

ARTICULATION(S) OF CULTURE(S):

Mobilizing knowledge, ecological justice, and media convergence

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Abstract. This paper draws on articulation(s) as a multi-method counter-methodology in the design of educational research. We use this form of critical inquiry to examine ecological literacies and digital epistemologies associated with Dow's 2006 worldwide advertising campaign, "The Human Element". Articulation(s) draw from research that continues to evolve reflexively and that openly questions deterministic institutional explanations. Our interpretation of articulation(s) include(s) critical processes for gathering, analyzing, and interpreting data. A critique of Dow's "The Human Element" ad is provided as an example of how multimodal forms of information have been mobilized, (re)presented, (re)mixed, and (re)mediated using media convergence, how various points of view intersect formations of everyday digital media networks, and how communication practices entail subtle and complex relationships associated with social and political meanings and values. Our focus is on social justice issues of ecology as mobilized through media convergence. We argue that an integrated and negotiated approach to critical inquiry linking ecological justice through education can help researchers, teachers, and students analyze conditions of culture(s) within the contexts of complex political and social conditions that are prevalent in most societies.

1. Introduction

In 2006 Dow unveiled a new worldwide advertising campaign, "The Human Element." According to their press release, "Dow's Human Element campaign is about reconnecting the company with the faces and values of the people Dow touches in a positive way." Toby Sachs, senior vice president/group management director at FCB Chicago stated, "Our creative approach was driven by the need to capture visually the commitments Dow has made to use its expertise and influence to make a difference in the lives of real people around the world." The campaign vision (re)presented Dow's identity as compassionate for some of the most pressing economic, social and environmental concerns facing the global community.

The Dow ad was comprised of five elements: soundtrack, voiceover narration, short video clips, colour scheme, and graphics. The soundtrack featured a solo violinist playing a Celtic melody. An adult male native English speaker narrated the ad in a friendly tone. (See complete scriptⁱⁱ). The 90-second film was composed of forty-five scenes. The ad imagery was gathered from locations on four continents. The first half of the ad was dominated by satellite images of pristine environments. The second half of it showed solitary humans in remote, rural and agricultural locations. The majority of people in the film were visible minorities, although there was one scene of a European male sculptor working in his studio and another of a male and female swimmer performing an underwater ballet in an emerald green lagoon. The palette of the film was soft, muted earth tones, grays, beiges, and greens. A brilliant pink jacket was used in the scene introducing the Hu (Human) Element symbol. The Dow logo appeared in the last 3 seconds and it was the first and only reference to Dow in the ad.

At first, when we viewed this Dow Hu (Human) Elementⁱⁱⁱ Commercial, it seemed like any other film-based advertisement promoting itself and its products. But as we probed into related information, we soon uncovered a complex web of communication practices at play. From the Dow website we read that Dow's campaign motivation was to re-brand its corporate identity. We asked, why does Dow need to re-build trust with its customers, employees and communities? How has Dow's previous reputation been negatively affected by past business practices? In what follows, we discuss our processes of investigating emerging social and ecological justice issues by articulating different views in relationship to different forms of information.

In this article, we use *articulation(s)* (Daryl Slack, 1996) as a way to study the social circulation of information associated with art, digital and analogue media and issues of social and ecological justice. The (s) is used after articulation to indicate that there can always be another relationship identified contingent on ones selection of multiple contextual conditions. We began by examining the following research conceptual dimensions of articulation(s): counter methodologies, nomadic, communicative, moments of arbitrary closure, situated and pragmatic, and reflexive. We examined how digital media can be used to (re)presents, remediates, and remixes information. Then, we used articulation(s) to examine the social circulation of different points of view and different forms of information about the Dow ad over TV and the Internet. We grouped various perspectives by applying Hall's (1980) theory of dominant-hegemonic^{iv}, oppositional, and negotiated reading positions. We used a web browser application to search for comments that characterize these points of view. Next we situated these three reading positions among five communication practices: information, propaganda, misinformation, disinformation, and _nformation (incomplete) in relationship to the various forms of Dow media. In conclusion we suggest resisting methodologies that claim to explain information through conclusive results. Instead we favour reflexive research perspectives and practices that support identifying, gathering, analysing, and interpreting data and that allows questions to be asked and that emerge as a consequence of engaging in research.

