Mapping Presence: An Exploration of Embodiment and Knowledge Transfers in Cyber-Mediated Classrooms

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Abstract

As teachers and students navigated the forced transition to online education, their physical and social interaction became possible only through technology. How did this mediated interaction affect learning outcomes, teacher presence, and their performance, in synchronous classroom spaces? What was lost in the translation of in-person instruction? What might this lost element tell us about the epistemology of embodiment, the transfer of knowledge in the classroom, and the roles of teachers and students within these knowledge frameworks? Through autoethnographical performative inquiry, this paper argues that embodiment—individual and collective—and multidimensional proximity construct sites of knowledge transfer.

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Prologue: Stuck on Mute

> "Oh. I can't hear you, Jamie. Would you unmute yourself?"
> Jamie continues to talk with a puzzled look in her eyebrows.
> "Hi, Jamie. We still can't hear you. You're muted. Would you click the microphone button on your device? This will turn your microphone on so we can hear you."
> Jamie's face gets larger and larger as she leans in toward her camera.
> Nothing happens.
> "Do you see the microphone button?"
> My amateur lipreading skills tell me that she says, "No."
> I describe the location of the button and what it looks like, drawing it on a piece of paper close by and holding it up to my laptop's camera, watching it fill my rectangle on the screen.
> She tries something (I think).
> Still nothing.
> The student becomes frustrated, not knowing how to interact with me. Being five years old, she is not old enough to type into the chat feature what she's thinking, nor can she troubleshoot her problems. And I cannot assist her beyond my verbal and visual offerings.
> "Is someone there that can help you get your microphone turned on?" I ask.
> Her blonde curls shake back and forth. No.
> "That's okay, Jamie. We'll get it figured out. Why don't you tell us about the puppet you created?"
> Silence. I see the student talking, very animated as she holds up her puppet made from materials around the house. The red microphone with a slash haunts the corner of her screen frame. My students and I watch as Jamie finishes her thought.

> "Wow! That's really awesome, Jamie. Thanks for sharing with us. I like how you used different colored yarn for the hair. That was a brilliant idea."
> The other students in the class nod and agree. Jamie smiles. We move on with our class.
> Jamie shares her thoughts two more times during class and participates in group activities. Anytime she speaks, we hold space and silence for her. We thank her for her contributions. The class is incredibly supportive, but sometimes we don't know what to say in response. She doesn't seem to mind—she's happy to be "heard." She forgets that we don't understand what she's saying.
> But I will always wonder . . .

Introduction

The recent forced transition to online teaching provides a point of access for the investigation of "presence" within classroom spaces. As teachers and students navigate online education, their physical and social interaction has become possible only through technology. How does cyber mediation affect learning outcomes, curriculum design and instruction, and the performance of teachers and students in synchronous classroom spaces? How does presence play out in online classrooms when there is limited teacher-student and student-student "contact"? When utilizing a platform of cyber mediation, what is lost in the translation of in-person instruction? What might this lost element tell us about the epistemology of embodiment, the transfer of embodied knowledge in the classroom, and the roles of teachers and students within these knowledge frameworks?

To investigate these questions, I turn to my own practice as a drama educator. Through an autoethnographical approach, I reflexively examine my experiences in synchronous learning spaces. Autoethnography "systematically analyze[s] personal experience in order to understand cultural experience" (Ellis et al., 2010); the approach treats research and writing as a political and socially conscious act. Using personal anecdotes from my virtual classrooms, I pull from tenets of both autobiography and ethnography, organizing my paper around and through interludes. I want to stress that my experiences in the virtual classroom do not translate to every classroom—I do not wish to generalize, downplay, or overwrite, the experiences of teachers and students during this time, especially as accessibility to technology and support varied widely. However, I display my experiences here as a way of systematically analyzing my own pedagogy within such a historically significant cultural moment for educators, starting from my own experiences in order to map the interactions I had with students.

