but embodied literacies and move closer to a poetics of teaching. Understanding how literacies evolve out of and are enacted within these porous sites enables us to reconfigure literacy instruction. Because meaning is choreographed among the transacting planes of bodies, cultures, places, and times, we are called to choreograph similarly our literacy praxis, moving to imageword's rhythm and pulsing to its dynamic.

3 The Shape and the Dynamic of a Poetics of Teaching

[. . .] cut loose from my words
[. . . . .]
remember: the body's pain and the pain on the street
are not the same but you can learn
from the edges that blur O you who love clear edges
more than anything watch the edges that blur
—Adrienne Rich, "29" of "Contradictions: Tracking Poems"

Last May, an unusually hot, muggy morning in central Indiana, my younger daughter staged a tantrum when I refused to let her wear sweatpants (a good three inches too short) and a heavy matching T-shirt (also three inches too short) to school. Lindsey is neither rebellious nor masochistic; she merely wanted to wear clothes emblazoned with Pikachu's image. Pikachu is a small, yellow, lop-eared, electrically charged Pokémon, and Lindsey is obsessed with Pokémon. These Japanese pocket monsters that began life as a video game, then morphed to trading cards, cartoons and movies, and related paraphernalia, then back again to the arcades via Game Boy form the center of her conscious and probably unconscious existence. Dressed in Pokémon clothes, speaking a Pokémon language of hit points, badges, and gym masters, and enacting a Pokémon life, Lindsey constructs a fluid identity that enables her to navigate the rigors of school, playground, and home.

Lindsey's fascination with and incorporation of Pokémon in her waking and sleeping lives reflect the myriad ways in which the literacies of bodies and of place, of culture and of time evolve out of the shifting borders of an imageword ecology. Adrienne Rich urges us to cut loose from words, to watch the edges that blur. "[R]emember," she tells us, "the body's pain and the pain on the street / are not the same but you can learn / from the edges that blur O you

who love clear edges / more than anything else watch the edges that blur" (111). Chapter 3 focuses on those blurred edges, the confluence of literacies that constitute the health of all human beings. The structure of any meaning emerges from the connections our minds and bodies make as we live within a specific place and time, subject to the social habits we evolve. Foucault notes that "our experience of the world is less that of a long life developing through time than that of a network that connects points and intersects with its own skein" ("Of Other" 22). To teach literacy, then, is to forge somatic, cultural, and environmental health as we live within historical and experiential time.[1] By focusing on the edges that blur—that amorphous realm wherein Lindsey shapes for herself a multifaceted identity out of an ecology of imagewords—chapter 3 extends the work of chapters 1 and 2 by describing the shape and the dynamic of a poetics of teaching.

I begin with the mercurial shape of literacy instruction. The four permeable sites within which and out of which literacy evolves resolve into three embodied literacies—somatic, polyscopic, and lateral literacies—and these embodied literacies structure a poetics of teaching. I describe the organization and enactment of each in our students' lives. I then turn to the dynamic permeating a poetics of teaching. The continual movement of imageword crisscrossing physical-social-spatial-temporal borders, a movement that generates embodied literacies, is also the movement, the rhythm, by which a poetics of teaching organizes itself. Positioned where the edges blur, our literacy classrooms become a site of and opportunities for a provocative dynamic. A poetics of teaching pulses to immersion, the experience of our deep connectiveness across the loops of an imageword ecology; to emergence, a recognition of the structure and rules governing that ecology; to transformation, the evolution of imagistic and rhetorical practices enabling us to evoke new connections, new ecologies; and to reimmersion, a new positioning in a different ecology, a different matrix of connections. The culmination of embodied literacies organized as a provocative dynamic is a multifaceted healthfulness, the well-being of the physical, textual, and spiritual worlds within which we live,

a healthfulness permeated with and constituted by the constant weave of imageword's double logics.

Embodied Literacies

Over the past two years, Lindsey has been systematically creating herself and her world by means of embodied literacies. She sleeps on Pokémon sheets surrounded by walls covered with Pokémon posters. She carries to school in her Pokémon backpack (along with her Pokémon lunch box) four or five Pokémon novels, accompanied by at least one stuffed Pokémon toy (negotiated down from three) and various small plastic Pokémon figures. When she is angry with me, she will crawl into her dark closet, close the door, and curl up under the hanging clothes, claiming that she is returning to her Pokéball to recharge. She records both anger and recharging in the daily entries of the multiple notebooks she keeps, all of which, for the past year, have been addressed to Pikachu (and have included Pokémon poems, Pokémon songs, and Pokémon stories). With her sister's help, she has created an elaborate Pokémon world in the playroom where they and the neighborhood children stage Pokémon plays they have written (based on Pokémon short stories Lindsey wrote for school). She rehearses Pokémon narratives in the bathtub, lining up small, colorful plastic figures around the entire rim of the tub, whispering dialogue to herself. She plays a Pokémon board game with anyone she can enlist and, when she cannot find any willing victims, pores over her collection of Pokémon cards and Pokémon manuals, memorizing hit points, evolutionary progressions, and powers.

Nor is she happy just to play with or write about Pokémon. Lindsey has gradually attempted to remake herself physically into Ash Ketchum, the human character in the Pokémon pantheon who is seeking to become a Pokémon master. She dresses like Ash, in jeans and T-shirt (preferably one of her Pokémon T-shirts). She refuses to wear shorts (because Ash does not). She sleeps in her Ash Ketchum hat and attempts to gobble up her dinner because "Mom, that's how Ash does it." She demands that her hair be cut above her

ears like Ash's, and, if she could manage it, I am sure she would try to cry in a fountain of light—just as Ash does in the cartoons and movies.

To craft for herself such an intricately constructed world and identity, Lindsey draws on myriad literacies, slipping and sliding gaily across the borders of an imageword ecology. A single literacy cannot account for the range of meanings and experiences she creates. Nor can that which is performed within the confines of a schoolroom and assessed by means of standardized tests be privileged as the sole manifestation of literacy. Instead, Lindsey's literacy exists as a hybrid of many literacies, a realization that allows us to extend the scope of literacy to embrace a multiplicity of media (New London Group; Stroupe) and a multiplicity of contexts (Street).[2] Who she is and how she navigates the world are imbricated with, dependent on, and manifested in imagewords negotiated through cartoons, drawings, illustrated novels, physical movements, transitional objects, dreams, and diary entries. What is at play in Lindsey's efforts to weave a meaningful life is her conscious and unconscious reliance on embodied literacies. Embodied literacies focus attention on the specific organization and deployment of shared ways of knowing that organize our experiences across media and across life. Regardless of whether we make meaning through print, iconography, or both, our enactments possess three common literacies: somatic, polyscopic, and lateral literacies.

