

**'Net\_work\_ed: Simulated Bodies and Objects Intertwined in Cyberplaces and Art Educational Spaces. Threads of a Critical Digital Pedagogy**

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Abstract (Summary)

The global spread of the Internet has been accompanied by change on a massive scale, a complex process that can be characterized as both beneficial and detrimental. This research project maps possibilities for approaches to art instruction based on contemporary artists who have used the Internet to critique art historical notions of authorship and the artist, the authenticity of the art object, and the authority of the institution. A comparison of these works with those produced by students in Art 100: Concepts and Creations in the Visual Arts --a general education art course offered at The Pennsylvania State University--provides examples of possibilities for critical technological approaches in visual arts classrooms.

This research project begins with an analysis of educational and digital spaces, drawing comparisons between the centralized, hierarchical networks typically reinforced in classrooms and those that are decentralized and rhizomatic such as the Internet. In order to extend this analysis, the 'society of flows' is compared to the Art 100 course structure, which reflects aspects of critical pedagogy. The social effects of developing technologies are then addressed through the three shifts that have accompanied the mechanical reproduction of artworks throughout the 20 th century. The shifts in notions of authorship, authenticity, and authority lead to a discussion of similar effects that have accompanied the widespread use of digital networks, and how these networks might work within a critical pedagogy based approach to art education. The concepts of the cyborg, the clone, and the parasite are then identified, leading to the analysis of contemporary artists who use these critical approaches in their work on the Internet.

Art Educators can benefit from the analysis of art educational spaces as they relate to complex networks such as the Internet, as they represent forms of organization that are socially relevant, technologically applicable, and potentially critical.

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