

## The Terror of Creativity: Art Education After Postmodernism<sup>1</sup>

jan jagodzinski

University of Alberta

[jan.jagodzinski@ualberta.ca](mailto:jan.jagodzinski@ualberta.ca)

### Abstract

This essay addresses two problematics. The first concerns the question of creativity, which has become a key signifier for art and its education in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. I try to situate this interest in creativity within the broader context of neoliberalism and capitalist designer capitalism. The second problematic addresses the term 'after postmodernism,' which has left us in a state of relativity by rejecting universality. My interest is to show how these two problematics are at play in the well-known documentary film, *Waiting for Superman*, directed by Davis Guggenheim. An attempt is made to expose the structure of this film for its melodramatic effects, which have become a way to address the uncertainties of pluralism and the need for the state to establish an 'immaterial' workforce for the information society.

## The Terror of Creativity: Art Education after Postmodernism

The title, *The Terror of Creativity: Art Education after Postmodernism*, is addressed around two central *problematics*:<sup>2</sup> the first will demonstrate why the contemporary emphasis on creativity belongs to a larger problematic—the Idea<sup>3</sup> of terrorism as the *innerer Klang* of the 21<sup>st</sup> century that is heard/herd around the globe. Terror has become actualized within the very fibers of daily life: from airport travel to a pervasive surveillance that continually charts, registers and eventually markets our electronic bodies. *Innerer Klang*, written in German, refers to a bell tone warning—the silence of a siren that causes the tinnitus of anxiety, an unexplainable ringing in the ears, the very opposite of Kandinsky's '*innerer Klang*' translated as the 'inner sound' of spiritual transcendental harmony. The discordance as the shadow side of the supposed harmony of neoliberalism is slowly creeping over the earth. The 'Occupy Wall Street' phenomenon is one actualized symptom of this *Klang*, now seeded globally around the world in many major cities. Authorities will eventually tear down these campsites, but the impact of the event will remain as part of the cultural history of struggle.<sup>4</sup>

The second problematic—after postmodernism—refers to the myriad of proposals for change that have emerged in the social sciences as the euphoria as well as the melancholy of postmodernism now undergoes a psychic change and reevaluation in a globalized society where questions concerning the geopolitics of trading bloc agreements, stock market instabilities, Middle East crisis, North African unrest, and floating currencies ('virtual money' or xenomoney) have led to a resurgence of a call for more conservative agendas: the rise of nationalist socialist parties in every country in Europe, the general globalized trend of closing national borders to immigrants escaping from the terror perpetuated in their own countries hoping for a better future, and a turn to more fiscal restraint shrinking even further the strained job market both in North America and Europe. The system is developing major crevasses. One need only look at the European Union crisis to grasp the anxiety that permeates the *Zeitgeist*. The iconic figures of the veiled woman and the bearded turbaned man have become the objects of suspicion that define the transferences of difference of both culture and religion. Facing sexual scandals, Republican presidential hopeful Herman Cain continues to maintain that most U.S. Muslims have extremist views (*Global Post*, Nov. 14, 2011), while one out of every five Americans still believes that President Obama is a Muslim. This fear of infection is indicative of an underlying paranoia deep in the psyche of a nation that is slowly losing its capitalist spearhead and global leadership.

### The *Klang* of Terrorism

The terrorism that surrounds the 'disappearance of man,' not as a Foucauldian call for further egalitarianism, but as the very question of ecological human survival—the Nietzschean prophecy of the 'last man' where only comfort and security are sought in response to nihilism—has fallen into what Alain Badiou in the closing pages of his book *The Century* (2007, p. 177) calls 'animal humanism:' a state of affairs where the "age of ecology and environmentalism is disavowed by new forms of neo-Romanticism," the escape velocity to transcendental spiritualism now calling on angels and crystals. If God no longer has 'truck with us, we should now turn to the gentle coaching of Helen Schucman's *A Course in Miracles* (1975) to achieve peace of mind or read perhaps Esther Hicks' *The Secret* (2007) for financial improvement by 'attracting' money. Should that fail, we can always turn to Oprah Winfrey's spiritual guru Eckhart [Ulrich Leonard] Tolle's in his quest for *A New Earth*

(2005) via a new form of religious relativism. While this may all sound cynical on my part, there are many believers who would tell me otherwise.