These three specific literacies are the culmination of ways of knowing and meaning derived from imagewords moving across bodies, cultures, places, and times. They represent the fusion of these planes and these ways of knowing (fig. 3.1). Thus, somatic literacy encompasses the reciprocity of places and bodies; polyscopic literacy captures the juncture of culture, bodies, and places; finally, lateral literacy ties together temporal literacy and spatial literacy. Embodied literacies highlight the reciprocity, the mutual constitution of the entire array of loops in an ecology of meaning. The shape of a poetics of teaching is derived from these three literacies feeding into each other. Thus, if teachers are concerned with the acquisition and enactment of a specific literacy practice—for

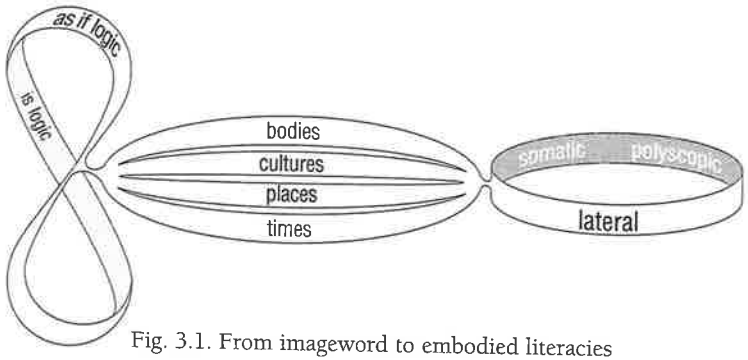

Fig. 3.1. From imageword to embodied literacies

example, digital literacy, defined as a way of knowing the symbol-system and conventions of the digital realm and a way of using that knowledge to facilitate our participation in that realm—then they would teach digital literacy via the embodied literacies that give rise to those literacy performances. They would structure their instruction and their environments to foster the somatic, polyscopic, and lateral literacies that unite to create digital literacy or print literacy or visual literacy. These ways of knowing—not a specific literacy practice—shape a poetics of teaching.

Somatic Literacy

A combination of corporeal and spatial literacies, somatic literacy concerns how we construct and participate in the world through our bodies and how we know the world as bodies positioned in specific sites. It embraces the level of kinesthetic learning, from the proprioception that allows us to orient ourselves spatially in the world to the twitch of our fingers on an imaginary keyboard when we think of writing. It embraces emotions issuing from our limbic system and circulating through the higher cortical regions, which Antonio Damasio in a flight of poetry calls the body murmuring to the mind. And it embraces what Ernest G. Schachtel calls allocentric perception, a "full turning toward [an] object that makes possible [a] direct encounter with it and not merely a quick registration of its familiar features according to ready labels" (221).

Through somatic literacy, students conceptualize meanings as multisensual and as sited, incorporating into writing-reading the sensuality and positionality necessary for our physical existence within the world.

Somatic literacy weaves throughout Lindsey's immersion in Pokémon. Her creation and inhabitation of a Pokémon world is an overwhelmingly corporeal act operating on myriad levels. The most visible is the restructuring of her physical environment—her bedroom—so that she is saturated in a Pokémon mythos. Even when sleeping, Lindsey surrounds herself with and embraces several stuffed Pikachus of various sizes. She redefines her physical presence to correspond to the dictates of her Pokémon world. This redefinition is reflected in her efforts to emulate Ash Ketchum, from choosing similar clothes to imitating body language and social habits. It is also manifested in Lindsey's complementary and conflicting desire to be Pikachu. Thus, she curls up in her closet when driven by indignation; she pursues karate instead of gymnastics because karate will allow her to be a more proficient Pokémon; and she threatens her sister with a shock attack. Finally, in a delightfully revealing and delightfully typical move, Lindsey consumes Pikachu, in the form of decorated birthday cakes and sugar cookies.

Somatic literacy is evident as well in her writing-reading. Here Lindsey relies to a large degree on her role-playing, where she moves fluidly and confidently from one physical stance to another. To illustrate, Lindsey asked me recently to keyboard one of her short stories, something I do frequently. As I typed the story that she read aloud from her handwritten page, she discovered gaps and omissions in her short story. To rectify the flaws she identified, Lindsey moved around the room, morphing various Pokémon guises, shifting her body and voice, using that physical role-playing as a heuristic to expand and elaborate her text. By embodying her Pokémon world, she was better able to create that world through words. It was a magical merging of herself, her toys, and her words. The richness of her experiences with the Pokémon novels and her own creative writing derives from her deep somatic connection with her fantasy world.

Somatic literacy also manifests itself in our students' and our own textual practices: through the rituals we enact as an egress into writing-reading, through our resistance to particular modes or prescribed ways of writing-reading, and through the act of memory itself. Marion Joan Francoz presents a "model of memory that embodies an infinitely complex neurological network, activated, constituted, and reconstituted by interactions with the environment," offering "a nexus between biological and cultural, between presence and process" (26).[3] Because memory—rhetoric's fourth canon—is embodied, rhetorical practices are inevitably embodied.

Somatic literacy also functions as the organizing principle for particular kinds of literacies, for example, working-class literacy. Janet Zandy argues that working-class language traces its antecedents to material existence (rather than canonized literature) and historic events (rather than abstract theory). Elastic, defying easy genre or historical classification, working-class language is a tool for survival in which intellect and emotion merge in an "ongoing dialogue between private pain and public speech" (Introduction 11). Working-class language use shares physical language because "working-class people practice a language of the body that eludes theoretical textual studies" (Zandy, *Liberating* 5), a point underscored by Karyn Hollis's study of the poetry of working-class women enrolled at Bryn Mawr during the 1920s and 1930s. Hollis argues that the working-class women involved in summer school at Bryn Mawr manifested a "cultural logic or 'grammar'" that was "largely corporeal, based on their physical exploitation for the benefit of a 'lady' of another class" (98). Their poetry, Hollis explains, reveals a "bodily motif" and "reveals how a pedagogical project can progress from textual to physical context" (99). Almost seven decades later, working-class students lack the same quiet hands and neutral faces, Zandy points out, because their bodies are not separated from their discourse. "The physicality of class difference, the use of the body for expression, communication, and as a substitute for abstract language, is evident in the literature produced by working-class writers, but is rarely recognized, never mind theorized, as a language system" (*Liberating* 5).

