PARALLAXIC PRAXIS
Multimodal Interdisciplinary Pedagogical Research Design

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Parallaxic Praxis is a research framework utilized by teams to collect, interpret, transmediate, analyze, and mobilize data generatively. This methodology leverages the researchers’ personal strengths and the collective expertise of the team including the participants and community when possible. Benefits include the use of multi-perspective analyses, multi-modal investigations, informal and directed dialogic conversations, innovative knowledge creation, and models of residual and reparative research. Relying on difference, dialogue, and creativity propulsion processes; and drawing on post-qualitative, new materiality, multiliteracies, and combinatorial, even juxtaposing theoretical frames; this model offers extensive research possibilities across disciplines and content areas to mobilize knowledge to broad audiences.

This book explains methods, theories, and perspectives, and provides examples for developing creative research design in order to innovate new understandings. This model is especially useful for interdisciplinary partnerships or cross-sector collaborations. This book specifically addresses issues of research design, methodology, knowledge generation, knowledge mobilization, and dissemination for academics, students, and community partners. Examples include possibilities for scholars interested in doing projects in social justice, community engagement, teacher education, Indigenous research, and health and wellness.
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Foreword

Eleven Perspectives on Parallaxic Praxis

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1

Parallaxic praxis is a celebration of the hard work that is heart work. In University commons divided: Exploring debate & dissent on campus, Peter MacKinnon (2018) notes that “intellectual work is hard work, and those committed to it must take the time to inform themselves carefully, to think their way through complicated questions, and to test their thinking in the marketplace of ideas” (p. 57). In Parallaxic praxis Pauline Sameshima, Patricia Maarhuis, and Sean Wiebe understand MacKinnon’s perspective on intellectual work as hard work. They take up MacKinnon’s call for scholarship and practice that “requires disciplined, patient effort, and a determination to engage and listen to others” (p. 57). Moreover, they agree with MacKinnon’s claim that “universities exist to develop the human intellect, to enable discernment and the search for truth, and to resist ignorance, intellectual laziness, and coercion” (p. 104). Parallaxic praxis is a sophisticated book that presents a comprehensive overview of the concepts and principles of parallaxic praxis as well as engaging exemplars of research design that address urgent issues and questions including methamphetamine addiction, interpersonal violence, Indigenous mental health care, learner-centered pedagogy, cervical cancer screening, dementia studies, teacher education, technology and inclusive education, literacy, knowledge generation, and veteran post-traumatic stress syndrome.

2

Perplexing Pedagogy: Pensées

if lost in mystery

something emerges
a time you learned something almost
always begins with letting go

at the end of the day, writing is about desire,
the heart, breathing and not breathing

I will learn to live attentively in tentative times
I will learn to live the tenuous in tensile times

under the sky where possibilities defy calculus
I am a radical rooted in earth, heart, and wind

I attend to the familiar with unfamiliar words
I attend to the unfamiliar with familiar words

if we don’t see the value in our lived stories,
we won’t see the value in others’ stories

seek words infused with the heart’s rhythms
efficacious, capacious, effervescent words

I come alive in my writing where
I see, hear, know promises

no day is complete without
reading and writing poetry!

I am in process,
I am content

Parallaxic praxis is a memo to the world to remember to listen, to hear one another. In her poignant novel about racism, immigration, and colonialism, In another place, not here, Dionne Brand (1997) writes: “Already their stories were becoming lies because nobody wanted to listen, nobody had the time. That’s what happens to a story if nobody listens and nobody has the time, it
flies off and your mouth stays open” (p. 60). According to Brand, “you end up being a liar because what you say doesn’t matter. And there’s no tracing or lasting to your stories” (p. 60). Parallaxic praxis is about learning how to listen to the stories of others, so those stories sing with truthfulness about lived and living experiences.

4

It’s All Greek to Me

antiphona
aporia
catechization
dialogue
ekphrasis
ethics
evanagnostos
métissage
mimesis
palimpsest
parallax
poiesis
praxis
sorites
trauma

And that is a significant strength of Parallaxic praxis—it offers richly evocative concepts that are full of possibilities for revisiting traditional practices, and shaping innovative approaches, and honouring the intricacies of interconnections among distinct disciplines that should never be held separate.

5

Parallaxic praxis is a confession of desire. In Ecology of everyday life: Rethinking the desire for nature, Chaia Heller (1999) notes that “informed by a
capitalist sensibility, desire is often reduced to yearnings for an accumulation of private property, both material and symbolic” (p. 5). Therefore, “rarely do we view desire as a yearning to enhance a social whole greater than our selves, a desire to enrich the larger community” (p. 5). Heller calls for “a desire for a more healthful and sensual expression of everyday life” (p. 6) as we nurture “the ability to synthesize reason and passion” (p. 9). Heller wants to create “a new relationality, an empathetic, sensual, and rational way of relating that is deeply cooperative, pleasurable, and meaningful” (p. 93).