The search for psychic health through numerous alternative body practices, from hot yoga to healing hands therapies, not to mention the myriad of physical activities complete with personal trainers and diet experts, is symptomatic of a globalized fatalistic anxiety within the stasis of postmodernity. Such 'escape attempts' try to push back the increasing toxicity of overconsumption of every kind through these forms of transcendentalism, a meditative trance to take the world away by those who can afford to do so. Ignorance, fanaticism, and anxiety vibrate to the *Klang* of this terrorized global order, which underlies such symptomology.

The other side of this, of course, is the barrage of 'reality shows' touted as therapy, meant to cure all the ills of overconsumption. The state of Hawaii and numerous tropical islands seem to be the place of choice to go for such escapes, as well as being 'reality' tests (*Survivor Series*), where cruise ships unload the newlyweds, the well fed, and the nearly dead. You can become 'organic' there—as well as shop. Shopping is more and more tied into the ridiculous claims of charity. By consuming, poor countries are being 'helped.' When you buy *Starbucks* you support their 'coffee ethics,' that is, fair trade, improvement of coffee crops, helping coffee farmers in have-not countries and so on. With 'cultural capitalism' you buy your own redemption (Zizek, 2009). Under the hegemony of 'animal humanism' everything now has to have its 'natural balance,' whether it's the market economy, sustainable eco-systems, or a balance "between the fortunately inevitable millionaires and the unfortunately innumerable poor" (Badiou, 2007, p. 177). What is dreaded and must be foreclosed is the monstrous and inhuman, which is neither natural nor amenable to categorization.

Some have called this new condition 'pseudo-modernism' (Alan Kirby, 2006) where the individual appears to have a say in matters, seemingly interacts with screen media, and claims to be a free and flexible self defining his or her own parameters through technological innovations. Everything is slowly becoming 'on demand' and touch operative, as a realm of executive directives. You ask for it, you can get it. Just touch it. Book publishing is drifting towards this 'flexible' model, remaining a virtual manuscript until someone 'demands' it online. It is then 'published' and sent to you, or finds its way in the growing virtual library. The nomadic individual seemingly 'rules'; his or her world—one phones, clicks, presses, surfs, makes choices, downloads, moves, flies—just look at the travelling businessman as ironically profiled in the movie *Up in the Air* (2009) and more brutally in *The Company Men* (2010).

Deleuze and Guattari (1980), quite some time ago, maintained that criticism, contestation, and radical shock, part of the modernist legacy, would become central strategy for deterritorialization by capitalism to produce the new. The FCUK campaigns, for instance, are based on a glance aesthetic of misrecognition. They are perceived to be *confirmative* rather than *conformist* signs of freedom and choice. You can now wear any logo you want—whether it's 'saving the whales' on your chest to support the Pacific Whale Foundation or display the EXX[C]ON logo as a sign of belonging and loyalty to the corporation. The two gestures, in effect, cancel each other out as each is an exercise of a democratic right, a vote one way or the other. Even a punk anti-logo of the late 70s that juxtaposes a Nazi SS logo with a communist sickle (scythe) exercises the same right. You are not necessarily what you wear.

