

# EDUCARE

Ano V - Nº 7 - Dezembro de 1999

# EDUCERE

ISSN nº 0873-0504

## METODOLOGIAS DE INVESTIGAÇÃO EM CONFRONTO

Revista da Escola Superior de Educação



# **EDUCARE EDUCERE**

ANO V - Nº 7 - DEZEMBRO DE 1999

## **METODOLOGIAS DE INVESTIGAÇÃO EM CONFRONTO**



REVISTA DA ESCOLA SUPERIOR DE EDUCAÇÃO DE CASTELO BRANCO

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### ÍNDICE

Editorial .....	3
<b>METODOLOGIAS DE INVESTIGAÇÃO NOS ESTUDOS CULTURAIS</b> .....	5
<b>O ESTUDO CULTURAL DA CRIANÇA. CONTRIBUTOS PARA UMA REFLEXÃO METODOLÓGICA</b> <i>Maria Margarida Morgado</i> .....	7
<b>GIVING VOICE TO YOUNG CHILDREN: AN INTERVIEWING TECHNIQUE FOR USE IN EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH SETTINGS</b> <i>Pauline Evans</i> .....	17
<b>THE TENSES OF EXPERIENCE: STRUCTURING THE FEELING OF THE PRESENT</b> <i>Álvaro Pina</i> .....	27
<b>EXPLORING ARTICULATION AS A METHODOLOGY: AN ARTICULATION OF THE CORPORATE PRESENCE IN RELATIONSHIP TO SCHOLARSHIP</b> <i>Amy Hea</i> .....	41
<b>METODOLOGIAS DE INVESTIGAÇÃO NOS ESTUDOS LITERÁRIOS</b> .....	53
<b>A EDIÇÃO CRÍTICA DE TEXTOS LITERÁRIOS</b> <i>António Gil Rafael</i> .....	55
<b>METODOLOGIAS DE INVESTIGAÇÃO NAS CIÊNCIAS DA EDUCAÇÃO</b> .....	61
<b>UMA EXPERIÊNCIA DE COMPLEMENTARIDADE DE METODOLOGIAS DE INVESTIGAÇÃO</b> <i>Mário Augusto da Fonseca</i> .....	63
<b>A INVESTIGAÇÃO EDUCACIONAL NA FORMAÇÃO DE PROFESSORES</b> <i>António Camilo Cunha</i> .....	73
<b>TEMAS LIVRES</b> .....	83
<b>AUTONOMIA DE ESCOLA: ALGUMAS REFLEXÕES</b> <i>Rui Moura</i> .....	85
<b>THE NEW SECONDARY ENGLISH SYLLABI AND A COMMON CULTURE OF CITIZENSHIP – REARTICULATING RAYMOND WILLIAMS'S PROPOSALS</b> <i>Manuel Augusto Gama Leal</i> .....	95
<b>RECENSÕES CRÍTICAS</b> .....	101
<b>TENDÊNCIAS DOMINANTES DA POESIA PORTUGUESA DA DÉCADA DE 50 DE FERNANDO J. B. MARTINHO</b> <i>M<sup>o</sup> de Lurdes Barata</i> .....	103
<b>CARVALHO, ANGELINA (1998). DA ESCOLA AO MUNDO DO TRABALHO, UMA PASSAGEM INCERTA. LISBOA: INSTITUTO DE INOVAÇÃO EDUCACIONAL</b> <i>José Fernando Rafael</i> .....	105

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## **EXPLORING ARTICULATION AS A METHODOLOGY: AN ARTICULATION OF THE CORPORATE PRESENCE IN RELATIONSHIP TO SCHOLARSHIP**

