen. The way of Zen is a way to an end, but there is no end. The way is an end in and of itself. It is precisely such efforts to "free" oneself from oneself that makes one's work one's own; one finds who one has been by always getting away from oneself.

In *This is not a Pipe*, Foucault (1983) pictures this process as an exercise of disengaging himself from himself in his "fragments of an autobiography," through "writings" that try to alter his way of seeing things. Foucault emphasized the power of sight to subvert the homogenizing drive towards the

"same" implicit in naive linguistic versions of representation. The disciplinary power of the gaze and any search for essentializing immediacy are Foucault's primary concerns. Likewise, these are my concerns as an educational researcher. In order to uncover meaningful data and enhance understanding of educational contexts, I must deconstruct the disciplinary gaze that so profoundly seeks to direct my consciousness, my life, and, in effect, the artifacts I produce as a writer, artist, and researcher. I am convinced that the demons that haunted Jackson Pollock thrived because of the disciplinary gaze. While Pollock learned from the Surrealists the necessity of breaking free of the gaze to "work within" in his studio, the power of the gaze over the routines of his daily life was unrelenting and contributed to the trauma of his life (Naifeh and Smith, 1989). I have experienced the same dilemma as Pollock both in my writing and research and in my daily life, a topic I will explore in my arts-based autoethnography at the end of this paper.

Concepts of the Individual

The traditional recognition of the individual self in the West seems to be the center of society; relationships are considered by-products of interacting individuals. Curriculum and educational practices are built around improving the minds of single individuals. However, after our immersion in existentialism, phenomenology, and structuralism during the 1960s, the notion of self and "things in themselves" were called into question. Language and the structure or systems that shape our understanding of ourselves and the world were modified. The truth about oneself has in the West been "a condition for redemption for one's sins" or as "an essential item in the condemnation of the guilty" (Foucault, 1993, 201).

According to Lacan's revision of Freudian psychoanalysis, the subject does not think; rather

language thinks and speaks the subject. On Foucault's account, generic "man" only came into being as the subject of knowledge in 1800s. In Hegel, we find that a conception of subjectivity is described as developing through history towards a comprehensive self-knowledge; or a conception of history as a process through which spirit progressively comes to know itself. Subjects occupy the roles of the empirical object of knowledge, with the elevated subject—the human person—as the house or the condition of possibility for that knowledge. Foucault contends that the human person being a subject and an object of study simultaneously initiates the destabilization of structure and subject itself. And this is exactly the destabilization that Jackson Pollock visually demonstrated. It is also the (dis)juncture of arts-based autoethnographic research. The goal is to free the self from the petrified connections forced on to the self by a repressing society or normative methodologies. This is exactly the political and social project begun by Magritte and the Surrealists, a project which reached a crescendo in Jackson Pollock's Abstract Expressionism. It is thus no accident that Pollock is considered the preeminent genius of twentieth century art.

Returning to the paintings of Jackson Pollock, it is undeniable that Surrealists like Magritte were the catalysts for his Abstract Expressionist work. In 1947 the art critic Andre Breton wrote: "There are three major goals of Surrealism: the social liberation of man [sic], his complete moral liberation, and his intellectual liberation" (Gershman, 1974, 80). Surrealists sought freedom of thought, speech, and expression. Pollock actually applied the Surrealist philosophy directly to his painting. He was committed to the idea that the creative act is a process by which the artist defines her or his inner experiences and inner values. The finished work of art was conceived as a form analogous to the artist's inner experience of the world, which included the work itself being created. This experience is what the

painting means, and this meaning is stimulated by the very act of making the painting. In sum, the form of the work evolved as the appropriate articulation of an experience that occurred because the work was being made.

Pollock began his work without any specific idea of how it would come out. During the creative process artist and medium each affected the other, so that as the work took form, its meaning emerged.

The creative act, therefore, was considered to be an ethical process during which the artist defined herself or himself by means of the actions taken in the process of painting. Thus, Pollock constantly reinvented the art of painting by relying on spontaneity to stimulate the direct expression of inner experience. However, unlike the Surrealists, Pollock also insisted on a role for conscious choice as the work progressed in order to address any compositional problem that occurred during the process of painting. Pollock writes:

When I am in my painting, I am not aware of what I am doing. It is only after a short get acquainted period that I see what I have been about. I have no fears about making changes, destroying the image, etc. Because the painting has a life of its own, I try to let it come through.

It is only when I lose contact with the painting that the result is a mess. Otherwise there is pure harmony, an easy give and take, and the painting comes out well. (cited in Chipps, 1971, 548)

Likewise, this is a metaphor for the educational researcher as artist working within. My autoethnographic research flows from the same aesthetic sensibilities presented by Jackson Pollock. It emerges from the Surrealist manifesto and finds fruition in Abstract Expressionism. I now present my own journey into the unconscious as a description of an autoethnographic arts-based research project in the spirit of Jackson Pollock and the artist working within.

