

DARCY ALEXANDRA: CO-CREATIVE DOCUMENTARY AND THE POLITICS OF LISTENING



Digital storytelling can offer dynamic pathways for developing relationships of inquiry, learning, and knowledge production through dialogical collaboration across domains. As a co-creative practice, the participatory media genre can render a nexus of domains—esthetic, ethical, sociopolitical, institutional—more tangible and open to analysis. Attention to these encounters of ‘political listening’ (Arendt, 1958; Bickford, 1996, Dreher, 2009) offers a framework for building and theorizing shared practices within proprietary contexts. To explore the collaborative and dialogical essence of digital storytelling, this talk will draw from a longitudinal (2007-2010) ethnography of media production with political asylum seekers and labor migrants in Ireland. Said research aimed to develop an exploratory and critical practice of inquiry that not only responded to the ethical complexities of research with refugees (Jackson, 2002), asylum seekers, and undocumented migrants, but also to create opportunities for research subjects—as emergent media practitioners and engaged scholars (Cammarota, 2008; Fine, et al., 2000)—to interpret, analyze, document, and publically screen their depictions of Ireland.

Darcy Alexandra is a specialist in co-creative documentary practices. She holds a PhD in visual anthropology from the Centre for Transcultural Research and Media Practice, Dublin Institute of Technology. Since 2007, Dr. Alexandra has designed and facilitated participatory media research projects that center audiovisual production as a means of inquiry and public engagement. She has conducted audiovisual research in the US-Mexico borderlands, El Salvador, Uruguay, Cuba, and Ireland, and taught digital storytelling in collaboration with university, non-governmental and governmental agencies including the Dublin City Council, the Forum on Migration and Communications, and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation. She is a guest lecturer at the Institute for Social Anthropology, University of Bern, Switzerland. www.darcyalexandra.com

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