*Amy Hea\**

While educators from various disciplinary backgrounds have begun to attend critically to issues of technology in their scholarship, less work has been completed in relationship to corporate web sites and the effects that the proliferation of commercial and consumerist web ventures has on that scholarship. Corporate representations are left, then, to professionals the fields of marketing and management who often must consider images and profits as paramount to the development and maintenance of the site. Many other educators outside of the disciplines of business, however, could also argue that such entities and such sites affect their scholarship and classrooms. Therefore, we, as educators, must consider the implications of these sites, their uses, their positions, and their power to position us and our students. To do so, we require a methodology that allows for sufficient critical critique as well as re-constructive potential. That is, to analyze effectively these corporate entities and their sites, we must engage in not only critical analysis but also critical re-construction of the images, terms, and figures that structure our literate practices in relationship to the web. A critical methodology designed to meet these ends must be more than simply a method or set of techniques, but rather it must theorize our roles as researchers and our research processes in substantial ways. To this end, I support Patricia Sullivan and Jim Porter's (1997) position that "all methodology is rhetorical, an explicit or implicit theory of human relations which guides the operation of methods" (p. 11). Considering this definition of methodology and the need both to question and re-figure existing practices and structures, I suggest a closer look at the potential of articulation theory<sup>1</sup> as such a methodology. This exploration is not to imply that articulation theory become a prescription, but rather I want to propose articulation theory as a heuristic to interrogate the relationships of corporate cultures to our scholarly lives. While my ambition is to apply articulation theory to classroom practice more explicitly, the scope of this essay does not allow for such a detailed discussion. Rather, I will be defining articulation's elements, tracing its methodological deployments through certain theorists, and drawing on my own experiences to demonstrate articulation theory and its contribution to exploring corporate representations. This essay, then, has acknowledged limitations, yet the objective is not to make pronouncements but to begin a conversation about articulation as a methodology and to propose a means for analyzing corporate entities, their sites, and their potential roles in our scholarship.

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<sup>1</sup> Throughout this work, articulation and articulation theory will be used interchangeably to stand for this theorized practice.

## DEFINING ARTICULATION

Rather than beginning with a “strict” definition of articulation, I want to emphasize Jennifer Daryl Slack’s (1996) comment on the difficulty of defining articulation theory: “the point is that it isn’t *exactly* anything” (p. 117). While I agree with Slack that articulation theory’s reliance on temporal, non-necessary connections makes this statement accurate, I also want to offer a discussion of the elements to which articulation theory attends. Through this discussion, I hope to illuminate articulation theory’s methodological potentials. To this end, the elements of articulation theory include an emphasis on ideology, a claim to dynamic, contingent, and multiple practices and structures, an acknowledgement of difference as integral to understanding those practices and structures, and a call for political imperatives. Although these elements are not exhaustive, most of the theoretical approaches and practical applications of articulation highlight them. These elements complement articulation theory’s grounding in cultural studies commitments. That is, articulation theory originates with the work of cultural studies scholars who have sought a means to combat essentialist and reductionist conceptions of Marxian theory and to posit a framework for analyzing and re-working specific, contextualized power relations (Grossberg, 1992; Hall, 1985, 1986, 1989; Laclau, 1977; Laclau & Mouffe, 1985; Slack, 1989, 1996). These power relations are not simply an aspect of *one* particular context, but rather *all* contexts can be explored to make visible the otherwise normalized subordinate and dominant positions of the given situation. In turn, this situation becomes a starting point to re-conceive relations that are more equitable and to strive for further inquiries into the ways cultural practices come to stand for certain cultural norms or structures. I contend that in conceiving of articulation in methodological terms, we, as educators and scholars, can make important connections between our scholarship and the corporate entities which inform our roles as scholars and teachers.

To illustrate better such potential, I want to extend a discussion of the elements of articulation, attending to them and their interrelationships. As Slack (1989) so aptly explains, ideology is “the mechanism that organizes disparate multiple lines of force into a temporarily essentialized system of representation within which we live out those connections as real” (p. 333). The uncovering of these contradictions allows for ideological struggles. In other words, we can question the “tendencies” toward “common sense” and attempt to uncover the social and political forces articulating and temporarily stabilizing the subordinate and domination power relationships. By attending to a particular context and a specific set of features, we can connect, for the purpose of analysis, the ways we create, respond, and/or re-inscribe the systems of power at work. For example, attending to corporate culture’s relationship to our scholarship means considering the ways corporate entities seem invisible within our academic space, even though many corporate entities enter our work by way of grants for our research, by student scholarships supported through corporate endowments, through our own and our students’ “consumer” choices about and loyalties to certain companies, and in our composing processes that are informed by corporate languaging and representations. These contributions to our academic space and our ways of constructing our experiences often are elided through the norming functions of our daily practices.