2. Media Convergence

In our inquiry we looked critically at the Dow Human Element ad and some of the social justice issues of ecology as mobilized through media convergence. Media convergence has increased in the past ten years as broadcast and digital media have been integrated in unique and unusual ways. Jenkins (2005) described the concept of media convergence as “the flow of content across multiple media platforms...Convergence is a word that manages to describe technological, industrial, cultural, and social changes depending on who’s speaking, and what they think they are talking about... Some of its circulation depend on tactics of grassroots appropriation, whether in North America or in the Middle East” (p. 2-3). In most societies worldwide mobile communication is not just circulated and distributed through broadcast and analogue media, but is being pushed to and pulled from communication sources over wired and wireless communication systems (Castells, M, Fernandez-Ardevol, M. Linchuan Qiu, J. & Sey, A. (2004). Contemporary communication systems employ vast networks of networks that allow for mobilizing knowledge, ideas and issues for a variety of purposes.

3. Critical Inquiry and Dimensions of Articulation(s)

To examine the Dow Human Element ad and the complexity of media convergence we conceived of critical inquiry as an *assemblage* (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987) of ideas, theories, and processes. For researchers, teachers and students critical inquiry can be used for examining, questioning, and deliberating on both the limits and possibilities of interpretations in relation to complex contextual conditions. Critical inquiry is premised on cultural study theories, which have demonstrated that experiential phenomena are not necessarily meaningful (Hall, 1980). Researchers, teachers and students should seek a fuller investigation into the interpretations of social, political, historical, cultural, technological contextual conditions (Krug, 2003). Critical inquiry about media convergence is a necessary area of study in education.

Our investigation also considered ways to identify a range of viewpoints and ideas at issue. The acceptance, resistance, and negotiation of contextual conditions are ascribed to particular human encounters filtered through forces of socially interested agency. Describing, analyzing, and interpreting symbolic cultural production in rich contexts necessitates that researchers, teachers and students examine how meanings and values of experiential phenomena will always be struggled over by people with different social interests.

Identifying dimensions of articulation(s) afforded us ways to identify, organize, analyze, and interpret relationships among the many possible forms of information to choose from. As researchers, teachers, or students one can ask under what circumstances are connections forged or made? These so-called relations of discursive discourses then can be the articulation(s) of different and distinct cultural characteristics, which can be (re)articulated in different ways because they have no necessary belongingness. Bakardjieva (2003) wrote “It is my belief that the careful examination of actual Internet use in its numerous forms should be organized by the

task of discerning, recognizing and articulating the empowering aspects of the technology as they arise out of the everyday lives of real people in particular situations” (p. 311). When conducting critical inquiry, dimensions of articulation(s) are presented as acts of connecting that can make relations of two or more different ideas or objects, under certain human forces of agency and contextual conditions, which are not necessary, determined, absolute, or essential for all time. Below we briefly describe a few research conceptual dimensions of articulation(s).

Articulation(s) are counter methodologies. Researchers use counter methodologies in order to struggle against the institutionalization of research methods. In other words articulation(s) are counter-normative processes that contest institutional tendencies to embrace proscribed research methodologies (philosophies) and methods (ways). Articulation(s) indicate that there can always be another relationship identified, contingent on the multiple contextual conditions in societies including the person/people employing these processes or the situations being researched. Articulation(s) do not necessarily begin by identifying a research question or research objective. Conventional research methodologies require researchers to pose questions prior to undertaking research. These questions are based on a hypothesis or thesis argument that underscores the research. The research is designed to address these questions. Articulation(s) can be based on questions, but these questions should also emerge from experiences that lead one to ask about the presence or absence of particular objects, activities, participants, or other contextual conditions. For example in the Human Element advertisement, the Dow Chemical logo was revealed only in the final seconds of the commercial. From this experience we began to ask questions about the visual, audio, and design information of this advertisement and how and why this information was being (re)presented in this particular way.

Articulation(s) are nomadic. Research methods need to change and adapt to particular cultural and contextual conditions. Researchers using articulation(s) can choose methods applicable for particular research contexts each time. They can draw multiple methods from various fields and disciplines of study in order make connections with similar, diverse, divergent and convergent forms of information.