I also draw upon performative inquiry as a means of tying my educational inquiry with that of performance studies. Performative inquiry "calls our attention to those moments that invite us to pause and reflect on the pedagogical significance of such moments for our work, for our relationships with others, for who we are in the world" (Fels, 2012, p. 51). Furthermore, David Applebaum (1995) offers the notion of a stop—a moment in which educators listen to the possibilities of a particular point within their teaching, allowing embodied data of pedagogy to transcend the temporal and enlarge the possible (Fels, 2012; Applebaum, 1995; Milloy, 2007). Utilizing reflexivity in my online pedagogy will allow me to interrogate the intersections between myself and the educational culture within which my practice lies as well as my personal feelings within the greater societal and political climate (Adams et al., 2015).

The focus of my research centers on synchronous classroom spaces—spaces which were translated to online platforms when in-person instruction could not continue due to safety and health guidelines. This distinction is important for several reasons:

1. Online instruction is the best possibility for some individuals. Their choice to pursue online education should be supported by educational stakeholders and systems. Learning outcomes and strategies of synchronous and asynchronous teaching in these instances is designed to benefit students' journeys, and support systems are in place to scaffold and design these programs to be fully online experiences. My own teaching practice did not benefit from long-term structures of online curriculum design, and instructional planning occurred experimentally, rather than within a system of long-term support. My investigation of presence and contact in online spaces is directly related to what I call "translated instruction"—a mediated experience translated from an embodied experience of pedagogy.

2. I do not examine augmented reality (AR) or virtual reality (VR) educational interventions within the argument of this paper. In my research, I am drawn to investigate the ways augmented or virtual reality experiences in education might roll into the online classroom and how I might apply these findings to my own pedagogical stop moments. However, these experiences are often conducted within the context of in-person instruction and not in an environment of complete online instructional translation. While AR and VR educational pursuits certainly offer an avenue to discuss the presence of students within a particular mediated environment or experience, I do not attempt to bridge this gap within this paper; translated instruction is much broader than a specific experience of AR or VR and should be treated as its own full and complete experience.

3. The efforts of teachers to translate their instruction to online spaces should be celebrated and not taken for granted. The challenges addressed throughout this paper support and validate the struggles many teachers faced when turning their instruction online. My focus on cyber-mediated classroom spaces and teacher-student presence within these spaces, recognizes that teachers encountered (and continue to encounter) pedagogical challenges unique to the synchronous online classroom. It is within these differences of pedagogy and educational transfer that I investigate presence and contact between students and teachers.

4. I will assume that teachers, once their teaching realities became cyber-mediated classroom spaces, designed their instruction to fall within their new online teaching realities. Even so, these pedagogical translations fall into structures designed to be in-person experiences (i.e., class size, class time allotment, structures of power and positionality within in-person schooling, etc.). While some of my youth drama classes received the benefits of online program design and a team of online teachers developing and selecting material that lent itself to online class, many teachers were not afforded the luxury of time to brainstorm and plan their next moves together nor did they have the opportunity to change the trajectory of their standards-based and test-based curriculum for the school year. As I pursue an autoethnography of my own teaching experiences designed to be synchronous online sites of knowledge transfer, I will position my own pedagogical experiences within the framework of intentionally designed educational transfers in cyber-mediated classrooms. Cyber-mediated instruction seeks to create the most successful environment for student engagement, opportunity, and extension of curiosity. Teacher positivity when approaching such mediated courses is crucial to student success; however, I know firsthand the differences that in-person instruction provides, and I will seek to articulate these elements in regard to the presence of teachers and students in order to gain a greater understanding of embodied knowledge transfer in the classroom.

5. In-person classroom spaces are no stranger to performance studies. Many scholars have investigated the intersections of performance models and the roles of students and teachers in the classroom. I will translate these understandings of in-person classrooms as a site of performance studies to their cyber-mediated and translated counterparts in order to examine the roles of teachers and students in these spaces.

My performative inquiry focuses on two sites of my own pedagogy. In the wake of building closures and social restrictions, I began teaching with Childsplay Theatre Company's Online Theatre Academy in spring 2020, developing classes to extend learning into students' homes and imagining successful programming titles and activities for online drama instruction. I continued with Childsplay's summer programming, utilizing drama-based pedagogy to teach drama skill-building classes as well as creative drama classes for students aged 5-14. I then taught an undergraduate dramatic analysis course at Arizona State University, straddling a hybrid space with one student who attended in person and the other 17 attending online; my in-person student often joined the mediated classroom site, stepping outside of the microphoned physical classroom in order to complete group work and discussions with other students. I can directly compare all my teaching experiences in these mediated spaces to classes I have designed and taught in-person, providing an access point for noting the differences in my instructional design, planning, and implementation; the level of contact with my students; the apparent engagement of students with both me and the course material; and the moments of challenge, frustration, and "missing pieces."