Another element of articulation theory is its insistence on dynamic, contingent, and multiple practices and structures. In order to understand how ideology works, we must recognize the structures supporting certain subordinate and dominant cultural positions. Hall (1985) emphasizes this point as he argues that “[p]ractice is how structure is actively reproduced. Nevertheless, we need both terms if we are to avoid the trap of treating history as nothing but the outcome of an internally self-propelling structuralist machine. The structuralist dichotomy between ‘structure’ and ‘practice’....serves a useful analytic purpose but should not be fetishized into a rigid, mutually exclusive distinction” (pp. 95-96). In Hall’s terms, we



cannot become too entrenched in only the immediate, local effects of our daily experiences and choices, but rather we must explore, historicize, and connect our experiences to the larger cultural context. Thus, one aspect of our questioning becomes finding the ways that our practices and participation in certain local, historical actions connect with institutional and disciplinary functions. For example, our understanding of our classroom spaces as democratic and participatory must be related to the disciplining functions of academic life and the demands that corporate culture places on our ability to prepare adequately the next generation of workers and managers. In other words, we must acknowledge that our classroom goals are neither innocent nor value neutral and question how and when our goals are reinscribing hegemonic social positions. This mediation between our local contexts and experiences and the structures and norms that delimit our perspective on those experiences must be interrogated continually as a means to combat certain subordinate and dominant practices.

Articulation theory also makes “difference” integral to practices. This emphasis on difference is not difference for difference’s sake or a “positive” pluralism that appeases certain collective guilts in our culture. Rather, Hall (1985) defines “difference” as a “complex unity” (p. 93). He further suggests that “to look at the overlap [of social positions] or ‘unity’ (fusion) between them... does not obviate the particular effects which each structure has. We can think of political situations in which alliances could be drawn in very different ways, depending on which of the different articulations in play became at that time dominant ones” (p. 111). Difference then is not a means to achieve an essential identity. Instead, difference is the combination of identifications and figurations that can be combined in a particular historical moment. The flexibility of these combinations does not preclude but rather invites complex analyses of social practices and structures. For example, in the computer courses, our interactions with students and the ways we approach critical engagements are not for all time exactly the same because of the ways each of us is gendered, classed, and raced by cultural definitions. For fruitful exploration, we must consider how our positions and positionings construct our roles, our students’ roles, and the ways corporate cultures influence those figurations. There is not a moment, then, where our students, the corporate entities, or any one of us is a pure essence that can be determined, but rather each of us is overdetermined by the multiplicity of possible meanings, connections, and questionings. Articulation considers difference as paramount to exploring connections and the clusters of power that arise momentarily rather than exist monolithically, yet at the same time articulation charts the ways these clusters of relationships allow for particular social structures to be maintained.

This emphasis on difference as a complex, temporal unity is not merely necessary for deconstruction but also for re-articulation, which, in turn, directly relates to the political imperatives of articulation theory. Among the various scholars advocating and practicing articulation, each lays claim to the importance of the politics of the system of relations. Hall (1985) argues that “the aim of theoretically-informed practice must surely be to bring about or construct the articulation between social or economic forces and those of politics and ideology which might lead them in practice to intervene in history in a progressive way—an articulation which has to be constructed through practice precisely because it is not guaranteed by how those forces are constituted in the first place” (p. 95). Here, political intervention into history making is contextualized and originates from our practices. There is not a convenient separation of our theoretical commitments and our practices, but rather we are called to become political agents through critical analysis and intervention. Often the split between theory and practice confines theory to scholarly space and practice to classroom space, yet this separation is exactly what articulation seeks to complicate. For educators working in computer environments, we must re-articulate the relationships among our roles, our students’ roles, technology’s roles, and those of corporate cultures, we must work to have theoretically informed practices that continually confront social inequities. This struggle is not easily resolved but rather is a continuous process of analysis and action toward exposing and changing power relations. Again, this work is never complete, and therefore, we should never be led to believe that it is possible to find a foundation on which we can rest our politics; our politics too become part of the process of re-articulation and of finding ways to confront social domination.

