Confronting the Visual in Qualitative Inquiry

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"The idea that everything we are interested in exists in language or text, or is expressible in those ways, and that we can explore it using words or reading text, can be argued to be a rather limited and uncreative one."

–Jennifer Mason (2002, p. 104)

The power that images hold as the phenomena of our inquiries (*what we study*)

How we make sense of our inquiries (*our visual processes of inquiry*)

Ways inquiry can be (re)presented (*how we communicate what we study visually*)

Future Directions & Implications

Confrontation: What we study

"There has also been some confusion about whether, when we talk about using visual data, we are referring to visual data sources (phenomena which occur or are located in the visual and spatial, rather than in words and text), or visual research methods (visual ways of researching), or visual data products (visual ways of recording or presenting data)."

-Mason (2002, p. 104)

Photo by Jonathan Harrison on Unsplash

Photo by Marten Bjork on Unsplash

Photo by Jovaughn Stephens on Unsplash

…objects, photographs, videos, art, graphic art, performances, print media, social media, newspapers, television, movies, documentaries…

"...narrative is everywhere, but not everything is narrative."

- Catherine Riessman (2008, p. 4)

Photo by Annie Spratt on Unsplash

The visual is everywhere, but not everything is visual data.

Photo by Annie Spratt on Unsplash

How do you understand visual data within this *particular* study?

What data will help you attend to your questions?

How do such understandings align with your theoretical positioning?

How will you make sense of (or analyze) these data?

MANLY HALL

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2016

Feminism
is
cancer

Above photo from wvmtv13.com.
Others were taken by the
presenter.

What do these chalkings mean for/in higher education?

What do chalkings do and how do we respond?

How do chalkings in relation to human and nonhuman actants map new connections in/with higher education?

"No art is neutral, of course, but the practices [of visual activism] largely address themselves to economic, social, and political circumstances with special – if not fully transparent – intensity."

-Bryan-Wilson, Gonzalez, & Willsdon (2016, p. 8)

"Video footage taken by Palestinians captured violations that would otherwise be hidden from the public eye: assaults and harassment committed by Jewish settlers, attacks on Palestinian land and property, violent behavior of Israeli soldiers, arbitrary shootings, wrongful detention, and unlawful use of ammunition."

–Ruthie Ginsburg (2018, p. 38)

"Haddad says the organisation is now trying to encourage people living in areas of confrontation to use their own cameras — if they have them – or mobile phones to film potential abuses that they encounter."
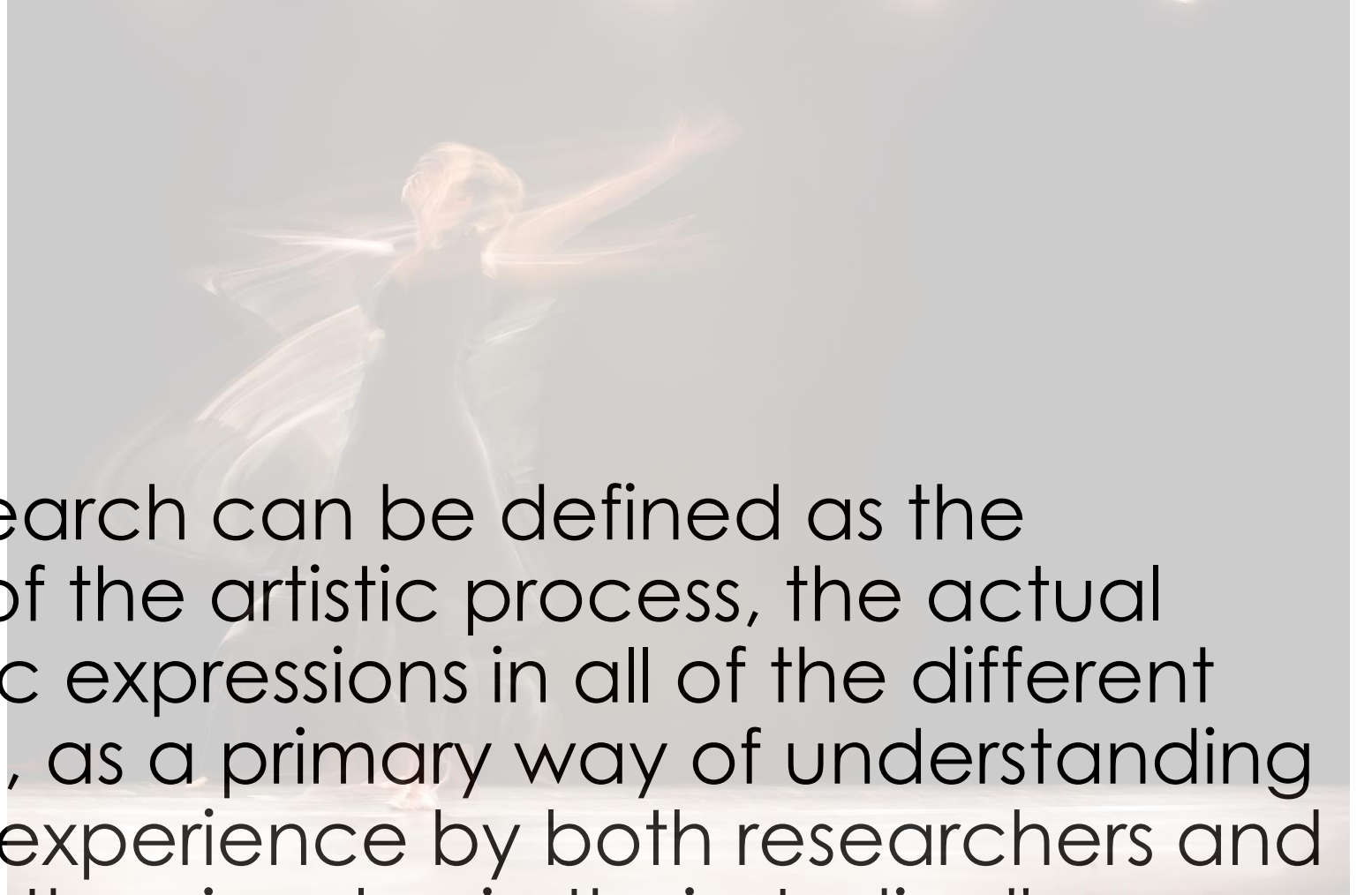
-Reporter, Peter Beaumont, *The Guardian*