Somatic literacy involves the development and the deployment of what Schachtel calls an allocentric perception and an allocentric attitude, especially evident in responses to art and poetry. Because somatic literacy operates by means of imagery's corporeal is logic, it unmarks boundaries and dissolves subject-object duality. Allocentric perception and attitude reflect this same dissolution of boundaries. In allocentric perception the perceiver, actively participating in the perception, opens herself "toward it [the percept] receptively, or, figuratively or literally, takes hold of it, tries to 'grasp it'" (83). Successful perception is predicated on a kind of mutual assimilation in which ego identity and utilitarian needs are subordinated to openness. For example, Schachtel describes an allocentric attitude as

> one of profound interest in the object, and complete openness and receptivity toward it, a full turning toward the object which makes possible the direct encounter with it and not merely a quick registration of its familiar features according to ready labels. (220–21)

Historian of science Morris Berman calls this means of perception "participating consciousness," in which we are not alienated observers of but direct participants in a human destiny indivisible from that of the cosmos (*Reenchantment* 23).[4] Knowledge results from a process "of visceral/poetic/erotic identification" (139).[5] To know, one must submerge oneself in an experience, not detach oneself from it to view it from afar. Knowledge comes about "through identification, or collapse of subject/object distinction" (181), and "[r]ationality, as it turns out, begins to play a role only after the knowledge has been obtained viscerally" (139). Because we permeate the world, we must "literally eat the other, take it into our guts, and as a result we are changed by it" (268). We "know a thing precisely in the act of identification, and this identification is as much sensual as it is intellectual. It is a *totality* of experience: the 'sensuous intellect'" (Berman, *Coming* 75).

This sensuous intellect or allocentric attitude is the aim and the

essence of somatic literacy. When students exercise their somatic literacy, they conceptualize meanings as multisensual and as sited, incorporating into writing-reading the sensuality and positionality implicit in all human existence and validating the legitimacy of those experiences. They evolve and deploy corporeal means to participate physically in the world. Literate citizenship is also somatic citizenship.[6]

Polyscopic Literacy

Produced through the fusion of culture, bodies, and places, polyscopic literacy concerns how we evolve and deploy specific ways of seeing and how we organize our realities, including our textual realities, according to specific networks of reinforcing images. First, to construct meaning in the world, we tacitly rely on a dominant imageword dynamic permeating a culture during an historical moment, an identifiable yoking and relative valuing of imagery and language. Donna J. Haraway reminds us that "all eyes, including our own organic ones, are active perceptual systems building in translation and specific ways of seeing, that is, ways of life," and I would add ways of literacy (*Simians* 190). Thus, Foucault can write in visual terms of the historical fault line that exists between the Middle Ages and the Enlightenment. He points to the differences between a participatory way of seeing in which word, image, and world were mutually reinforcing and a detached way of seeing in which word, image, and world were amputated from one another, severing the connection between perceiver and perception (*Order* 17–42). Learning how to mean and learning how to participate in a culture cannot be excised from learning how to see in a particular way because a culture—its infrastructure and its exoskeleton—is organized around this dynamic.

A way of seeing is intrinsic to Lindsey's literacy, to her construction and inhabitation of her Pokémon world. For Lindsey, her Pokémon way of life is predicated on the mutuality of image and word and on her active participation in the creation of each. Every diary entry and story she creates reveals this dynamic, for words are accompanied by pictures; words frequently are pictures.[7] While this

process is subtle, it is not passive. Rather, her negotiation of the imageword dynamic is a constructive act, in which she is an integral agent. She generates those imagewords by physically enacting her stories, which exposes her to different spatial perspectives.

Our students are not immune to the influence of a way of seeing. Our students' and our own textual practices reflect the development and deployment of ways of seeing the world, including those that differ from ways of seeing promulgated by the academic system or by the culture at large. For example, Christine Bennett has argued for the importance of teaching what she calls "multicultural competence," defined as "competence in multiple ways of perceiving, evaluating, and doing" (191). Multicultural competence acknowledges that individuals possess a "view of the world that is not universally shared and that differs profoundly from that held by many members of different nations and ethnic groups" (191). Crucial to this enterprise is the recognition that one's cultural membership and construction of the world is predicated on the development of a way of seeing that world. "Vision," Haraway reminds us, "is *always* a question of the power to see" (*Simians* 192).

In addition to an imageword dynamic, polyscopic literacy also involves the construction of and adherence to networks of reinforcing imagewords validated within a culture. Developing proficiency in a way of seeing, and thereby developing one's cultural membership, is interwoven with constructing and adhering to an array of imagewords. We cannot separate what we see from how we see. Lindsey's literacy again offers insight into this aspect of polyscopism. The configurations of reinforcing imagewords serve as raw materials Lindsey molds and reshapes to conform to the angles of her life. The Pokémon commercial mythos serves only as the starting point for her creativity; she has no compunction about evolving alternative storylines or entirely new storylines, each of which challenges the commercial Pokémon. She and her sister have even created new Pokémon. Lindsey takes the imagewords produced through posters, novels, cartoons, and games, negotiating their constraints and her desires. This is a reciprocal process, however, in that the reinforcing imagewords also mold and reshape

Lindsey's life, dictating wardrobe choices, sibling behavior, and acceptable responses to anger.

Lindsey finds her array of Pokémon imagewords enabling. She uses them to explore the possibilities of agency in her world, and she uses them as portals into different worlds in which she is an active participant and a creative force. But such configurations can be disabling as well. Mike Rose achingly illustrates this possibility in *Lives on the Boundary.* Turning to his classmates' responses to both their vocational educational curriculum and to their configuration by the administration as voc ed students, Rose reveals how imagewords can be disabling. In the midst of a discussion in religion class on talent and achievement, one of Rose's classmates announces that he just wants to be "average" (28). This is a typical reaction to voc ed placement, Rose says, one in which students sees themselves according to the imagewords constructed by the school administration, protecting themselves "from such suffocating madness by taking on with a vengeance the identity implied in the vocational track" (29). Assignment to the voc ed track carried with it a particular organization of imagewords dictating identity, dictating what is real and truth: One is, at best, average. Students can use this configuration as a point of resistance or as a goal, Rose says, but it always serves as the students' starting point for self-definition.