In positing these various elements as integral to articulation, I also want to highlight that articulation theory is not practiced exactly the same across contexts or among cultural studies scholars. Instead, articulation's complexity and flexibility have been deployed as a means to question such areas as aesthetics, race, nature, hypertext, and communication (Jameson, 1991, 1993; Hall, 1985, 1989; Haraway, 1995; Johnson-Eilola, 1993, 1997a, 1997b; Slack, 1989), yet this very list is not representative of how scholars have developed their critiques and re-constructions. That is, as articulation has been enacted, it has also been re-figured to account for these scholars' purposes, but each maintains a commitment to questioning the politics of representations and figurations and to re-figuring relations of power in his or her project.

### **DEPLOYING ARTICULATION IN RELATIONSHIP TO METHODOLOGY**

My purpose in tracing the elements of articulation theory and noting its affiliations is to work toward conceptions of articulation as a methodology. In her extensive discussion of articulation, Slack (1996) notes that "it may be useful to think of articulation in terms of theoretical and methodological valences...[which requires] a commitment to the process of theorizing....[and developing] a conception of method as practice" (p. 113). That is, prescriptive methods for applying articulation theory are not compatible with its elements. Instead, methodologically, we can discuss the possibilities and potentials of its use knowing that these must always be questioned and adjusted depending on all the factors of the research project. To begin this discussion, I will be drawing on the work of several scholars who have deployed articulation as a means to critique and refigure power relations. While their complete projects are valuable, I will be using their works not in their entirety but rather to highlight methodological potentials.

Articulation theory raises issues of methodology in relationship to knowledge production; research context; researcher and participant positions; and data selection, collection, and interpretation.

Because of articulation theory's insistence that difference is important and that practices and structures are multiple, contingent, and dynamic, it raises questions about what counts as "knowledge." In Haraway's (1997) project to critique and re-articulate technoscience and its undertakings, she notes that participating in "ongoing articulatory activities that are always potentially open to critical scrutiny from disparate perspectives, is to adopt the worldly stance of situated knowledges" (p. 138). In other words, articulation theory interrogates traditional knowledge-making claims and sees knowledge as invested in the contexts and questions related to persons' (and for Haraway, non-persons') existence. In articulation theory, knowledge is not about "transcendent" truth claims but rather it seeks to produce frameworks for social intervention and action. This view of knowledge applies to the ways in which corporate cultures reproduce themselves through their figurations. For our purposes, we must develop ways of questioning the norming functions of education for merely careerist aims or as conduits to the world of "success" where competition is often constructed as the key to betterment. This questioning also consists of our own critique of the roles we play in perpetuating and re-inscribing individualist notions of corporate success.

This questioning of knowledge can also lead to a questioning of the research context. In her discussion of technological context, Slack (1989) emphasizes that context is not simply the "place" or "site" that the researcher chooses to explore and to report on, but rather "if context is truly constitutive,

we can never completely separate object and context...the process of contextualizing technology involves the movement of the objects through different, though related nations [and I would add situations]" (p. 339). Here, the multiple connections of situations and concerns can illuminate the researcher's work. That is, our construction of the classroom is not dictated or controlled by a force "outside" our classrooms nor are our students living in a state of "false consciousness." Instead, to explore context is to acknowledge the ways in which we and our students respond to and engage with representations of corporate success, and in turn, how our classroom practices connect with other contexts and situations. Removing the barrier between inside and outside and seeing contexts as partial and contingent, we can strive for more detailed analyses and re-articulations of power structures across differing contexts and systems.

