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Liberal Studies 330.

Sean Ashley.

December 7th, 2018.

Getting Started For Future Tutorials.

Tutorial Information: LBST 391 with Josema Zamorano - Humanities Division.

Proposed Topic of Investigation: Land, Mythology, and Art in Contemporary Mexican-Mayan Communities.

Resources and Methodology: By reading materials such as Chilam Balam and Popol Vuh, I will prepare a summary of important characters and mythology for a future reinterpretation in a creative piece. As well, through conducting interviews, I will learn about the Mayan culture from Mayan citizens from Mexico. In addition, preparing critical reviews of relevant materials including film, photography, art, will allow me to expand my perspective on the topic.

Proposed Learning Outcomes:

- Identify current social/environmental problems affecting Mexican-Mayan Communities in Mexico.

- Describe foundational Mayan myths and symbols and their social/environmental relevance today.
- Identify mythical beings and symbols that can be reinterpreted into fictional characters for a future visual/textual creative piece about current social/environmental challenges in this region.
- Expand knowledge on how to draw fictional characters.
- Explore how to express emotions visually.

Literature Review.

Beliefs and perspectives have shaped the various ways people see the world. Regardless of whether people study a photograph or a drawing, human views towards data will be influenced by the way they perceive reality. When defining my interests for current and future tutorials, I understood how important it is to mold the knowledge that shapes the lens through which you observe life. Articles such as “Art for Art’s Sake to Art as Means of Knowing” and writings on reconciling the indigenous peoples of Mexico have gifted me a wider view on the world and the different issues affecting my home country. Other readings on “Embodied Methodologies, Participation, and the Art of Research” have shown me a world of possibilities when it comes to merging research and creativity within one project. Thanks to nurturing my knowledge on these topics, visual storytelling and research have become my main interests for my tutorials and graduating project. These two mediums were incorporated when I had the idea for my first tutorial, which consisted of doing a graphic novel inspired by both Mexican mythology and the contemporary indigenous issues of Mexico. In order to accomplish this coalescence between art and research, I had to

investigate the different ways this exploration could be accomplished. Thus, I chose to investigate art as a means of knowing as well as the various methodologies present when observing qualitative approaches to research. Currently, my views on these topics are expanding and evolving, and I am hoping they will thrive as I continue working on nurturing my mind during my tutorials and graduating project.

The article “From Art for Art's Sake to Art as Means of Knowing: A Rationale for Advancing Arts-Based Methods in Research, Practice, and Pedagogy” explores the arts-based methods that benefit research, practice and pedagogy. By addressing the intricacies of knowing and learning, this article appreciates art and the aesthetic experience. It examines the arts-based methods as a conduit for topic engagement and reflection. Techniques such as drawing, photography, cartooning, and music, are considered as tools that can explore methodology and epistemology. In the same way, Madeline Fox’s article “Embodied Methodologies Participation and the Art of Research,” Fox discusses the areas of academia where both art and research overlap. Fox employs the “performance and circus theater in order to explore alternative possibilities ... of reality” and explains the ways one can use visual, verbal, or performing arts to display real-life data via artistic methodologies (Fox 325). Artistic approaches used methodologies are considered as a way of unraveling reality’s meanings and strengthening validity. Furthermore, both “Embodied Methodologies Participation and the Art of Research” and “From Art for Art's Sake to Art as Means of Knowing: A Rationale for Advancing Arts-Based Methods in Research, Practice and Pedagogy” encouraged me to analyze my graduating project and its in-depth meaning. They incited me to wonder how my graduating project would influence an audience as well as myself. A hidden facet of my project was revealed and explained: art

and narrative are able to “support a re-visioning of subjective issues in a means not possible from more traditional and linear descriptive methods of engagement,” (Eaves 156). The idea of my work having a lasting aesthetic impact towards an audience had not occurred to me thus far. The visuals of both articles gifted me the idea of using images as tools to depict emotions. The drawings from my future graphic novel will be used as vessels to convey feelings that would otherwise be hard to express. Thus, I will showcase what remains unseen and silent by merging research and art while also using colour, visual juxtaposition, text, and powerful imagery.