A Dream from the Unconscious

I began a psychoanalytic journey similar to Pollock's in the early 1990s with Richard Chachere, a Jungian therapist working in Lafayette, Louisiana, with my own desires and demons lurking within. Unlike Pollock, I did not sketch improvisational drawings from the unconscious; rather, I produced narrative vignettes of my nightly dreams. On my initial visit, Richard instructed me to record my dreams on a bedside tablet as soon as I awoke each morning. Since I had never been consciously aware of my dreaming, I assumed that nothing fruitful would come of this exercise. In fact, I was skeptical about the prospect of remembering anything significant each morning. I was a busy school administrator, and I often tossed and turned at night worrying about discipline hearings, budget shortfalls, board meetings, and schedule changes. However, my willingness to begin Jungian therapy at a time of stress and trauma, along with the power of the suggestive influence of a respected therapist, elicited a life clarifying first dream. This is what I wrote on the yellow bedside tablet the morning after my first session:

A tiny baby was wrapped tightly in a blanket. His hair was thick and black; his skin was dark. He was sleeping soundly in a newborn crib in a doctor's office. As I entered the spacious office, the doctor—who had curly hair and resembled a principal in our district named Claude—rose to greet me affectionately. We stood near the baby—my fourth child, a son named Peter Slattery. The baby boy looked beautiful, but the doctor cautiously explained that Peter was born with a strange new disease. I quickly asked the doctor, “Will he be able to hear?” The reply from the doctor was affirmative. “Yes, Peter will be able to hear and understand.” I then inquired, “Will he be able to run and play and hold a job when he gets older?” “Yes, of course!” the doctor adamantly replied, but added, “Peter will not be able to speak.” I cried and

the doctor tried unsuccessfully to comfort me, and then he opened the New York Times to a full page advertisement devoted to this new childhood illness. I leaned forward and saw graphic photographs and diagrams of fetuses with captions explaining muteness. I was devastated. As the doctor put his arm around me, we took two steps down into an adjacent room—it was the living room of my childhood home in New Orleans. The deacon of my church greeted me in the living room; he consoled me as I wept. I regained my composure and then quoted from the Christian Bible to the doctor and the deacon: “God never tests us beyond our ability to endure.”

I awoke from this dream in a cold sweat, deeply moved and profoundly disturbed. I shared the dream with my wife over breakfast, and we pondered the meaning of these strange images. We had three small children at the time, and we were actively trying to get pregnant with a fourth child. We had, in fact, already selected the name “John” in hopes of having a son. My first reaction to the dream was twofold: First, the dream was a warning that we should not have a fourth child—even though the name in the dream was Peter instead of John—because the boy would be born handicapped; Second, the doctor, deacon, and school principal in the dream represented my responsibility as a compassionate educator to be supportive of people in distress.

Over the coming months Richard taught me several Jungian concepts such as active imagining, symbolic representation, individuation, archetypes, anima and animus, collective unconscious, shadow figures, and mandala drawings (Jung, 1962; Storr, 1973). As we discussed the dream together and explored the mythic symbols in the dream, I reevaluated my initial interpretation. These new insights derived from the unconscious began an important healing process in my life. I also concretely understood for the first time the power of the unconscious and the importance of working within.

Anthony Storr (1962) concludes: “One of Jung’s central ideas was that modern [persons] have become alienated from the mythopoetic substratum of their being, and therefore their lives lack meaning and significance. The task of analysis is to put [persons] in touch once again with ‘divine ground,’ as Aldous Huxley would have called it, by means of analyzing the subject’s dreams” (36).

Such alienation is the focus of the early work of William Pinar. It is most interesting that both Carl Jung and Jackson Pollock figure prominently in Pinar’s educational research, particularly in his analysis of Pollock’s painting *The White Cockatoo* (Pinar, 1991). His first study, “Sanity, Madness, and the School” was an effort to portray the milieu of schools by emphasizing the unseen and unspoken dimensions of life in schools and the seemingly inescapable experience of losing oneself in school. Pinar explains that much of his research is an effort to elaborate strategies for the educational researcher to work from within (1991, 245). Pinar writes “Like modern painters, my students and I have come to feel that we rarely need to refer to subject matter outside ourselves. We work from a different source. We work from within.” (1972, 331).

Pinar links Pollock’s abandonment of realism and representational painting (Rohn, 1987, 122) to his own abandonment of mainstream empirical and statistical research (Pinar, 1991, 246). Relinquishing realism allowed Pollock to become more self-conscious about the very process of painting and the generation of each stroke or line. Pinar compares his research to Pollock’s style:

In an infinitely more primitive way, leading to an incomparably more modest result, I have explored the uses of autobiography in the effort to comprehend curriculum, devising the method of *currere*, which allowed [the researcher] to become more self-conscious about the “strokes” and “lines” etched into the personality by curricular experience (and vice versa). My point here

is to suggest to you that the processes in which Pollock was engaged, processes that begin with the relinquishing of so-called realism and representation and end in abstract dynamics of color, shape, and texture, allow us to see anew and to understand anew. Such is the high purpose of art, and such is the high purpose of scholarship. (Pinar, 1991, 246)

Pinar's "high purpose" of art and scholarship accurately describes the goal of the educational researcher as artist working within. The purposes of art and scholarship are combined to create a powerful dynamic that allows us to understand complex layers of the metaphysics and epistemology of the educational process. Not that other forms of quantitative and qualitative research are incapable of such noble work. Rather, exploring poststructural notions of the self in educational contexts through arts-based projects that foreground the excavation of the unconscious provide an alternative form of representation for fresh new understandings.