A complication of research context also means a renegotiation of the concept of "participant." If situations and relationships are part of the research context, then the researcher must consider the participants' relationships to other persons who may not be present in the research site but still affect those participants' lives. In fact, this interrelationship is emphasized by Haraway (1997) as she argues that "confrontation and exchange in power-laced practical circumstances make the work of codification, situating, and mobilization of categories explicit for *all parties*, changing *everybody* and everything in the process, including the categories" (p. 141, emphasis added). This commitment to seeing the relationships among all persons (and for Haraway all beings) as significant can be attributed to articulation theory's emphasis on ideology and politics.

Attention to these interrelations must not be reserved merely for the participants but also the researcher. One of the important contributions of articulation theory as a methodology is its insistence on complicated sets of relations that must be continually explored and renegotiated. The commitment to this task on the part of the researcher is no small endeavor. Haraway (1997) emphasizes that "I will critically analyze, or 'deconstruct,' only that which I love and only that in which I am deeply implicated" (p. 151). In order to affect political change, the researcher must be committed to the complex task of articulating, and he or she must have an investment in the systems and contexts with which he or she is working. In other words, articulation projects demand careful consideration, and they cannot be selected simply by choosing an isolated incident of interest. For our critiques and re-articulations to be effective, we must have a sense of the political and ideological connections among our work and corporate systems that inform our ways of understanding ourselves, our scholarship, our teaching, and our students and their experiences. In other words, without a commitment to such exploration, articulation becomes a game of connecting and not a means of interrogating a set of relationships to initiate social change.

Data selection is also integral to articulation and its application. Because articulation theory makes connections that are "not necessary, determined, absolute and essential for all time" (Hall, 1986, p. 53), the features and "texts" we use to figure certain social practices and structures are not dictated to us. Methodologically, this lack of absolute connection means our selection processes are not controlled by a set standard on what counts for "valid" material to be studied. In Haraway's (1997) explanation of her choice to critique a set of advertisement cartoons for their figurations of science, she asserts that "advertising is the official art of capitalism...[it] also captures the paradigmatic qualities of democracy in the narratives of life itself...advertising and the creation of value are close twins" (p. 151). Her selection to critique science with these texts is not because these are the only available means to do so, but rather because these texts represent one set of relations that expose certain political and ideological commitments that Haraway is attempting to complicate. In other words, data selection is not limited to traditional materials or complete bodies of work.

Closely associated with data selection criteria are questions about data collection and analysis in articulation. As situations are seen as dynamic and contingent, the amount of data and what counts as data increase exponentially. Again, this issue is directly addressed in Haraway's works (1992, 1997) through differing sets of "texts" that count as data—art works, cartoons, advertisements, reports of experiences



(hers and others), journal articles, tools, technologies, textbooks, discussions, presentations, experiments, etc. By articulating and re-articulating both the objects and subjects of her research, Haraway (1997) explores the subordinate and dominant subject positions of social formations. In his work, Johnson-Eilola (1997) also crosses disciplinary boundaries to articulate and re-articulate constructions of hypertext writing. This emphasis on the dynamic, shifting, and contingent aspects of interrelationships makes their mappings more difficult but it also allows them to discuss less “permanent” claims about knowledge production, and instead, to advocate for “situated knowledges” and a “critical practice of hypertext,” respectively.

Just as with the discussion of the elements of articulation, this discussion of articulation theory and methodology is not meant to be comprehensive. To the contrary, it is intended to suggest ways that articulation theory can inform discussions of methodology, not dictate them. As I have noted, these discussions of articulation theory as a methodology become useful a means to critique and re-figure corporate entities.

