CLOSETS AND WALLS:
PRACTICES OF HETERODOXY AMONG GAY MORMONS AND
STENCILISTAS IN SANTIAGO, CHILE

by

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A THESIS SUBMITTED
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE

Doctor of Philosophy

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HOUSTON, TEXAS
NOVEMBER 2010
ABSTRACT

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This dissertation compares the heterodoxic practices of gay Mormons and stencil street artists (Stencilistas) in Santiago, Chile, recorded during twenty-two months of fieldwork. The dissertation is divided in two distinct sections: one text-based and the other visual. The research explores a multi-sited ethnographic practice that is situated interstitially between a number of academic theories and methodologies including anthropology, sociology, art, and religious studies. The research illustrates further evidence that in religious, artistic, and anthropological practice heterodoxy generates orthodox discourse that over time initiates orthodoxic accommodations resulting in doxic changes. The latter sections of the dissertation explore visual methodologies of ethnographic evocation. One chapter is a photographic essay portraying a downtown street demonstration performed by university students calling for educational reform in Santiago. The protestors carried stenciled depictions of then president Michelle Bachelet illustrative of the permeability and fluidity of stencil art practice. The final chapter discusses Stenciling Power, the dissertator’s solo art show at Rice University Media Center November 2009 that reproduced some of the street art created by Stencilistas as well as original stencil art creations and video installations by the dissertator that can be found at found on the back cover in the printed version and in the Rice Digital Repository that can be found at URL: http://hdl.handle.net/1911/35296.
One person is always credited as the sole author of a dissertation; however, that one individual never accomplishes the writing alone, but rather is aided in the task by the work of a complex collaborative comprised of a multitude of individuals, families, colleagues, institutions, departments, and more. My dissertation is no exception. There are so many people to acknowledge for their help in making this work possible that I fear I am bound to forget someone. Therefore, in anticipation of the inevitable reality of such an oversight, please forgive me the error of my aging brain. It has been a long and ever-so-slightly eventful adventure.

First and foremost I would like to thank the Rice University Department of Anthropology for extending me the invitation to do my research with them, and for providing four years of generous financial support. Thanks to my master’s committee members who wrote the letters of recommendation: Jill Dubisch, Jim Wilce, and Miguel Vasquez. Thanks to George Marcus for the phone call that changed the direction of my life. And many thanks to my committee members who have seen me through the trials and tribulations of my program to the completion of the work: Jim Faubion, Steve Tyler, and Jeff Kripal. Each of you has offered something unique to the project and granted me safe passage through the liminal years of this initiatory ordeal. Jim is quite simply a genius of extraordinary dimensions. As a model theoretician, Jim is the disciplining force who has helped to tame my otherwise nonlinear and tangential tendencies thereby helping me to mitigate my more nonproductive passions and flights-of-fancy that would have meant sure failure. I would never have finished without his ever-refined grace and
eagle-eyed gift of knowing when I did not. Jim has been patiently watchful and concerned when all I could do is show up dialysis-addled and dying. Thank you, Jim for showing me Bourdieu and so much more. Steve’s work is one of the reasons I came to Rice in the first place. He has been an inspirational figure for me since before and has been a stolid force during urging completion while also ever encouraging experimentation and determination. Always concerned for my wellbeing, Steve is the embodiment of a scholar and a gentleman; I am grateful for his presence in my work and my life. Jeff chairs the religious studies department at Rice and has been especially supportive during my post-fieldwork synthesis period helping me to rediscover the comparativeness of research that I had misinterpreted and misunderstood. He is also a paternal figure extraordinaire who has been about slaying the dragons of my self-doubt, while also weaving a worldly model of the academician I would hope to become: ever encouraging, compassionate, and kind.

I gratefully acknowledge that my solo art show *Stenciling Power* was underwritten by an endowment from Jerome J. Segal and that my research in Chile was partially funded by a grant from the Boniuk Center for Religious Tolerance at Rice University. My Mellon seminar on Comparativism with Jeff Kripal was funded by the Humanities Research Center at Rice University, which included a travel grant from a donor who does not want to be mentioned publicly.

I had the unique opportunity of enduring a catastrophic illness during my doctoral program that gave me the chance to meet a whole other group of people outside the academy for whom I owe a great deal, and without whose expertise and care I would no doubt now be no more that ash. I owe much to the nephrologists who allowed me to do it
my way and whose patience made my continued existence on this planet endurable and possible: Dr. Mahendra Agraharkar. I am also very grateful to the many dialysis technicians and nurses (particularly Bonita and Joey) who saw to my constant care for three and half years at clinics in Houston, Galveston, Flagstaff, Winslow, Salt Lake City, Los Angeles, Long Beach, Philadelphia, and Santiago, Chile. Dr. Kristene Gugliuzza, the miracle worker of UTMB Galveston, who the night before my transplant when I feared I could not go through with it warmly encouraged me and took me into her arms assuring me that it was my time and my kidney and that everything would be OK. Thanks to the entire team of doctors and nurses who brought me back to life including that unknown cardiology intern who suggested the life-saving defibrillation when no one else knew what to do about my post-surgical unrelenting ventricular fibrillation. He gave me the shock of my life and I will be forever grateful. In the nearly five years since the transplant, I am so grateful for the two nephrologists who have seen to my care and with whom I have developed a professional friendship: Dr. Jacqueline Lappin and Dr. Kanae Ishihara. Where would I be without these two dedicated physicians? I shudder to think. Thank you.

Three women have meant more to me during my time in Houston and at Rice than any others: Nahal Naficy, Tish Stringer, and Valerie Olson. The three collectively and individually have been more than friends, much more and I want to dedicate a little something here to them. Each for different reasons is permanently inscribed in my heart. Nahal though now physically much more distant is nonetheless ever present in my thoughts. Nahal graciously accompanied me through many trials of my illness and my early years at Rice. Her joie de vivre helped me survive and thrive when I felt myself
withering. She was there to encourage and advise during my coursework, my fieldwork, and all things during much of this research. She witnessed the best of me and the worst of me. As my long dead friend Fred once said (quoting Joni Mitchell) “No regrets coyote we just come from such different sets of circumstance.” May you live long and prosper my dear one. You melted my heart and I thank you. Tish is like a sister to me in more ways than either of us cares to admit. Like Nahal, Tish has seen the worst and the best of me. Without Tish Stenciling Power would never have happened. Without Tish I would probably have ignored my interest in stencils. Tish helped awaken my inner anarchist that has trembled in the closet alone ever since the queer me slammed the door on him. “Remember, remember the fifth of November.” And I will not Tish; it is the day I remember you and all you have done for me, and this work – the day I write this.

Valerie, Valerie, Valerie. There is so much to say. Like Tish you have been there every step of the way through good times and really, really bad times. Thank you. How many hours have we spent conversing of the mundane, the mad, and the metatheoretical? How many gallons of coffee have we witnessed each other consume? I cannot forget the hours that you spent while I underwent on surgical procedure after another, or the fact that you have seen every drop of my blood circulate through the Borgian filters that sustained my life. I will not forget your advocacy, your support (nor the supporter you and John brought when my manhood became unwieldy post surgically!), and your omnipresent faith in me. You know that you have played an integral part in my survival of this 7-year ordeal. You and me we are one. LIVE LONG AND PROSPER!

This part should be written in Spanish, but for the sake of the audience that will read it first, if there is such an audience(!) I will write in my native tongue. There were many people in Chile who made this work possible, and for their collaboration, friendship, and love I am ever grateful. To the mamita (Carmen Toledo Bernal de Gonzalez) who gave me what I have missed since the premature demise of my own mother. Gracias por los empanadas, porotos, pan amasado, pastel de choclo, torta y
amor. Te quiero más que haya palabras suficientes. Hernán Gonzalez, thanks for your friendship and support and having such awesome nieces and nephews! Thanks to Pia Ossa and her entire family, Marco Maraboli, Marco Gonzalez, Julio Gonzalez, José Opazo, and Abraham Rojas, and their families. I am very grateful for my special friendship with Jeannette Herrera. I am also grateful to Ana Herrera and Manuel Luna, Sissi and Patricio, and their families. Thank you for giving full meaning to the theories of rapport and reciprocity: Alvaro, Pablo, and Tito. I am grateful for my friends and students at UNIACC. And I am especially grateful for the members of Afirmación who showed me the way of Chilean gayness. And to my friends Elías, Juan Carlos, and Marco and Marco: thanks for the parties, the dancing, and the Pilates. Abrazos! To Edwin Campos, Alan Meller, Sebastián Arancibia (Acuario), Contra-Golpe and all the anonymous Stencilistas thank you for the inspiration and the confidence to do-it-myself. The Rice Media Center and the Rice University Department of Visual and Dramatic Arts are woven into the fabric of my dissertation. I am grateful for the classes I took with Hamid Naficy and Brian Huberman. Brian has encouraged my video work and my art. Brian made it possible for me to spray my stencils all over the gallery space and actualize my fantasy of the embodied ethnography. I am so appreciative of your support and your encouragement. As an employee and an artist at the Media Center I have made many friends and I acknowledge their part in making my life more pleasant and their unceasing support of my work. I am particularly grateful for Rachel Boyle and Charles Dove. Others that made Stenciling Power possible include: Gaylon Denny, Jeff Fegley, Chris Sperandio, John Speragana, and David Krueger. Stenciling Power would not have been possible without the unflagging work and stimulating creativity of my nephews: Alec Biggs and Michael Biggs, and the inspiration of their brother Garrick. They are my champions.
I am also grateful for the cadre of friends and colleagues that I have acquired during my tenure here at Rice. From the very beginning of my time here in 2004, I have seen friends and colleagues come and go each leaving their mark on my work. Those who will not be forgotten include: Carole Esperanza, Kris Peterson, Lisa Breglia, Andrea Frolic, Jennifer Hamilton, Erkan Saka, Ebru Kayaalp, Brian Riedel, Anthony Potoczniak, Dan White, Ayla Samli, Lina Dib, Ala Alazzeh, Brian Clark, Elise McCarthy, Jason Eichorst and Andrea Jain.

I would be extremely remiss if were not to acknowledge the love and support of all my family both those of my blood and those of my soul. To my mother: I know this work is far afield of what we discussed before you left. Nowhere will you find mention of our ancestor uncle James Adair, or our contemporary Cherokee cousins, but it is my hope and my belief that had you yet a body you would use it to tell me how proud you are of my accomplishment. Michele and Jonee, thanks for the cheap airfare to Santiago, the encouragement, the love, and the wonderful children. Zoë and Elise, thanks for the “Words with Friends” and your sweet, smiling faces. Melanie, thank you for understanding the commitment this work has required and your words of support, love, and encouragement. I hope this sets a good example for Antonia and Nicholas. Marla, I appreciate your support more than you know. I am a lucky man to have the wonderful nieces and nephews I have already mentioned and Weston, Cassidy, and Chloe. Steve Patterson, thank you my bother, for the important gifts that made my work possible and for the unconditional love you and Sterling offer me. David Seibert, I thank you my brother for being you. I miss Jack too. Go! Lisa Hardy, I thank you for being my sister for the good times and the bad times. I appreciate and I thank you for being there from
the beginning of this journey back in Flagstaff 1999. Thanks for being there Chuck and Hank, Kayte and Carl, and Oskar and Rene. And for my other nieces and nephew whose blood I may not share but whose spirits I do, Cosmo, Fiona, and Iris, thanks for the hugs!

