LBST 330 – Fall 2018 Module 2 – Research in Context Response paper #1 to Chapter 1 Ways of Seeing

By Cody Peters

Expanding on point #5 of my previous fields of interest assignment, the opportunities and problems that surrounded sampled data that I brought in to my project are myriad in their potential. For my first project, the sampled data that I utilized, or had the opportunity to utilize, was largely self-generated. I do not mean that I simply made up the data; I personally created and wrote the questions that I utilized in the interviews which I myself conducted and recorded. As such, the information that I generated through these interviews and questions was potentially problematic for several reasons; firstly, the potential for bias was relatively high, as I was conducting the interviews and gathering the data that I was looking for. To combat this, I submitted both the questions themselves and then later the fulfilled interviews, to a separate and external authority, namely my supervising professor, Gillian. Due to her lack of knowledge or involvement with the *Magic: the Gathering* community, there was little to no reason for her to be biased towards the questions and the responses themselves, as she has no prior knowledge or expectations for this information. In addition to this, there was little chance of my making a simplified or "captured" version of the information, as I was attempting to generate as diverse and in depth forms of data as possible, and I did not and would not alter any of the responses that were given by my participants. As such, the data was very organic in nature; much like a photograph, the recordings and transcripts of my interviews are very reliable records of information, as they were true-to-life examples of the emotions and responses of my participants. In this sense, going over the records is similar to "seeing" the world around *Magic: the Gathering* culture, as anyone who reads or listens to them is experiencing them in the same scope and setting as the interviews were conducted.

In this vein of thought, photography-based media, such as film, television and other visual mediums do play a role in the way that I perceive or access reality, as with my own project, if one were simply to read a paper or reduce the knowledge expressed in my interviews to an analysis, then one would not get the same level of emphasis or passion that was expressed by my participants. By opening up the style of data gathering to encompass more than just question and response, I was able to experience the reality of my participants and know their understanding and grasp on the world in a more unique and in-depth way. In this regard, reality is absolutely changed by the methods we use to inspect it. Without the recordings or true-to-life transcripts, the reality surrounding the opinions or thoughts of the participants would be reduced or confined. Despite my lack of usage of photography-based data, the use of recordings and transcriptions helps to generate a more true-to-reality scope for the consumption of this data.