### ENACTING ARTICULATION AS METHODOLOGY

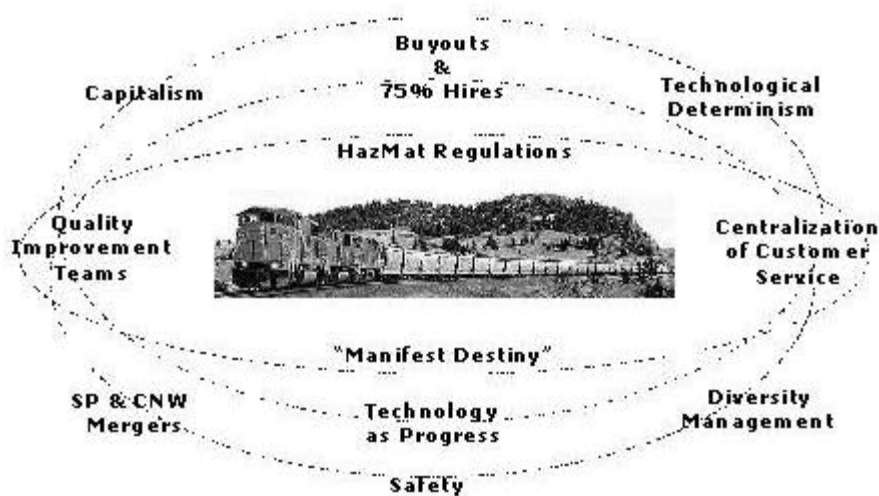
My interest in offering such an exploration of articulation theory as a methodology directly relates to Patricia Harkin’s (1998) call for “foregrounded articulation [that] shows how theories of writing [or composing] and of culture are connected—what their connections can accomplish and how, and what they occult or slight, and how” (p. 495). Her concern, and mine as well, is that the complexity of articulation and its commitments to political change must be acknowledged. This acknowledgement requires us to “*stipulate and explain* why and how disparate systems are connected so as to accomplish a given goal” (Harkin, 1998, p. 495) and provides scholars with pathways to developing, supporting, and critiquing one another’s works.

To demonstrate articulation as a methodology, I want to begin with such a foregrounding. My enactment of articulation and selection of corporate entities and their influence come from my own concerns about how corporate entities not only reflect cultural norms but also influence them. My contention is that we, as educators, should explore how corporations construct representations of class, race, and gender and how those constructs position our work and us. That is, we are charged with the job of preparing our students for their careers, careers in which many of them will bear the responsibility of “managing” other persons. The expectations circulated about work and the role of the corporation need to be explored in relationship to the academy and even our theories of education. Further, our research is often supported through a system of corporate endowments and affiliations with the universities and colleges by which we are employed. In other words, we are implicated in a system that makes certain corporate constructions of class, race, and gender less visible by determining that each of us—individually—is responsible for the preparation of our students as workers.

In my desire to consider this individualist myth and others, I will explore the ways in which Union Pacific has constructed itself via its web site. My choice to articulate Union Pacific’s representations comes from my affiliation with this company; I worked for UP Railroad for almost two years before pursuing my Master’s degree full time. My experiences working at UP helped to reveal the ways that corporations market and position themselves in relationship to their workers and our larger culture. Since then, one of my concerns has been in identifying *how* certain corporate representations contribute to cultural assumptions about class, race, gender, work, and workers. I must stress, however, the case I provide is not the only means to articulate UP’s image. Further, I do not pretend to speak for all UP workers and their experiences. Instead, my hope is to demonstrate how this particular corporation uses the web to perpetuate a corporate image that plays into larger systems of culture. This tracing will employ

articulation as a methodology, paying particular attention to the elements of articulation and how those inform my connections.

Union Pacific Corporation, the parent company of Union Pacific Railroad, has three other subsidiaries: Union Pacific Technologies, Skyway Freight Systems, Inc., and Overnight Transportation. My discussion will focus on the corporation's images in relationship to both the railroad and technology ventures. These two subsidiaries are aligned closely, as UP Technologies develops the computer software and hardware for the transportation systems of the UP RR.

