Notice of the Final Oral Examination
for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

of

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MEd (University of Victoria, 2009)
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“Collaborating in the Electric Age: [onto]Riffological Experiments in Posthumanizing Education and Theorizing a Machinic Arts-Based Research”

Department of Curriculum and Instruction

Thursday January 7, 2021
10:00am PST
Remote Defence

Supervisory Committee:
Dr. Monica Prendergast, Department of Curriculum and Instruction, University of Victoria (Supervisor)
Dr. Michael Emme, Department of Curriculum and Instruction, UVic (Member)
Dr. Matt Bernico, The Center for Visual Culture and Media Studies, Greenville University, (Outside Member)

External Examiner:
Dr. Nicholas Ng-A-Fook, Faculty of Education, University of Ottawa

Chair of Oral Examination:
Dr. Esther Sangster-Gormley, School of Nursing, UVic

Dr. Stephen Evans, Acting Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies
Abstract

Collaborating in the Electric Age: [onto]Riffological Experiments in Posthumanizing Education and Theorizing a Machinic Arts-Based Research is a study about locating opportunities and entry points for introducing consideration of the nonhuman and posthuman to pedagogical perspectives that are traditionally concerned with human beings and epistemological subjects. The research, herein, engages doings in collaborative effort, during conditions of unprecedented interconnectedness facilitated by the electric age. Steeped in an environment thus created by technologies’ immense ubiquity and influence, this collaboration endeavours to recognize their full research participation, alongside that of humans.

This research presents collaboratively conducted, published inquiries that have been coauthored by myself and fellow doctoral candidate Richard Wainwright. Each facilitates, then attempts to articulate ways to decentre the human in educational contexts, beginning with our own human perspectives. As exercises in broadening our considerations of the life forms, matter, and nonhuman entities that surround humanity, this research prompts us to recognize much more than what humanity typically acknowledges as existing, given the anthropocentric frameworks it has constructed. We reorientate the nature of these relationships—posthumanizing them—and in doing so, disrupt our own thinking to work something different than our circumstances have hitherto informed us to consider. We have co-developed a study and conducted research in collaboration with human and nonhuman research participants.

Five nationally and internationally published co-authored journal articles, a book chapter, and five intermezzos (short “observational” pieces) comprise this study that explores collaboration and recombinatoriality during “the electric age” (McLuhan, 1969, 10:05). Recognizing humanity’s increasingly inextricable relationships with technologies, this collaboratively conducted study draws into creative assemblage Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari’s philosophical concepts; new materialism as cultural theory; the prescient observations and predictions of Marshall McLuhan and a media studies curriculum he co-developed over forty years ago; arts-based research; museum exhibitions; features of music production such as sampling, mashup, remix, and turntabliling; among many other notes and tones. A conceptually developed riff mobilizes our inquiries as “plug in and play,” while its academic study is theorized as [onto]Riffology. Ontological shifts beget a machinic arts-based research (MABR) that develops a posthuman critical pedagogy inspired by Negri and Guattari (2010). Collaborating in the Electric Age: [onto]Riffological Experiments in Posthumanizing Education and Theorizing a Machinic Arts-Based Research celebrates collaborativity, discovery, and learning during the electric age.