Articulation(s) are communicative. Language is used to examine particular communication practices. In 1980, Hall described how images are *encoded* with meanings during their production and *decoded* by viewers when they are read within a particular cultural context and he argued these communication practices are not a linear process. Hall identified three reading positions viewers might take as decoders of information: dominant-hegemonic—the unquestioned identification with dominant points of view; negotiated—a reflexive interpretation of multiple perspectives; and, oppositional—the outright rejection of most points of view including a dominant perspective.

Articulation(s) are moments of arbitrary closure. Information is partially produced and circulated through fluid temporal and spatial dimensions. Researchers can only hope to represent information in a limited way by capturing a fleeting moment in time and space. Information is understood as a partial story of any given complex situation.

Articulations are situated and pragmatic. Researchers cannot explain phenomena solely by drawing on scholarly theories. Traditionally, researchers have focused too much attention on —*what*” rather than —*whose*” knowledge is of most worth. Education

is highly situational (Kliebard, 1986). For example “best practices” are interpretations and what is a best practice for some people and educational site might not be the best solution for all instructional settings. Research models in education cannot necessarily be generalized to all educational settings.

Articulation(s) are reflexive. Research should be recursive and critical and not linear and explanatory. Researchers using articulation(s) continue to question not only the subject of the research but their own act of conducting the research as well. Reflexivity is an act of self-reference or looking back in a continuous motion of deliberation and analysis.

Articulation(s) are more than we can report here. The dimensions of articulation(s) listed above can be applied to conduct research in a number of different ways. Our purpose was to learn more about the Dow ad in relationship to education, digital media and issues of ecological justice.

4. Virtualities: (Re)presenting, Remixing and Remediating

Virtualities or the reality of the virtual, to use a Deleuzian notion, recognizes that the virtual does not just imitate reality, reproducing human experiences in an artificial medium. Realities and virtualities are mutually inclusive. The reality of the virtual consists of actual effects and consequences (Zizek, 2003). In *The Virtual* (2003) Rob Shields puts virtuality in with the key categories of contemporary social theory such as subjectivity, agency, structure, and the spaces and temporalities between the modern and the postmodern. Shields has rescued the term and the idea of the virtual from utopian futurists like Howard Rheingold and Nicholas Negroponte who use it to hype emergent technologies and forms of culture as the magical vehicles and entry points to new worlds and identities” (Kellner & Thomas, p. 1). Levy (2002) added, “Virtuality is not the opposite of reality. Even if we see it out there, the virtual parts of living organisms, human beings or complex situations are probably the most important parts of their identities. A seed is oriented by a virtual tree, but we cannot describe exactly the shape of the tree. We even cannot be sure that there will actually be a tree. The (virtual) tree is the problem of the seed, and it is at the same time the essence of its identity” (p. 7). In other words, conceptually and physically, virtualities are the potential of possibilities. Media convergence continues to create potential for the way people can possibly use not only the technologies, but also more importantly the information created in different and unique ways.

For example, the Human Element ad was produced by Dow and distributed primarily through television. To begin creating a case we searched the Internet and selected five Dow ad related forms of media convergence to examine: 1) the Human Element Commercial film by the Dow Chemical Company (Dow Ad video); 2) Dow Chemical Company—Human Element film by the Dow Accountability Network (Remixed video); 3) The Dow Accountability Network (DAN webspace); 4) the Dow Interview Hoax on the BBC by The Yes Men (BBC Dow Hoax video); and 5) the Dow Global Playground webspace by The Yes Men (thetruthaboutdow.org). These five media texts were selected because they promote or subvert Dow’s campaign by applying aspects of virtuality through media convergence. For example one website

subverted the Dow ad by remediating the Dow ad and appropriating the soundtrack and remixing different images and video clips from the 1984 Union Carbide Corporation (UCC) chemical disaster in Bhopal India and other Dow chemical incidents (e.g. agent orange). This remixing drastically altered the meanings and values associated with the Dow ad.