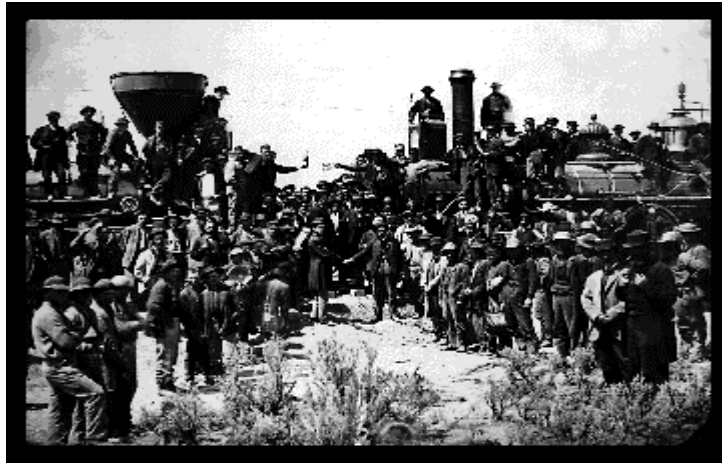


**Figure 1: Articulation of UP**

In Figure 1, I have attempted to outline some of the corporate representations that circulate in relationship to UP. These representations arise from the ways in which UP structures its business both daily and historically. For example, the ideology of the railroad has been associated historically with “manifest destiny”; this romanticization of westward expansion claims, however, that its systematic destruction of environmental habits for both humans and non-humans was necessary to our country’s development. These claims are best demonstrated by UP’s own historical overview of the transcontinental railroad’s development. In the history overview provided on the website, UP states that “General Greenville Dodge, Civil War general and chief engineer of the Union Pacific Railroad, wrote to General Sherman, commander of the Military Division of the West, ‘We’ve got to clean the Indian out, or give up. The government may take its choice.’ There was no mystery about how to do the job. The solution was practically larger than life. Sherman knew that the bison was the source of food, clothing and shelter for the plains tribes. The railroad, by bisecting the great herds of bison, provided a source of transportation for hunters, thus speeding up their elimination. Eradicating much of the bison population provided an earlier end to the hostilities than otherwise might have been the case” (UP Corporation, 1998b). In UP’s version of railroad history, the loss of bison and the driving of Native Americans from their lands is a necessity to progress. The process is rationalized as a means to a more peaceable end than “otherwise might have been the case.” In other words, the problematics of westward expansion are presented as inevitable, and even beneficial, to our country’s success. This instance is but one example of UP’s version of history that rationalizes the loss of lives and habitats. The racism is apparent in this example, but class

issues are also implied by the railroad's version of history. "Progress" is to be achieved at any cost, and those persons who work hard and are industrious enough to "solve" problems are valorized in this historical discussion.

In another UP version of the westward expansion, similar sentiments are forwarded. In UP's "A Brief History," the ideologies of manifest destiny and rugged individualism are constructed with its description of the "driving of the famed Golden Spike at Promontory, Utah Territory" (1998a). The website image included with this history is displayed below in Figure 2.



**Figure 2: Driving of the Famed Golden Spike**

The inclusion of this picture of the workers and the discussion on their lives after this achievement seems particularly poignant. The men are noted as "returning to their homes and families," "staying to further branch lines," and "settling to form ranches" (UP Corporation, 1998a). Yet, this website image does not even depict the largest majority of the workers who completed this expansion—Chinese immigrants. In addition, no mention is made anywhere in this brief history of the horrible, risky working conditions of these men. Here, UP's history completely ignores the systems of class and race oppression that allowed for the construction of the railroad. What seems most disturbing in UP's historical depictions is its lack of recognition to the ways these stories perpetuate current practices within its corporation. Little attention is paid to issues of diversity unless by way of its "diversity management team," but this move to acknowledgement does not include the stories of past or even current disparate working conditions of its "minority" or "manual labor" workers.

Other images of a "new" manifest destiny appear and are related to UP's technological determinism, globalization, and mergers. The most recent of these acquisitions included the 4 billion-dollar purchase of Southern Pacific Railroad. Besides the corporate myths of individual success and sacrifice of racial or class minorities for the betterment of all, UP forwards other views about how workers should be positioned. The practices and structures of the railroad are significant; for Hall (1985), practice is "how a structure is actively 'reproduced'" (pp. 95-96). The non-necessary connection among UP's representations reveal certain corporate stories of individual worker positions and at the same time demonstrate other larger cultural narratives about success. Through an articulation of these single ideas, concepts, and events, we can map the contradictions in UP's corporate programs.