Further Insights from the Unconscious

While some psychologists and counselors encourage literal interpretations of dreams and visions—especially lucid dreams—Jungian therapists, like Joseph Henderson and Richard Chachere, prefer to explore archetypal imagery emerging from the unconscious as expressed in psychoanalytic sketches and dream narratives. It is this symbolic imagery that informs my approach to arts-based educational research. The dream described above convinced me of the healing power that flows from the artist working with(in) the unconscious. However, there is disagreement among artist and psychologists about the appropriate use of art therapy or psychoanalytic drawings. In fact, when Henderson published Pollock's psychoanalytic drawings in 1970 (after storing them in a file for twenty-five years), Lee Krasner, Pollock's widow, filed a lawsuit claiming that anything that goes on between

an analyst and patient must remain private. While Krasner's lawsuit was dismissed, the conflicting comments by Joseph Henderson regarding the nature of Pollock's sketches as both art and psychological symbolism continue to generate lively debates in the art and medical professions (Cernuschi, 1992, 18).

The Jungian process of active imagining led me to several important insights about my dream. First, not only am I the compassionate deacon, doctor, and principal in the dream, I am also the handicapped child. I can hear and understand messages, and I can also run, play, and work. However, like the defenseless baby boy in the dream, I cannot speak. For many years prior to this dream I carried the heavy burden of not being able to speak the right words to my own father who called me on the phone in my college residence hall at the College of Santa Fe, New Mexico, on March 19, 1975 shortly before he shot and killed himself. On one level, the dream was seeking understanding of my verbal powerlessness—my muteness—at the moment of my father's suicide. I was both father and child, healer and handicapped, in this important dream.

Second, the name Peter conjures up many symbolic archetypal references, especially to religious figures who were a part of my family heritage and Catholic schooling. The disciple Peter, for example, was mute when confronted by authorities about his association with Jesus, denying him three times in the scriptural story.

It will be clear in my example of arts-based autoethnographic research below that these family events and religious archetypes play a significant role in my arts-based research. The exploration of the unconscious in Jungian psychoanalytic drawings and dream narratives can be an important source of understanding for those seeking to confront personal demons or describe educational phenomenon.

They are also important tools for researchers who explore multiple layers of meaning in schooling experiences.

Autoethnography and Alternative Forms of Representation

Before describing an example of my autoethnographic research, I pause to locate arts-based epistemologies in contemporary educational scholarship. Without this context, some readers may be inclined to assume that such work, while interesting or aesthetically challenging, may not legitimately be called “educational research.” Additionally, graduate students and professors who pursue arts-based autoethnography or autobiographical narrative as a line of research will find in this literature review important theoretical support for their projects, as well as practical insights in the concrete example that follows.

What makes arts-based educational research, autoethnography, and other emerging alternative forms of research representation legitimate in the academy? Carolyn Ellis, proponent and practitioner of autoethnography, writes, “the crisis of representation provoked by postmodernism challenges some of our most venerable notions about scientific knowledge and truth” (1997, 115) which in turn results in a loss of faith in the theory of language as a clear and concise economy of writing on which scientific inquiry has been based. Ellis explains that contemporary critiques of positivist methodologies undermine any social science research devoid of intuition and emotions and questions the usefulness of rigid disciplinary boundaries that separate the humanities, social sciences, natural sciences and the arts. This fluid intersection of the humanities and social sciences, along with the trend toward experimentation with multiple forms of research representations in the academy, provides legitimization and support for scholars who pursue arts-based autoethnography. Elliot Eisner (1997) recently presented the “promise

and perils” of alternative forms of representation, particularly as related to arts-based research:

One of the basic questions scholars are now raising is how we perform the magical feat of transforming the contents of our consciousness into a public form that others can understand.

The assumption that the language of the social sciences—propositional language and number—are the exclusive agents of meaning is becoming increasingly problematic, and as a result, we are exploring the potential of other forms of representation for illuminating the educational worlds we wish to understand. . . . The concept of alternative forms of data representation presents an image that acknowledges the variety of ways through which our experience is coded.(p. 4)

I support Eisner’s critique of the hegemony of propositional language and number in educational research, and I extend the project to transform the contents of consciousness to the unconscious as well. I support McLeod’s (1987) insistence that word, number, image, gesture, and sound are all equally valid forms of research representation and Lawrence-Lightfoot and Hoffman Davis’(1997) development of “portraiture” as an alternative method of inquiry blending aesthetics, narrative, and empiricism in order to capture the complexity, dynamics, and subtlety of experience and school life. These multiple approaches to educational research in the realm of the visual, literary, psychoanalytic, musical, and theatrical must be encouraged and legitimated not just in the academy but also in research practices in classrooms and in schools. Traditional social science research can be no more or less rigorous, insightful, or useful than informed eclectic postmodern alternatives such as arts-based autoethnography. Novellas, plays, musical compositions, film documentaries, narratives, allegories, paradigm parables, portraitures, readers theater, art installations, and multimedia projects are often an integral forms of research and data representation (Diamond and Mullen, 1999). Their validity is

reflected partly in what Eisner (1994) calls “structural corroboration”— the interpretation of data corroborated by the way in which all artifacts support one another consensually—and “referential adequacy”—a phenomenological experience of the object of study in a new, more adequate way (pp. 236-42).