4.1. (RE)PRESENTING

The *Dow Hu (Human) Element ad* shows how a corporate identity can be (re)presented through media to promote hidden social, political, aesthetic, and ecological issues. (Re)presenting is a process of intentionally constructing and depicting information to influence viewers (Bolter & Grusin, 2000; Manovich, 2002). In Dow's case, their campaign was to change its global corporate image and reputation. From our inquiry we learned Dow's campaign motivation was to change its reputation and re-brand Dow. Dow corporate vice president, Julie Fasone (July, 2006) discussed the Human Element vision in a company publication, —Our reputation work is motivated by several factors... a strong reputation builds trust with customers, employees, and the communities where we operate... an outstanding reputation positively affects the bottom line.” (p. 2) This campaign statement begged several questions, —Why does Dow need to build trust with its customers, employees and communities?” —How has Dow's previous reputation negatively affected the bottom line?”

4.2. REMIXING

Remixing is an act of assembling different media to produce a hybrid form (Bolter & Grusin, 2000; Manovich, 2002). On December 3, 2006 a remix of Dow's ad appeared on YouTube. The remixed video attracted 35,553 views and over 90 comments. Eighty-six seconds long, it contained 43 scenes of still photographs and short film clips. The scenes changed in sequence with the soundtrack as an ironic parody of Dow's ad. For example, the Dow ad's opening sequenced a collection of satellite images of unpopulated landscapes. The remixed video, accompanied by the narrator's voiceover, —For each of us there is a moment of discovery, we turn a page, we raise a hand, and just then...” combined a series of industrial site images including a factory plant with a large neon sign, —Dow Chemical Company.” In the Dow ad, accompanying the narration, —...we look around and see the grandness of the scheme...” a satellite camera pans across a pristine river delta. In the remixed video during the same narration a camera pans across a field of dead water buffalo, killed by the 1984 UCC chemical disaster in Bhopal. The final scene of the remixed video used the same scene that closed the Dow ad. The Hu Element symbol changed into the Dow logo, with one important addition. Just as the Dow logo appeared, —Visit www.thetruthaboutdow.org.” also appeared in the upper half of the frame.

We followed the www.thetruthaboutdow.org link and discovered a network of people concerned with Dow's production and use of dangerous chemicals, including survivors from India, Vietnam, Nicaragua, and Michigan. The *Dow Accountability Network (DAN)* included public health advocates, chemical disaster survivor groups, legal experts, investors, environmental justice organizations, corporate accountability groups, and human rights organizations. Many of DAN's members were with activist organizations concerned with past and present conditions of the UCC disaster in Bhopal

such as, Amnesty International, International Campaign for Justice in Bhopal, and the Pan North America Pesticide Action Network. These groups admonished Dow's long, toxic legacy.

The DAN webspace also included a review of Jack Doyle's book, "Trespass Against Us: Dow Chemical and the Toxic Century." Noam Chomsky wrote, "Trespass Against Us" is a chilling expose of corporate deceit and crime, with the collusion of the state authorities. It is a grim warning of what lies in store unless an aroused public places existing institutions under its supervision and control, and in the longer term dismantles illegitimate structures of power. The terrible story of Dow can provide an awakening and a stimulus to serious action."^{vi} The remixed video was part of a much larger effort to prompt Dow to be responsible for the tragic human suffering that resulted from its corporate activities. From this inquiry, we learned why Dow invested so much time and money into its new ad campaign.

4.3. REMEDIATION

Remediation is the process whereby contemporary media (i.e., digital media, virtual reality and the Internet) appropriates and refashions earlier media (i.e., painting, photography, television, and film), (Bolter & Grusin, 2000; Manovich, 2002). Before Dow unveiled its Human Element campaign, The Yes Men performed the *British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) hoax*. It was in response to Dow's outright denial of any responsibility concerning their subsidiary company UCC. It coincided with the 20th anniversary of the UCC chemical disaster in Bhopal. The BBC contacted The Yes Men through their imitation Dow webspace (<http://www.dowethics.com>), not realizing it was fake. The Yes Men invented Jude Finisterra, aka Andy Bichlbaum to act as a Dow spokesperson and hinted to the BBC that he had an important announcement to make during the broadcast. On December 3, 2004, Finisterra, appeared on the BBC and claimed that Dow "taks full responsibility for the very real Bhopal tragedy of December 3, 1984." He also claimed Dow established a \$12 billion fund to compensate victim's families and survivors of the disaster.^{vii} The hoax garnered world-wide attention to Dow's negligence in Bhopal, where a contaminated industrial site remains derelict, and the health issues of the disaster continue to plague both survivors and current residence. As a result of the BBC interview, Dow's stock price dropped and they had to publicly deny that any funds or other resources were allocated to help in Bhopal. From this inquiry, again we learned why Dow invested so much time and money into its new ad campaign.