Feminist struggles with metaphor highlight the troubling reciprocity of enablement and disablement in reinforcing imagewords, evident in both Lindsey's and Rose's experiences. As Meryl Altman points out, "[f]eminist criticism, and feminism more generally, have both feared and loved metaphor," resisting, on the one hand, uses of metaphor to restrict and reduce Woman to a trope, and, on the other hand, drawn to the transformative potential of metaphor to reconfigure reality (495–96). Patricia Yaeger in *Honey-Mad Women* addresses this problem specifically in regard to women writing. Feminists argue that women have been silenced by a male-dominated language in which women have no avenue to speak their desires, their pleasures. They are trapped in a disabling array of images that stress a woman's "alienation from her own powers of metaphor" (4). But women can access the power of language by evolving

a new matrix of enabling images. Yaeger turns to the "honey-mad woman," the archetypal image liberated by poet Mary Oliver, a woman "mad for the honey of speech" (4). These new images of women seizing words and aiming them with their own purposes redefine women's marginality, reverse their alienation, and enable their speaking. The metaphor of the honey-mad woman "gives us a map for defining a countertradition within women's writing, a tradition in which the woman writer appropriates language 'racked up' in her body and starts to sing" (28).

A third characteristic also marks polyscopic literacy, and that is the multiplicity of visions and networked imagewords. A culture is marked by more than one way of seeing, more than a single network of imageword. We constantly shift among perspectives, a process clearly manifested in Lindsey's literacy. Lindsey inhabits more than one position, sees through more than one set of eyes: through the culturally mandated vision of her Pokémon world; through the fracturing vision of her home, influenced by a mother less than thrilled with the Pokémon craze; through the collaborative sight of sister and playmates; through literal shifts in vision as she moves herself physically, crouching and crawling to see the world as Pikachu, as a gym master, as Ash. These same multiple perspectives are reflected in our students' survival (or extinction) in the academy. Part of becoming a successful student, one who not only moves between disciplinary boundaries demanded by an undergraduate education but also one who navigates the competing demands of a single discipline characteristic of graduate studies, is predicated on juggling different ways of seeing. Thus, as students learn the discourse of the biology lab report, they are simultaneously learning the way of seeing privileged within biology, that which Martin Jay identifies as Baconian empiricism ("Scopic"). Then, when these same students shift to an English class, one in which they are required to read and respond to literature, they are invited into a different way of seeing, one more reflective of Schachtel's allocentric perception.

Polyscopic literacy involves the development and deployment of multiple ways of seeing and multiple networked images. Through

polyscopic literacy, we learn to shape and to recognize the partiality of our visions of and in the world, as well as the limitations and possibilities of the configuration of imagewords reigning in a culture at a particular time and place. The aim of polyscopic literacy is to reinforce the partiality of perspective, the sitedness of sight. Polyscopic literacy enhances our awareness of the limits of our way of knowing and our knowledge and invites us to evolve alternative ways of seeing, a process that Haraway warns is marked by considerable angst but one that is also necessary for our social and psychological health (*Modest* 182).[8]

Lateral Literacy

Resulting from the fusion of spatial and temporal literacies, lateral literacy concerns how we evolve and organize narratives faceted by time and space.[9] Few deny the necessity of stories for crafting our epistemology, our morality, and individual and cultural identities (Bruner; Fisher). A lateral narrative is a story or, perhaps more accurate, stories that fuse space and time so that the sequential flow of chronology is disrupted to take into account simultaneities that are not simultaneous. As physicist Paul Davies reminds us, place disrupts what can be conceived as coincident, for an action in one place at one time will not occur in concert with an act in another place. There will always be minute (or vast) differences in time lines, depending on the distances between events. This is not just a case of different perspectives on the same events. The interpenetration of space and time calls into question the sameness of time lines and challenges the linearity of narratives.

Because we are stretched along the horizontal and vertical dimensions of social being and consciousness, we are subject to what postmodern geographer Edward Soja refers to as lateral narratives, stories whose chronological linearity is disrupted by the presence of places, by events that are and are not simultaneous. The stories that we live are the product of both time and space, constituting a "spatial hermeneutic" that makes it possible "to enter the narration at almost any point without losing track of the general objective: to create more critically revealing ways of looking at the combination

of time and space, history and geography, period and region, sequence and simultaneity" (Soja 2). Essayist Nancy Mairs points out that

> [t]he search for lost time necessitates spatial, not merely temporal recall. [. . .] We can impose a grid of time onto our memories, much as we sketch lines of latitude and longitude on a globe, a useful device for knowing when or where we are in relation to some other event or spot used as a reference point. But the memories won't yield up their freight in response. For that we have to let go of lifelines and plunge into the multiple modalities—sensory, emotional, cognitive—which have encoded the past and will realize it, transformed, into the present. (*Remembering* 9)

Lateral literacy is the multimodal process we have developed to fashion a meaning from the many conflicting spatial-temporal planes we live within by composing stories that weave together time and space.[10] To paraphrase Emily Dickinson, it is the process by which we tell the truth slant, by which we keep that truth fluid. Lindsey's Pokémon stories manifest her reliance on lateral literacies, shifting as they constantly do in response to place and time overlapping in myriad combinations. Perhaps the most obvious enactment of lateral literacies results from Lindsey's continual movement between media, a movement that requires her to evolve and negotiate different imagistic and narrative practices. Shifting between media results in a kind of narrative refraction. Refraction refers to the visual phenomenon that occurs as light travels through different media and changes speed, resulting in visual disjunctures. For instance, when light travels through the water of a crystal vase, it produces the illusion that the stem of a flower is broken even as it stands upright. The temporal integrity or backbone of narratives is also broken as the narratives morph through different media. My daughter's Pokémon stories demonstrate this break. Lindsey is a connoisseur of Paint, using this computer program to draw elaborate, ongoing stories with multiple levels and intricate spatial

relationships. When she transforms these spatial narratives into a textual story, she transforms the nature of the story, juggling the constraints of verbal description and action, highlighting elements absent from her picture. However, this shift in narrative elicited by the constraints of writing draws her back to her Paint figure, which she had stored on the computer desktop, so that she continually revises the image, working by turns on Paint narrative and textual narratives.