It has become all too obvious that the affective unconscious mind is rapidly being colonized by corporate capitalism to further consumption (Lindstrom, 2011). The consuming public, however, does not believe it. Its right to choose appears unaffected, like the water temperature rising in a fish tank. Affect, as the 'life' of the intrinsic body (or *zoē*), is being harnessed to hold our 'attention' by tapping into the primordial responses of fear and anxiety, and of course libidinal sexual energy. We have reached a new level in neuro-marketing where the fMRI scans will up sales. *En masse* niche marketing is no longer an oxymoron. Transsexuality, once the leading edge of sex/gendered protest, has now been smoothly worked into the design fashion industry. The transsexual man can now pose in the submissive comportment of a girl as postfeminism continues its claims of pluralist democratic gestures. Emancipation, resistance, and alienation, concepts that have been legitimated by critical theory in the name of social justice, have become emptied, impotent in their affects, managed through neoliberalist rhetoric. All these leftist agendas have been hijacked: postfeminism, postcolonialism, green capitalism.

The problematic 'after postmodernism' is caught between the rejection of modern universalism and postmodern relativism as orchestrated by one of the names for modernity itself: capitalism, where the investment of desire is for infinite enrichment by a ceaseless will that channels creative energy into specific outcomes. In this sense, capitalism has become a figure, which is not 'economic' nor 'sociological' but metaphysical. In capitalism, infinity is posed as that which is not yet determined, as that which the will must indefinitely dominate and appropriate. Capitalism territorializes and deterritorializes, breaking all laws, and inventing new laws as it reinvents itself; its criterion of technicity as the rule of performance requires the endless optimization of cost/benefit (input/output ratios), which has been harnessed to the cybernetic and genetic sciences that are themselves invested in the infinite desire for knowledge.

These two problematics—terrorism and 'after postmodernism'—feed into one another in a continuous loop, what the social activist and journalist Naomi Klein (2008) has identified as one aspect of its repeating cycle: "the shock doctrine," where capitalism profits from disasters, both natural and (let's say it) man-made. The other aspect of this endless loop, which I will address more specifically, is creativity as the appropriation of 'life' itself by the industries of designer capitalism in their thirst for constant innovation to keep globalized capital in motion.

### **Waiting for Superman**

To bring all this home to education and then more specifically art education, I would like to start by referring to a documentary film that stirred a lot of controversy and almost made it as an Oscar nomination: *Waiting for Superman*, directed by Davis Guggenheim, also the director of *An Inconvenient Truth*, which received the US Audience Award for Best Documentary during the 2010 Sundance Film Festival. This reference is an oblique move on my part to show just where 'creativity' begins to emerge in this web of relationships of what might be understood as an assemblage of terror|creativity|education|art.



Figure 1. *Waiting for Superman*.

If you haven't seen this film, what follows will be perhaps less fulfilling. It is also meant to make you skeptical of its claims. We might call what happened in the state of Wisconsin today with Governor Scott Walker's 'union busting' initiatives a direct experiment related to what this documentary claims to be the state of education. Its message appears simple. U.S. public schools are sinkholes of failure and in shambles. The country's economic future has been jeopardized, and students are kept from being internationally competitive because of incompetent teachers and their obstructionist unions. The solution is also given: reward those teachers who raise student standardized test scores, fire those who don't, abolish tenure, and close the low-performing schools. Above all, break the unions and open up more charter schools.

The documentary is strangely consistent with Obama's "Race To the Top" (RTTT) grant-initiative program as sold by Secretary of Education Arne Duncan in its support for charter schools, as you will see. *Waiting for Superman* confirms once again that the force of media rhetoric is able to mobilize resentment in the name of factual information so that a certain public affect can be mobilized in the name of school reform, to rally the conservative troops and stop the insanity of the failing report card on education. The difficult question that remains for those who still believe in public education is precisely how does one go about dismantling a very powerful representation that claims to be showing you the way things are: The film screams, "Can't you 'see,' stupid? Here's the solution."

There is of course the academic approach that can offer counterfactuals: Green dot charter schools, which are praised in this documentary, are also unionized. This simple 'fact' is not mentioned in the film. In 2009 Stanford's Center for Research on Education Outcomes maintains that there is a 2-1 margin of bad charter to good charter schools. A different set of numbers rolls out than the one in the documentary: Stanford's Center claims that "only 17

percent of charter schools do better on math and reading tests than their demographic peers in regular public schools. Thirty-seven percent do worse, while 46 percent of charter school kids, almost half, perform at approximately the same level as their traditional public school counterparts” (CREDO online).