Interlude I: Puppet Master with Invisible Strings

I have sent my students into breakout rooms to peer review their analytical papers on a work of tragedy we've been studying. They have 25 minutes to read each other's work and discuss strengths and moments of possible improvement, following a document of questions I have prepared and linked for them in the chat feature. This is not the first time we have done this activity, which proved helpful to their writing and reviewing practices for their first analysis paper.

> "Hi, Kendra."
>
> The greeting takes me by surprise. I look up from my personal laptop where I am marking the attendance for today on our Canvas page. I turn my attention back to the university computer.
>
> "Hey, Maggie, what's going on?"
>
> "I think I need a new partner."
>
> I scroll through the partnerings I have randomly generated as she continues.
>
> "I've tried talking to him, but he doesn't say anything. I don't think he's there."
>
> The student she's referring to hardly turns their camera on during class, sacrificing participation and attendance points regularly. I want to say I am surprised by her account. And to a point I am—he has not been so bold about active dis-participation.
>
> "Okay, Maggie. I'll put you in a room of three. Let them know what's going on. Hang on one second while I shuffle."

> Like a puppet master, I send her into another room with students I know have prepared for class—picking up her frame and dropping it into a separate ″space.″ Her picture freezes as she disappears.
>
> I can still see the other student's name sitting in a room all on his own. He accepted the invitation to join the breakout room but refused to engage in the activity or the class, just selecting the pop-up box as it appeared on his screen. I doubt he even knows that he is alone in his own room now.
>
> He was there on the other end. But he "wasn't there."

Mapping as Metaphor

Maps record pathways, topography, intersections, and shape and size in a relative manner, and a directional manner. Additionally, maps record connections and relationships between a Point A and a Point B; they are a tool for understanding and streamlining movement, navigation, and destination.

As I investigate knowledge transfers and instructional design in mediated classrooms, I am concerned with this idea of Point A to Point B as knowledge transfer itself. How can I map the site of the transfer to record how knowledge is passed and shared and moves through pathways, designed by teachers and morphed by systems, structures, and the limitations and possibilities of the virtual? This specific metaphor and framing device provides an avenue (both figuratively and literally) for me to articulate my autoethnographical frustrations and successes as an educator as well as identify the mystic, ever-evolving yet ever-present idea of presence itself. As I navigate my own experiences, I am able to play the role of cartographer, utilizing my own classroom experiences as a baseline for systematic analysis and cultural experience. My research into knowledge transfers in synchronous translated instruction maps the topography of presence in virtual space: *What is present? Who is present? How do we measure and record this kind of presence? What does presence look like (so that we might replicate or improve it)?*

Maps are also a two-dimensional representation of a three-dimensional phenomenon. In this way, they mirror our cyber spaces. Three-dimensional teachers and students experience instruction in their own three-dimensional space, but they become two-dimensional representations online. My contact with my students in cyber-mediated spaces reduced my multidimensional self into a smaller, two-dimensional version during classes. I could control and manipulate what students were able to see of me and around me. My students were able to do the same. This site of manipulation and controlled representation falls under the umbrella of "mediated framing," a term I use to describe the ways in which online synchronous instruction allows us to selectively present our own learning environment and state of being. The concept of mediated framing relies on an understanding of personal, environmental, and instructional presence, in the classroom. We navigate the spaces of performing identities at all times—presenting ourselves in ways that differ depending on context and social relationship—but rarely do we have the ability to perform and present identities, control our physical appearance dimensionally and spatially within a frame of visibility, and manipulate the environment in which we are situated. Mediated framing accounts for gained and lost control of individuals in their learning environments and states of being.

