Thirdspacing the University: Performing Visual and Spatial Literacies

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**Video Transcript: “Bringing Multigenre Research to FYC: An Interview with Ashley Holmes”**

[Video begins]

[Music playing with text on screen: *Bringing Multigenre Research to FYC / an interview with Ashley Holmes*]

[Text on screen: *Every project has a story. What’s yours?*]

Ashley talking: *Well, um, I guess the story of my project started probably about four years ago.*

[Image of Tom Romano with text on screen: *Tom Romano / Professor, Miami University / Selected Work /* Clearing the Way: Working Teenage Writers *(19870 /* Writing With Passion: Life Stories, Multiple Genres *(1995) /* Blending Genre, Altering Style: Writing Multigenre Papers *(2000)*]

A:  *I went to a teaching workshop at NC State when I was a master’s student, and they had a guest presenter, Tom Romano, and he presented on multigenre research projects. And he seemed kind of like a kooky guy, but he was very inspirational.*

[Image of Tom Romano with text on screen: *“I see no dichotomy between analysis and synthesis. They are Fred and Ginger. Poncho and Cisco. Thelma and Louise. Yin and Yang. Neither is as effective separately as it is when partnered with the other. Good writing, regardless of the mode of discourse, causes writers to think. That thinking involves a productive dialectic between analysis and synthesis” (6). An Excerpt From /* Writing With Passion: Life Stories, Multiple Genres]

A: *The student projects he shared were just really interesting, um, and very different, very nontraditional.*

[Image of Picasso drawing with identifying text on screen: Femme Assise en Costume de Cheval */ Pablo Picasso, 1964 / charcoal on paper / Mougins, France*. Contrasted with photo of a drawing taped to a refrigerator door with identifying text on screen: To Londie and Uncle Michael */ Alise Young, 2006 / ink on paper / My fridge, Tucson, Arizona.*]

[Text on screen, appears handwritten in multicolored crayon: *What is art? Surely there’s good stuff somewhere in between*]

A: *But he shared a lot of, like, middle school and elementary school student projects, which, um, was a fear I had early on about trying to implement this at the college level—that it would be seen as kind of children’s work, that students are just doing drawings or, you know, creating charts, and that there’s not any value in that.*

[Image of Tom Romano with text on screen: *“A multigenre paper arises from research, experience, and imagination. It is not an uninterrupted, expository monolog nor a seamless narrative nor a collection of poems. A multigenre paper is composed of many genres and subgenres, each piece self-contained, making a point of its own, yet connected by theme or topic and sometimes by language, images and content” (x-xi). / An Excerpt From /* Blending Genre, Altering Style: Writing Multigenre Papers]

A: *So, anyway, that was kind of my first inspiration for working with multigenre research, which is what I’m gonna be doing for the showcase.*

[Animation composed of a small pink circle at the center of the screen growing larger while words and phrases in different colors circulate around the central phrase *research multigenre*. Circulating phrases include: *narrative, memoir, primary research, poetry, expository writing, public writing, personal writing*. While the phrases circle, *research multigenre* flips to become *multigenre research*]

A: *And, um, so I started reading more about it, and I got Tom Romano’s book, one of them, and kind of looked through that and began to think about ways that I could translate this to the undergraduate college level while still maintaining high standards for research, um, incorporating academic writing as well as more personal writing and public writing.*

[The word *posthuman* appears on screen in a variety of different font faces.]

A: *So, mulling all of that over, the last semester of my master’s program, I took a posthuman rhetorics class,*

[Image of Donna Haraway with text on screen: *Donna Haraway / Professor, University of California / History of Consciousness Program*]

A: *and I connected multigenre research with cyborg theory, with Donna Haraway.*

[Image of Donna Haraway next to a cycle of generic avatar images with text on screen: *An excerpt from* Simians, Cyborgs and Women: The Reinvention of Nature *(1991) / A cyborg is a cybernetic organism, a hybrid of machine and organism, a creature of social reality as well as a creature of fiction. Social reality is lived social relations, our most important political construction, a world-changing fiction. (149)*]

A: *So, that resulted in a paper where I did a lot of research about multigenre and read a lot of articles—some were very theoretical, some were really teacher-based, like here’s how I do this assignment in my class, and here’s the benefits of it. And then I got the chance to try it out when I began teaching at Elon. Um, the first time I did it was really scary, and my students thought I was crazy.*

[Animation of a pathway expanding toward a question mark fixed on the horizon. The question mark becomes an exclamation point just as an image of the sun passing through the sky reaches the center of the screen.]