According to this Stanford report, the ideological commitment to charter schools by the Obama administration, especially by Education Secretary Arne Duncan, requires the closing of 5,000 public schools, firing slacker teachers, and forcing the establishment of more charter schools. While charter schools are not private institutions, they are seen as the route to educational ‘reform.’ Most are run by “for-profit organizations,” less often by universities, educational non-profit organizations, or coalitions of teacher and/or parents.

Charter schools provide competition for the more traditional schools despite these statistical claims. On the average, their educational outcomes are no better, and in many cases worse, than in the regular public schools. The only remaining rationale for charter schools is to break the unions and move closer to privatization of public education. In *Waiting for Superman*, inner-city public schools are given the worst report cards, while many urban public schools, which disproportionately serve minorities and have a disproportionate number of uncertified or incompetent teachers, are underfunded and overcrowded, another missing fact. However, pitting one set of numbers against another doesn’t do much to change the force of the documentary, which is meant to bolster the perception that charter schools are the best solution to cure educational ills.

*Waiting for Superman* is presented in a genre that has become the gold standard in the stasis of the ‘postmodern aftermath’ of relativism—namely, melodrama as the popular cultural narrative par excellence that structures political discourse and national identity in contemporary post-industrialized societies. The melodramatic form shapes the morals in black and white terms to return to a stable world order where one knows just what side of the fence to belong to. It distinguishes the good guys from the bad guys. The villains and the heroes are clearly separated. There are clear designations of victimization, heroism, and villainy. Emotions of passion, sorrow, tension, and tragedy are easily mobilized for purposes of identification and sympathy.

As a documentary that purports to be offering us the truth through empirical claims (primarily through the economy of numbers), *Waiting for Superman’s* utilization of the melodramatic form within its genre is a clever way to gain sympathy for one side over the other through the mobilization of ‘facts.’ Melodrama has become a common ploy throughout many media forms as the indirect way pedagogy operates outside the classroom in this period I am referring to as ‘after postmodernism’. For instance, as Elizabeth Anker’s (2005) remarkable study of the events of 9-11 has shown, within eight hours after the attack, the Fox News network had already packaged the traumatic event as a melodrama and sold it to their conservative viewing audience in their 5:00pm and 6:00pm EST timeslot: America is a victim engaged in a battle against evil. *Waiting for Superman* is no different. It sets high emotions into play. We have the villainous union leaders like American Federation of Teachers Randi Weingarten, who defends incompetent teachers, the slacker teachers shown loafing around through vintage newsreel, and of course the innocent children, Anthony, Francisco, Daisy, and Emily that are featured in the documentary, whose future depends on a lottery draw to enter into a charter school because they are oversubscribed. By law charter schools must accept a certain percentage of those in waiting.

The disappointments or rejoicing in their faces makes the drama between life and death, failure or success up close and personal.

The heroes are forwarded like DC Superintendent Michelle Rhee, whose reforms are blocked by bureaucracy and those damn unions. The stasis of postmodernity—that is ‘after postmodernity’—has enabled the melodrama, as the embedded structure of this particular documentary, to become the perfect genre to polarize emotions, offer simple solutions as a way of continually making the elephant in the room invisible. That elephant is profoundly simple as it is impossible to eradicate in a capitalist competitive meritocracy: persistent poverty and insufficient funding of education in all states. The untold story of corporations making their investments in charter and private schools is the silence that rings tinnitus in the ears of many. How can one point fingers at corporations, the very pulse of capitalist life? It simply becomes finger wagging like Oliver Stone’s *Wall Street II: The Money Never Sleeps*, where Gordon Gekko gets to redeem himself by investing in the fantasy of cold-fusion energy. On the one hand, the Wall Street CEO’s become the fall guys to shake a finger as well—CNN brought you the ten worst offenders of corruption made responsible for the stock market bubble; the BP oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico is eventually forgotten as the media leaves the site and the cash is paid out. No one can easily recall the CEO’s name [Bob Dudley] as accountability is settled by dollar sign figures. Like GM, BP will soon make up the short fall in profits given the trouble in Libya. It will all balance out. Watch Charles Ferguson’s *Inside Job* some day. It will bring this home.