"...experience is made up of more than what actually takes form. Experience is alive with the more-than, the more-than as real as anything else directly experienced."

–Erin Manning (2016, p. 30)

Confrontation:
How do we inquire artfully
with the visual
in mind?

"Arts-based research can be defined as the systematic use of the artistic process, the actual making of artistic expressions in all of the different forms of the arts, as a primary way of understanding and examining experience by both researchers and the people that they involve in their studies."

-Shaun McNiff (2008, p. 29)
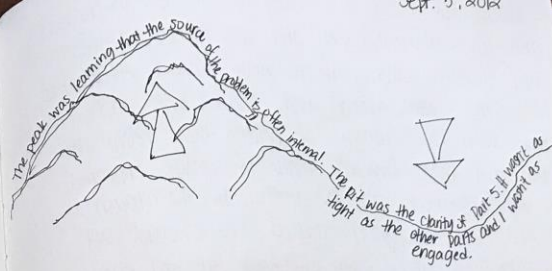
"Waste not, want not" presentation

- trash cans
- free-gan / dumpster diving
- Pile of Tires

- dump trucks from around the world
- e-waste (computers & other electronic waste)
  - China - taking computers apart
- Edward Burtynsky - photographer of waste landscapes & scenes of waste
- Japan - recycling practice; disassemble products
- Portland - composting

Sustainability's goal is to create possibilities not to limit options

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Sept. 5, 2012

The peak was learning that the source of the problem is often internal! The pit was the clarity of Part 5 & it wasn't as tight as the other parts and I wasn't as engaged.

Two of three groups had difficulties attributed to the interdisciplinary teams → they stated in their presentation.