Comic-book illustrations and narrative have the power to transmit core messages, guide a serious investigation, and aid in research. It is true that “art can induce emotion, challenge understanding and be disrupting and even disconcerting, serving to redefine how we make assumptions and potentially catalyzing transformative change” (Bishop 102). Art can draw from an “influence base and reach out to a broad audience enhancing understanding of the human condition,” (Eaves 148). This is my graduating project’s ultimate goal, causing transformation and challenging assumptions for people to become aware of a country that has been diminished and underrepresented. The ongoing indigenous issues in Mexico should be showcased in media all the more. For example, the Rios Montt genocide case examines two recent landmark cases in Guatemala. In the article “Reconciling Indigenous Peoples with the Judicial Process: An Examination of the Recent Genocide and Sexual Slavery Trials in Guatemala,” the *Q’eqchi* and *Ixil* cultures are discussed. The article analyses two recent landmark cases in Guatemala. The first is the Rios Montt genocide case; the second is the 2016 Sepur Zarco case. Both of these explore the topics of genocide and domestic slavery in contemporary settings, which are topics that

require more attention. In a milder manner, I wish to portray these issues within my graduating project and give a voice to the “under-represented experiences - those who are oppressed and Othered - flattened, obscured, missed, distorted and misconstrued” (Fox 321.) It is cultures like these that I wish to represent within my graduating project as they are being neglected by the world. With my stories and my art, I will invite people to rethink their beliefs, expand their awareness and act to better the issues present in Mexico.

This semester has been one permeated with discovery, which has brought my creativity and inspiration to a new level. My first two tutorials will be research-based tutorials, while my third tutorial will be a stepping-stone towards my graduating project. Before getting close to finishing my last project, I would like to work towards creating a script for my graphic novel. With a script, I will be able to start sketching and editing my final graphic novel by the time I begin my project. Since a creative project takes a while to conceive, using my tutorials to move forward is the only path to success. For my second tutorial, I thought it appropriate to perform research on the ongoing political and legal affairs present in Mexico, specifically in the peninsula where the remaining Mayan culture still thrives. I am truly excited to see what the future holds for this project and to see how people will one day react to my creation.

Next Steps.

For my third Tutorial, I believe Jack Silberman from the MOPA division at Capilano would be a notable candidate to instruct me in the art of how to create a script for my graphic novel as well as how to write an engaging and powerful story. Silberman has been producing, directing, and writing films for more than three decades and has extensive

international experience, having worked on location in more than twenty countries around the world. Even though my project is not film-based, it is still visual storytelling, which is relevant to what Silberman teaches. For my graduating project, I would truly enjoy working with Sandra once again since she is an amazing teacher and she aided me to build the first idea for my project. Another option would be Anne Stone as she is a wonderful storyteller as well and has experience in the publishing world. Most of the faculty at Capilano could aid me in completing my graduating project as they are all incredibly qualified and admirable, though these three instructors are the people who best fit, though this can change as the project evolves during my tutorials.

Works Cited.

- Eaves, Sally. "From Art for Art's Sake to Art as Means of Knowing: A Rationale for Advancing Arts-Based Methods in Research, Practice and Pedagogy." *Electronic Journal of Business Research Methods*, vol.12, no. 2, Nov. 2014, p. 147-160.
- Fox, Madeline. "Embodied Methodologies, Participation, and the Art of Research." *Social & Personality Psychology Compass*, vol. 9, no. 7, July 2015, p. 321-332.
- Patterson, Elisabeth Madeleine. "Reconciling Indigenous Peoples with the Judicial Process: An Examination of the Recent Genocide and Sexual Slavery Trials in Guatemala." *Revue Québécoise de Droit International*, no. 2, 2016, p. 225.