The Act of Performing "Presence"

As I began investigating presence in classrooms, I realized that no one definition of this concept exists. When discussing presence are we referring to a concrete existence? An ambiguous or liminal space? An epistemology of practice or embodied knowledge? My understanding of performing presence in online classroom spaces relies on research in performance studies and educational curriculum design and instruction. I situate my argument within the work of Don Hufford (2014), claiming that true presence is a student's ability to live out their own identities in a classroom space; Cormac Power (2008), drawing upon the "liveness" and "energy" of a theatre event to create presence between performers and audience; and Shea and Bidjerano (2012), describing presence as the ability for interaction within a Community of Inquiry educational model. These definitions and discourses on the concept of presence draw upon performance studies and the ways in which we can fully "perform" our roles of teacher, student, audience, and performer, in shared realities and environments. The liveness of the event, the fullness of a student's existence in the space, and the contact and interaction between teacher-student and student-student, create an environment for presence to occur.

My discussion of presence within this paper relies on both the synchronous physical existence of multiple bodies in a "room" and the readiness or willingness of these bodies/minds to engage with their social, learning environment. These two conditions provide an access point for mapping knowledge transfers in cyber-mediated classrooms by providing clear parameters for the guideposts in a destination-focused pathway of knowledge: Point A (an individual as performer of knowledge); Delivery (the ways in which knowledge is and can be constructed or conveyed between Points A and B); and Point B (the same or another individual as receptor and practitioner-performer of knowledge).

Point A

An individual as performer of knowledge. The starting point of a knowledge transfer rests in the body of an individual. Here, there is the potential for sharing and/or coming to knowledge. The individual must in some way have the capacity to perform their knowledge so that individual(s) at Point B might receive and observe the knowledge.

Delivery

The ways in which knowledge is and can be constructed or conveyed between Points A and B. Knowledge is transmitted via environment and relationship (either interpersonal, social, or reflexive) and relies on communication with self and/or others. The performance of knowledge itself (the action done by or at Point A) makes up a Delivery—or active connection between Point A and Point B, often called engagement. Types of Delivery may include instruction of knowledge (i.e., lecture, reading material), external or internal questioning leading to knowledge (i.e., verbal group discussion, writing assignment), practicing knowledge (i.e., attempting to juggle in order to learn how to juggle), or other types of knowledge performance (i.e., experiencing an artwork).

Point B

The same (Point A) or another individual as receptor and practitioner-performer of knowledge. Whereas Point A is an individual with potential for sharing and/or coming to knowledge through exploration, Point B is an individual with potential for receiving and/or practicing the knowledge delivered during exploration. Point B individuals become practitioner-performers when they exercise their knowledge (in their everyday lives, within assessment tools, etc.).

My definitions of Point A, Delivery, and Point B, rely on an epistemology of embodiment—learning and knowing is a *practice* that learners must engage with in their physical existence. Meskin and van der Walt (2018) claim "practice to be *always* embodied—it always happens in *action*, and thus, by definition, it happens *through* and *of* the body" (p. 41). Additionally, Ben Spatz (2015), in his discussion of what bodies can do, outlines the ways in which bodies in action construct sites of knowing, engaging with Aristotle's *techne*, or craft knowledge. Of course, some argue that there are other categories of "knowledge," such as theoretical (*episteme*); but even these ideas must somehow be rooted in practice-based application in order to foster true understanding in educational settings. On a grand scale, educational models and theories revolve around formative and summative assessment: measurements of knowledge in action by students performing practitioner-performer roles. In synchronous learning spaces, presence—the physical existence of multiple bodies in a room and the readiness or willingness of these bodies/minds to engage with their social, learning environment—both depend upon and cultivate an epistemology of embodiment and practice.

Mediated framing and reduced dimensional contact transform the landscape of Delivery, changing the capacities for Point A and Point B to experience engagement. My attempt to map presence in cyber-mediated spaces causes me to ask: *How does this new mediated environment dependent upon technology complicate, exacerbate, and interact, with an epistemology of embodiment?* I further ask: *How does accessibility affect student and teacher presence within classroom spaces?* If students are asked and expected to perform and engage with an epistemology of embodiment, we should also map the structures and strategies that are (or are not) in place for them to navigate the Point A, Delivery, and Point B, understanding of knowledge transfer.