- Hooks
- Drill Bits   BRING!
- Nails   → Fishing line
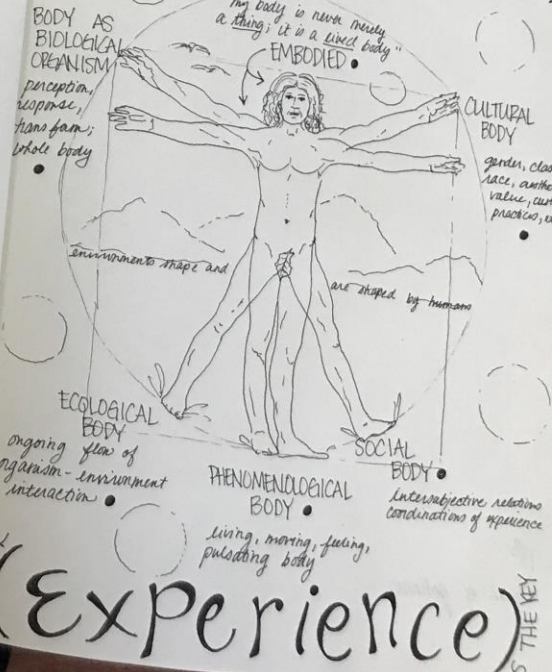
Team Development & Team Roles
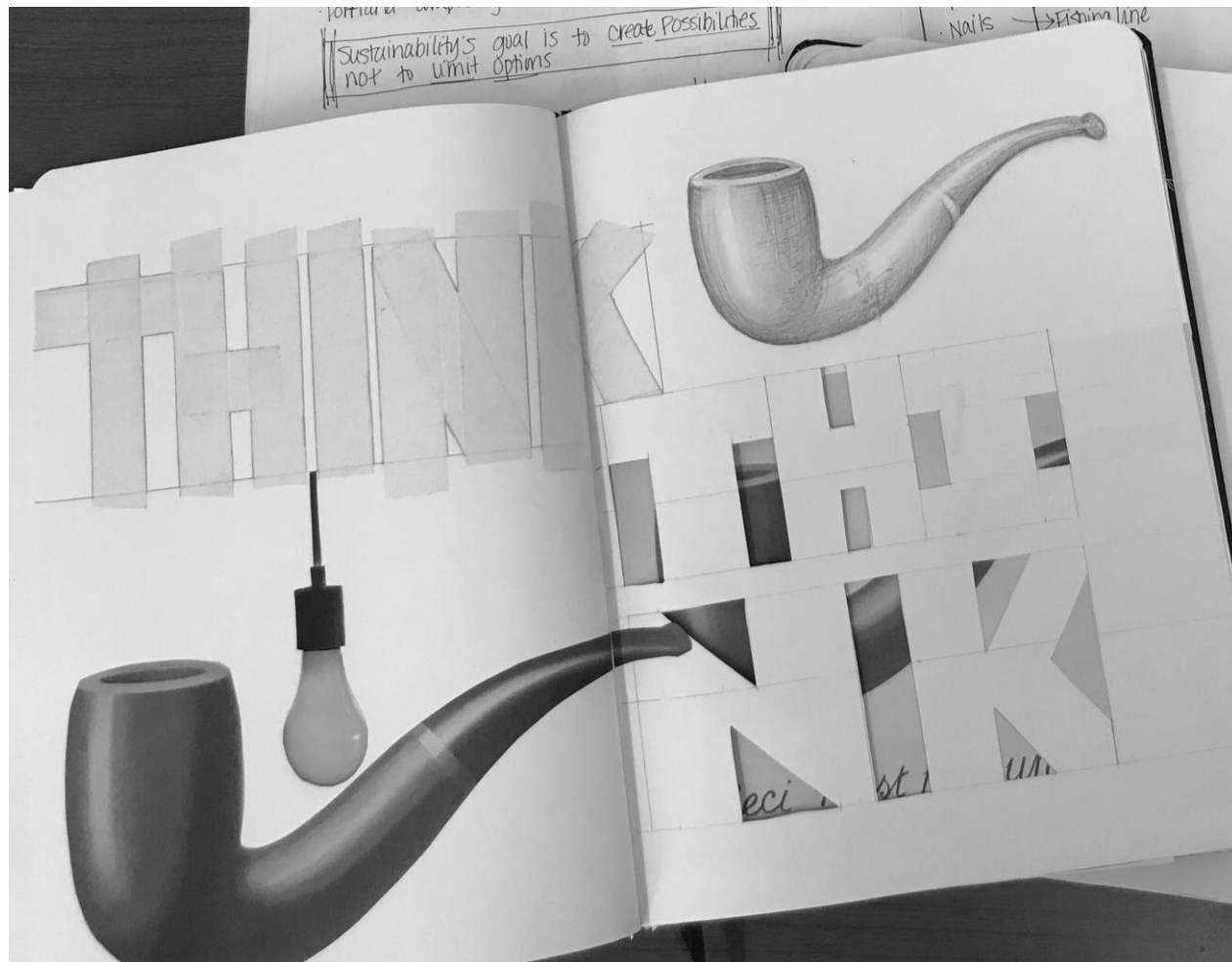1. Forming
2. Storming
3. Norming
4. Performing

THINK

THINK

THE What is... Meaning of the Body

BODY AS BIOLOGICAL ORGANISM
perception, response, transform; whole body

"My body is never merely a thing; it is a lived body"

EMBODIED

CULTURAL BODY
gender, class, race, anth., value, cultural practices,

Environments shape and   are shaped by humans

ECOLOGICAL BODY
ongoing flow of organism-environment interaction

PHENOMENOLOGICAL BODY
living, moving, feeling, pulsating body

SOCIAL BODY
intersubjective relations; coordinations of experience

THINK (Experience) IS THE KEY

"Making is a thinking in its own right."

-Erin Manning
(2016, p. 28)

Write down a question or area of stuckness that you are currently grappling with in your own work. Or develop your own visual prompt.

Create. Keep the idea you wrote down in your mind and allow yourself to be newly attentive to the materials, the movement of your body, where you mind wanders.

Don't worry about what the image looks like, just *immerse yourself in the process* and be attuned to what happens as you do.

Confrontation:
(Re)Presentation:
How we communicate

How we (re)present the visual

How we (re)present through the visual

"Within the art-making community, some will argue that the art or visual text speaks for itself and that the drawing, collage, or performance exists precisely because the idea is not easily expressed in words."