The *Dow — Chemical Company on the Global Playground* (dowethics.com) webspace was also created by The Yes Men. It imitated the Dow webspace layout, graphics, colour scheme and fonts and included Dow's logo. Dow press releases were juxtaposed with subversive documentation and transgressive innuendo. For example, "We understand the anger and hurt," Dow spokesperson Bob Questra said and arrogantly added, "But Dow does not and cannot acknowledge responsibility. If we did, not only would we be required to expend many billions of dollars on cleanup and compensation—much worse, the public could then point to Dow as a precedent in other big cases. They took responsibility; why can't you? Amoco, BP, Shell, and Exxon all have ongoing problems that would just get much worse. We are unable to set this

precedent for ourselves and the industry, much as we would like to see the issue resolved in a humane and satisfying way.”^{viii} On the first page of the webspace, a satirical tagline read, “Did you know... Dow is responsible for the birth of the modern environmental movement. The 1962 book *Silent Spring*, about the side-effects of DDT, a Dow product, led to the birth of many of today’s environmental action groups.”^{ix} Obviously, Dow does not claim this accomplishment.

We articulated relationships among three aspects of digital media (representing, remixing, and remediation) and five web-based examples to give a sense of the complexity of conception, production, and distribution taking place through digital media in relation to issues of social and ecological justice and education. In the next section we used these examples to discuss articulating points of view.

5. Positions: Articulating Points of View

5.1. DOMINANT-HEGEMONIC

Dominant-hegemonic positions take information at face value. From these perspectives, it does not occur to viewers or they do not consider that their own, or other peoples’ philosophical positions, re-enforce this world-view. A dominant-hegemonic perspective overwhelmingly accepts Dow’s message that they are global caregivers of people and environments.

5.2. OPPOSITIONAL

Regarding the remixed video, someone stated, “This is so transparent—like all PR garbage—and nausea inducing that I’m having trouble believing anyone could find it inspiring; if only because it’s so insulting to anyone who thinks about it for 2 seconds (jbrownil)”, “This is why I hate marketing and advertising. The art of lies and deception. I can’t believe people are offended by this video because they found the original inspiring. The original is a big lie!! (funfnalas),” and “... so sad... I’m sick of greenwash...” (elparrot).^x Greenwash is the use of disinformation by an organization to conceal its abuse of the environment in order to positively (re)present themselves.

5.3. NEGOTIATED

Negotiated positions are based on analyzing information from various perspectives and across disciplinary boundaries. It requires placing personal memories into specific contexts in order to examine relations with ones philosophy on which to deliberate about an issue. As we researched perspectives about the Dow ad we found that “A result of its merger with the Union Carbide Corporation in 2001 Dow has inherited the legacy of the 1984 Bhopal gas tragedy. This is not only the world’s worst industrial disaster to date but its physical and emotional repercussions continue to traumatize the capital of the central Indian province of Madhya Pradesh to this day.”^{xi}

Dow refused to address its liabilities in Bhopal. In India, Dow’s subsidiary CEO (Anderson) still faces manslaughter charges and is considered a fugitive from justice for a pending criminal case related to the 1984 Chemical disaster. Dow’s and UCC’s lack of culpability in the disaster continue to affect lives in Bhopal to this day.

Is Dow responsible for the tragedy of the UCC disaster in Bhopal? Political struggles over issues are not a matter of simply answering yes or no. Negotiated positions weigh issues understanding that information can be both positive and negative at the very same time. Negotiated articulation(s) raise important issues of power. Whose articulation(s) matters? Who ultimately controls how these meanings and values are produced, used, circulated, reproduced and/or consumed? Negotiated articulation(s) use various methods of critical inquiry in order to ascertain the positionality associated with the social construction of meanings and values ascribed to the information. It is a process of trade and compromise, which involves political dialogue and debate. Sturken and Cartwright (2001) wrote, "Interpretation is thus a mental process of acceptance and rejection of the meanings and associations that adhere to a given image through the force of dominant ideologies" (p. 57). Teachers and students should actively struggle with the meanings and values of dominant, residual, and emerging points of view (Williams, 1961; Krug, 2003) during processes of political and social analysis and interpretation.