Thank you Susan Romanelli for the talks and the courage.

A big shout out to the Rice Coffee House, and every one of those bright faces that have made the last year so wonderfully caffeine filled. Thanks for the shots of savory and sweet, the boosts of courage and confidence, and for the smiles that kept me going: Erin, Kate and Alex! You guys rocked my world every day. Thanks!

Finally, I am so grateful to the most gracious, kind, and compassionate librarians at Fondren, many of whom have become dear friends: Erin, Cheryl, Tiffany, Rebecca, Alexis, and Sarah. Thanks for the pep talks, the candy, the purified water, the chocolate cake, the Chinese food, the conversation, and the carrel! LIVE LONG AND PROSPER!
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For my Mormon brothers and sisters
whose blood cries from the ground.
In the early afternoon of December 10, 2006, word of Augusto Pinochet Ugarte’s death crashed the homecoming party I happened to be attending. I had been in Santiago, Chile, for less than six weeks and had traveled there with the intention of investigating Chilean Mormonism and deviations thereof. I planned to interview converts to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormon Church) from the mid to late Pinochet period (1980-1990). Initially, I was interested in learning what had attracted such large numbers of Chileans to Mormonism during this period, which also included the two years I had served there as a Mormon missionary, and in investigating the factors suggestive of continued activity and inactivity. For my part, approximately two years after returning from my mission, I found myself wavering in my own practice of Mormonism, though I continued to be active as I finished my bachelor’s degree at

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1 See David Knowlton 2005.
Brigham Young University. I wondered if my own reasons, which I will discuss later, were similar to those I would encounter among inactive Mormons in Santiago.

Shortly after the announcement of Pinochet’s death hit the news, Chileans began to gather at various sites around the capital to celebrate and to mourn. I wanted to be with those who were celebrating, so I went to the Plaza Italia – a rotunda on the largest thoroughfare in Santiago and a traditional gathering place for demonstrations of all varieties – and joined the ever-expanding and ebullient throng. The experience of this demonstration shifted my awareness and would eventually alter the trajectory of my research. By the end of the afternoon, I had witnessed people spray-painting graffiti on sidewalks, street signs, and walls. It was my first experience of tear-gassing and water-cannoning. Sharing water and lemons with a young man who like me was choking on the acrid fumes on the quickly-clearing sidewalk, I felt a fleeting moment of Geertzian rapport.2 I witnessed the sharp and brutal fist of repressive state power, and I began to consider how to blend this experience into my work.

The original methodological strategy called for initiating conversations with long-lost converts whom I had converted to Mormonism on my mission, during the twenty-two months that I labored in the suburbs of Santiago. Mormon proselytism in Chile during the 1970s and 80s concentrated in the desperately poor poblaciones where the majority of new converts were realized. Mormon demographers reported that more than 2.5 percent of Chileans are members of the Church, which equates to just over half a million members throughout Chile; however, a little over 150,000 actually reported their

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2 Clifford Geertz died the day I arrived in the field, and I wondered if I would have some sort of “cock fight” moment that would mark my work like it did his. Of course, the one I allude to here did not have the same import as Geertz’ in Bali.
religion to be Mormon on the 2000 Chilean census. Moreover, official church attendance records reveal that less than twenty percent regularly attend. Though I continued to wonder why so many Chileans became Mormon and why they did not stay in the fellowship, I found myself unable to attend to the sort of fieldwork that would have been required to realize this research. Confronted by curious members who wanted to discuss my personal life and marital status, I avoided the discussion and hid, as it were, in the closet. In some quarters my bachelorhood seemed odd. While I refrained from discussing my sexual orientation with active members of the Mormon Church, both with those that I baptized and otherwise, this self-imposed closeting led to uncomfortable moments that I tried to avoid. Frequently, homophobic jokes were shared or the sexual orientation of public personalities became a topic of discussion; and when I asked about certain clubs or areas of town that I was interested in exploring, I was urged to avoid them as places that “those people” frequented. I did not want to be “out” to everyone, in fact, until I contacted members of Afirmación, I did not want to be out to anyone. Moments of “deep hanging out” were sometimes most unsettling, when the threat of my “outing” seemed to hang in the air like a nerve gas – toxic to me alone. As I continued to cope with the duality of my fieldwork persona and the performance of heterosexuality – or perhaps better stated as pseudo-heterosexuality – I realized that my pre-fieldwork urges to stick with so-called deviant Mormons were indeed correct.

While I would have appreciated finding someone that I had baptized who had confronted issues of same-sex attraction (to use the Mormon terminology for

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3 Knowlton 2005.
4 See Sedgwick 1991 for a thorough discussion of the fluidity of the closet.
5 Clifford 1997.
homosexuality) that was not to be. Along the way to my research compeers in the gay Mormon community, I videotaped street protests that seemed endemic to life in Santiago where I repeatedly encountered torture survivors – victims of Pinochet’s mad Carabineros. I considered exploring the subject further by visiting Villa Grimaldi and interviewing the president of the survivors association, and thus, abandoning the Mormons altogether; however, I was haunted by the structural and symbolic violence that gay Mormons in Chile experienced, and that I had experienced as a Mormon, and I redoubled my efforts to stay on track.

Then four months after I arrived in Chile came the near cataclysmic overhaul of Santiago’s transportation system Transantiago. The result caught me and everyone else completely off-guard. Visually, the transitionary period was captivating: bright new green buses, long lines of commuters waiting for buses that were made scarce by the removal of half of the fleet, and a paralyzed metro system traveling with trains filled to capacity. I considered turning to this subject for ethnographic work: indeed, seeing a public transportation-dependent population of a world-class city rendered to map-reading strangers in their own city was a sight to behold. I could not help but draw a comparison between the rerouting of the urban transit system, resulting in the transformation of the way individuals perceived themselves, their city, and the way they negotiated their city, as roughly analogous to the coming-out process for a gay Mormon – or any other lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender (LGBT) person. LGBT persons are compelled to reassess

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6 Villa Grimaldi was a particularly infamous concentration camp in an Eastern Santiago suburb. Many of the internees perished either at the camp or shortly after being removed. It was reported to me that all the women who were interred there were raped and tortured. The president of the Chilean Republic, Michelle Bachelet, and her mother were both interred there for a short time.
their world and their place in it as part of the realization of their status as a sexual minority. Perhaps religious conversion results in a similar reconfiguration of ontological questions. Many of my Mormon compeers suggested that Mormonism attracted Pinochet-era converts because it served to help Chileans cope with the boredom brought on by curfews and restrictions of public assembly ordered by the military dictatorship. Also, with unemployment near thirty-five percent and widespread poverty brought about by strict adherence to Milton Friedman’s neoliberalist economic austerity policies, which for a time were rigidly enforced by Pinochet and his Chicago Boys,7 Chileans welcomed the attractive, well-fed Gringos into their homes with the hope that by close association with their wealth and that of the Mormon Church, perhaps they would glean economic prosperity. However, today as per-capita income has increased and democratic freedom not experienced under totalitarianism is more widespread, attendance in the Mormon Church, probably all churches in Chile, has decreased proportionately.

I began to realize that the institutional and symbolic violence experienced by Chilean gay Mormons seemed to intersect with the recurring themes of state-sponsored violence – both during the Pinochet era as well as under the rule of the Concertación (Chile’s left-leaning coalition during the twenty years following Pinochet, replaced in 2010 by right-wing venture capitalist and adherent of Opus Dei Sebastian Piñera). In the machista Chilean society, gay Chileans, like their counterparts in much of the world, struggle against heteronormativity and institutional homophobia that relegates them to second-class citizenship.8 Like most of Latin America, Chile denies gay people some of

7 Klein 2007.
8 See Wilson, Adela H. 2000.
the most important rights afforded non-gay members of society. In fact, homosexual second-class status – which more indexes a stigmatized, marginalized class – is doxic in most societies and religious communities throughout the world and reflects the inherent structural violence in the symbolic domination of masculine heteronormative society.

Same-sex marriage has become a major indicator in the level of state-sponsored symbolic domination, or of its diminution. Only one Latin American country allows same-sex marriage: Argentina.

In Chile, the government is drawing up proposals which would grant homosexual couples the same rights as heterosexual couples regarding their finances, including pension rights, and being recognized as next of kin. However, Chilean President Sebastián Piñera has said that civil unions would not under any circumstances be equivalent to marriage.

Of course, only five states permit such unions here in the United States – not exactly a model for gender equality. As a contemporary phenomenon, the international gay rights movement falls under the category of a modernist movement, and as such, I realized that I wanted to deploy some sort of hybrid strategy for evoking the experience of the globalist, modernist movement in contemporary Santiago. Enter the Stencilistas.

In the midst of videotaping a May Day march and rally in 2007, stenciling graffiti artists or Stencilistas darted past me as they quickly, and as surreptitiously as possible, stenciled walls and sidewalks with slogans and images of communist icons, Mapuche prisoners, and victims of Pinochet’s military junta – all the while avoiding the

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10 Goffman, Erving 1986; Bourdieu, Pierre 2001 118.
11 Mexico City also allows same-sex marriage, however, it is not legal in the country as a whole.
Carabinero gaze, but not that of cameras and curious observers like myself.\textsuperscript{13} Though these Stencilistas worked in the daylight under cover of a mass protest, most worked on the streets of Santiago in the early hours of the morning while the majority of the city slept.\textsuperscript{14} Initially, I assumed that Stencilistas were subalterns engaged in a counter-discourse with hegemonies of power and voicing concerns and anxieties of the otherwise silent majority. With time, I learned that this was not necessarily the case.

While I had noticed and photographed some stencils before, I now began to see stencils everywhere. It seemed as though overnight they jumped off the wall to speak to me. I began to photograph more and more and attempted to interpret them. I have digitally reproduced one such copy here on the left. The text reads, “U.S.A Nos USA.” With this text, the Stencilista invokes the homonym usa, (Spanish third person singular conjugation of usar – to use) and the Spanish pronunciation of USA, the country to the north that Chileans simultaneously admire, mimic, and love to hate.\textsuperscript{15}

\textsuperscript{13} In reality, the Stencilistas did not appear to be too concerned with the Carabineros, who were more concerned with interdicting more destructive and violent protestors. 
\textsuperscript{14} One interviewee confirmed that 3:00 A.M. was the prefect time to stencil. 
\textsuperscript{15} Many of my consultants, informants, compeers, and friends lamented what they interpreted as Chileans lack of culture, “Everything we have we copied from the gringos,” I heard repeatedly. Of course, this is a gross distortion of reality though not entirely untrue. Many icons of modernity borrowed from the North are evident in contemporary Chile, but there remain many “cultural” indices including the cueca (Chile’s national dance), the distinctive idiomatic Chilean speech, and, as noted with the 2010 mining rescue, a habitus of collective action.
Contesting heteronormative homophobic doxa, as well as many other Chilean doxas, Stencilistas’ subversive art seems bent on upending the status quo. Professed anti-globalizationists and anti-violence activists, Stencilistas challenge the machista doxa of Chile society, as well as any number of other norms. Beyond even the more obvious anticapitalist stencils sprayed on corporate-owned walls, Stencilistas tend to create counter-normative art that aggressively, though nonviolently, presents heterodoxic alternatives to orthodox regimes of power. In this dissertation, I argue that at the margins of Chilean society, Stencilistas and gay Mormons occupy a similarly permeable and fluid borderland of heterodoxic practice. In my own work with this dissertation; and taking a cue from my informant and compeer communities, I endeavor to engage in heterodox methodologic practice and ethnographic evocation.