Laurel Richardson (1994) argues that the debates about contemporary educational research and multiple forms of data representation emerge from postmodern theory:

The core of postmodernism is the doubt that any method or theory, discourse or genre, tradition or novelty, has a universal and general claim as the “right” or privileged form of authoritative knowledge. Postmodernism suspects all truth claims of masking and serving particular interests in local, cultural and political struggles....No method has a privileged status. The superiority of [social] science over literature—or from another vantage point literature over [social] science [research]—is challenged. (p. 517)

While considerable attention has been given to debates about the merit of quantitative versus qualitative research methods in the past, postmodern inquiry challenges the superiority of any methodology and exposes the contradictions in traditional methods of identifying issues for inquiry, selecting modes of analysis and inscribing data into transmittable form. Postmodernism situates the researcher and the research subject in a historical and social context where knowledge is co-produced between the two, with results that are always contingent, tentative, and open to further interpretation. Since there are multiple ways of knowing and interpreting data, the possibility of discovering a universal transcendent truth outside of a specific context—or for that matter a replicable and final solution to any research question—is challenged. Postmodernism resists the positivist urge for universal and unalterable

objectivity, contending instead that we can come to understanding through experiences that *evoke* rather than simply *represent* and *replicate*.

Jipson and Paley (1997) write, “As forms of this newer kind of practice continue to erupt in multiple ways, in multiple locations, for multiple reasons, inside and outside the grids of defined research categories, the sphere of scholarly inquiry has become an extraordinary animated site for a diverse and experimental analytic production by a number of thinkers not hesitant to situate inquiry in a vaster epistemological space” (p. 3). Tierney and Lincoln (1997) contend that we must provide such multiple forms of data representation for multiple audiences because “multiple texts, directed toward research, policy, social change efforts, or public intellectual needs...may better represent both the complexity of the lives we study, and the lives we lead as academics and private persons” (p. xi). They conclude that “how we present our work, and to whom, is more up for grabs today than at any other time in this century” (p. vii). Postmodern discourses contribute to our understanding of the multiplicity, complexity, and ongoing paradigm struggle in educational research. Additionally, in recent years there has been a significant focus on the way that ethnography is a joint production between researcher and field participants (Ellis and Bochner, 1996). This has led ethnographers to write about the ways that we make sense of and reflect on our own experiences, interactions, and positions in the field (Coffey, 1999, 115). It is this attention to the “self” of the ethnographer that has validated personal narratives and autobiographies as an accepted means for exploring the identity negotiations of participant and field researcher (Coffey, 1999). Arts-based autoethnography takes this two steps further: first, by making the participant and field researcher a unified whole; and second, by encouraging engagement with the unconscious.

I have often been asked by colleagues and students to explain why I take the risks involved in working within to develop arts-based forms of research representation. The risks they identify include gratuitous self-indulgence, the unreliability and inaccessibility of the unconscious, embarrassing self-exposure, alienation from mainstream social science researchers and their grant money, ridicule among peers, tenure and promotion concerns, and lack of rigorous scientific standards to evaluate arts-based autoethnography. I share some of their concerns and continue to work with colleagues in the arts-based educational research community and Jungian scholars to address many of these issues. There are no simple answers to these complex problems. However, my study of postmodernism, poststructuralism, arts-based research, and identity politics compels me to pursue autoethnography. The psychological inertia and status quo socio-political injustices that result from too much “safe” research is a far greater risk in my mind.

An Example of Arts-Based Autoethnographic Research

I presented one of my arts-based autoethnographic educational research projects at the “Reclaiming Voice II” conference in Los Angeles in June, 1999, with professors Linda Skrla of Texas A&M and James Koschoreck of the University of Cincinnati, and at the “Arts-Based Educational Research Association” conference in Albuquerque in February, 2000. The title of the presentation was “Knowledge (De)Constructed and (Re)Embodied: An Art Installation that Disrupts Regulation of the Body in Classroom Practices.” This arts-based research project, done in collaboration with Craig Richard Johanns, an independent artist in Austin, Texas, seeks to deconstruct notions of the body and practices of sexual regulation in schools and classrooms through an art installation of actual artifacts and other symbolic representations of my conscious and unconscious memories of my elementary

classrooms in a Catholic school in the 1960s. The work recalls the methodology of assemblage tableaux by Edward and Nancy Kienholz (Hopps, 1996). This art installation includes two canvases, a free standing 1960s style wooden school desk with textbooks and personal memorabilia arranged on top of and under the desk, and a wooden classroom bench converted into a makeshift altar forming a tableau (see figures 1 and 2). The installation includes contemporary protest music by *Rage Against the Machine* titled “Take the Power Back” and religious chants by the *Monks of Taize* titled “The Spirit is Willing but the Flesh is Weak” playing in the background. Candles and incense burn, purposely creating a Catholic monastic milieu. The viewer is invited to experience the tableau while kneeling on an antique Catholic confessional prie-dieu.

Viewers of the installation are warned in advance that religious, violent, and sexual images are juxtaposed with educational material and classroom furniture in the tableau. Some viewers find this evocative and illuminating; others find it provocative and unsettling. While this arts-based research installation may be didactic in the way it evokes multiple reactions and insights, like the work of Jackson Pollock, it initially emerged from my unconscious without a specific didactic intent other than to probe my memories of the body and sexuality in my schooling experience. The installation tableau seeks understanding about regulation of my body in the Catholic school classrooms of my youth. However, once my inner work becomes an aesthetic representation in a public space, the piece is available for others to experience, evaluate, critique, and apply to other contexts. In effect, it become a piece of interactive research in an ongoing process of deconstruction and recreation.