Articulating negotiated positions are not limited to a single interpretation of an advertisement from either a dominant or oppositional perspective. These positions resist homogenizing processes of understanding in favour of multi-accentualities (Volosinov, 1973). In other words, media (re)presentations, remediations, and remixing are polysemic as individual self and social identities are different. Negotiated positions require adequate time for one to experience, observe, reflect, deliberate and critically analyze communication practices. In the next section, we discuss these positions in relationship to characteristics of certain communication practices.

6. Mobilizing Knowledge: Communication Practices

The mobilization of knowledge requires that people have an understanding associated with and how they know and use particular information and communication practices. "Knowledge is defined by the Oxford English Dictionary as (i) expertise, and skills acquired by a person through experience or education; the theoretical or practical understanding of a subject; (ii) what is known in a particular field or in total; facts and information; or (iii) awareness or familiarity gained by experience of a fact or situation."^{xii} In our articulation of information, we connected five communication practices: information, propaganda, misinformation, disinformation and information. Drawing from Kirk's (2001) research on communication practices, we share our sense of the slippery relationships below for both social and political analytic processes.

6.1. INFORMATION

Information is data set in context for relevance (Kirk 2001). Information becomes knowledge when someone uses it critically and adds it to what they already know (Kirk, 2001). Webster's Online Dictionary defined information as knowledge obtained from investigation, study, or instruction.^{xiii} Dominant-hegemonic information conveyed by the Dow ad connotatively associated poetry, nature, and pre-industrial society with Dow. The DAN webspace remediated information about Dow by negotiating views

from multiple respected international human rights organizations in a way that justly uncovered information, some of which Dow did not want known about their inhumane corporate activities and responsibilities.

6.2. PROPAGANDA

Propaganda uses verifiable evidence in such a way as to provoke a desired response (Kirk 2001). It is “The systematic propagation of information or ideas by an interested party, esp. in a tendentious way in order to encourage or instill a particular attitude or response” (Oxford Dictionary, 1989). Propaganda spreads ideas, information, or rumors for the purpose of helping or injuring an institution, a cause, or a person.^{xiv} Dow used an idyllic image of a lone man dressed in traditional, middle-eastern robes sitting in solitude staring off into limitless sand dunes as the narrator said, “...to stand fearlessly and face the future....” Connotatively the images linked Dow’s dominant-hegemonic corporate activities with ideas of spirituality, heroism, and courage. The remixed video oppositionally linked Dow with industrial wastelands, human disfigurement, and death. The Yes Men’s BBC interview also oppositionally and intentionally used incorrect information to pressure Dow to make a public announcement about their corporate and humane responsibilities with the Bhopal disaster. The remixed video showed a young boy framed in a doorway made of rough boards with hanging shredded fabric. His facial expression showed concern or worry and a sense of hopelessness and extreme poverty. The image connoted oppositionality to the exploitation of people in underdeveloped countries struggling to challenge the will of a large foreign corporation.

6.3. MISINFORMATION

Misinformation differs from propaganda as it refers to something that is not deliberately misleading, just wrong or mistaken. Misinformation is erroneous or incorrect information (Oxford English Dictionary, 1989). Many of the webspaces we visited listed a dominant-hegemonic views of the Bhopal death toll at 2,500 - 5,000 people. However that number has steadily grown to well over 20,000. Satinath Sarangi (2002) wrote, “On the night of December 2-3, 1984 the chemical disaster at the Union Carbide pesticide plant in Bhopal, India, left a half million people surrounded by deadly poison clouds while they slept. The disaster killed more than 8,000 people in its immediate wake (Morehouse and Subramaniam, 1985). The death toll today is well over 20,000 and rising (Dinham, 2002), with over 30 survivors dying every month (Madhya Pradesh Government, 2001). Today, well over 120,000 survivors are in desperate need of medical attention for chronic exposure-induced diseases (Dinham, 2002), including breathlessness, persistent cough, early-age cataracts, loss of appetite, menstrual irregularities, recurrent fever, back and body aches, loss of sensation in limbs, fatigue, weakness, anxiety, and depression. Thousands of families are on the brink of starvation because the breadwinners are dead or too sick to work.” Various points of view regarding misinformation can be easily published and distributed through digital media and the Internet.