While I might have focused on one or the other, gay Mormons (indeed, an understudied social group) or Stencilistas (an emergent group of artists whose practice of guerilla art seems to be gaining significant purchase beyond traditional art worlds, and who are also under represented in academic literature), I continued to work on the comparative questions: What do gay Mormons and Stencilistas have in common? How are they different? How can I compare them? Why am I so attracted to them both? What interests me about these two completely disparate research subjects? Is such a comparison ethnographically significant and if so, how? What do I need to do to compare these groups in an ethnographic project? How can I do something unique and ethnographically experimental and innovative to contribute to the discipline and to the discourse around globalization, religious studies, and art in anthropology? Indeed, as

these questions began to percolate, I was compelled ever more inward to examine my own subjectivity and ontological understanding for the answer.

Among anthropologists, the move toward multi-sited ethnography might give rise to three sets of methodological anxieties: a concern about testing the limits of ethnography, a concern about attenuating the power of fieldwork, and a concern about the loss of the subaltern. ¹⁷

FIELDSITE SNAPSHOT

Spanish conquistador Pedro de Valdivia founded Santiago, Chile, in 1541. Indigenous groups whose bloodlines today run through most of Chile’s mestizo population occupied much of the territory. It goes without saying that the Mapuches did not need a city to be founded or a conquest perpetrated; however, like their relatives throughout the hemisphere, they faced these prospects valiantly. Indeed, the Araucanos, or Mapuches, were the last indigenous group to surrender to the well-armed Spanish. The Mapuches have continued to be stalwart defenders of their homelands throughout their 500-year struggle for self-determination. That fight continues today as Araucania is under siege by international and national business concerns that would appropriate their last remaining resources and land. Indigenous Chileans are often victim of state-sponsored violence on the barricades erected throughout Araucania.

Today in Santiago, temporary barricades shrouding construction projects, crumbling adobe structures indicative of endemic urban decay, as well as the granite walls of modern skyscrapers and stuccoed walls of hastily constructed apartment buildings function as grand canvases for the spray paint-armed Stencilista who hastily installs her work for public exhibition.

I am acquainted with two disparate versions of Santiago, one troubled by omnipresent fear incited by state-sponsored violence or totalitarian fascism, and the other a modern society coping with its past and confronting its future. As part of my multisited strategy, I have the extraordinary good fortune to be able to compare my missionary experience in Pinochet’s Chile with that of my anthropological fieldwork experience in Michelle Bachelet’s Chile. The change over time not only qualifies as a fieldsite, but so also do the experiences of the Chileans who traversed this time. I am cognizant of the changes in the physical space, most notably the construction of high-rises throughout the city and the transformation of campamentos to poblaciones (shantytowns to stable neighborhoods), as well as the construction of highways and additional metro lines, as well as the societal transformations associated with the transition from dictatorship to democracy. Signs of economic stability abound, though the disparities persist. I “felt” different moving about the city. Of course, the automatic weapons of the Carabineros are history, which makes the streets feel less militarized and opens up the space for the flourishing of the stenciling that I document in this work. During the Pinochet years, a graffitist could have been shot on sight. Such repressive measures are impossible today. Meanwhile, Mormon missionaries under Pinochet enjoyed unrestricted access to all but the most guarded of wealthy neighborhoods.

This dissertation entertains notions of the visually praxological, paraethnographic, autoethnographic, and artistic. I deploy visual ethnographic methodologies (including videotaped open-ended interviews, photography and design) coupled with artistic methodology and a theoretical praxology to evoke the tensions and comparison of the research. My research has resulted in three ethnographic products that contribute to the
rapidly growing canon about Chilean society, but it also challenges the borders of ethnography and the intersection of anthropology and art.

To begin the process of exploring the multi-site in chapter 1, entitled, “Blocking Together: A Multi-Sited Approach” I begin the process of assessing, understanding, analyzing, and critiquing heterodoxies and orthodoxies in Chile by comparing the incommensurable social grouping of gay Mormons and Stencilistas, both of which admittedly represent relatively extreme minorities in the Chilean social field.

Gay Mormons in Chile, as elsewhere, are situated at the margins of a modernist religion that adheres to a rigidly hierarchical bureaucratic structure that is at once evocative of a contemporary multinational corporation and the Roman Catholic Church. I juxtapose this emergent group beside the Stencilistas who represent another entirely disparate, emergent grass-roots art movement without any explicit structure, but which appears to spring anarchically from global networks of like-minded people who contest among other things the dominant consumerist paradigm – so-called free market capitalism and neoliberalist economics. While members of the former group appear to unwittingly collaborate in the structural violence of institutionalized Mormonism by submitting to a heterosexist power structure, as a matter of doxa, they also struggle to form a heterodox identity that will be explored at length in this chapter. The latter group is comprised of non-structured local collaboratives and independent individuals who tend to be artists and activists who reject the bureaucratic, hierarchal, and patriarchal structures doxically embedded in Chilean society, and thus, they embody a heterodox habitus that is not as radically outside the mainstream as might be expected.
In chapter 2, “Toward a Praxology of Gay Mormonism and \textit{Stencilismo}” I examine the practices of Stencilistas and Chilean gay Mormons. I discuss the history and ethnography of stencil street art, focusing on the more influential artists in Chile and elsewhere and further contextualizing Santiago’s emergent movement. I continue the work of comparative juxtaposition by illustrating the heterodox practices of members of Afirmación, the Chilean iteration of a gay Mormon support group founded in the United States in 1977. I examine how some of my interlocutors became authors of their own paraethnographic study of stenciling in Santiago, while other “professional” Stencilistas having practiced for some time and garnered press and popularity, began to work for interests who could provide them with social, artistic, and economic capital.

Chapter 3 is a photographic essay entitled Ahumada. The essay is named after a promenade in Santiago’s downtown area where I took the twelve digital photographs. Traditionally, the incorporation of photos in an academic text such as this serves to illustrate a specific datum, or support a research finding that can elicit an emotional and sensorial exchange that the author feels salient to her discussion in the written text; however, photographs often end up in an appendix, or some other marginalized space as supplementary to the text. While I have performed this strategy in a couple of places in this text, the photographic essay performs a distinctively activist purpose. I am interested in reproducing the strategy used in Arnd Schneider and Christopher Wright’s edited volume \textit{Contemporary Art and Anthropology} and subverting the tradition.

Chapter 4, “Imagining Artist-Anthropology: A Method and Practice,” details the theory and method of the artist-anthropologist. The artist-anthropologist that I imagine and embody is videographer and documentary filmmaker, photographer, blogger, and
installation artist, as well as philosopher, teacher, theoretician, and scholar. I argue that the visual is an important field for ethnographic work and that visual evocation is on par with textual. While my own practice of artistic methodologies is necessarily imperfect and fragmentary, the resulting ethnographic evocations contribute significantly to the ethnography of visual communication and the anthropology of art, which cannot easily be dismissed. My work highlights the interdisciplinary impulses emergent in contemporary anthropology, and I deploy a number of artistic ethnographic forms to create something uncommon in contemporary anthropology: an artistic alternative to the traditional ethnographic dissertation.

My installation project, detailed in chapter 5, “Art Practice as Ethnographic Methodology: A Personal Exhibit,” drew together such divergent ideas as an heraldic totem of historical figures within anthropology, a five-by-thirty-three foot, rainbow-colored series of stencils of the founder of Mormonism Joseph Smith, and a gaudy, McDonald’s-inspired commentary on the 9/11 attack on the World Trade Center. The gallery exhibition brought together an assemblage of images captured and archived during my time in-country as well as stencils that I created out of my research. The collected works allude to the power struggle against the legitimacy of heterodoxy in the struggle against the structural violence of a number of orthodoxies.

Finally, the blank spaces that may exist in this dissertation are analogous to the spaces we see on walls in between the stencils, and are also reflective of the time spent without interlocutors or compeers wherein an intersubjectivity and intertexuality results in the creation of the ethnographic text and art. Blank space is where we find fertile ground to allow the imagination to create cohesion, coherence, and collaboration. Simply
by suggesting the unexpected comparison between Mormons and *Stencilistas*, or Mormonism and Stencilism, I animate the reader’s mind to fill in the blanks, create connections, and attempt to understand surprising juxtapositions from the cohabitation of two very dissimilar subjects in one ethnographic text. I invite the reader to go beyond the boundaries of what I suggest here and draw more elaborate connections and affinities between the two subjects. There is much more beyond what I describe here, and there is much more work to be done. This dissertation may serve as the blueprint my future work and ethnographic inquiry in the Chilean contemporary, religious gays, and the practice of artist-anthropology.

This dissertation embodies collective intersections of anthropology, art, and religious studies, offering theoretical and methodological solutions for thinking about ethnography as an artistic practice and de-centering the hegemony of the stand-alone, written monograph. If my ethnography of Stencilistas is thin in contrast to my very thick ethnography of gay Mormonism, it is a result of my complex autoethnographic positionality that is accounted for by my life-long experience as a gay Mormon, and my much less integrated experience with Stencilism. Messy imperfection of the incomplete, fluid, and living document is the performative space of the multi-sited ethnography.
Religion made it very difficult for me to accept my homosexuality. I felt bad; I felt guilty; I felt like I was disobeying god. Early on I confessed to the bishop what I was feeling and what was going on, and he disfellowshipped me. He told me I needed to pray because I needed to “sacarlo” (draw out) this homosexuality because, he said, “It is an abomination.”

Despite being visually aggressive, my images represent a peaceful way to protest against war, because to protest against violence in a violent way is as stupid as going to war.  

This move toward comparison embedded in the multi-sited ethnography stimulates accounts of cultures composed in a landscape for which there is as yet no developed theoretical conception or descriptive model.

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1 Nefí, gay Chilean Mormon interview transcript 2007.
3 Marcus 1995.
Estación: Yungay’s Love. The stenciled image pictured above embeds multiple layers of multiple meanings into a single sign that creates a juxtaposition of two, utterly unrelated topics and that serves as an iconic evocation for the work of this chapter. Just as this chapter juxtaposes two groups in contemporary, urban Chile that may seem unrelated – gay Mormons and stencil street artists (Stencilistas) – the stencil plays with political protest over an unrealized Metro station and the notion of an amorous gay relationship – a subjectivity always already politically charged in Chile and elsewhere.