When I started this tableau installation I began by working within, turning to the unconscious for direction and inspiration. Like Pollock, “when I am engaged in the process, I am not aware of what I

am doing” (Chipps, 1971, 548). Only after the tableau was completed could others respond to it and possibly construct a didactic purpose. Since regulation of the body continues to impact students in schools today, it is imperative that teachers and researchers investigate regulation of the body and experiences of sexuality. One way to do this is through traditional social science projects that quantify and codify such experiences for the purpose of exposing generalizations about sexuality in schools and curricular material. Another approach is to provide thick descriptions in case studies of individual students. However, in this arts-based installation, I take another approach by using the lessons of Pollock, Jung, and autoethnographers to work within to research bodily regulation in schools and classrooms. The unconscious is the place of my research, but expanded discourse about spirituality, sexuality, social justice, and school curriculum are also my goals. Foucault’s notion of governmentality informs my work as I come to understand the ways that my body was regulated by catechisms, priests, and nuns that bombarded my consciousness with notions of celibacy, purity, heteronormativity, virginity, chastity, and the like.

Foucault on Regulation and Governmentality

Theoretical support for this work comes from Foucault’s notion of regulation and governmentality (1972a, 1972b, 1975, 1977, 1978). Foucault (1983) writes that power works through language, and that language not only describes and defines human beings but also creates institutions to regulate and govern human beings. Literally, power is inscribed in our bodies and language governs our mentality. [As we will investigate below, the images in my autoethnography installation tableau emerge from the unconscious and evoke such an understanding of bodily regulation in classrooms.] Since the social sciences categorize people into “normal” and “abnormal,” Foucault was

interested in finding out historically what constituted madness, criminality, perverted sexuality, and illness. Many modern philosophers from Kant to the present have assumed that “normal” and “ethical” are universal concepts that have remained static over time. Foucault disagreed. He examined historical documents in order to deconstruct this assumption. He found that definitions of normal and the treatment of abnormal persons have varied over time and place. The “abnormal” was understood historically only through the ideas of the “normal.” In other words, “normal” people became obsessed with studying and controlling the “abnormal” people and eventually begin to regulate and govern the abnormal people using their power to control.

In studying Foucault, I began to recognize the ways that I had been constructed as an object of such regulation and governmentality in my adolescent classrooms, especially concerning issues of sexuality. While the exploration of the effects of such regulation might be effectively explicated using quantitative statistical methodologies, qualitative case studies, or traditional ethnographies, the researcher as artist working within explores the autobiographical context of her or his lived experience first and then allows the unconscious to direct the creation of an aesthetic text that represents symbolically these experiences. Autoethnography is an attempt to disrupt notions of normalcy in research. I agree with Linda Brodkey’s conclusion, “To the extent that poststructural theory narrates a story, it tells a complex story about the power of discourse(s) over the human imagination” (1996, 24). The recovery of imagination through the complex narrative of autoethnography offers a poststructural alternative to continued regulation and governmentality of human bodies in schools and society.

In Foucault’s philosophy, persons considered abnormal are silenced because they do not have the knowledge of the truth. This provides further support for the importance of the educational

researcher to work within to explore the layers of prejudice, manipulation, and indoctrination that have influenced her or his cosmology. Foucault (1977) writes, “We must see our rituals for what they are, completely arbitrary things...it is good to be dirty and bearded, to have long hair, to look like a girl when one is a boy (and vice versa); one must put ‘in play,’ show up, transform, and reverse the systems which quietly order us about. As far as I am concerned, that is what I try to do in my work”(p. x). For Foucault this resistance isolates the individual and creates “special cases” which do not allow for generalizations. In *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault moves away from structuralism to explore power relations and oppression. He contends that discourse has a role in power relations and that the seeming abstractions of discourse do have material effects on people’s bodies because language is inscribed in our bodies. This is the primary notion that I explore in my tableau installation. What are the material effects on my body that have resulted from memorizing the Baltimore Catechism texts and performing Catholic rituals in my elementary classrooms in the 1960s? How might others be informed by my display of these memories in a psychoanalytic art tableau?

Foucault documents the movement toward punishment as regulation in prisons of the early nineteenth century. This was accomplished in six ways: (1) Spatialization—everyone has a place and with compliance you each person move to a better space; (2) Minute control of activities—especially by the use of timetables; (3) Repetitive exercises—standardization and sufficient repetition was found to create automatic reactions to stimuli; (4) Detailed hierarchies— each level keeps watch over the lower ranks; (5) Normalizing judgments-continual analysis of whether the disciplined one deviates in any way from the normal. Punishments and rewards are given that can work on the inside of the person. (6) The Panopticon—an architectural design for prisons where the prisoner is isolated and observed at all times

by a single person at a central tower. The panopticon is lighted so that each inmate can see neither the observer or other inmates. Foucault contends that this results in a docile worker who becomes reformed in prison and becomes an automaton for a capitalist factory. When schools function like prisons students become passive receptors of inert information and react like docile automatons in a system of educational or religious proselytization and indoctrination. My autoethnography explores such reactions to the regulation of my Catholic education. Those who do not accept the prevailing ideology imposed in the panopticon remain “abnormal” and can be kept away from the normal indefinitely in the prison system.