Interlude II: Frozen

> I'm frozen.
>
> I'm sitting in a chair at my kitchen table in my tiny apartment. The temperature outside of my window is 117 degrees of Arizona dry heat—I have turned my thermostat up to 80 degrees in order to save money on my utility bill. I am sweating, but I am frozen.
>
> My laptop sits on a box on my kitchen table so that I don't have to stoop while teaching. Its screen shows six rectangles: four images of students, my co-teacher, and myself. None of us is moving.
>
> A student just finished sharing a poem she composed for my poetry composition and performance class. We are in the process of selecting our pieces for the end-of-week virtual

sharing. I am facilitating feedback for the student's poem and performance, or I was. Now my mouth is open on my screen as I try to make my way back to my own words, back to my class.

The buttons of my WiFi router flash—normal. I haven't lost power. My WiFi icon appears at the bottom right corner of my laptop screen, I move my cursor—

"Oh. Oh. There you are!"

The pictures begin to move once more. My movements are mirrored in my own little rectangle above "Miss Kendra."

"You're back!"

"Yes, I'm back," I say. "I thought I'd lost you!"

Frozen. Lost. Disconnected.

Broken Contact and Dimensionality

The actual mapping of knowledge transfers provides a closer look at the effects of mediated framing and reduced dimensional contact. My initial maps in Figure 1 show the pathways for knowledge transfer. This visual representation of in-person instruction, alongside online engagement, highlights the ways in which mediation plays a strong part in radically changing the topography of embodiment and Delivery as it relates to knowledge embodiment, performance, and practice.

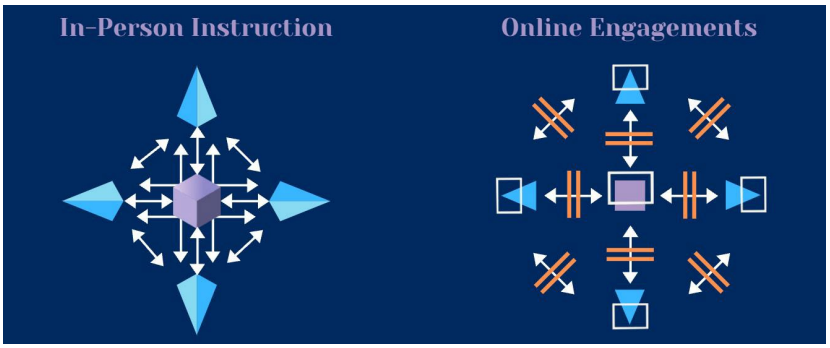

Fig. 1: Mapping knowledge transfers in translated pedagogy.

In Figure 1, we see a relational model of pedagogy—knowledge constructed through relationship. My autoethnographical and performative inquiry methodology, centering my own experiences as an educator in these spaces, result in a centralized position of the educator in my initial knowledge transfer maps. As I further explore the ways in which presence inhabits educational space, I will work to decenter the educator from my investigation of presence, contact, mediated framing, and Point A and Delivery guideposts. Additionally, future maps will consider and illustrate other forms of mediation, not just cyber mediation. The simplicity of this initial mapping focuses on the translation of in-person instruction to virtual classroom spaces; however, there is much more work to be done in order to illustrate the varying accessibility of in-person instruction and the ways that other mediations (i.e., distractions, basic needs, mental health, differing abilities, etc.) affect an epistemology of embodiment.

In the map of In-Person Instruction, I illustrate the educator as a purple cube and students as blue pyramids. The white arrows represent pathways for the transfer of knowledge and the ways in which bodies existing in a space create a network of presence and embodiment for Delivery to occur. My illustration of Online Engagements is a translated version of this in-person map, mirroring the concept of translated instruction. In online instruction, there are a series of changes and mediations: rather than a cube and pyramids, the educator becomes a square and students become triangles; each individual in the space has a white rectangle cutting through their shape, signifying the camera's capture of only some of the body; the white arrows of knowledge Delivery are spliced by orange lines, representing the reliance on dual-technology mediation as well as the separation of learning environments between individuals; and not all pathway arrows are translated between students, portraying the ways in which screen size or other technology limitations and connections complicate holistic online interactions.