At first glance, the stencil – spray-painted in red that fades into an orange tone, positioned on a decaying, stuccoed concrete wall that is itself peeling yellowing eggshell-colored paint to reveal layers of green and blue beneath – is disorienting and confusing. We see what appear to be two men gleefully looking at each other, perhaps on the verge of giving a warm abrazo, or Chilean-style bear hug, or even about to kiss. Something about the way the stencil was designed gives the pair the appearance of being dressed in some sort of space-age outfits. At first, I thought they might be part of a young, urban tribe that dresses in Borg-like gear.\(^4\) Examining it more closely, however, we can see that the man on the left is actually foregrounded by a large soda bottle, which happens to look like it is part of his attire, and the one on the right is simply wearing a striped shirt. The Borg imaginary disintegrates as the image is revealed to be far more mundane. The sense of a homoeroticism is not abandoned, but is further reinforced by the text that frames the males and their apparent movement toward one another is made somehow all the more provocative by the presence of the seemingly innocuous, yet suggestively rigid soda

\(^4\) On the streets of Santiago as elsewhere, young urban tribespeople tend to distinguish themselves from others not of their group by wearing distinctive clothing, e.g., Emo, Goth, Punk, Skinhead, and Raver.
bottle. The text is expressed through a common practice of Chileans – who almost universally have some knowledge of English – by code-switching between Spanish and English: Estación is in translation “station” and Yungay is a place name. However, the noun is modified by the English possessive suffix “apostrophe-s,” and then, of course, “Love” is written in English. (“Love” is an English word that most Chileans understand). Yungay [pronounced in Spanish as “jung-guy”] is a play on words and pronunciation, because in Chile as elsewhere, the term “gay” is often pronounced accented, but with the full meaning attached. Because the word is given the English possessive and precedes the term “Love” we can assume that the intention is to read it as “gay.” Thus, it is clearly meant to suggest – to the knowing viewer – the phrase “Young gay love.” However, if one is not savvy to the play on globalized sexual identity, even if one is also aware of another dimension of the image indexed by the word Estación, then this queer interpretation might elude. Another dimension, clearly mixed in the messy baroque of this stencil, is that Yungay Station, located near the Quinta Normal, or the western-most end of Line 5 of Santiago’s ever-expanding Metro system, is not really a station at all. Land was purchased, cleared, and developed for the station, and its announcement was celebrated by the citizens who found themselves in the middle of a very large gap between the last two Metro stations on that line. Ultimately, and without public debate

5 Yungay was a battlefield 200 kilometers north of Lima, Peru, where Chilean soldiers defeated the Peruvian and Bolivian Confederacy in 1839. See http://www.elgrancapitan.org/portal/index.php/articulos/historia-militar/903-la-batalla-de-yungay.
7 I mean to suggest here that “gay” is a globalized term adopted by non-United States citizens as a way to affine themselves with the identity/liberation movement started here.
8 Signs are posted around the Yungay park where the entrance to the subterranean station would be, but there is only the periodic rumble as a train passes beneath. I lived blocks
or notice, a decision was made to not open the station. The “ghost station”
sits as a constant reminder of a promise not kept. Thus, the stencil can be interpreted as an ironic
homage to the celebration for a Metro station that will never be. Before we leave this
image, there is one more point and language game that I would like to suggest the reader
consider. If we look at the way the word Estacion is expressed, without the diacritic over
the “o” and with the “o” and “n” written somewhat smaller, and taking into account the
Chilean practice of dropping the last syllable of words, notably consonants, we might
read the word “Estaci,” which would be understood to mean está asi – in translation,
“it’s like this.” Adding this to the lower text we could interpret the full text to mean:
“This is how young gays love.” And, voilá, we are back to our first impression of the
stenciled image as that of two young men amorously involved, perhaps, on the verge of a
kiss.¹⁰

I posit that there is much insight to be gained by experimenting with postmodernist
juxtapositions like the one embedded in the stencil shown here, and that, as George
Marcus suggests, through the creation of a “messy baroque” that in its elaborate and
intricate blending and mixing of subjects and sites, we might, like the bricoleur Claude
Levi-Strauss invokes, hold gay Mormons and Stencilistas in stark relief for maximum
analytical effect. Indeed, while the two groups’ distinctive heterodox strategies,
dispositions and tendencies mark it habitus, and the orthodoxies that oppose them, we
might understand that the two groups, like so many other disparately marked groups,
from this “phantom station,” and once a month a minor march of neighbors would wend
its way through the surrounding streets decrying the government’s “betrayal.”

¹⁰ Near the end of my research, I learned that, in fact, the young man that made this
stencil had created it from a photograph that a friend had captured of his lover and him at
the moment right before kissing.
have more in common than in contrast.

**COMPARATIVE STRATEGY**

The para-site always involves a material dimension, a kind of labor, or a making of things out of the way they are supposedly or otherwise given.\(^{11}\)

Gay Mormons and stencil street artists, as objects of study, appear to be utterly incommensurable social actors, each associated with oppositional worldviews and life strategies. Gay Mormons are positioned within a sexual orientation that renders them subject to domination by the structures of heterosexist normativity and the structural and symbolic violence of religious doxa that is nearly impossible to elucidate, much less to break. Stencil street artists seem disposed to contest domination and power in many of its globalized iterations. Confronted by two such diverse strategies in the struggle against hegemonic global domination in the fields of religion and politics in Chile, the comparison seems particularly stimulating and virtually inescapable.

Furthermore, holding the two practices together as a comparative strategy is a testimony of ethnographic complexity\(^{12}\) illustrative of the fragmentary, multi-sited approach that “quite literally following connections, associations, and putative relationships”\(^{13}\) encountered during my twenty-two months of fieldwork in Santiago, Chile. Having committed myself early on to attempting a Marcus-inspired strategy of fieldwork, which advocates for the anthropologist to follow connections wherever they

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\(^{11}\) Marcus 2000.
\(^{13}\) Marcus 1995 97.
may lead, I could not have done this research any other way. The comparative strategy seemed to emerge organically: along the way, even if I did not immediately recognize it.

Marcus explains the phenomenon:

Comparison emerges from putting questions to an emergent object of study whose contours, sites, and relationships are not known beforehand, but are themselves a contribution of making an account that has different, complexly connected real-world sites of investigation. The object of study is ultimately mobile and multiply situated, so any ethnography of such an object will have a comparative dimension that is integral to it, in the form of juxtapositions of phenomena that conventionally have appeared to be (or conceptually have been kept) "worlds apart." Therefore, while gay Mormons and stencil street artists could not exist in worlds further apart, or so it would seem, I encountered those worlds conterminously during my fieldwork in cosmopolitan Santiago. I was challenged by the problem of figuring out what their juxtapositional relationship was and why the intersection of their strategies, so often compellingly opposed, came to be so significant.

One of Marcus' muses for the often misinterpreted notion of multi-sited juxtaposition is Francois Lyotard who argues for blocking together to be a figural mode "in which two incommensurable elements (such as the visual and the textual) are held together, impossibly, in the 'same' space: a kind of superimposition without privilege." Marcus further distills Lyotard's radical comparative strategy for anthropologists as "a research design of juxtapositions in which the global is collapsed into and made an integral part of parallel, related local situations rather than something monolithic or external to them." Clearly, if I may agree with Marcus on this point, juxtaposing gay Chilean Mormons and stencil street artists is a methodologically appropriate strategy for

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15 Readings 1991 xxx.
16 Marcus 1998 102.
looking at local articulations of globalization and domination, which Bourdieu suggests is always violent.\textsuperscript{17} While the project at hand is not necessarily a specific examination of globalization or violence (both of which have been subjects of numerous works alternately rigorously researched or reductively simplistic), the intersection of each and their roles in the lives of gay Mormons and stencil street artists in Chile lend to the salience of their commensurability.

James Faubion insists that making connections – while vital to the anthropological project – is not enough to the creation of a “good” anthropologist, or good anthropological work. Indeed, he reminds us that more important than the connections themselves are which connections we make:

\begin{quote}
[T]o the human subjects under investigation, to the scenes and sites of investigation, to subjects and scenes and sites already investigated, to analytical apparatuses, to anthropology as a discipline, to the world at large, and by no means least to herself–are also of critical moment.\textsuperscript{18}
\end{quote}

Thus, while I might have contented myself with comparing gay Chilean Mormons to American gay Mormons, a perfectly legitimate study, the project would not necessarily have satisfied my other goals, including that of theorizing artist-anthropology, which I do in a later chapter. Furthermore, the practice of gay Mormonism tends to be uniform across the national boundaries of the United States and Chile, though not perfectly so. Therefore, comparing the practice of gay Mormonism to the practice of stencil street art permits a unique opportunity to explore comparative strategies that not only benefit the project at hand, but also illuminate and suggest theoretical strategies for the discipline as a whole.

\textsuperscript{17} Faubion 2003.
\textsuperscript{18} Faubion 2009.
Bourdieu’s theory of practice and notions of reflexivity further inform my research analysis, however problematically. First and perhaps most importantly, I will experiment with Bourdieu’s notion of participant objectivation, which he suggests is the “objectivation of the objectifier and of his gaze,” alongside the “social analysis … of structures with interpretive accounts of the primary experiences and representations of agents.19” I emerge from the school that is well versed in the wildly diverse permutations of reflexivity, and I find myself unable to do any sort of anthropological research that does not include a big piece of me in the description and analysis. Indeed, I wage an interminable battle over how much of me to put into the text, and I find myself continuously struggling to avoid solipsism and the threat of narcissistic autoethnography that would hurl my research into the ethnographic trash bin. Troublingly, in his elaboration and explication of participant objectivation, Bourdieu singles out Marcus and others who, Bourdieu asserts, misinterpret reflexivity as “observing oneself observing, observing the observer in his work of observing or of transcribing his observations, through a return on fieldwork, on the relationship with his informants.20”

Indeed, it stands opposed at every point to the naive observation of the observer which, in Marcus and Fisher (1986) or Rosaldo (1989) or even Geertz (1988), tends to substitute the facile delights of self-exploration for the methodical confrontation with the gritty realities of the field. This pseudo-radical denunciation of ethnographic writing as 'poetics and politics', to borrow the title of Clifford and Marcus’s (1986) edited volume on the topic, inevitably leads to the 'interpretive scepticism' to which Woolgar (1988) refers and nearly manages to bring the anthropological enterprise to a grinding halt (Gupta & Ferguson 1997).21

Faubion suggests that the anthropologists of whom Bourdieu finds himself so critical

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21 Ibid 282.
disbelieved his “tidy and complete” theory of practice (particularly this notion of participant objectivation) perceiving it to be nothing more than a “utopian fantasy.”