Parallaxic praxis resonates with Heller’s hopeful understanding of desire and love: “It is in the space between individuals, within the hearts of individuals, that Eros flourishes. Eros, then, represents an embodied quality of social relationships—an attraction, passion, and yearning of one self for other selves” (p. 94).

A Poem Is

a heart beat   a light breath
a dream hanging on the line
stretched between poles we cannot see
falling in love with the alphabet
growing intimate with grammar and syntax
a game of peek-a-boo   scribbles in snow
a call, filled with hope somebody will hear
a message in a bottle dropped in the sea
attending to the familiar with unfamiliar words
a love note sent to creatures light years away
words infused with the heart’s rhythms
words, efficacious, capacious, effervescent words
enjoying the sunlight through the study blinds
learning to live attentively in tentative times
cedars dancing in my neighbor’s backyard
Parallaxic praxis is a sacred testimony. In her moving memoir *Gently to Nagasaki*, Joy Kogawa (2016) asks, “Do we write to be free of our ghosts or to welcome them?” (p. 190) For Kogawa, the world is “an open book embedded with stories. We hear them if we have ears to hear” (p. 149). She knows that her “story is from the belly of the dark” (p. 47). She is both “forbidden to tell it and commanded to tell it” because she knows “that to speak is to slay and not to speak is to slay. What is needed is right action” (p. 47). Therefore, she concludes that “for my part, I hold with a fierce and painful joy my trust in a Love that is more real than we are” (p. 42). This is the spirit of parallaxic praxis.

Parallaxic praxis is a political manifesto that champions interdisciplinarity in scholarship and social activism . . . . Parallaxic praxis is a love song! In “Everyday life at the corporate university,” Jane Juffer (2009) refutes binary oppositions in order to promote “the intersections of globalization, job training, cultural production, and ethical engagement” (p. 147). According to Juffer, “the challenge is to truly think in interdisciplinary terms . . . , which requires one to think about the ethical possibilities in the relationship between the humanities, business, education, engineering, information sciences, health services, and other fields” (p. 153). In a likeminded way, Andrew Ross recommends that “we are living through the formative stages of a mode of production marked by a quasiconvergence of the academy and the knowledge corporation” as they mutate into “new species that share and trade many characteristics” (p. 182). Parallaxic praxis sings with enthusiasm for social activism and change.

While I read *Parallaxic praxis* I lingered with many questions including:

1. In parallaxic praxis, what are the differences between collecting, representing, interpreting, and disseminating research?

2. What is the difference between using the arts to make sense of research conducted using traditional social science methods, and using the arts to research traditional social science issues and questions?

3. What is the relationship between ethics and aesthetics?

4. What is data?
5. What is the difference between rendering and surrendering?

6. What are the criteria for assessing Arts Integrated Research?

7. How can we make Arts Integrated Research more persuasive and useful?


9. Should we develop criteria for assessment from social science methodologies and practices, or from artists’ methodologies and practices?

10. What is Arts Integrated Research good for?

Lunatic Scholars

education research and practice
should always charge us with insights
(in legal electrical business military ways)
living with the flux, listening to ducks
laughing on the dike, an encouragement
not to duck the flux, to laugh too
dance a highland jig, even if we don’t
know how, right in the middle of
the flowing, furling, flashing flux
leave the models and wall charts
and kits and formulas to others
who wear suits or pretend they do
we become masters like Ted T. Aoki
is a master, always pushing boundaries
we have not yet seen or been
to inscribe our own insights
we do not need to repeat
everything others have done

our hang-ups are the stories
we seldom tell, the handicaps
that trip up our successes

the hang-ups are our humanity,
at least as integrally who we are
and are becoming, as any gifts

perhaps the classroom needs
to be a place where human beings
hang out with their hang-ups

instigating a revolution,
a twisting turning, to and fro,
in the heart of pedagogy

why do scholars speak so quietly?
why do scholars mumble rumble stumble?
why do scholars amble in their preambles?

if you are going to be witty, ironic, comical,
be prepared (in the best Boy Scout ethic) to be
misunderstood, misinterpreted, misrepresented

write with a kind of reckless, ruthless,
ruminative, revelling resolve

to defer solution and resolution
Parallaxic praxis is a love song! In a remarkable book titled *Three moments of love in Leonard Cohen & Bruce Cockburn*, Paul Nonnekes (2001) spells out a profound definition of love:

> Structures of love are created not through the fixing of desire in secure borders and boundaries, but through establishing frameworks of intersubjectivity, the activity of subjects reciprocally recognizing each other’s independence and freedom, recognizing each other’s difference, establishing a big space for the entertaining of diversity. (pp. 174-175)

Like the authors of *Parallaxic praxis*, Nonnekes understands “love as movement forward, not staying in one place, not being stuck or fixed” (p. 56). For Nonnekes, “love must move outward into the complicated world of social relations, of politics and power, of intersubjective conflict” (p. 66). Nonnekes calls for “the prophet-poet” (p. 178) because “the prophetic voice of the poet is outside the established system” (p. 129). Nonnekes calls for “an activist community fighting for change, for a better world” (p. 94); he calls for “a community of love” (p. 93). Even if “everything is falling apart, yet love rules” (p. 178) because love “is the active agent in human desire. It is what keeps us burning for something more than what presently exists. Burning for love, for justice and the overcoming of evil” (p. 60). The authors of *Parallaxic praxis* are all committed to “burning for love.” And we are all bountifully blessed by their commitments!

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Glossary

Select terms suggested by students:

**Aesthetic:** the physical beauty of an object or work; the focus on the physical appearance, underlying principles

**Agonism:** struggle between adversaries; a philosophy where conflict is important to politics and societal change

**Answerability:** responsibility for explaining or justifying one's actions

**Antiphona:** a refrain that repeats, the ways in which the commonalities between rendered works echo one another or come together to teach the viewer/researcher something new

**Artefact vs. Artifact:** The use of the word artefact throughout the book is intentional. While many sources indicate that the difference in spelling is geographic with British English preferring artefact and North American English preferring artifact, the word artefact is used in this book to specifically refer to constructed objects that reference a part, a residual, or an abstract object, perceived through context. An artifact is generally considered a complete object, a whole. An artefact is an object made by a human being or is something that results from a preparation or investigation

**Aporia:** challenges or puzzles regarding the rendered work that challenge closure in thinking

**Assemblage:** a gathering, accumulation, or remixture

**Bacchanalian:** a drunken revelry

**Bricolage:** the construction of a creation from a variety of available objects

**Catchization:** question or examine closely or methodically; to move knowledge forward through questioning systematically or searchingly

**Dissonance:** tension created as a result of two clashing or disharmonious elements

**Ekphrasis:** a device where something is recreated in a different medium; i.e., a painting translated into a poem

**Etiology:** the cause or reason for something; investigation of the cause of something

**Evanagnostos:** the legibility of the rendered work; how well the audience can read the rendered work

**Found poetry:** poetry created from previously available text; i.e., creating a poem from interview transcripts by using the participant’s words

**Hermeneutic:** methodology of interpretation of human actions, specific texts or other literary texts

**Heteroglossia:** the presence of multiple expressed viewpoints located in a text or an artwork; notion that all conflicting perspectives have value
**Heuristic:** an approach to learning where the answer is found using hands on, trial and error based inquiry processes

**Intertextuality:** interconnection and how different words influence interpretation; how the rendered works speak to each other, the researchers and the data they represent

**Juxtaposition:** the placement of objects side by side, often to create contrast or comparison between the objects

**Liminal:** transitional, borderline, at the edge, in progress, just beginning or forming

**Mimesis:** imitation or making a likeness; a mirroring or reproduction of data found in the rendered artwork

**Narrative:** the story created by the data collected in a study

**Ontological:** beliefs about what exists and how reality is categorized. An epistemological position refers to a stance the researcher adopts toward the nature of knowledge or how something is known

**Palimpsest:** traces of different perspectives that come through the underlayers of a work

**Parallax:** the change in an object/view point due to a change in perspective by the viewer

**Polysemy:** phrases and words that have multiple meanings

**Poiesis:** a moment when the rendered work has meaning added to it through discussion and interpretation; the process of a work being moved from a static object to an interpretive body

**Portraiture:** a method of thinking about and producing rich representations of phenomena

**Post-Qualitative:** inquiry that seeks to move outside the normalized structures of qualitative research methodologies and humanist epistemologies, and ontologies

**Praxis:** the process in which the learned is put into practice; the embodied form of engaging, realizing, and applying theory in practice

**Punctum:** to wound; the emotional connection that occurs when looking at a visual

**Reparative:** effecting repair, balance, returning

**Residual research:** research benefits that continue to occur without the researcher present. i.e., Similar to royalties from a book publication, permanent research art exhibitions can create reminders in communities of community involvement

**Sorites:** a significance found in the data or rendered works

**Transactive:** an object that interacts with a viewer in a reciprocal or influential manner
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