While Foucault’s analysis of discipline and punishment in society deals specifically with prisons, the analysis can be applied to any institution that seeks to control those judged to be abnormal. In my autoethnographic tableau I apply these notions to regulation of the body, mandatory chastity, the preference for celibacy in the priesthood or religious community, and unquestioned heteronormativity in my Catholic school classrooms. The art work itself is a construction of a tableau with the juxtaposition of symbols that flow from my unconscious. Some symbols are carefully and purposely incorporated into the tableau, but only after they resonate with the unconscious work within. However, they can only be understood in the context of the multiple layers of meaning in the entire work of art (Foucault, 1983).

Jackson Pollock used this process as he incorporated symbols from mythology, native American spirituality, and Mexican muralism in his psychoanalytic drawings. Pollock lived in Arizona in his youth and traveled in Mexico on several occasions. He was highly influenced by native American arts; he admired and collaborated with the Mexican artists Jose Clemente Orozco, David Alfaro Siqueiros, and Diego Rivera. The context of Pollock’s drawings can only be understood if the conscious

and unconscious influence of these artists and styles are considered. This is an essential feature of the artist working within.

The Installation: Representation of Research by the Educational Artist Working Within

In my art installation I look specifically at the normalization and regulation of sexuality in a Catholic school classroom of the 1960s (Foucault, 1978, 1986a, 1986b). Images from my Catholic catechism are included in the tableau which is titled *10,000 Ejaculations* and the canvases titled *(De)Evolution of the Marathon Runner*³ and *Hopelessness*.⁴ The Catholic nuns who taught in my elementary school spent a great deal of time instructing the students to say prayers in Latin and English (e.g., Hail Mary/Ave Maria, Our Father/Pater Noster). One type of prayer was called the ejaculation. Ejaculations were short and spontaneous prayerful outbursts like "Jesus I love you" or "Jesus, Mary, and Joseph protect me." Ejaculations were particularly recommended by the nuns in times of temptation. The gravest temptations were "impure thoughts" which could lead to the deadly sins of touching one's body, masturbation, orgasm, or sexual intercourse.

The Catechism displayed in the tableau pictures angelic celibate priests and nuns with the word "best" inscribed under the drawing. A devout and pure married couple is identified as "better." A single eunuch is labeled "good." Good, better, and best represented holy lifestyles. However, the unmistakable message was that a sexless celibate life was clearly superior—preferred by God and the nuns. Of course, same sex relationships and homosexuality were not even options open for discussion. The Baltimore Catechism, still in use today in some Catholic schools, outlines the prescription: "The doctrine of the excellence of virginity and of celibacy, and of their superiority over the married state, was revealed by our Holy Redeemer, so too was it defined as a dogma of divine faith by the holy council of

Trent” (Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, 1962, 103). [A copy of a 1962 sixth grade Baltimore Catechism can be seen in the tableau representing not only pre-Vatican II Catholic theology, but also the pervasive hidden curriculum and subliminal messages found in all school textbooks.]

Students in Catholic elementary schools in the pre-Vatican II 1950s and 1960s were often required to make "Spiritual Bouquets." The spiritual bouquet was a decorated greeting card with space provided to list prayer offerings for a special person—often the student's mother. [One such card that I made in school on April 11, 1961, and saved by my mother in a scrapbook, can be seen in the tableau.]

The spiritual bouquet contained a numerical listing of prayers to be offered for the recipient. The greater the quantity of prayers offered, the greater the implied religious fervor of the student. My classmates and I always felt compelled—both in the overt religious instruction and the subliminal suggestions of our conscience—to offer as many prayers as possible. This would not only demonstrate holiness and piety, but also our efforts to save the souls in purgatory who needed our prayers to escape to heaven. Each prayer was assigned a numerical indulgence that reduced time spent in Purgatory by deceased souls.

The most highly recommended prayers were rosaries and communions at Mass which provided maximum indulgences for the recipient of the spiritual bouquet and/or “the poor souls in purgatory.” However these prayers were time consuming and laborious. While I often felt compelled to include a few rosaries and communions on the spiritual bouquet, I usually preferred to pad the prayer offerings with lots of ejaculations. [One of my spiritual bouquets with an offering of 10,000 ejaculations for my mother is seen in front of a replica of the Pieta. I enthusiastically presented a spiritual bouquet to my mother every year along with a ragged bouquet of assorted flowers and weeds from our yard.] Adding

thousands of ejaculations to a spiritual bouquet provided an appearance of religious fervor and spiritual gratitude. Offering to recite 10,000 ejaculations for Jesus, Mary, the nuns, and my mother became a passionate religious mantra—although I do not remember actually keeping an exact count of the prayers, I just rattled them off in my head until I got distracted. The ironic juxtaposition of spiritual ejaculations and celibate, heteronormative sexuality are deconstructed in this tableau.