Therefore, while I may also be enamored of utopian fantasies – though perhaps Bourdieu was not really all that utopianist after all – I will attempt to explore a bit of the Bourdieusian objectivation in my analysis, though admittedly on a limited basis. Indeed, my efforts in this chapter will be toward alleviating my own reflexive anxieties of an anthropology based in classical participant observation, “a necessarily fictitious immersion in a foreign milieu,” and the positionality of objectivist observer “who remains as remote from himself as from his object.” In fact, my positionality as an American gay Mormon seems naturally to allow for a bit of play with Bourdieusian notions of reflexive participant objectivation.

I am looking at gay Mormons, with whom I self-identify, and yet, I am looking at the particularities of gay Chilean Mormons, one of whom I am not. Thus, I am one of the subjects on the macro level, and yet, I am really not. To further muddle the mix, I am an anthropologist looking at Chilean stencil street artists, which I am not; but in the process of my research, and in an effort to participate in the practice of stencil art, I experimented with stenciling and became a stencil artist, though not of the street variety, at least not that I could admit publicly; rather, I practiced my stencil art in a gallery. In other words, I am an American gay Mormon stencil artist-anthropologist who is writing about gay Chilean Mormons and stencil street artists as subjective categories into which I enter as a virtual object. Thus, while Bourdieusian participant objectivation is the model that influences my anthropological analysis here, I deploy it in a rather untidy, nearly

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22 Faubion 2009 152.
23 Bourdieu 2003 282.
unBourdiesian unscientific way, which probably more approaches Marcus' model, if there is one. Moreover, rather than doing traditional descriptive ethnography here, which I am wont to do, I am experimenting with praxology, which Faubion explains is at once comparative and descriptive while being engaged with practices both modern and metacultural. 24

Further articulating commensurability between gay Mormons and stencil street artists requires a slight adjustment in subjectivity that will allow me to analyze them in ways that would be otherwise impossible were I to remain bound to the particularities of my research consultants. By this I mean that for the sake of this work, and to protect the anonymity of my research consultants, I create composite, aggregated, and hybridized subjects. The composite gay Chilean Mormon subject will gather together the experiences of the individuals I interviewed, hung out with, observed, played with, and read about, collecting them all together in a whole that will offer a picture of the larger group experience. The imaginary I am creating will avoid the identification of any specific gay Mormon, whom I will alternately give appellations from the Book of Mormon (in translation: Lehi, Nephi, Sam, Laman, Lemuel, etc.), and who may inhabit (or just as easily may not) a dangerously transgressive space of the outcast, excommunicate, heretic, apostate, radical, deviant, sex worker, transvestite, addict, pornographer, or mentally ill, as well as many other possible identities.

Likewise, stencil street artists, or Stencilistas, will be composite. Here again, the Stencilista will be at once individually unrecognizable and yet multi-faceted in such a way as to suggest a bit of everyone who has ever taken can in hand and sprayed on a

24 Faubion 1995 xxiv.
wall. Stencilistas inhabit another comparably dangerous space to that of the gay Mormons, though on a different scale and in a different register. The Stencilista may be (or just as easily may not be) an anarchist, radical, criminal, psychedelic, anti-capitalist, utopianist, romantic, unemployed student, graphic designer, animal activist, teenager, vegetarian, straight, or gay.\(^\text{25}\)

**GAY CHILEAN MORMON TRANSGRESSIVE HABITUS: A PERSONAL TESTIMONY**

Soy Chileno, Soy hombre, y Soy Cola.\(^\text{26}\)

Amón’s family was very religious. For the first few years of his life, Amón’s family practiced Catholicism, which included praying before images of Christ. Later, still as a young boy, Mormon missionaries taught his mother a few of the discussions; however, she found herself drawn to another denomination, whose missionaries had proselytized her at the same time as the Mormons. For several years the family had

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\(^{25}\) I am cognizant of the fact that I am generally deploying the masculine pronoun in my discussion. Though the move has been toward use of the feminine pronoun, I feel that this would be outside the reality of my experience. I saw only one female Stencilista and I only had dealings with males. This is also salient to my discussion of gay Mormons as I did not encounter any lesbian Mormons, though my interlocutors spoke of them.

\(^{26}\) Sam 2007. *Cola*, is a term favored by many gay men in Chile. Though I found it derogatory, because it means “tail,” which seems to me to be a self-deprecating allusion to “a piece of ass,” if I may be so vulgar, my compeers express the facile shortness of the term, its indigeneity (in the respect that it comes from Chile and is not the adopted term, “gay”), and the fact that it is commonly used among gays to talk about each other. In my conversations with gay Chileans none of them expressed any negativity about the term, and balked when I translated my own interpretation of the term from an English-speaking perspective. In fact, everyone claimed to have never consider the meaning I ascribed the term, which I still find rather remarkable. Of course, many gay English speakers probably are unaware of the provenance of “fag” also, so perhaps I really should not be so surprised.
attended this church and seemed happy. Amón states that the family was very religious, and they prayed together often. A Mormon church was built near Amón’s family home in a Santiago suburb, and as he entered his teen years, he became interested and started attending the local ward. Amón tells me that at this point in time he had no thoughts about his sexuality, though he related the following:

There was this guy in the neighborhood that everyone knew was kind of perverted. He was the neighborhood pedophile. He would hang around and watch the kids. Anyway, I was developing as teenagers do, and I was blessed with really nice legs and ass. In the summer, I wore really short shorts so, of course, it kind of accentuated my features. One day, barely a teenager, I was on an errand and I happened near this pedophile guy. As I approached him, I had this sensation that something was going to happen. I don’t know what it was, I can’t really say, but it seemed to excite me. The pervert looked at me and said, “Estai rico!” He offered me money to go with him behind a building and I said, “No.” I ran home and told my parents about it. I didn’t leave the house for two weeks I was so afraid I’d run into that guy again. Later on, people would yell things at me on the street, but I never really realized that I was homosexual. I always told people that “I may have homosexual mannerisms, but it doesn’t mean that I am one.”

The mention of “homosexual mannerisms” would come up again, when Amón talked about his mission experience. Amón also spoke about going to weekend soccer games with his father, and that these events always ended in the showers. He always looked at the men as they showered together, but he did not really realize how much he enjoyed it until much later.

Eventually, Amón and other members of his family were baptized Mormon. They were very faithful in their obedience to all the Mormon markers: paid a full tithing, kept the Word of Wisdom, attended all their meetings, fasted and paid their fast offerings, and did all the other incidentals that make up the Mormon habitus, including being of service and always ready to accept callings regardless of the personal hardship. Amón did his
home teaching and felt at home in the life of religious service. Even before he became Mormon, he always knew that he would one day be a missionary, though he assumed it would be for the previous church. In the Mormon parlance, “He loved the Lord.” The Mormon Church afforded him the opportunity to serve full-time for two years, which he was quite happy to do.

As he prepared to serve, he was often troubled by one thing: his need to masturbate. “I had been raised in a Christian bubble. I had never enjoyed masturbation. I had always done it, and when I came I felt nothing but guilt. It was something that I just sort of had to do, and when it was over, I was glad.” This problem would not resolve until later when Amon had his first sexual experience with a man. He, like many of my other comppeers discussed the missionary gossip that sometimes emanated around one or another missionary being gay, acting gay, and so forth. One or another missionary was identified as raro or weird. Amon always reminded himself and others that just because an individual had certain mannerisms and gestos, he was not necessarily homosexual. He was aware that many people thought he had such gestos; however, he never felt gay. Ironically, while serving his mission, he was accused of misconduct with a girl, which he realized then was utterly ridiculous, and which led him to emerging from the closet within a year of returning from his mission.

Amon’s coming-out experience post-mission is not unique and further elaborates the circuitous journey that many gay Mormons take on the road to self-awareness and understanding. At twenty-one, when returned from his mission, Amon continued riding his bike as he had done on his mission. He found himself talking to men on the street, and
he could tell that they were interested in something more than conversation, but he continued to see himself as heterosexual.

I talked to homosexuals and lesbians and when they asked me about it, I always told them that even though I had similar *gestos*, I wasn’t homosexual. I always introduced myself first as Mormon. I told them that I had gone on a mission and that I was attracted to women. I was aware that *me pasaban cosas con hombres*, (I felt something different around certain men), but it didn’t bother me. I had a girlfriend.

It took several more years for Amón to realize that he was gay and to permit himself to love, and be loved by, another man. He claims that he was stubborn, and that he never fully gave in to the fact that he was “oriented in this way.” Little by little things began to become clearer. He found himself going to pornographic theaters downtown that were known meeting places of gay men. Other gay men told him that men performed fellatio on one another in these theaters, that they had sex. Intrigued, and stimulated, he would wander. Frightened of being seen, or being touched, he would hurry down to the front of the theater – someone had told him all the licentiousness happened in the back. He recalled immediately encountering a distinctive, pungent odor. “It smelled different than anyplace I’d ever been,” he said. Positioned in the front row, he perceived men moving about the theater, particularly when things got “heated” on screen. He would never let anyone touch him, and he never touched himself. “I went to these places to experience it, and see how I felt, but I never allowed anyone to do anything to me, or with me. I was too afraid.” This went on for a while before he realized that he was, indeed, gay. When he came to this realization he decided he needed to contact his bishop. He claims to have never tried to hide it or pretend that it was not so. In fact, he wanted to be as forthright as possible with his ecclesiastical authorities. He had always been taught that if he was honest and told the bishop about his problems, he would receive the help he needed. He
did not want to be gay, but he knew that he was challenged with same-sex attraction, and he decided that he needed help. Amón elaborates.

It was very difficult because I knew it went against the teachings of the church. I knew it was wrong. I agonized over it, writing for hours in my journal trying to work it all out. I felt terrible guilt. I knew that God must be displeased. How could I feel this way about other men? It was so wrong, I knew.

The bishop told him how wrong it was and reiterated to him what he already knew, which was that as an endowed elder, he was putting his membership and priesthood at risk. The bishop told him that he had to remove the homosexual spirit from him, and he decided that because Amón had confessed to having repeatedly gone to the adult theaters he needed to be sanctioned; thus, he disfellowshipped him. Disfellowshipment allows the member to think about his actions, and repent. Such ecclesiastical punishment is meant to remind the member that there is further sanction that can take place, excommunication, and that he or she must “put his house in order.” A disfellowshipped member is not allowed to participate publicly in meetings; he is proscribed from praying, teaching, speaking, or otherwise participating in front of other members. Amón was alarmed by this action, but he was determined to follow the prescription the bishop offered. He prayed, he fasted, and he stayed away from the theaters. He was focused and sure that he would be successful. After the required time had passed, he returned to the bishop and declared that he was cured. He had won and no longer felt any desire toward men. He was released from the disfellowshipped status, but he continued to struggle. Rather than go back to the theaters, he started going to gay discos. They were fun, and he felt like he could do it without falling back into sin. However, it was not long before he met someone that he was deeply attracted to and with whom he would eventually have an
intimate relationship. Though he had struggled and felt that he had been successful against the “spirit of homosexuality,” he realized that it had come back. He returned to the bishop. Amón explains, “I told the bishop that I couldn’t fight it. I didn’t know what to do. I was desperate. I didn’t want to be excommunicated, I told him. I wanted help.” The bishop directed him to counselors who could help. Amón enlisted friends from church to help him. He continued to pray and tried to remind himself that it was just a temptation, that it was not an identity. He could overcome it if he just had enough faith. Eventually, it became clear to him that it was not going away. “It was a long, difficult, and sometimes even a bit tortuous process,” he said, “but I finally realized that it is just the way I am.”