A second and more subtle way that Lindsey manifests (and relies on) lateral literacy is through the process of diffracting narratives. In optics, diffraction results from the interference of light waves as they pass an opaque body. The interference produces a fuzzy region between the shadowy area and the lighted area that, upon examination, resolves itself into light and dark lines. Diffraction grids filter light through thin slits, a process that diffuses light into its multiple colors. This is the method of critique, of "critical consciousness" advocated by Haraway in opposition to reflection (*Modest* 34, 272; "Promise"). Diffraction patterns record the history of an interaction, she writes, unlike reflection, which merely replicates an interaction. Lindsey's narratives are subject to this subtle process in two ways. For Lindsey, Pokémon is both a solitary and collaborative activity. When she is engaged with her sister and the neighborhood children in the Pokémon playroom that they have jointly created, a single narrative fails to satisfy the group's desire. Instead, they demand that Lindsey relate the history of the story—where it came from, how she wrote it—so that they can proceed to rewrite the narrative collaboratively, splitting it into lateral lines. Finally, Lindsey has gradually begun altering the shape of her private Pokémon narratives as a result of my repeated interference, my efforts to critique the Pokémon mythos. Troubled by the ethical system that infuses the Pokémon world, I have frequently asked Lindsey to tell me stories about Pikachu's capture, about Charizard's incarceration for disobedience in his Pokéball, about Pokémon who do not want to fight for their masters, and about Pokémon mothers whose children have been enslaved by an evil master. Such interference has gradually resulted in subtle shifts in her narratives, in

plotlines where Pokémon masters, including Ash Ketchum, her hero, are conspicuously absent. Instead, Pokémon have their own adventures, freed from the confines of Pokéballs and the human drive to use them to become gym masters. Through diffraction, Lindsey splits story lines into their multiple histories, undermining her conviction in one story, one meaning, one identity.

Our students' and our own textual practices also involve the development and deployment of lateral literacies, especially evident in the navigation of cyberspace. A term coined by William Gibson for his 1984 novel *Neuromancer, cyberspace* refers to the felt sense of connectivity that comes into being when individuals communicate through a complex network of computer nodes. Cyberspace disrupts traditional narrative linearity, providing a fertile environment for our students' development and practice of lateral literacies. This is evident not only in the poetics of cyberspace, that is, in the fiction and poetry created for and distributed through the World Wide Web (www), but also in the nonnarrative Web sites that proliferate throughout the Internet. The habits we acquire as a result of our immersion in what Craig Stroupe calls the hybrid environment of hypermediated cyberspace encourage us to think in terms of lateral narratives whether we are navigating a story or not.[11] The separations between Web sites, images, and words are subject to constant erosions that reconfigure their boundaries. At the click of a mouse, a hotlink in a text can open a word into a graph; a hotlinked point on the graph can morph into a new text or a new image, one fluid with movement and sound. Clear-cut divisions between space-time and imageword can no longer be maintained. Nor can the divisions between primary or central text be maintained. As George Landow notes, within the hypermediated realm of cyberspace, the marginal and the central are complementary; the definition of what constitutes central or primary text is as much a product of time as it is of space. Dominated by the fluid, constantly revised spatial-temporal sites, narrative explodes into narratives, primary text into texts: "As the rigid demarcations between formerly discrete texts become fluid liminal zones, and then simply markers within an ever-shifting nodal system of narrative information, the Aristotelian

story arc, with its beginning, middle, and end, becomes something else again" (Lunenfeld 15). With its collapse into space-time and imageword, the electronic age, Peter Lunenfeld argues, frees us to "invent nonlineal illogics" (21) and nonlinear time lines, manifesting the enactment of lateral literacy.[12]

The aim of lateral literacy is to increase the fluidity of our meanings and increase our opportunities to transform our imagistic and rhetorical practices. Lateral literacy serves a survival function, enabling us to evolve narrative practices that help us respond flexibly to the challenges posed by a multifaceted reality subject to its own randomness. Bateson has argued that survival goes not to the creature best adapted—physically and rhetorically—to its environment. The Burgess Shale represents as much, filled as it is with the fossilized remains of extinct species all perfectly adapted to their environments. Rather, survival goes to the creature with the greatest flexibility, one that can respond to the random reordering of the ecology within which it is immanent. Lateral literacy endows us with flexibility. It mitigates the human desire for closure, for completion, by keeping us open to transformation. Lateral literacy demands that we continually struggle with the multiplicity, the split nature, of our identities and of our worlds. "The narrative urge," Anne DiPardo writes, "is as ubiquitous as our desire to understand our condition, and just as important as knowledge gleaned through more systematically rational means" (63). But, she continues, in order for our stories and our students' identities as storytellers to affect our curriculum and instruction, "our working definitions of narrative must be enlarged and enriched, as must our sense of its relations to the whole of thought and language" (63). Lateral literacy accomplishes this.

Immersion, Emergence, Transformation

Embodied literacies provide a shape for a poetics of teaching, leading us to new questions for and new techniques of literacy praxis. A major shift in our approach to teaching writing-reading heralded by embodied literacies concerns the dynamic by which we structure

our courses, the dynamic by which we decide what to teach when. Embodied literacies implicate a particular rhythm for the classroom, a tempo for learning experiences. That dynamic involves the cadence of immersion, emergence, and transformation. Whether we focus on invention or audience, on writing-reading process or cultural studies, on personal expression or social construction, the pedagogical questions we put to ourselves in regard to our students concern our connectiveness within an imageword ecology, our egress into a critical awareness of the formative rules of that connectiveness, and our re-formation of those rules into different imagistic and rhetorical practices, into different narratives. Shaped by embodied literacies, we are impelled to consider ways in which we can invite our students to immerse themselves in the multilayered and tangled loops of an imageword ecology. We are impelled to provoke our students into an awareness of the rules—the ways of seeing and being—that limit their ability to discover, to invent, to mean. We are impelled to elicit transformations, new imagistic and rhetorical practices, that enrich our students and offer opportunities to renarrate the imageword ecologies within which they live. Thus, even as we are subject to our participation in an imageword ecology, that teeming nexus of bodies, cultures, times, and places, we are also able to exercise embodied literacies to act on that imageword ecology, to recraft both the meanings and the systems that give us birth.

