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Response Paper #3 to Villenueve's *Arrival*

a) How has the reflection undertaken so far in Module 2 shifted and/or deepened your emerging or already chosen research topics, and the ways you envision proceeding? Has one of the suggested topics, or may be a new one, emerged as the more compelling option?

Since writing the Emerging Fields of Interest assignment, I have narrowed down my chosen research topic. I intend to explore masculinity within my tutorials and final Graduating Project. I envision proceeding with this research topic by using my three tutorials to explore masculinity from at least three different perspectives. First, I intend to examine cross-cultural hegemonic masculinities using an Anthropological approach and Feminist lens. Next, I hope to examine masculinity and effects (my approach here is as yet undecided). Finally, I intend to examine the intersection of masculinity and art – how men have been represented in art historically and contemporarily. I am exploring the idea of creating an original art piece for my final Graduating Project. I have never considered myself as a traditional "artist", but have become inspired by Berger's Way of Seeing, Gadamer's Game of Understanding and a LBST 200 class (which I am taking concurrently) focused on drawing as an ethnographic method.

Berger's Way of Seeing illuminated the idea that "the way we see things is affected by what we know or what we believe." Berger uses the example of original art versus reproduced art as his example for ways of knowing and approaching knowledge and research. I was particularly struck by Berger's idea of original art works as having "immediacy in their testimony." In creating an original art piece that speaks to contemporary masculinity, I hope to remove the detachment that would arise from simply reproducing knowledge from scholars on the topic.

Specific to my research approach, it will be important for me to integrate Gadamer's Game of Understanding, especially, creating a dialogical relationship with my research on masculinity. Because I identify as a cis-gendered female, the research topic of masculinity is quite literally "the Other" to me, similar to the relationship between humans and aliens in the film *Arrival*. While I cannot *immerse* myself into this research topic in a literal sense (as Gadamer would have suggested), I can allow myself room to *play* with the topic (through tutorials and personal research), and remember that providing room to make mistakes is when true understanding occurs. In doing so, I might uncover views and sensitivities to the topic of masculinity that I could not have otherwise.

b) Taking on this film, and reflecting on previous materials and discussions, do you foresee new ideas to approach your research going forward with your tutorials and/or Graduating Project? Include for example a reflection on your personal history, limitations, normalized assumptions on the field, and other contextual considerations that you want to be mindful of as a way of engaging in a situated dialogue with your topic.

Villeneuve's *Arrival* solidified the idea that an open dialogue cannot be established while adhering strictly to previously set methods. The resolution of the film's plot is dependent upon creating an open dialogue, allowing room for changes in approach, and approaching the issue with different epistemological perspectives. As well, the film's non-linear approach to time draws on ideas of a universal ontological reality. The film illustrates that words form the basis of all reality. Without developing the proper language, knowledge is out of our reach. This is exemplified in the film by the difference between the alien's semasiographic language representing meaning, and human's written languages representing sound.

My personal history with the topic of masculinity lies in my position as the *other* – I am a cis-gendered female who embodies many stereotypical feminine qualities. Because I will be approaching *the masculine* through *the feminine* this contradiction could be seen as limiting. My personal experience of masculinity from the perspective of the *other* will be my greatest limitation with this research. I have many learned biases and assumptions stemming from cultural and societal norms and expectations about gender that will impede my research process if I do not approach it in an open and dialogical way. Because masculinity is the *other*, it is pertinent that I develop a *language* during my research to understand the topic in an all-encompassing way.

c) How do you foresee adapting methods or creating new procedures for your project? The final way will be up to your negotiation with the situation, but what do you imagine happening?

I expect to encounter different theoretical approaches when approaching the topic of masculinity from different academic perspectives (e.g., anthropology, feminist theory, art history). These *different ways of seeing and understanding* will provide me with an opportunity to illuminate different elements in my research. These theoretical approaches will guide my procedures as I *play* with applying them in different ways. I anticipate that throughout the research process I will continually adapt my direction regarding what research I decide to supplement my original art piece (Graduation Project) with. I expect and welcome mistakes to be made as I explore masculinity using a dialogical approach, allowing for further exploration and reflection.