Amón had been dating the fellow from the disco throughout this time. He says that nothing physical went on, but rather, they were just friends. Then the friend became a boyfriend: “He told me that he would see me through all of this, and that he would be faithful to me. He said that he loved me.” At this point, Amón decided to go directly to the stake president and confess.

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27 Interview transcripts 2007.

28 The Mormon hierarchy resembles an American-based multi-national corporation with lay and professional managers/leaders covering all possible units and divisions of congregations (Hansen 1981, Heinerman and Shupe 1985, Davies 2003). The lower or local leadership positions are lay positions and require that a member/leader maintain a career and their “church calling.” The higher up the hierarchy, the more likely the position will require a living allowance or salary. The most common unit is the ward, which is a congregation of Mormons of between 300 and 1000 members; the bishop is the leader of this congregational unit. In the mission field, areas where there are very few members, sometimes spread out over vast territory, the most basic unit after the nuclear family is a proto-ward, or branch. Sometimes missionaries, either young men or older men, who are serving in retirement with their wives, are called to serve in this capacity, the preference is to call a man who has the leadership capacity and who also lives within the boundary of the branch. When the membership reaches approximately 300, regardless of the attendance figures, the branch will “graduate” to the ward level (Taber
service in the ward and on the stake level, and he had faith that the leader would do the right thing. "I went to the meeting with my boyfriend. I told him that I was gay," Amón tells. The stake president was grim but persistently hopeful. He informed Amón that if he would but repent and forsake "the lifestyle," since he had not as yet committed a grave homosexual act, they could keep it between themselves and forget this indiscretion had ever happened. Amón was unmoved. He said that there was nothing he could do about it, and that he was gay; he knew it to be his truth. The stake president said that he left him no choice but to inform the High Council and to proceed with his excommunication. The proceedings went on with Amón in absentia. "I didn’t want to see men, some of whom I considered unworthy, to be sitting in judgment against me," Amón recounts. "I was hurting, I was angry, and I was rebellious." Furthermore, Amón claims that he still does not understand why he had to be excommunicated.

I wouldn’t have suffered so much if the church only accepted homosexuality. I always tried to avoid evil and do what the church teaches. I wanted to be a member. I loved the church. But after they excommunicated me, I did all the opposite of what the church teaches in every way. It was like moving from all the good in the world to all the bad. I decided to do what all homosexuals did.

1993). It is the ward level where most of the action happens for members. Every half a dozen wards are joined together in a stake. The term stake literally refers to the objects driven into the ground that hold up a tent; the allusion, borrowed from the tent which once covered the arc of the covenant when the children of Israel wandered around the Sinai Peninsula before entering the "promised land." In the modern sense, stakes hold up the tent up over the body of the saints, which is now referred to as Zion, the global Mormon congregation – the entire corporate and corporeal body of the church. The next unit up is the region. As church demographics shift, some regions have become smaller in geographic territory, though not necessarily membership. For instance, Chile is now a region. A group of regions then forms an area. South America is an Area as is North America, Europe, Africa, etc. Areas tend to be associated with continents and Regions are associated with countries, groups of countries, or, as in the United States’ case, groups of states. At the regional and area levels, the leadership is no long laymen: they are employed full-time by the Church and are paid salaries, unless they happen to be independently wealthy, which may indeed be the case for some.
Amón repeated what I heard time and again from gay Mormons no longer active in the fellowship:

I have a testimony of the gospel. I know it’s true. But I also know that I am gay, and that this is true, and I can’t deny either one. I know that I will be homosexual until the end of my life. I can’t deny how I feel. I need both the Church and my sexuality to be happy. Without either one my life would be incomplete.

PRACTICE

If all societies and, significantly, all the “totalitarian institutions”, in Goffman’s phrase, that seek to produce a new man through a process of “deculturation” and “reculturation” set such store on the seemingly most insignificant details of dress, bearing, physical and verbal manners, the reason is that, treating the body as a memory, they entrust to it in abbreviated and practical, i.e. mnemonic, form the fundamental principles of the arbitrary content of the culture.29

Gay Chilean Mormons learn Mormon habitus beginning with the conversion process, or they are born into it and learn it through the socialization of their parents and that of the structure of the Church. There are a number of dispositions that must be committed to, and mastered, to become a full-fledged, temple-recommend-holding, member of the fellowship. While few of the gay Mormons I spoke with had been born into the Church, those who had been did seem to suffer less than some of those who had converted as teenagers and had given themselves over to the conversion process so completely. The prospective convert will usually encounter two young men riding

29 Bourdieu 1977 italics in original.
bicycles, dressed in white shirts, with conservative ties and name plaques, who are icons of Mormonism and its global missionary efforts. Indeed, missionaries teach the laity how best to practice Mormonism, starting them out with baby steps, and as the convert becomes more adept, she learns more precepts and more of the habitus of Mormonism. "Line upon line, precept upon precept."

Crafting a near perfect practice of Mormonism makes one worthy of temple worship. The temple is a space where only the elite practitioners of Mormonism, known as “card carrying” or temple-worthy members, those that we might refer to as the master craftspeople of Mormonism, may attend temple ceremonies and participate in the high rituals of embodied Mormon practice. Fitting then, that once inside the temple, the worship service is punctuated by repeatedly rehearsed techniques, gestures, and tokens meant constantly to bring to mind the deeply embodied practice of Mormonism. There are signs, symbols, and names that when seen or heard outside the walls of the temple will immediately recall the experience of temple worship. The association and remembrance of temple symbols and the habitus learned there does not, of course, cease when one becomes disaffected, is excommunicated, or finds oneself in heretical positionality. The effects of the mnemonics are permanent and are infinitely replicable across temporal and spatial borders. In fact, Mormons are steeped in symbolism and the occult meanings of symbols that surround them. Faithful, temple-going Mormons wear the garment, the shape and embroidered symbols of which serve as a sort of sacred and

30 2 Nephi 28:30 “For behold, thus saith the Lord God: I will give unto the children of men line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little; and blessed are those who hearken unto my precepts, and lend an ear unto my counsel, for they shall learn wisdom; for unto him that receiveth I will give more; and from them that shall say, We have enough, from them shall be taken away even that which they have” (Emphasis added).
holy mnemonic for the liturgical narrative, vows, covenants, and rites experienced during temple attendance, and which should be constantly held uppermost in the Mormon’s mind.

By the same token, the successful Stencilista will create a powerfully insightful and clever symbol to be sprayed on a wall, which should bring a flood of emotions, memories, insights, and knowledge, both explicit and implicit, to the viewer’s experience. The stencil not only sparks a flood of memories for the viewer, but ideally it also sticks in the mind to continually activate the consciousness, inspiring more thoughtful practice. Some of the most dramatic and memorable stencils tamper with and reconfigure iconic symbols of consumerism and capitalist appropriation of everything that has filtered into our collective unconscious through successful advertising campaigns.

Stencilism, as a practice, is evoked in the crude spray-painted images found littering urban sectors all over the globe, which are easily recognized and suggest humanist values that are anti-capitalist, pro-female, pro-equality for all genders, pro-animal, anti-exploitation, anti-imperialist, anti-fascist. These images moved to new heights with the installation of the Shepard Fairey stencil of then-candidate Barack Obama and their deployment in mainstream media news such as during election results coverage when CNN’s backdrop logo for the election was constructed to appear as stenciled street art. The motif/style is meant to connote change and the hip-ness/hipster sensibilities of the global left.

Meanwhile, a Stencilista perfects his art; however, stencils only illustrate a practice and ideology. There are Stencilistas who prohibit the consumption of meat products – a vegetarian lifestyle is more sustainable – just as Mormons prohibit alcohol
as a means of qualifying to worship. Stencilistas are actively anti-capitalist, anti-animal experimentation, pro-vegetarianism, pro-gay rights, pro-civil/human rights, anti-authoritarian, anti-fascist, anti-globalization, and anti-American. Stencilistas are also trying to “build the kingdom,” if I may use the Mormon aphorism for comparison: they simply have a significantly different view of what that place should look like. Art for art’s sake in stencil street art is as commonplace as that which is meaningful and message-laden. Santiago Stencil authors note that at least half of the works they documented over a five-year period were of purely aesthetic value, most of which consisted of portraits of celebrities and unknown individuals.\textsuperscript{31}

Technical hegemony exists both in the practice of stencil art and the practice of Mormonism. Though there is a tolerance for the less adept, particularly if the individual is a neophyte, less tolerance is reserved for someone who has practiced at either for a length of time. Anyone can cut a stencil and spray it on a wall, but how well crafted is it, how well executed? Is it brilliant or blase? Is it studied or pedestrian?

Mormons mimic Christ and the prophets as exemplars of perfected living. Stencil artists mimic masters like the prophet Banksy, Shepard Fairey, and others. While distinctive in their habitus, doxa, and practice Stencilism and Mormonism are clearly marked by distinctive practices, which I will further elaborate in the next chapter. Each comes complete with behaviors, activities, performance expertise and a heterodoxic normativity that eventually creates a doxa all its own.

\textsuperscript{31} Campos and Meller 2008.
Charismatic authority is in Weber's own reckoning inherently transgressive, militant, and at odds with establishmentarianism of any sort—religious establishmentarianism included.\textsuperscript{32}

Blocking together gay Mormons and Stencilistas does not necessarily clearly delineate dichotomous comparative categories evocative of the global political right versus left, good versus evil, north versus south, and any other array of polarized orthodoxies in which the world's socio-politico-religio-cultural stage is currently constructed. However, if we consider that gay Mormons interact in a social world that is mediated by their religion, and we also objectify straight Mormonism with its rigidly conservative globalist strategy, then the unifying of the two as one lends itself to a more dichotomous, facile comparison with anti-globalist, liberalist Stencilism. I will oscillate somewhat between comparing Mormonism and gay Mormonism to Stencilism in some of the following sections. Bourdieu suggests that the right and the left in government index the right as the government involved in policing and controlling the working class for the benefit of the elites, the left as the expansion of government in the social milieu for the benefit of the working class. I will offer a similar comparison with the objects being Mormonism and Stencilism.