Drawing on UP Technologies' image in Figure 3 (UP Corporation, 1998c), we can see yet another of the ways UP constructs itself through its website.



**Figure 3: Union Pacific Technologies' Background**

The hovering globe is aptly labeled Union Pacific Technologies; their transportation companies are all leading into the computer terminal of the UP system. These company symbols coalesce to stand for the new manifest destiny of the horizon of technology where progress and efficiency are highly valued. This image plays into the celebration of technology and its mastering of the global marketplace. Here, the industrial train meets with the post-industrial computer to shake nature into submission. The political imperative of this corporation is none less than to be the world leader in the transportation industry. This imperative, however, elides the company's ability to do more than speak of social and institutional changes. One example of the technological determinism in action is equipping all UP trains with OBT (On-Board Terminal) systems for electronic train management. While these systems allow for better car tracing for customers and quicker interchanges between railroads, they also reduce the train crews from two persons to one person. Further, these computer terminals disallow conductors to make certain reportings that could affect their well-being—like reporting a car's status as “hazardous empty” if it is indeed so, or reporting a car to its physical location despite its location in the computer system. The company's stance on this change has been that this technology will help the customer and that it was simply too expensive a development not to be implemented. Despite the risks involved for the workers (and even the public), UP has forged ahead with this technology “as is.” In this example, class issues, again, surface as those employees at risk also happen to be “non-skilled” workers. The company's lack of recognition of the risks to workers is exchanged for the accolades of other corporate entities that contribute to the company's profits.

Other technological “breakthroughs” have also led to greater train crew risks such as the centralization of train crew support to a remote location and automatic hazardous material billing. While the technology, itself, is not inherently “bad,” these corporate representations have valorized the company's position without regard to the potential detriment of its employees in the field. UP's valorization of its technological developments can be noted in this following claim about TCS (Transportation Control System): “TCS is recognized as the most comprehensive freight car management system in the railroad industry today. Over 2,000 man-years have been spent developing a highly

integrated system that controls all aspects of railroad operation” (UP Corporation 1998d, emphasis added). This overstatement by the company does not state, however, the ways that TCS has also allowed for the centralization of jobs and thus the elimination of train crew and train clerk interactions. Here, the story told is of progress and efficiency as the corporation’s primary commitments.

These corporate articulations are not meant to provide a definitive portrait of Union Pacific Corporation, but Union Pacific’s representations do bring into question certain contradictions of this corporate entity—such as attention to diversity while downplaying its past contributions to racial genocide, and commitment to better customer service to the potential detriment of its employees. In addition, this articulation reveals certain cultural narratives about progress, efficiency, and technology that must be questioned, critiqued, and re-articulated. These issues also relate to our scholarship as we attempt to complicate such narratives in our own work and in the work of our students.

My own investment in critiquing corporations is related to my commitment to combat social domination of persons in our culture. To do so, we must have a means of making visible the otherwise invisible practices and structures that lead to the perpetuation of such inequities. By proposing a methodology that values productive knowledge, I hope the call to influence political change is answered by scholars, students, and corporations. This articulation of UP needs to be re-articulated to include the ways gender is often ignored because of the railroad’s masculinist history, to re-historicize the ways in which this corporation has distanced itself from its racist and classist past, and to re-envision opportunities for workers, at all level of the corporation, to contribute to the development and implementation of new technologies.

From this articulation of the railroad, I have attempted to demonstrate the ways articulation theory can be employed as a methodology. While I have not extended all the possibilities of connections and their interpretations, I have worked to demonstrate how certain elements of articulation can be considered in relationship to methodological concerns. This connection becomes important especially when attempting to get at sets of relationships that are “normalized” through current cultural practices. These norming functions must encourage us, as educators teaching in technological environments, to implement technology in ways that allow for an opening up and re-construction of the images and representations related to the web. In addition, our work needs to generate a critical space for further re-negotiations of the corporate presence in our lives and the lives of our students. Through such explorations, we can hope to reconstruct more equitable social relations across contexts.

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