Like embodied literacies, the dynamic of a poetics of teaching is a cyclical one, existing not as a linear progression from immersion to emergence to transformation, but as an interwoven loop of rhythms. In addition, even as each beat of the dynamic privileges a specific material literacy—immersion somatic literacy, emergence polyscopic literacy, transformation lateral literacy—it is embedded within all literacy. Similarly, each embodied literacy offers egress into each pulse of the dynamic (fig. 3.2). For example, immersion clearly relies on and enhances the connectiveness of somatic literacy, but it is also central to polyscopic literacy, to ways of seeing. Similarly, emergence suggests a shift to polyscopic literacy, to different ways of seeing connectiveness, but it is also crucial to

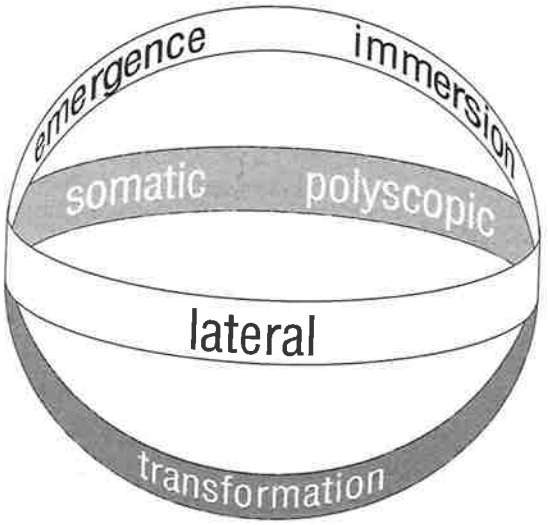

Fig. 3.2. The dynamic of a poetics of teaching

lateral literacies. Finally, transformation is an essential trait of lateral literacies, but it is also necessary for somatic literacy. The question that we need to ask ourselves, then, as we prepare to teach embodied literacies and to teach with embodied literacies, is how to invite immersion, provoke emergence, and elicit transformation, knowing that we can separate these experiences only artificially.

Immersion

Regardless of whether we are committed to teaching tropes, technical writing, or writing with technology, regardless of whether we are in a writing center, literacy center, or traditional classroom, a necessary part of a poetic of teaching is the invitation to immerse, to experience a visceral-emotional connectiveness so that the demarcations between subject and object, individual and situation, word and place dissolve. Privileging the corporeal *is* logic of imagery, immersion is the process of unmarking the boundaries that separate students so neatly and artificially from their embodiment and emplacement within the world. Immersion ties students' literacy

experiences to what Gesa E. Kirsch and Joy S. Ritchie, quoting Adrienne Rich, call a "politics of location" (7), which "reconnects our thinking and speaking with the body of this particular living human individual, a woman" (Rich, qtd. in Kirsch and Ritchie 7). A politics of location validates our lived experiences as knowledge, as a way of knowing. Immersion brings students nearer to the realization that bodies, communities, and literacies are mutually infused, mutually porous. Thus, the social-political vigor of a particular community cannot be abstracted from the physiological-psychological vigor of a particular individual. Each is woven within the other.

One way to invite immersion is to focus on the sensuous connections among imagewords, bodies, and places by literally shifting students to a different venue for writing-reading. Randall Roorda explores just such a strategy by having students write in nature as they study nature writing. Writing in nature, Roorda argues, makes students more sensitive to the interweaving of the words they use and the places within which they dwell. "Writing may function not just to record but to embody one's presence in place" (Roorda 397). For instance, Roorda cites the note-taking habits of nature writer Gary Nabhan. While in the field, Nabhan focuses in his field notes on re-creating in language the bird songs he hears. "In the field, there is a chance that some of the sounds I hear in that landscape will carry over into sounds of words I use to describe a place" (Nabhan, qtd. in Roorda 397). These on-site sounds, Roorda writes, weave throughout the language created in place, achieving for this discourse "a virtue borne of its origin in the place itself, a qualitative difference from any language he [Nabhan] can generate elsewhere" (397).

By connecting to place—both an environment and a body—students situate themselves on the shifting boundaries between words and somatic reality, discovering the inescapable connection between our words and our worlds. We do not need to take our students outside to do this. We can invite connectiveness to place by focusing their attention on their immediate "print setting," a term Robert F. Carey and Jerome Haste use to describe the physical

environment within which we write-read, opening us to the paradox of place: that connection to place can be one of alienation, can be alienating. The writings exchanged by students in Michael Blitz's and C. Mark Hurlbert's classes poignantly demonstrate the power of a print setting to close down language, to cut off options for actions. As one student so insightfully reveals:

> What's wrong with this picture? An eighteen year old kid comes home to find his mother totally drunk, as usual. His little sister has most of her clothes off with her boyfriend who is older and bigger than the eighteen year old so what can he say? The father? Well he's no place, nobody knows where he is or if he is dead. The eighteen year old finds a pile of dirty dishes and empty bottles and the baby brother is crawling around in garbage. So the eighteen year old picks up the baby and puts him in his chair while he starts to clean up the kitchen and make dinner. [. . .] The eighteen year old will be too tired to study again and he won't have time to write his paper for the only class he thinks he can do good in. What's wrong with this picture? (6)

These sensuous connections among literacies and sites can also be explored in the more traditional and more privileged school literacy. Immersion invites students to explore the blurring of school literacy, with its conformation to assessment and its service to middle-class values, and the material and discursive constraints (and agendas) of academic institutions (Fleckenstein, "Writing Bodies"). This exploration serves as a prelude to the realization that other places give rise to other literacies, literacies ostracized from school places but equally valid, equally capable of creating meaningful realities. Deborah Brandt's approach to writing-reading through "sponsors of literacy"—"agents, local or distant, concrete or abstract, who enable, support, teach, model, as well as recruit, regulate, suppress, or withhold literacy" ("Sponsors" 166)—provides insight into how such invitations to immerse can be supported. Here Brandt examines not only the scenes of literacy, with a perceptive

eye toward literacy (and literacy workers) as exploitable resources, but also the performance of literacy, performances that include an appropriation of literacy for the writer-reader's own purposes, separate from those of the sponsor. The acquisition and use of literacy within a work setting, as well as the acquisition and use of literacy to further the user's own agenda, underscore the material performances of literacy practices within specific places by individual people. We are tied to place "undetachably and without reprieve," Edward S. Casey tells us (xiii), and so are our literacies. By providing opportunities for immersion, we help our students learn to halt or limit the inevitable shrinkage that occurs "as signs come to surpass the body [escaping] its sensuous control, dissevering themselves from the material world and dominating that which they are meant to serve" (Eagleton qtd. in McLaren 147).