On the other hand, the CEO’s somehow remain the good guys. As in the Abu Ghraib torture scandal, there were only a handful of rotten apples that had to be thrown out of the barrel. Everything is back on track toward ‘economic recovery,’ provided that you begin to lean to the center of right so as to not lose your way. Melodrama will continue to help here. The recent 2010 November election results have already sent the message to the White House. Government workers’ unions are under attack as exemplified by New Jersey’s Republican Governor Chris Christie and Wisconsin’s new Republican Governor Scott Walker. On the whole unions across the US are under siege.

The extraordinary disparity between inner-city schools and the affluent suburbs is not mentioned in this film either, nor does the film distinguish troubled schools in impoverished areas from the vast majority of public schools where students are doing well despite the budget cuts. It is poverty and underfunding that contribute more than anything to low academic achievement, as well as crime. *Waiting for Superman* ignores or disputes any correlation between poverty and dropout rates. What becomes sensationalized is the high dropout rates, failing test scores, and poor performances compared to other countries’ rates in math, language, and sciences. In countries such as Korea, where the test scores are high, no one speaks of the high suicide rates of their young people; or Finland, which led in the PISA scores, no one mentions that the poverty gap is relatively small because of the country’s tax (the dreaded socialism that frightens the right wing) or that the teachers are unionized and free to structure their curriculum.

Melodramas generally confirm the long forgotten bourgeois family of contentment and bliss, despite the various sitcoms that identify the changed family relations—like *American Family*. Dropout rates are associated with bad teaching. In the film the parents of Daisy, who want her to get into Charter school, tell Davis Guggenheim that they dropped out of school not because of teaching incompetence, but the need to find work to support their families. The charter card is played once more by the charismatic figure of Geoffrey Canada, who

states that if they just opened up charter schools and got good teachers all would be OK. What is not shown well enough is Geoffrey Canada's insistence on providing an entire educational ecology of social services in the surrounding neighborhood to ensure success by setting up a social safety net. That takes money and time.

Who then are the spokesmen in the film? There is Eric Hanushek of the right-wing Hoover Institution at Stanford University, who claims that the per pupil spending has nothing to do with academic achievement since money on education has doubled since 1971, yet the US reading scores remained flat. What's not said is that in this same period the percentage of the GNP spent on education declined while wages remained flat. There is also Bill Gates, seen here with the director and Geoffrey Canada, who has become a hero. By profiling him and his wife as magnanimous charity contributors, a more popular profile has been smartly created. Gates maintains poor academic performance is ruining the economy, whereas the true culprit is finance capital itself, of which he is part. Before the global recession and costly wars, United States productivity outstripped Canada's. The parity of currency between the two trading partners indicates that Canada's natural resources have become lucrative trading commodities, while the perception by investors appears to be that the U.S. economy is slipping into an impossible debt crisis.

The aim in this film flatly assumes that the goal of education is to prepare kids for jobs. More specifically one of the planks of Obama's "Race to the Top" is [quote] "to adopt standards and assessments that prepare students to succeed in college and the workplace and to compete in the global economy." [end of quote]. In his State of the Union Address Obama alluded to a key concern of a "Gathering Storm"—35% of the younger scientists and engineers with doctorates working in the US today are foreign-born and most are on work visas. Many, if not most, are prepared to return to their home countries with their knowledge and capabilities to establish technology-based industries that will compete with US businesses.