The points of mediation—where technology intervenes to fill a gap in distance—become a source of gap in contact. The orange lines and white rectangles break the shapes and arrows in such a way that individuals are unable to make a true embodied connection, relying on technological tools to provide a stand-in for educational environment. Additionally, cyber mediation reduces dimensional existence. Not only does the dimensional reduction affect Point A's ability to perform Delivery action, but Point B perceives and interacts with only reduced dimensionality, even seeing and monitoring themself within a mediated frame.

Contact and dimensionality factor into an epistemology of embodiment and complicate knowledge transfer pathways. The multidimensional proximity within a shared learning environment that in-person instruction provides, offers more ways for presence to permeate, network, and travel across the physical space to, through, by, and with, learners. The large-scale turn to cyber mediation for translated instruction in spring 2020 offered an avenue for educators to continue to connect with students; however, the technology intrinsically broke dimension and contact. This breakage is perhaps the "missing piece" that so many educators articulated as a phenomenon in their translated instruction.

My own experiences as an educator in the cyber classroom support this missing piece. As a theater educator, I am often on my feet, making circles, passing movements, maneuvering power with my students through nonverbal communication in activities, making bold and zany choices in the context of story and space. My online classroom space muddles my ability to be in action at times, instead causing me and my students to rely on more verbal communication, slow the pace of activities for all of us to understand instruction and have a chance to participate, and minimize the action we can perform on screen. I can feel the diminished presence. I rely on the energy of my students to adapt or modify activities in the moment; I can feel the lack of energy in our collective digital environment within my body—emptiness. My Delivery methods of instruction, largely rooted in engaging multiple learning styles simultaneously and offering avenues for students to try out in real-time new techniques as practitioners and owners of their space, translate to a centralized me as the facilitator in the digital medium. I don't want to be confined to a rectangular box, a flattened existence, a liminal learning environment.

I want to be in the room with my students.
I want to sing together and hear all of our voices mixing together.
I want to create and hang up posters and drawings and return to them at a later time.
I want to feel the energy of the space and the people who occupy it.
I want to complete silly tasks as part of a transition.
I want to seamlessly hand off power because we can all "feel" the power moving.
I want to see and be seen.
And I want my students to feel like they can see and are seen by their peers and me.

Visibility and Vulnerability in Classroom Presence

Seeing and being seen by others create an awareness of visibility and vulnerability among individuals in a learning environment. These elements contribute to the performance of presence for educators and learners in these spaces, and their alteration in this new cyber medium has heightened my understanding of their importance in the learning and embodied experience.

Visibility refers to the representation of our bodies in space—our physical existence as perceived by others. We often associate visibility with eyesight, but this principle also extends to other senses such as our ability to be heard or even touched within a space. Visibility largely relies on contact and connection and lays the foundation for vulnerability.

Vulnerability is our capacity to "be seen" in a multifaceted way, encompassing our emotions, our desires, and our energy. This principle also extends to the ways we share our ideas in a social context, offering ourselves up to failure or success. Brené Brown (2017), a pioneering researcher in the field of shame and vulnerability, claims that, "without vulnerability there is no creativity or innovation. There is nothing more uncertain than the creative process, and there is absolutely no innovation without failure" (p. 106). Learning environments which encourage students to be courageous in their failure within the safety of a learning community and a listening facilitator benefit student innovation. Students' abilities to be seen and show up with their own identities in the space (vulnerability) is a large part of student presence, built upon the foundation of their existence in a space with others to begin with (visibility).

In-person instruction inherently fosters an environment of visibility and vulnerability. Students attend class, they gain literal multiple perspectives within their learning environment, and they become practitioner-performers in real time with others. Multidimensional proximity and the ability for embodiment to occur in the same space creates presence possibilities in these classrooms, and the consistent capacity for student-student and teacher-student contact creates a seamless experience with knowledge transfer pathways. There are, of course, limitations placed upon the physical and emotional readiness and ability of students and educators to tackle unfiltered learning in this way, and more research and writing must account for the true accessibility of these pathways, especially in spaces of marginalized communities. However, in-person learning, as compared to virtual learning, at least structures relational pedagogy in such a way that Delivery is possible in real time and space with Point A and Point B.