On one hand, the right hand, if I may, straight Mormons tend to be conservative nationalists who are aligned with the Christian conservative movement in the United States. However, while American Mormons tend to be politically conservative—a recent Gallup poll suggest that fifty-nine percent consider themselves to be so—the statistic is

\textsuperscript{32}Faubion 2002 75.
not mirrored in Chile, where many of my Mormon compeers reported to be left-leaning.\(^{33}\) Indeed, many active Chilean Mormons were baffled by the American church members whose practice seems not only to sanctify and canonize heterosexist norms, but also capitalist strategies that are at once neoliberal, anti-poor, and anti-worker. While American Mormons actively lobby state and national governments for their adoption of heterosexist protection of marriage, it would seem that the disposition of the essentially converted class of Mormons in Chile have another agenda; for instance, taking care of the poor in their communities and attempting to raise attendance levels of their congregations, which are at record lows.\(^{34}\) There seems to be little interest to engage with the issue of same-sex marriage as it arises in the Chilean Parliament.

In Chile, there is no questioning the mission of the Church, but there is a distinction between the priorities of the United States congregation. Globalization, with the so-called "free markets" of both good and ideas, and most importantly, with its rather amicable relationship with Christian missionization, is a boon to the Church. Mormonism embraces globalization as doxic hand-in-hand with the primary mission of the Church: missionization. Interestingly this translates in the Gay Mormon case to take part in the global movement toward equality, and the transnational networks of support and activism naturally hook in because of their habitus of globalism. It is, as Bourdieu might suggest, a habitus acquired in Mormonism, thus very nearly doxic, for them to join these movements and participate in such things as Gay Pride, just as it is their habitus to


\(^{34}\) See Knowlton 2005.
to convert the non-believer. I will show that once the acceptance of their sexuality has been made, many are willing and anxious to proclaim their *truth* far and wide.

On the other hand, the left hand, Stencilistas tend to be more radical liberals, anarchic, leftist, godless, anti-American, anti-religionist, anti-institutionalists, located in horizontally structured collectives, or, indeed, with no structured affiliation at all. Stencilistas can be seen as anarchists, who are thought by the dominant and domineering governmental structures located on the right to have few morals, particularly regarding private property and sexuality; moreover, perhaps not explicitly homosexualist, their work certainly indicates that they are more libertine with the doxa of sexuality and gender identity, and seem more accommodating to alternative sexualities. There does not seem to be a specific canon that Stencilistas adhere to, per se, but just as their gay Mormon counterparts, they make use of globalist technologies such as the Internet networking tools – a conduit for networking, viewing and reproducing techniques, flash (stencil patterns), and relevant propaganda. While there is not necessarily a charismatic leader/prophet figure that the group reveres and follows and is indicative of a type of anti-establishmentarianism that Faubion underscores in the epigraph, there are names/tags that rise to the level of celebrity status, “the magic of the name of the artist,” as Bourdieu termed it, (e.g., Blek le Rat, Banksy, and Shepard Fairey.) Stencilistas are almost universally considered delinquents and are reviled because of their ability to operate with the strike capability more akin to a terrorist cell. Indeed generally, Stencilistas seem to operate as solo practitioners with a complete democratization of the do-it-yourself process; nonetheless, I met countless groups of Stencilistas that operated in pairs or larger groups.
While globalizing missionary practices of Mormonism are met by the anti-globalizationist practices of Stencilism, both insinuate into the Chilean cultural landscape and Chilean’s psyches as products of the North, thus as globalizing forces, but are translated at the local level. I might suggest that Mormonism acts more from a politically hegemonic place, while Stencilism is counter-hegemonic; however, neither emerges independent of the dominant processes seen in the North, but rather as a fractalized, glocalized iteration.35

I argue that both Mormonism and Stencilism have designs of global geopolitical power that includes, but is not exclusive to, wide adoption of their particular orthodoxy, which we will continue to explore further in this chapter. Both tend toward their unique iteration of utopia, which is probably far removed from that of the other. Bourdieu’s point here is well taken: often those most deeply affected by the violence of structural and symbolic violence are blind to it. Therefore, one often notes the people who are most directly victimized by the violence reproduce it, if not in the public eye, internally, emotionally, and sometimes physically.

**Pasivo/Activo**

Because of what the church teaches, I was terrified to say it out loud. I read one excerpt from *The Miracle of Forgiveness*, and I couldn’t read anymore. It was so frightening; it made me feel so guilty.36

It was hard. It was very painful, and I rebelled. I love the Church and I love the teachings of Jesus Christ. I couldn’t understand why this had to happen to me

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when I was being honest and telling who I was and what was going on in my life. Why did I have to be excommunicated?37

Homosexuality is quite nearly a universally stigmatized category; however, within this category there are others who are even further stigmatized, the passive, the effeminate, and the receiver. Erving Goffman suggests that the stigmatized tend to hold the same beliefs about identity as everyone else, and thus, feel alienated when they are around so-called “normals.”38 Indeed, Goffman asserts, this alienation leads to an internalized stigmatization and hierarchy within homosexual society. Bourdieu terms this behavior as a reaction to the symbolic violence of domination, which in this case would be the hegemonic symbolic violence of heteronormativity: “The dominated apply categories constructed from the point of view of the dominant to the relation of domination, thus making them appear as natural. This can lead to a kind of systematic self-depreciation, even self-denigration.”39 The master dichotomy of passive versus active, and the symbolic capital of the active/inserter role over the stigmatization of the passive/receiver role is a bit troublesome in my view. In Chile as in Greece, and indeed, the United States, “the effeminate man is judged far more harshly.”40 This stigma is held emicly as well as eticly. Faubion argues that in Greece the womanly man, the man who prefers the woman’s tasks and the woman’s world, as well as the woman’s role as receptacle for a man’s semen is an “urgent threat to the sexual economy.”41 Experience in Chile, and within my own community in the United States, confirms that this is may be

38 1986 7.
39 2001 35.
40 Faubion 1993 222.
41 Ibid 223.
a universalist doxa. One might think that this emicly-perpetuated stigmatization would not necessarily be the case. Nonetheless, considering Bourdieu, we see how this becomes so.

When the dominated apply to what dominates them schemes that are the product of domination, or, to put it another way, when their thoughts and perceptions are structured in accordance with the very structures of the relation of domination that is imposed on them, their acts of cognition are, inevitably, acts of recognition, submission.42

Chileans, then, are much like their Mediterranean counterparts, where the effeminate male is the “most scorned of social subversives,” and yet the active male, who is doxically expected to be indiscrete sexually as a sign of his masculinity, is “hardly subversive at all.”43 Within Mormonism, however, the stigma comes universally and categorically to the “practicing” homosexual versus the “same-sex challenged,” almost in a reversal of the passive/active dichotomy, but not quite. Again, Bourdieu offers an apt appraisal of how gay Mormons are dominated emicly.

The particular form of symbolic domination suffered by homosexuals, who are marked by a stigma which, unlike skin colour or female gender, can be concealed (or flaunted), is imposed through collective acts of categorization which set up significant negatively marked differences, and so create groups – stigmatized social categories.44

If Bourdieu is right about the violence inherent in domination then hierarchy and patriarchy, which are inherently dominating, and particularly male-dominated, are

43 Faubion 1993 223. I quickly discovered that in Chile if one claims to not necessarily prefer either sexual position, active or passive depending on the circumstances, which is labeled in the United States, “versatile,” one is labeled “moderno.”
44 2001 118.
systems of violence, even within the Mormon Church. The violence is real, psychological, social, and emotional, and though it may appear ephemeral, untouchable, barely sensible (as in affecting the senses) it results in more physical violence, either in the form of gay bashing, which takes many forms even in Mormon communities, or self-mutilation, self-destructive behaviors, and in extreme cases, self-annihilation. The orthodoxy relies on the habitus of the stigmatized, who has internalized the “recognition and submission” and rather than embarrass himself, his family, or the community, he understands doxically the need to self-exclude, and in some cases self-destruct, as a means of ridding the “community of the saints” of the corrosive effects of his identity/sin. As discussed elsewhere, individuals “suffering from same-sex attraction” are welcomed in the community as fictive kin who share in the struggle to avoid sin, which is occasionally alluded to by some members, usually as a form of self-deprecating gibes, but is seldom admitted to as truly problematic. The gay Mormon, however, who is “practicing homosexual behaviors” is ostracized and held at bay, or is expected to refrain from interacting with the fellowship because of his polluting habitus.

The disposition of the Mormon Church toward gay Chilean Mormons, indeed toward all gay Mormons, resembles the disposition of the conditionally loving parent who requires obedience as qualifying the object as deserving of love. “As long as you do as I say,” these types of parents and the Church assert, “as long as you think I as I tell you to think,” add these parents and the Church, “as long as you behave as I demand that you behave,” they finally intone, “I will love you.” In fact, as long as scriptural references are continuously alluded to and deployed to attack gayness, same-sex desire, and finally and most importantly, sexual practice of same-sex intimacy. The actions of these
“lovingly disconnective” parents and the Mormon Church always lead one to suspect otherwise. Mormons are taught to hate the sin but love the sinner, a common mantra among many orthodoxies that while often attributed to Gandhi, has Biblical provenance, or possibly comes from Augustine. However, for gay Mormons the mantra elicits a cognitive dissonance that is difficult to recognize, acknowledge, and resolve. All the gay Mormons I spoke with argue that homosexuality is inherent to their personal identity. Their sexual orientation is not decided, acquired, or necessarily desired; it simply is. While I found most had struggled mightily to reconcile their faith and orientation, they have come to terms with it, as well as the repressive retrenching orthodoxy of the church. For most gay Mormons in Chile, their gayness is not necessarily a practice, though more than one used the phraseology: “I am a practicing homosexual,” rather, they identify as essential identity markers their maleness and gayness.

I argue that the habitus of gay Mormons in Chile, like those in the United States, tends toward a disposition at the opposite extreme of the straight Mormon. Many of my comppeers spoke of giving up and giving in, allowing themselves to experience all that the gay world has to offer, regardless of their previously esteemed standards, ethics, or moral code. The further immersed into the “gay lifestyle” the more likely they are to drink alcohol, smoke cigarettes, indulge in other substances of abuse, partake of radically permissive, and sometimes dangerous sexual encounters, and much of that license tends

45 “It is clear, then, that the man who does not live according to man but according to God must be a lover of the good and therefore a hater of evil; since no man is wicked by nature but is wicked only by some defect, a man who lives according to God owes it to the wicked men that his hatred be perfect, so that, neither hating the man because of his corruption nor loving the corruption because of the man, he should hate the sin but love the sinner. For, once the corruption has been cured, then all that is left should be loved and nothing remains to be hated.” Augustine, City of God 1958 304.

46 In the next chapter, I will discuss the notions of gay Mormon practice in greater detail.
to be passive. This does not necessarily suggest that all the gay Mormons I encountered were passive sexually, but rather, their affect tended to be passive. Indeed, this is the habitus of most Mormons, particularly those raised in the church and as members of the working class, as well as converts, who are almost universally from the working class and working poor. Upper class converts are rare, though highly coveted, particularly those with a great deal of symbolic capital that can serve the missionary effort. Chile has very few members with the social capital to influence the status of the Church. The few members known publicly through news reports tend to be inactive, and while they do not speak negatively of the Church, they are not particularly favorable either.