6.4. DISINFORMATION

Disinformation is —False information deliberately and often covertly spread (as by the planting of rumors) in order to influence public opinion....”^{xv} When viewing the Dow ad from a negotiated position, we asked —What is the relationship between Dow and the people portrayed in their ad?” The film (re)presented people as if they were appearing in the ad on behalf of Dow, thereby supporting Dow’s dominant-hegemonic perspective. But Dow corporate activities do not directly connect to a figurative sculptor, Mexican blacksmith, or an African mother living in a mud hut. Dow circulated this disinformation to imply a correlation with these peoples’ artistic and hand made practices and pre-industrial ways of living. From an oppositional position, The Yes Men also circulated disinformation performing as a phony Dow spokesman (Jude Finisterra) to announce a —radical new direction for the company, one in which Dow takes full responsibility for the [Bhopal] disaster.”^{xvi} They intentionally mislead viewers provoking Dow to acknowledge their refusal to be accountable for the ongoing health crisis in Bhopal.

6.5. _NFORMATION

_nformation is incomplete information absent by omission.^{xvii} For example, in Dow’s dominant-hegemonic ad there was no information concerning the corporation’s past negative impact on environments around the world. Dow used the ad to distance themselves from ideas of industrialization, modernism, colonialism, consumerism and urbanization. On the other hand, negotiated and oppositional articulation(s) found the environmental devastation wrought by Dow’s manufacturing of pesticides and insecticides; the military use of defoliants; and the degradation of the world’s water supplies by the proliferation of chemical dispersal was purposefully omitted from the Human Element campaign. The remixed video was an oppositional indictment of Dow as a polluter of third world countries. But it too failed to similarly show any positive effects of chemical research.

A negotiated view would acknowledge that Dow has delivered —a broad range of products and services to customers in around 160 countries.”^{xviii} Dow has researched and developed chemistry to help provide fresh water, food, pharmaceuticals, paints, packaging and personal care products. In addition a negotiated view would also indict the consuming habits of developed nations. Dow exists because there are markets willing to consume cheap goods at the expense of citizens in countries struggling to protect themselves and their communities. _nformation obscures the value of life associated with those who do not enjoy the participatory privileges of democratic government. In addition, the remixed video did not mention the role the Indian government played in the Bhopal disaster and their lack of action in the clean up. The South Asian online forum^{xix} reported that Dow made improper payments to regulatory officials in India.^{xx} Later, the Indian government negotiated a settlement with UCC without the Bhopal survivor’s consent. The settlement did not cover adequate health care (\$300-\$500) for the survivors and made no provision for cleaning up the contaminated industrial site.^{xxi} Articulating positions and communication practices can be used to conduct critical inquiry about a wide variety of information per se.

7. Conclusion

In conclusion, we have overviewed the use critical inquiry and dimensions of articulation(s) to understand how knowledge can be mobilized through media convergence. In this case, our research involved issues of social and ecological justice, communication practices, positioning points of view, and the application of virtuality. We used articulation(s) because they provided a way for us to be resilient in the presence of institutional forces that expect us to use scientifically proven methods. As our society changes we need our research to change: we want the ability for our philosophy and methods to also change and adapt. We showed how this nomadic approach to critical inquiry can be used to temporarily visit applications of virtuality such as (re)presented, remixed and remediated forms of media convergence knowing that upon our return at another time these same processes will have been changed based on particular social, technological, political contexts. Because language is used to provide moments of arbitrary closure, meanings and values will continue to need to be uprooted and re-established. Dow attempted to (re)present its identity through the Human Element campaign, but action groups around the world used Dows own ad to remix its meaning and link it back to the industrial disaster in Bhopal, India, and its aftermath. We learned media convergence could be mobilized to support particular points of view. In our study, we reflexively returned to interrogate our own perspectives in connection with dominant-hegemonic, oppositional, and negotiated points of view in order to study historical and contemporary accounts and emerging, multiple, and complex relations. The Dow ad could be analysed by articulating it with various forms of communication practices. We selected five texts, fully realizing there are others.