A second technique for fostering immersion involves empathy.[13] Empathy extends our emotional connections across borders. Martin L. Hoffman defines empathy as a vicarious emotional response to another person's situation. It is a match between the observer's feelings and those of the model ("Interaction" 103). Thus, it requires connections between at least two people who do not share the same immediate situation. However, the power of empathy extends far beyond the dyad of victim and observer, Hoffman argues. Empathy is the basis of our community building and thus the basis of our survival as a species and our identity as human beings. "This human capacity for empathic distress [. . .] may thus be a major cohesive force or glue in society," Hoffman argues ("Empathy and Justice" 151). To feel empathy, people subordinate their own situation to that of the victim. The major process by which an individual experiences empathy, Hoffman says, is that of role-taking: imagining oneself in another's place, an act that intrinsically taps imageword's double logics ("Interaction"). Role-taking can take two major forms: other focus and self focus. The first role-taking strategy—that of focusing on the model—involves imagining how the model is feeling, visualizing the model's behavioral responses so that missing nonverbal cues are provided, and responding to the images as if the situation were physically perceivable. The second

strategy, that of focusing on self—or identification—is one in which the individual pictures himself or herself in the model's position instead of just imagining the model's feelings. Perceivers immerse their values, drives, and behavioral patterns in those of the model, merging identities. Both techniques depend on blurring the boundaries between the place the perceiver inhabits and the place the victim inhabits, a process that enables victim and perceiver to experience similar physical reactions.[14]

As Hoffman points out, the richness of empathy extends beyond the victim-observer dyad to embrace the entire imageword ecology. As a result, immersion through empathy reconfigures traditional divisions of writing-reading. Invention, the art of finding the available means of persuasion, becomes inextricable from our connectiveness to the specifics of a physical situation. Invention becomes a material act. Audience is similarly reconfigured, requiring us to "flesh out" the fiction of audience by reminding our students that readers read in real places, in specific bodies. "From my wheelchair," Nancy Mairs wryly notes, "nothing looks the same" (*Voice* 46). The inescapability of body and place feeds directly into response so that reading as a writer means more than an enhanced sensitivity to style. It means resonating to a writer's situatedness, to the scene of action. *How* we invite immersion is not the crucial question for a poetics of teaching. *That* we invite it is.

Emergence

While immersion is a necessary element of a poetics of teaching, it is not sufficient. An entire semester inviting immersion might enable our students to plumb the depths of connectiveness, but it will not help them gain a greater critical awareness of the implications connectiveness holds for their literacy practices. Immersion must work in conjunction with emergence, or immersion can too easily morph into its own end, trapping writer-readers in one place, one body, one literacy, one reality. It can result in a glorification of the personal as an end in and of itself. As Rich warns, the "personal-for-its-own-sake," an "individualistic telling with no place to go," has no power to change the disenfranchisement of women

(*Of Woman* x) or the disenfranchisement of anyone. A necessary corollary to immersion is emergence, an identification of the imagistic and rhetorical strategies that maintain our emplacement within a particular imageword ecology.

We invite immersion, but we provoke emergence. The aim of emergence is to create a classroom praxis that requires our students to become more cognizant of the extent and the implications of their multifaceted immersion. Our participation in a culture results in our second naturing, our development of habits or ways of knowing that are drawn from our involvement with the very tools we create in the places we create them. Emergence aims at inciting an awareness of these habits and the price we pay for them.

One way to provoke that critical insight is by juxtaposing contrary ways of seeing. Ways of knowing are also ways of seeing, what Martin Jay, borrowing from Christian Metz, calls scopic regimes: the visual rules by which we see one way and not another (*Downcast*). These rules, however, become so deeply internalized that it is difficult to recognize their existence or to recognize their cultural embeddedness. However, important to scopic regimes is the existence of multiple ways of seeing. While one regime tends to dominate in a particular time and place, many less privileged ways of seeing are in contention within a single regime. Increased cognizance of a scopic regime, then, can be elicited by requiring our students to shift regimes. Disciplinarity, especially as configured through a communication-across-the-curriculum or writing-in-the-disciplines focus, is one way to do this. For example, literacy practices in the arts and literacy practices in the sciences are predicated on two very different ways of seeing. The ways of seeing in the arts correspond to what Schachtel calls allocentric seeing, a participatory seeing in which a writer-reader merges with the object of study, such as a poem.[15] On the other hand, the sciences are based on a different kind of seeing, that commonly referred to as Cartesian perspectivalism.[16] The scientific observer remains detached from the observed, an invisible witness to the unveiling of a reality to which the witness has unmediated access (Haraway, *Modest* 23–45). The disciplines are differentiated not only by their methodologies and languages but also by the way of seeing privileged with that academic community.

Literacy practices are linked inextricably with habits of seeing. Thus, juxtaposing different literacy practices—for example, writing a lab report of a poem or a poem of a frog dissection—enables our students to emerge from and recognize the influence of habituated ways of seeing that govern their progress through school, highlighting the degree to which their success in the academy rests, in part, on their ability to segue from one way of seeing to another.[17] On the basis of this realization, students will then be able to turn around on their disciplinary knowledge and on the world situations within which they honed a particular way of seeing so that they can identify the presence of alternative ways of seeing throughout their multifaceted lives.

In addition, when students acquire and validate multiple ways of seeing, they will inevitably find themselves in the position where these ways of seeing present them with oppositional visions of reality. "Struggles over rational accounts of the world are struggles over *how* to see," Haraway reminds us (*Simians* 196, her emphasis). This conflict in ways of seeing opens up gaps in the visual field or, more accurate, highlights the gaps already there. These gaps can then serve as points of resistance to the dominant ways of seeing, points where we can question the truth presented to us by our eyes. As Gilles Deleuze reminds us, "The point of critique is not justification but a different way of feeling, another sensibility" (vii). So, too, a different way of seeing.

Furthermore, confronted with these disparate versions of reality, students are then required to negotiate among these competing visions. This experience provokes the realization that a complete accounting of reality is impossible, that what we can hope for at best is an epistemology of partial perspectives, which is exactly what Haraway advocates: it is in "the politics and epistemology of partial perspectives that the possibility of sustained, rational, objective inquiry rests" (*Simians* 191), that the possibility of knowledge

rests.[18] Within the epistemology of partial perspectives we are subject to neither the totalization of a vision from everywhere nor the relativism of a view from nowhere, both of which Haraway calls "god-tricks" and common myths in the rhetorics of science. Instead, caught as we are "in an echo chamber and a house of mirrors, where, in word and image, ricocheting mimesis structures the emergence of subjects and objects," we can turn emergence into an ethical and accountable way to write-read (Haraway, *Modest* 179).