-Mitchell, Theron, Smith, & Campbell (2011, p. 19)

"...at its best, [ABR] culminates in the creation of something close to a work of art."

- Barone & Eisner (2012, p. 1)

Implications
& Future Directions

"Visual methods are no more honest, objective or authoritative than traditional language-based approaches."

- Stephen Spencer (2011, p. 68)

(Some) Visual Inquiry-Friendly Journals

Art and Perception

Art/Research International

International Journal of Education & the Arts

Journal for Artistic Research

Journal of Visual Culture

Visual Anthropology

Visual Arts Research

Visual Inquiry

Visual Methodologies

Visual Sociology

Visual Studies

Qualitative Inquiry

Qualitative Research in Psychology

Reconceptualizing Educational Research Methodology

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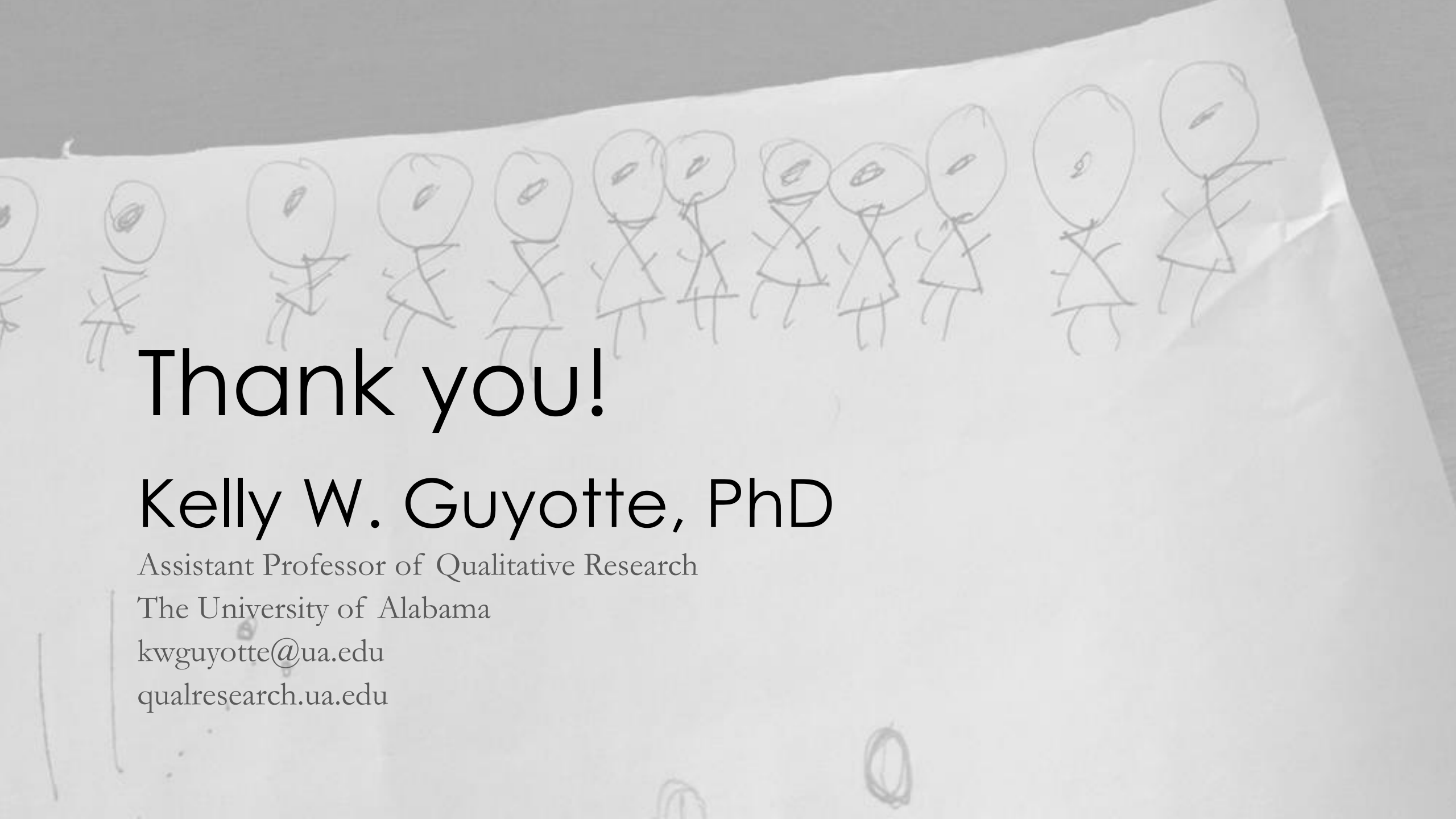
Thank you!

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