The Religious Sisters of Mercy were my teachers in New Orleans. I was never physically or verbally reprimanded by the nuns—probably because I was a compliant student with an angelic attitude. However, underneath my facade of purity, perfection, and piety was adolescent confusion and guilt which began during puberty. [There are many interesting parallels to Jackson Pollock’s inner demons and the manifestation of his complex and at times conflicted sexuality in his sketches and paintings.⁵] While sexuality was never overtly discussed in my school or home, the hidden message that governed my thinking was that sex was sinful. My Baltimore Catechism again: “The sixth commandment of God is Thou shalt not commit adultery. The sixth commandment forbids all impurity and immodesty in words, looks, and actions whether alone or with others. Examples of this would be touching one’s own body or that of another without necessity simply to satisfy sinful curiosity, impure conversations, dirty jokes, looking at bad pictures, undue familiarity with the opposite sex” (Confraternity, 1962, 125). Along with classmates, I began to privately explore my sexuality as a junior high school student. I wonder today how the catechism lesson about familiarity with the opposite sex may have contributed to the experimental encounters between male classmates. Occasionally in seventh grade, and without my parents' knowledge, I rode the St. Charles streetcar to the French Quarter with friends after school on Fridays to see sexy peep shows at a penny arcade on Bourbon Street. This installation creates a "peep

show" where only a few glimpses into the adolescent experience can be seen, possibly eliciting some of the same emotions: curiosity, discomfort, arousal, guilt, disgust, passion, etc. The religious and sexual emotions are juxtaposed to reinforce adolescent confusion. For example, the faces of naked men and women, juxtaposed next to Bernini's *Estasi Di Santa Teresa* [*The Ecstasy of St. Theresa*], all display similar expressions. With the body of Jesus on their tongues, does this ecstasy portray Christian mysticism or sexual orgasm—or both? The painting of a woman mystic in spiritual ecstasy is remarkably similar to the expressions of sexual ecstasy in the erotica photographs. Juxtaposing sexual and religious symbols invites the viewer to re-experience the confusion and guilt of adolescence.

The impression that sex was evil and touching the body sinful was reinforced by the fact that the body was always covered in my Catholic school—the nuns only exposed their faces and hands, girls covered their heads with veils, and modest dress was demanded at all times. In the classroom we were taught to avoid "impure thoughts" by praying ejaculations. However, I often fantasized about bodies and sex as I sat in my junior high school desk. The images from playboy and playgirl magazines in the tableau foreground my fantasies of the human body as an adolescent student, albeit covered with white hosts—the body of Jesus—to protect me from my impure thoughts. The pubescent male is constantly aware of his body with spontaneous erections and sexual fantasies. Efforts to control and regulate the body through prayer may have sublimated sexual arousal temporarily, but the religious manta was seldom successful.

In this tableau installation I have covered the genitals and explicit eroticism of the photographs with the symbolic body of Jesus—communion wafers. There are layers of meaning: the unconsecrated non-body of Jesus covers the impure erotic body images in the photographs; the body-less memory of

the student who once sat in this now empty desk re-members suppressed erotic bodily experiences; the bodily re-membering is done under the watchful eye of Virgin Mary who is holding the limp body of Jesus; Mary, whose body was taken into heaven as celebrated on the Assumption, models virginity and purity as she watches over the school desk like the nuns of my 1960s Catholic schooling.

In this autoethnography tableau the viewer enters the bodily experience as voyeur. The viewer may be tempted to move the communion wafers from the photograph of the naked male and female bodies—either physically or in fantasy—to view the genitals. This may even cause the viewer to experience some level of arousal. However, like the adolescent student, this arousal must be quickly suppressed in the public space of the art gallery. This parallels the experience of students who sit in desks trying to control fantasies for fear that an erection or flush face will be publically noticed. Many adolescent males hide their uncontrollable erection by covering it with a book, shirttail, or sweater. When I was in school and an unexpected fantasy or erection occurred, I would attempt to regulate my body with the prayerful ejaculations taught by the virgin nuns in an effort to suppress images of sexual ejaculations. If the voyeur attempts to remove the symbolic body of Jesus from the sexual images, she or he will find that the communion hosts are glued to the photographs. The body of Jesus literally suppresses the impure thoughts and prevents them from being manifested.

When I first discovered masturbation in junior high school, I was overcome by guilt. I kept a secret calendar under my mattress—along with any erotica or pornography that my friends at school would share—and I would draw a circle around the date each day that I would masturbate. [A calendar and photograph of a young man masturbating are placed under my desk, hidden in a sense like my calendar and pornography under my mattress.] The calendar served several functions. First, it

recorded the number of times that I masturbated so that I would have an accurate count for Friday confession before Mass. Communion was not allowed unless the soul had first been washed clean by the priest's absolution. Since a missed communion was a public admission of mortal sin, and because my catechism and religion lessons had convinced me that the worst mortal sin was sex or touching one's body, the calendar protected me from a public admission of masturbation—or worse the suspicion of sexual intercourse. Second, I thought that by keeping a count of my evil transgressions I could gradually wean myself off of this sinful act. Third, the calendar provided me with hope that during the next month I could reduce the number of times that I would masturbate, and thus minimize the risk of a scolding from the priest at the next Friday confession.