A: *And I was able, I had to kind of find my own resources because there’s not much out there. Um, so, when I told them that they were gonna do this really funky research project, um, they really kind of, they went with me, which was good, and by the end of it, they overwhelmingly really enjoyed the project and got a lot out of it,*

[Text on screen: *thinking about writing, research / thinking differently*]

A: *and I had a lot of reflections that I collected with them talking about how this made them think about writing differently, how they learned their research differently because they had to work with material in different ways.*

[Animated map on screen with a pathway leading from the phrase *the classroom* to the word *presentations* and then to *CCCC Conference on College Composition and Communication.* The path ends at the logo for the Spatial-Visual Rhetorics event.]

A: *So, um, since then I’ve been teaching it every semester, except for the current semester. I taught multigenre research for six semesters in first-year comp, among several sections in each semester, and, um, presented on it at some small conferences like teaching conferences in North Carolina, and presented on it at CCCC a few years ago, and have always gotten good response from it.*

[Text on screen with font appearing in multiple colors: *visual culture*]

A: *Um, and so, bringing the story up to now, which is taking it to the spatial and visual rhetoric class—when I signed up for the course, I knew that I was excited about extending the work that I had done with this project.*

[Text on screen: *visual culture / many definitions*]

[Text on screen: *Margarita Dikovitskaya says…*]

[Text on screen: *One can conclude that visual culture is a field for the study of both the social construction of the visual (visual images, visual experience) and the visual as a place for examining the social mechanisms of differentiation” (58). / Margarita Dikovitskaya / from* Visual Culture: The Study of the Visual After the Cultural Turn *(2005)*]

A: *Um, and I should also say that, at Elon where I taught previously, I was involved in a visual culture group, um a group of faculty that were interested in teaching with visuals, and it was interdisciplinary. We all talked about really interesting ways to use visuals in the classroom, and it was more visual than spatial. So, um, I brought my multigenre research materials to that group, with, you know, a good response. And so, that also helped to kind of advance. Anyway, so, I signed up for this class knowing that I had interest in teaching with visuals and learning more about that and reading more about it. And um, so I really felt, when Amy introduced this project, that I was gonna cop out if I was redoing the same project that I’ve presented on and taught a lot.*

[Image of the Spatial-Visual Rhetorics event logo appears small and faded at the center of the screen. As it grows larger, becoming less transparent, the phrases *writing program, new context,* and *accessibility* appear and circle around the logo.]

*Um, but after talking to Amy about it and reflecting on it, um, I’m really kind of extending work that I’ve done previously and putting it in a new context, because I’m trying to connect it with the objectives for U of A’s writing program, and I’m also shifting kind of the way, um—*

[The phrase *genre theory* appears at the center of the screen, and, as it grows larger, multicolored words float in from both sides of the screen, overlapping as they pass over each other: *narrative, memoir, primary research, poetry, expository writing, public writing, personal writing*]

A: *I’m trying to offer people more options for the assignment so that they don’t have to see it as a big undertaking, because it is a really big project. But, for instance, you can have your students write in one other genre, whereas my project, I usually have my students write in six or eight genres, um, all together.*

[Text on screen: *Bringing Multigenre Research to FYC*]

A: *So, but even having people become aware about genre theory and the benefits of that for raising visual rhetorical awareness and helping students gain a firmer sense of audience.*

[Text on screen: *big thanks to Ashley Holmes*]

A: *So anyway, that’s kind of, I decided that I would continue to kind of extend what I already have. I have good student examples that I think people will enjoy seeing at the event.*

[Text on screen: *please visit her presentation and learn more about multigenre research / (I know I will!)*]

A: *And so, I’m also challenging myself by incorporating readings from our class, which were things that I hadn’t read before,*

[Text on screen: *Music by Neu! / from their self-titled album*]

[Text on screen: *“Hallogallo”*]

A: *into how I see this project interconnecting with what we’re learning. So that’s kind of recontextualizing it a bit, too. So, that’s pretty much where I am right now.*