Transformation

Immersion invites sensuous connections, emergence provokes partial perspectives, transformation elicits change in imagistic and rhetorical practices, opening the way to change in an imageword ecology. Transformation radically alters the imagistic and rhetorical rules by which a system functions, by which it maintains the homeostasis of all its elements. Speaking within the context of art and the African American experience, bell hooks calls this the process of "set[ting] our imaginations free," necessary for the "invention of the decolonized self" (4). Because both minds and imaginations are "colonized," what is required is "a revolution in the way we see, the way we look" (4). Feminists have similarly argued for radical shifts in the way we write, a turning around on the rhetorical practices that maintain the supremacy of a patriarchal structure (Joeres and Mittman). Transformation effects such changes, on micro and macro levels of the imageword ecology.

One strategy for eliciting transformations in our classrooms consists of changing the medium within which traditional rhetorical and imagistic habits are practiced. The World Wide Web offers a rich possibility for such a change. The confluence of image and word in cyberspace, the hypermediated as well as the hypertextual structure of cyberspace, requires subtle and obvious shifts in our literacy practices. Craig Stroupe calls such imagistic and rhetorical transformations hybrid literacy, arguing for "visualizing English," an approach based on the "dialogically constitutive relations between words and images [. . .] which can function as a singly intended, if double-voiced, rhetoric" (609). Stroupe argues that

Web-based environments, through a "class of living, social intentions rather than formal arrangements" can result in "illumination" rather than illustration (620). Illumination is the transformed literacy practice in which words and images talk, respond, and resist: they illuminate each other rather than merely illustrate each other (620). "Seams and margins" between words and images become "contact zones," gaps within which new rhetorical and imagistic practices materialize (628).

A second technique that elicits transformation is empathy, particularly the cognitive or critical face of empathy. While empathy provides a valuable strategy for immersion, it also provides a starting point for transformation.[19] Empathy enables not only the sharing of situations and perspectives but also the changing of situations and perspectives. It is an agent of transformation. Hoffman has written repeatedly that empathy is the basis for prosocial activism, which he defines as "sustained action in the service of improving another person's or group's life condition either by working with them or by trying to change society on their behalf" ("Empathy and Prosocial" 65). Empathy initiates action, and it does so through the fusion of emotion and critical cognition. This critical aspect of empathy is clearly evident in the attribution of causes for the distressful situation and in application of principles, values, and ideologies (79). For example, when we encounter someone in distress, we automatically begin to assign reasons for the distress, and those reasons affect how empathy is experienced. If we conclude that victims have no control over their plight or if we conclude that we have contributed in some way to that plight, very different empathic responses occur, each of which lead to different kinds of civic actions. A critical leap is also necessary for the shift between empathy for another's specific situation and for another's life condition. We must recognize that that life condition is not limited to one individual but is endemic to an entire group or class of people (70).

Empathy in its emotional and cognitive aspects elicits radical changes in imagistic and rhetorical practices by reconfiguring narrative. First, it mitigates our reliance on a single story or a single image by breaking the temporal backbone of master narratives. One

of the dangers of immersion is that a particular situation can easily become a representation of all situations. For example, one woman's story of her struggle to craft an identity outside patriarchal structures morphs into all women's stories. It is this shifting from *a* situation to *the* situation that women of color point to when they argue that the feminist movement has essentially been a movement of white, middle-class women who have had the luxury of wealth, time, space, and education to ask the "woman's" (their "woman's") question. A multifaceted empathy disrupts "story" by crisscrossing stories, including counterstories that pulse to different rhythms, different times, different places. Thus, feminist researchers deliberately incorporate multiple voices—subjects and researchers—in an effort to highlight the multiplicity of stories within any construction of knowledge.

Second, empathy transforms the tyranny of first person singular, the rhetorical "I." Feminists assert that the construction of the rhetorical "I" in Western autobiography and essayistic writing has been founded on the existence of the unified Cartesian subject: white, middle-class, and male. This is the "I" that Virginia Woolf points to as shadowing, barring the first person Mary Seaton-Beaton in *A Room of One's Own*. By practicing empathy, however, students learn to question the authority, the singularity of the first person pronoun in published writing, in their own developing texts, and in the images "they" create. By disrupting their imagistic and textual stories, students embed multiple identities within that singular instance of "I," transforming a rhetorical stance inherent in Western essayistic practices.

Experiencing our connectiveness to bodies and places, recognizing the scopic regimes that morph out of connectiveness, and transforming in large and small ways our rhetorical and imagistic practices—this is the dynamic of a poetics of teaching. It is a dynamic that relies on, as well as enhances, the development of somatic, polyscopic, and lateral literacies.

Three years ago in first grade, Lindsey announced: "Don't call me Lindsey Mouse. I won't hear you."

"Oh?" I asked, assuming that she no longer wished me to use her nickname of Mouse. "What name will you hear?"

"My name is Junie Beatrice Jones Fleckenstein. And I want my hair cut so," she said, assertively placing under my nose the book cover of a popular series about a lively kindergartner. And so for a span she became Junie B. Fleckenstein, signing her diary entries "Junie B." practicing Junie B. mischief, and peppering her conversation and her play with Junie B. witticisms. Then Junie B. morphed into Ash Ketchum. Yesterday afternoon, Ash Ketchum Fleckenstein stepped off the school bus, brandishing her sister's copy of *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*.

"Mom, I need a wand and a cape. I'm going to fight He-Who-Cannot-Be-Named." She has discovered Hogwarts, so I expect that soon the Pokémon posters will come down, Ash will be relegated to a garage sale, and Lindsey will transform herself into a wizardling.

Through a continual weave of embodied literacies, through a rhythm of immersion, emergence, and transformation, Lindsey, like our students and ourselves, constructs a place for herself in the world, flexibly recrafting mind and body so that it resonates to the powerful imageword contexts within which she is interwoven, mirroring those multiple contexts in both her life and her writing-reading. By shaping our literacy teaching to embodied literacies and the dynamic of immersion, emergence, and transformation, we hold for our students, our children, and ourselves the hope of connection, of critique, of change.