In harmony with Obama's position, *Waiting for Superman* equates test scores with learning and teacher quality and proposes that charter schools know how to insure good test results and provide the way for your child's future. Everyone wants in on the lottery to succeed. Capitalist economic demand in an information industry requires more specialized education. The addition of years of schooling goes hand in hand with the demands of the changing fluctuations of capitalism. Elementary school eventually was not enough to train a workforce. Adolescence emerges with industrialization when vocational education is introduced; high schools, which were the elite institutions of the nineteenth century, came into prominence after WW2 with the emergence of post-industrialization, and now it is charter schools, which are heralded as what is needed for globalized capitalism. We are now at the point where masters degrees are more like undergrad work, undergrad more like high schools, high schools more like junior high, and so on. On the upper end, post-doctorates have become the new holding pens, offering a way into the blessed life style of scientific research.

The equality of schooling in industrialized countries is not based solely on unions and good teachers; there are many more insidious factors at work. The divide is between prep schools for the rich (like Sidwell Friends that Chelsea Clinton attended, and now Sasha and Malia Obama attend; or like the prep schools attended by John Kerry, John McCain, George Bush; or like Hotchkiss and Lawrenceville Academy, attended by the sons and daughters of the CEO's at Goldman Sachs) and an education for the job market given to the poor.



Between this divide are the so-called middle classes who are left wondering what it is they can do for their children so that they too feel successful; and this is where the corporate and private school begin to play into that gap, encouraging what I am calling the 'terror of creativity.' And this is where art education comes into play.

### **T(error) of Creativity**

So why 'terror of creativity?' What's all this to do with art education? Quite some time ago, in the mid-90s, the social critic, educator and author of *Ghetto Schooling: A Political Economy of Urban Educational Reform*, Jean Anyon (1997) made the point that art education, when it was included in a school's curriculum, was taught differently depending on where it found itself within a range of schools. Art education in elite schools across the United States for children of executives, those earning 250,000 dollars or more in the mid-90s, did no art projects what so ever! They learned to critique art since their parents bought and sold art like a business investment. They were its collectors. Anyon noted that as one moved down the scale to middle class and then working class schools, the rope allowed for the type of expressive projects became shorter and shorter. In working class schools the art projects tended to be prescribed, while moving up the ladder, where parents had management and professional jobs, the art projects were more and more exploratory. While class as a differentiating factor has lost its critical edge in sociological circles, covered over by the claims of consumerist spending by all classes through the enslavement to credit, life chances and opportunity for children remain as desirable ends as the very title 'waiting for superman' indicates. In an information society where global capitalism holds the agenda for competitiveness, creativity has become the key selling point for the flexible subject. The desire of middle-class parents has steadily increased to have their children become involved in what the conservative economist Richard Florida (2002) calls the 'creative industries,' which fuel the entertainment and consumerist markets. In a general sense then, public education as envisioned on a meritocratic basis with its grading structure to let in so many students into higher education is not providing what the middle to upper class professional parents want. This is typified in the movie by the parents of a grade eight student Emily Jones who desperately want their daughter to be out of the ZIP code that places her in Woodside High School, a school that has been ranked by *Newsweek* to be in the top 6% of high schools in the US. Rather, they want her to attend Summit Preparatory Charter High School, in Redwood City, California because there is no tracking policy there. In the film, Emily is one of the lucky lotto winners.