In online synchronous learning, students may not be seen or heard at all. With reduced dimensionality and mediated framing, students have a higher capacity to hide themselves and forego participation. They

must stare at their screen to see others, reducing the peripheral spaces of a learning environment. With the switch of a button students can turn their camera off, breaking themselves from the learning community. Not to mention actual technical problems that cause freezing and lags. The technology used by students through mediated framing reduces their visibility and vulnerability, illustrated by the mediated breakages in my knowledge transfer maps.

Students and teachers are losing their ability to see and be seen online, and this lost element of presence—the ease with which we can disengage or not be able to engage with others at all—complicates the delivery, reception, construction, practice, and performance, of knowledge.

Interlude III:

> "It's not a good practice to require students to have their cameras on."
>
> I'm reading the course evaluations for a large lecture class in which I taught one of seven recitation sections. My check-in meetings with the other instructors throughout the semester often revolved around class participation online; some instructors started to demand cameras be on in order for students to gain participation and attendance points that day.
>
> I did not require cameras on for classes as part of my practice of care amidst vulnerability, but I did expect verbal engagement or answering questions in the chat during large group discussions. I also relied on small group work for creative interventions with film and play analysis—student engagement became most apparent in the preparation of these engagements in breakout rooms and their presentation in a large group format.
>
> "If I'm in the Zoom I'm there."
>
> I will be the first to admit that learning environments must account for student vulnerability with material, instruction, and assessment methods and should incorporate a reciprocal amount of facilitator vulnerability. In this course alone, I made special arrangements for two students that were triggered by content in films assigned to the larger class. In each case, we discussed and determined together the best way to move forward and accomplish the learning outcomes for the assignment along with the individual goals of the students. But this student, in an anonymous course evaluation, does not point to specific moments in which they wanted or needed their camera off—they make a sweeping pass at "good practice. "
>
> Should student visibility be an option in the classroom? Is this student commenting on the instruction or revealing more about their own vulnerabilities or willingness to engage in the classroom space?
>
> "You should not have to see me in order for me to get attendance points."
>
> If this class were conducted in person, would this student object to physically showing up in order to get their attendance points? What was this student really saying in this course evaluation?
>
> The fact is, I don't know if students are "there" when they are in the virtual room, and I believe that there may be varying levels of there when we engage with questions of presence and contact. I wonder if students forced to orient themselves in virtual classes without physical visibility caused a reluctance on the part of these learners when they reentered physical classrooms.

> Reading this comment leads me to question how my pedagogy (in-person or online) does or does not reflect my belief that student vulnerability leads to growth while simultaneously accounting for my valuing of student consent and safety. How successful am I in this pursuit?

Conclusion

In conclusion, embodiment—individual and collective—and multidimensional proximity, construct sites of knowledge transfer within in-person classroom spaces. The translation of instruction to online classrooms reduces dimensionality and the ability for contact, resulting in the reduction of visibility and vulnerability. The missing piece that so many educators have articulated surrounding their online instruction directly relates to limitations on presence in cyber mediation and the broken routes of knowledge transfer they must now navigate.

More presence mapping must be done in order to account for movement within classroom spaces for an even greater understanding of dimensionality and its impact on visibility and vulnerability. Additionally, my experiences as an educator must be taken alongside others' experiences to create a true phenomenological understanding of presence in synchronous translated instruction. We must also turn to our students, experts of their own autobiographies and learning experiences, offering a path to relevant perspective that decenters the educator in these instances of illustration.

Looking ahead to a time when classroom instruction resumes fully in-person once again (sans the mediation of masks and other protocols), how will educators' experiences with broken visibility and vulnerability affect our curriculum design and instructional delivery? How will virtual learning experiences forever change students' abilities and willingness to connect to in-person learning? How might we center reciprocity with students and account for all potential pathways of contact and knowledge construction in student-student and teacher-student relationships inside and outside of the classroom? How might we design our learning environment spaces to account for an epistemology of embodiment, and encourage students to see and be seen? How might we articulate a Dimensional Pedagogy?

I look forward to the answers.

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