The final element of the installation is a cardboard artwork in the bottom corner of the desk, an art therapy project completed by my father in a psychiatric hospital on the morning of his death by suicide. After finishing the art project, my father left the hospital with a 24 hour pass, bought a pistol, called me in Santa Fe, and told me that he was going to shoot himself. I tried to dissuade him and asked if he has seen a priest, said his prayers, or gone to communion to eat the body of Jesus. As I listened frantically and helplessly on the other end of the phone, his final words to me were "Only God can help me now." He shot himself in the heart and died two hours later. My active imagining of these dramatic events create a parallel between my father's limp body, the limp body of Jesus in the Pieta in the tableau, and the limp body of those who were taught to recite 10,000 ejaculations to suppress impure thoughts, erections, and orgasms. Thus, my desk and the floor beneath the desk are littered with 10,000 white communion hosts—reminiscent of Jesus' body as well as globs of white semen staining my linen and the floor beneath my seat. My elementary education was regulated by thousands of

ejaculations—literally and spiritually. A complex curriculum of governmentality is exposed in the tableau.

This installation is a construction and re-construction of memories of my body in junior high classrooms. I collected artifacts from scrapbooks, yearbooks, and family closets. I also imagined furniture and icons which I searched for in antique stores and junk yards. I worked within to reconstruct images from my unconscious, while remembering Jackson Pollock's admonition that the creative process also involves consciousness of the overall effect of the piece. While the symbols are particular to my Catholic school experience, I believe that the issues I raise in this installation are applicable to many students. Repression of the body, sexual fantasies, uncontrollable sexual responses, and guilt and anxiety about sexuality are all a part of the educational experience of students who sit in school desks. Since there is no student seated in the desk in this installation—only the reminder of my presence with the plaster casts of my hands and my actual hand prints from a first grade art project—the viewer is reminded of the absence of the body and the attempt to repress sexuality in the school curriculum.

The hidden curriculum of the body has a powerful impact on the lived experience of students. These early life experiences, according to Jungian and other psychologies, emerge from the unconscious and affect our relationships and our education in multiple ways for our entire life. I have worked as an adult to (re)member my body with my spirit, my sexuality with my spirituality, and my fantasies with my imagination. I have concluded that the only way to avoid the hopelessness of my father's suicide and Jackson Pollock's alcoholism and depression is to remember holistically, to live with my whole body, and to take the power of my body back from those who regulated it—including the governmentality by my own conscious and unconscious actions (Foucault, 1978, 1986a, 1986b). This autoethnographic arts-based research tableau is an ongoing project to (re)member teaching and learning with the whole

body. Autoethnography has the power to evoke memories and elicit insights that contribute to our understanding of students and classrooms. I believe that the educational researcher as artist working within makes an important contribution to this process.

Conclusion: Researchers Continuing the Vision of Jackson Pollock

Modern art—before its lofty ambitions were trivialized by American Pop Art—was searching for excellence and transcendence, partly in response to the hopelessness and destruction first identified in the Surrealist manifesto. Jackson Pollock and many of his contemporaries sacrificed everything, including sometimes their lives and their sanity, in a glorious attempt to make sense of a century that makes little sense in its horrific embrace of totalitarianism, materialism, and destruction. The regulation and governmentality of the body is another tragedy of modern life, particularly in the schooling process. The excavation of arts-based autoethnographic narratives will hopefully contribute to understanding and ameliorating this tragedy. James F. Cooper (1999) offers, perhaps, a fitting conclusion and tribute to Pollock and all artists working within: “Jackson Pollock took more with him than a tortured life when he fatally crashed his automobile against a tree on Fireplace Road in East Hampton, New York. His death signaled the end of an era of courageous experimentation that made American culture alive and relevant” (1999, 7). May educational researchers as artists working within pick up Pollock’s aesthetic torch and renew such courageous experimentation in their arts-based autoethnographic work.

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Endnotes

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1. *Guardians of the Secret*. 1943. Oil on Canvas. 48 3/8 in. x 6 ft. 3 3/8 in. San Francisco Museum of Modern Art. Albert M. Bender Collection; Albert M. Bender Bequest Fund Purchase. OT 99.
 2. See Pollock, J. "My painting." In H. B. Chipps (Ed.), *Theories of modern art: A source book of artists and critics*, (pp. 540-556). (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971).
 3. *The (de)Evolution of the Runner*. 1999. 6 ft. x 4ft canvas by Patrick Slattery and Craig Richard Johanns. Mesh, oils, plastic, and metal on canvas. The title and image are intended to suggest the gradual dismemberment of an athlete.
 4. *Hopelessness*. 1999. Craig Richard Johanns is a 2 ft. x 4 ft. assemblage on canvas depicting a skeleton on a cross over a pile of slashed and decapitated doll faces.
 5. See S. Naifeh & G. W. Smith. *Jackson Pollock: An American saga*. (New York, NY: Clarkson N. Potter, Inc. Publishers, 1989) for a comprehensive, controversial, and, in conservative art circles, blasphemous, look at Jackson Pollock's ambiguous sexuality. The authors present a disturbing view of Pollock as an infantile, insecure mama's boy, an exaggerator of sexual conquests, and an abusive husband who may have been attracted to men. One passage implies that Pollock associated his drip technique with boyhood memories of watching his alcoholic father urinate on rocks. I am particularly struck by the accounts in the book related to Lee Krasner that examine Pollock's inner turmoil over his sexuality (e.g., pages 272-275). I suspect that Pollock's ambiguous and complex sexuality will continue to inspire debates and discussions. For me, the best way to understand Pollock's sexuality is to meditate before his sketches and paintings, beginning with *Male and Female* and *Stenographic Figure*

(Naifeh and Smith, 1989, 432-433).