Charter schools open up the possibility of the teacher and student as flexible workers. In this new globalized matrix, art education as we once knew it is effectively dead when it comes to this reorientation of arts implosion with technology and science. School boards now hire inspirational speakers such as Sir Kenneth Robinson, who makes the (now) obvious claim that a paradigm shift is necessary to find one's talent within. He is billed as an international advisor on education in the arts to essentially anyone who will hire him: governments, non-profit, and profit organizations. Widely publicized through the TED lecture series and a travelling salesman of humor, he compares his own technological ineptness (Robinson is 60) with his technologically savvy children to make his point that a shift to creativity is essential. Robinson speaks directly to the aspirations and desires of middle to upper class parents who want their children to succeed in a technologically oriented information society. Such presentations as "Do schools kill creativity?" is answered with a resounding "yes" as Robinson outdates public school curriculum by juxtaposing it to essentially a curriculum of innovation already embraced by many charter schools. It should

be no surprise that this is taking place in an environment where the division between work and play has effectively disappeared as long as productivity is maintained. Julian Dibbell (2007) has called this *ludocapitalism*. This is the price that professional people are willing to pay, me included. One has the flexibility to travel and be mobile as long as productivity for the corporation (university) is maintained.

Contemporary corporations and institutions (like the university) begin to conceive of work qualitatively, as a sphere of creative activity, of self-realization, the idea of fulfilling an infinite will whose desire is driven by lack; like capitalism one always wants more. Just go to Cosco sometime to see consumerism in action as lack. The bigger the shopping carts, the more they will be filled. The 'connectionist man' or 'networker' is delivered from direct surveillance and paralyzing alienation, thereby loosening hierarchies, to become the manager of his or her own self-gratifying activity, as long as that activity translates at some point into valuable economic exchange, the *sine qua non* for remaining within the network. The harnessing of productive creativity enables what Deleuze (1997) and Guattari (1995) called a control society.

In designer capitalism the flows of movement are choreographed so that it seems that movement and freedom are available, which is why design has imploded with technology and science to become the key marketing strategy. Aesthetic environments are manipulated to create the customer. Biopower is achieved by establishing the psychological, sensorial, and communicational horizons of the customer's experience. One should read Bernd Schmitt's (1999) *Experiential Marketing* to see how this all works. Biopower at this level is an attempt to orchestrate vital creative energy (that is *zoë*) to channel it for a managerial labor force. The subtitle of Schmitt's book, "Sense, feel, think, and relate," covers all the basic human capacities. Within designer capitalism, charter schools have become the bridge to corporate education. Art has to be harnessed to become 'useful,' to be recognized as pulling its load—designed engineering. Art education is *terrorized* into moving into this direction. If it doesn't, it will not survive. It has to retool itself as a 'useful' subject as more and more digital-screen technology invades the classrooms. It is simply a question of time.

### Neurological Imagery and Art

To make this innovative curriculum effective, creativity is now theorized within complexity theory and neurosciences to move toward mapping a creative subject of cognition—more specifically a subject of 'pure performative will' that is needed to fuel the desire of globalized competitive demand, something that China and countries like East India, Korea, as well as the Northern countries, such as Norway, Sweden, Finland, have already effectively done. fMRI brain scans are becoming a tool for marketing and the emergence of the 'neuro-image' in digital inspired movies and popular culture is preparing the ground for the new nanotechnologies, which will be launched in the future.

We see this creative performative subject being pushed and displayed everywhere, especially in the competitive talent shows, such as the globally franchised television series *Idol* (and the myriad of shows like it), that are tied to the global entertainment industries. It has spread into virtually all the post-industrialized nations of the world, confirming the need for a global performative self. And, we see this repeated on YouTube with myriad attempts of kids displaying themselves, performing, trying to get attention and an audience, blogging, doing web pages and so on, clamoring for a spotlight, terrorized by the possibility of failure, worrying about finding their place in the social order. Recently, Lady Gaga

skyrocketed a ten-year old Canadian girl, Maria Aragon from Winnipeg, to fame after listening to her rendition of 'Born This Way' on YouTube. As in *Waiting for Superman*, or *American Idol*—it's a lotto mentality. Someone will win big.