Finally, articulations are moments of arbitrary closure and these research dimensions acknowledge the fluid, dynamic quality of conducting critical inquiry in a rapidly changing social, cultural, political and historical landscape. We have come to realize the limits of our research perspectives are arbitrary constructs of representation that researchers employ to make data manageable. Moments of arbitrary closure make it possible to acknowledge the dynamic states of multiple realities, without being overwhelmed by them. Articulation(s) enable researchers to learn from their investigations by travelling, stopping, travelling, stopping and deliberating beyond one set of questions that might limit our ability to imagine other relationships at the outset of our study.

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EndNotes

ⁱ (Retrieved on January 6, 2009 from <http://news.dow.com/corporate/2006/20060619c.htm>).

ⁱⁱ For each of us there is a moment of discovery, we turn a page, we raise a hand, and just then, in the flash of a synapse, we learn that life is elemental, and this knowledge changes everything. We look around and see the grandness of the scheme: sodium bonding with chlorine, carbon bonding with oxygen, hydrogen bonding with oxygen. We see all things connected, we see life unfold, and in the dazzling brilliance of this knowledge, we overlook the element not listed on the chart. Its importance is so obvious; its presence is simply understood. The missing element is the human element, and when we add it to the equation, the chemistry changes. Every reaction is different: potassium looks to bond with potential; metals behave with hardened resolve, and hydrogen and oxygen form desire. The human element is the element of change, it gives us our footing, to stand fearlessly and face the future. It is a way of seeing, that gives us a way of touching: issues, ambitions, and lives. The human element, nothing is more fundamental, nothing more elemental. (Retrieved from: http://news.dow.com/dow_news/ads/dowtv.htm)

ⁱⁱⁱ See <http://www.eoht.info/page/Human+element?t=anon> for more information. In June of 2006, Dow Chemical promoted a large magazine and video advertising campaign in which each person is considered as abstract "human element", symbol Hu, atomic mass number, and 7E+09 (in reference to global population count). The idea was to showcase individual human profiles

and circumstances to communicate the power of harnessing “The Human Element” to foster solutions to human problems around the world.”

^{iv} The processes by which dominant culture maintains its dominant position.

^v See <http://www.eoht.info/page/Human+element?t=anon> for more information. In June of 2006, Dow Chemical promoted a large magazine and video advertising campaign in which each person is considered as abstract “human element”, symbol Hu, atomic mass number, and 7E+09 (in reference to global population count). The idea was to showcase individual human profiles and circumstances to communicate the power of harnessing “The Human Element” to foster solutions to human problems around the world.”

^{vi} Retrieved from <http://www.thetruthaboutdow.org/article.php?id=257> on January 3, 2010

^{vii} See video at: <http://www.spike.com/video/yes-mens-dow-apology/2658655>)

^{viii} Retrieved from <http://www.dowethics.com/> on December 6, 2009

^{ix} Retrieved from <http://www.dowethics.com/> on December 6, 2009

^x Retrieved from <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lbpuSPL-FNU> on January 12, 2010

^{xi} Retrieved from <http://www.thetruthaboutdow.org/article.php?id=257> on January 13, 2010

^{xii} Retrieved from <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Knowledge> on December 6, 2009

^{xiii} Retrieved from <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/information> on December 6, 2009

^{xiv} Retrieved from <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/propaganda> on December 6, 2009

^{xv} Retrieved from <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/disinformation> on December 6, 2009

^{xvi} Retrieved from <http://www.theyesmen.org/hijinks/bbecbhopal> on January 12, 2010

^{xvii} Retrieved from <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/> on January 8, 2010

^{xviii} Retrieved from <http://www.dow.com/about> on January 5, 2009

^{xix} See http://www.thesouthasian.org/about_us.html

^{xx} Retrieved from http://www.thesouthasian.org/archives/2007/dow_paid_bribes_indian_governm.html on December 14, 2008

^{xxi} Retrieved from <http://www.greenpeace.org/international/news/investment-firms-tell-dow-to-i> on December 14, 2008