So precisely how does complexity theory work when it comes to creativity, especially in charter schools, which are preparing students to become the needed flexible subjects of globalized capitalism capable of repeating the benefits of a technologized world order? Education in control societies operates on a managerial model supported by cyber-technologies where the teacher is a facilitator and mentor while the student is an active and responsible self-seeking learner, an agent of her own 'sense-making,' catering to unique differences that yield new creative possibilities for growth. The student is placed in an open environment where time is flexible; he or she is open to new ideas, dialogue, co-operation, and a community of shared judgment necessary for human survival. The quality and accountability of such education are assured through monitoring and assessment. This is an open system theorized by enactivism, constructivism, and most recently, complexity theory. The obscene supplement of this managerial system of education begins to show when differences can no longer be contained easily through well-established test procedures. The sociological experts of organization and class management come to help, reminding teachers that they should recognize the other's 'baggage' (to be more sensitive to cultural differences); or receive extra training to provide a smoother delivery of material (the cyber-gadgets); or learn how to deal with inappropriate behavior by understanding different personality types. Perhaps a school needs a long term business plan and a mission statement of values to get its act together?; or pastoral programs should be instituted to help with interpersonal relations—like homework clubs, anti-bullying programs, courses in anger and time management, and the like.

Parents are held hostage to this model. If they want their children to find their place in this globalized capitalist world, they need to seek out schools that shape such a subject position. Art education is forced to move in this direction also if it is to survive. Little of what I have said is going to change this demand by national and state governments or by parents whose anxiety for their children will not just disappear if the life-chances for their children remain blocked. Charter schools and the privatization of education are the managed direction middle to upper class parents are forced to take. My personal story regarding my son Jeremy is no different. I want him to succeed, to have his future open through commitment to a cause that gives him satisfaction, to have a meaningful life. But, I am already addressing a privileged life, a life where there are financial resources that may well be drained, but nevertheless are available. Such is not the case for the majority of people globally. The terrorism of creativity of designer capitalism leads to a do-or-die mentality where parents, like their children, are held hostage to performativity and flexibility in the stasis of 'after postmodernism.' Basically, art education must follow this managed direction.

There is, however, another side of art and its education that escapes the clutches of utility, what I have identified as a fundamental antagonism that exists between art & design (jagodzinski, 2010, pp. 41-58). This 'line of flight' 'leads to post-Situationist art and what I refer to as an 'avant-garde without authority' (pp. 109-126). It is my attempt to show how the 'force' of art can still be affective through various strategies that are its 'work.' Four strategies are presented, which I believe escape the clutches of designer capitalism: disruptive forcework, rhizomatic forcework, the forcework of productive reassemblage and the forcework of alternative information. There are many artists and art educators who have not bought into the trend of creativity as usurped by the globalization of designer

capitalism. They offer 'escape attempts.' As Gilles Deleuze (1988) comments in his review of Foucault's oeuvre, "resistance comes first," and it does so only through a creative act proper, which is itself a *rare event*. There are many who remain resistant. I hope I have persuaded you to consider exercising your own form of resistance given the state of terror and the packaging of creativity for consumerist ends to keep ludocapitalism alive.

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## End Notes

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<sup>1</sup> This is a version of the Manny Barkan Award presentation given in Seattle's NAEA Annual conference in 2011.

<sup>2</sup> The term *problematic* is specifically used here rather than 'problem. I am drawing on Deleuze's (1994, 177-181) distinction between problematics and problem in the sense that the former refers to virtual Ideas that are yet to be actualized, while the latter refers to possible solutions that already have an array of resolutions at some time in the future. Problematics points to a future not as yet determined from an array of different virtualities. Problematics therefore deals with potentialities rather than possibilities.

<sup>3</sup> The capitalization of Idea(s) refers to a transcendental virtual realm as Deleuze reworks Kantian transcendental idealism into a transcendental empiricism.

<sup>4</sup> One should watch the satirical action thriller *Gamer* by Neveldine and Taylor, to view a future that is, as the opening credits of the film say, "Some years from this exact moment." The terror that feeds the anxiety of 'Occupy Wall Street' is not difficult to imagine in the near future.