One of the most strongly emphasized orthodoxies in Mormonism is the need to maintain a moral purity, which is almost always indexed as sexual purity or chastity. Any polluting behavior is to be rejected. Though there may be some wiggle room on this point for straight Mormons, there is none for gay Mormons. Any gay sexual practice is offensive and treated as moral sin, which can lead to ecclesiastical punishment. In the Bourdieuian sense, this type of domination is violent.

“Actions speak louder than words.” The interpretation of this aphorism might be, in the Bourdieuian sense, “Practice explains better than discourse.” Thus, the Mormon Church’s active practice of political engagement in what are qualified as “moral issues” illustrates a clear example of structured, institutional, symbolic and real violence. It is symbolic in that no actual physical violence is perpetrated against individual bodies, though there are isolated examples of this (see the violence against the gay men for kissing in the park between the headquarters and the temple in Salt Lake City), and it is symbolic in that the violence is imperceptible to the naked eye. The discourse
surrounding these events in the United States distill through the media and other networks to gay Mormons in Chile. While no issues have necessarily come to the fore in Chile for gay church members to be rallied against, the actions in the United States spark interest and reap the same despair and anger in Chile that they do in the US.

The compeer who stood in front of the Mormon temple in Santiago, and who was later excommunicated, received the full force of the symbolic violence the Church was able to inflict. Excommunication is generally the result of a disciplinary courts hearing, euphemistically labeled a “court of love,” wherein the member is almost always the victim of ecclesiastical symbolic violence. The termination of fellowship in the Church, the opportunity to serve in any capacity, publicly pray, accompanied by the rescission of temple blessing and the forbidding to wear the garment of the holy priesthood all have as their stated purpose to “give the member the opportunity to repent;” however, as symbolic violence they also result in the emotional short-circuiting of valuable connections. The most significant effect is the threat of eternal expulsion from the presence of the Father, in other words, a denial of family ties both temporally and eternally, including the threat of eternal sterilization, as those who reach the highest level of the Celestial Kingdom are granted eternal increase and the pleasures of godly sex.

One of the most insidious acts of symbolic violence perpetrated by the Mormon hierarchy is through the euphemization of gayness into “same-sex attraction” – a practice shared by many Christian groups. This denial of essentiality, which is historic and often ontologically biased cross-culturally works on the mind of the young man like a cancer destroying self-esteem, self-trust, and normal self-love. Something as essential as sexual attraction is turned on its head and pathologized as a mental disturbance caused by
temptations from an imaginary entity, Satan. Satan is thought to enter the person’s mind and perverts the natural purpose of his body, or so he must think. The “spirit of homosexuality” is suggested to have possessed him. The emerging gay Mormon second-guesses all of his thoughts: “Is this from me, or is it from Satan?” He questions his sanity. He mistrusts his body to the point of loathing. The body of the teenager or young man reacts to visual stimulation often unconsciously. The gay Mormon realizes that he does not control his body in the way that the doxa of society and the field of Mormon culture otherwise expects. What could be going wrong? Why would he be tempted like this and not his friends and peers? There is every indication in Mormon doxa that his attraction and his desires are his own fault. There are few avenues one can take and none of them seem to offer a pleasant outcome. He has learned that the hierarchy holds the keys, the answers, and the symbolic capital to help him overcome himself; nonetheless, it is difficult for some, particularly of certain classes, to accept this. There is a rebellion that leads to the rupture of all Mormon doxa.

GLOBALISM/LOCALISM OR CAPITALISM/ANTI-CAPITALISM

El stencil graffiti nace
de la fragmentación
el eclecticismo
la hibridación
la serialidad
la iconofilia
la iconoclastia
del capitalismo avanzado
para atentar contra el

\[47\] Meller 2007.
It was near the end of my mission that I found the Affirmation website. It was from the United States, not here in Chile. Before that, I didn’t realize that there were gay Mormons, and I didn’t realize that I was one.

——Laban (2007)

In a world saturated with high-priced corporate imagery, beyond just having a charming aesthetic, the stencil is a cheap and effective way for an artist or activist to put their work in front of the public and level the playing field.48

Chile has long been considered to be one of neoliberalism's most treasured successes. In a March 1, 2010, commentary Wall Street Journal columnist Bret Stephens glowingly praises Chile’s neoliberalist strategies, suggesting that Milton Friedman's "spirit was surely hovering protectively over Chile" when the megaquake struck. Borrowing from Bourdieu in what surely disrupted the scholar's anti-neoliberalist sensibilities in the hereafter, Stephens argues that the only difference between the apocalypse in Haiti that killed nearly 300,000 people the previous month and the catastrophe in Chile with its relatively low death toll of somewhere around 500 is that Pinochet listened to Milton Friedman. Stephens claims that Pinochet’s "intellectual capital" prepared Chileans from what would have been certain megadeath on par with the Haitian catastrophe.

What Chile did have was intellectual capital, thanks to an exchange program between its Catholic University and the economics department of the University of Chicago, then Friedman's academic home. Even before the 1973 coup, several of Chile's "Chicago Boys" had drafted a set of policy proposals which amounted to an off-the-shelf recipe for economic liberalization: sharp reductions to government spending and the money supply; privatization of state-owned companies; the elimination of obstacles to free enterprise and foreign investment, and so on.49

49 Stephens 2010.
Naomi Klein responds in a follow-up opinion two days later that it was building code policies enacted before Pinochet took power – beginning in the 1930s – that saved so many Chilean lives when disaster struck. Klein claims that, “So widely discredited is his [Friedman’s] brand of free-market fundamentalism that his followers have become increasingly desperate to claim ideological victories, however far-fetched.” There are a number of other factors that Stephens ignores that I argue are self-evident, including the relatively remote and unpopulated location of the epicenter, the history of seismicity in Chile, and the fact that Chile has significantly more economic resources than the poverty-burned Haiti.

The opinions of Stephens and Klein, which may represent like-minded people from the right and left respectively, aptly illustrate the dichotomy that I am deploying as some of my argument in this dissertation, which demonstrates the circulation of globalization discourse in which Chile finds itself embedded. When anti-globalizationists practice stencil street art they are acting in a public sphere that may seem local, but I argue that it reaches into, and borrows from, the global public sphere, and challenges the hegemony of the United States, Chile’s most significant trading partner and arguably home to many of the architects of contemporary Chilean society. Briefly, I argue for a public sphere as discussed by Habermas, but globalized through and on the Internet.

The bourgeois public sphere may be conceived above all as the sphere of private people come together as a public; they soon claimed the public sphere regulated from above against the public authorities themselves, to engage them in a debate over the general rules governing relations in the basically privatized but publicly relevant sphere of commodity exchange and social labor. The medium of this

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50 Klein 2010.
political confrontation was peculiar and without historical precedent: people's public use of their reason.\footnote{1991 27.}

We can probably quickly address Meller's suggestion in the epigraph that stencil graffiti emerges from postmodern, Jamesonian late capitalism, against which it was born to struggle.\footnote{Jameson 1991.} Indeed, Stencilism is probably a postmodern artifact; but rather than struggling against late capitalism, as Meller suggests, I argue that it is, like gay Mormons', an embodiment, an assemblage that in its attempt to oppose neoliberalism (understood to be globalization) it seems to emerge as yet another practice of globalism: an artifact that would not exist were globalization and the technological artifacts that it, in part, propels were not in play. Thus, while Stencilistas tend to side with anti-globalization effort, on the one hand, which are sometimes anti-capitalist, many may indeed embrace some of the modalities of capitalism. Furthermore, while Stencilistas might consider capitalism to equal globalization, fascism, and the hegemony of American, or market-driven neoliberalist culture, Mormons equate global capitalism with free-market democracy, a God-inspired politics that facilitates better than any other form of government the free movement of Mormonism (interpreted and proselytized as the restored, original form of the gospel of Jesus Christ) around the globe. Thus, gay Mormons in Chile, particularly those who have had a great deal of contact with American missionaries, and those who have served missions either in Chile or elsewhere, have been taught, and tend to accept as doxic, the equation of American democracy and neoliberalist, free-market capitalism, regardless of the fact that many may have struggled with this interpretation while active, and even more so when they come out of the closet
and reject much of Mormon doxa. I might remind the reader at this point that this comparative category, perhaps more so than any of the others, is quite porous, and though we might consider gay Mormons to be doxically globalizationist, this is very contingent on their status in the church, their educational level, the degree to which they have come to fetishize American society, and their knowledge and interest in economics and politics. And though we might suggest that while Stencilistas tend to be anti-globalizationist, we should recognize that this categorization is subject to the particularities of the individual artist. Many Stencilistas are college students who are proto-participants in the market economy, some hoping to work in the most iconic of free market industries, advertising. Others are more interested in using the walls of public buildings merely as a canvas, with the only doxa being that all publicly accessible space is for public use regardless of who claims ownership. Finally, there are utopianists who like their straight Mormon counterparts truly want to influence others under the guise of changing the world for the better. Once again, while these are not the only categories of Stencilistas, they represent the majority of possible works. Moreover, these categories are decidedly porous and an individual Stencilista, or a collective of Stencilistas, may work toward each of these goals at different times and with different pieces.

Meller claims Stencilism is born to be an adversary of the structure from which it emerges. Indeed, Gay Mormons share a similar provenance and effect: they are born of Mormonism, and often multi-generational Mormons, but by accident or intention, they struggle against and antagonize Mormonism, or its orthodoxy. The connection can go deeper here, however, as we look at the role of capitalism in Mormonism, which, once
again whether by accident or intention, tends to lend itself as a functionary of globalism and neoliberalist capitalism.

I have argued that Mormonism is doxically modernist and globalist. Assuming that neoliberal economics are capitalist and constitutive of what is termed globalization, then perhaps we may be able to suggest that Mormonism is a capitalist religion. We might consider the American iteration versus the Chilean iteration, noting that Mormonism has been in Chile just over fifty years, as a source for the answer to this question. (Mormon chapels tend to be aesthetically and architecturally similar wherever they may be found throughout the world, and as such are evocative of any major corporate structure, though certainly the faith is far from a fast-food franchise. Indeed, the genesis and structure of Mormon doctrine and system of beliefs might be quite difficult for some to swallow!)

The practice of Mormonism creates and sacralizes an environment wherein those persons inclined toward capitalist ventures may justify the practice, which tends to espouse private ownership and the unfettered accumulation of wealth in market-based exchange. According to David Westbrook in *City of Gold*, modern capitalism is essentially globalization, which he describes as a global political movement toward governance by and for the market. Kozul-Wright and Rayment suggest that globalization retains a bit of the “utopian spirit” from which it sprang in the 1960s, before the “bitter” economic crisis in the 1970s, and Reaganomics, or the turn toward neoliberalist policies. They assert that the phenomenon is recognized by its “unprecedented speed and [the] endless complexity of the changes deriving from an ever-

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deeper interaction between local and global forces. Traditional borders between nations, disciplines and occupations are seen as the vestiges of a passing era and obstacles to modern efficient structures.\(^{54}\)

Later, we will discuss a bit of what we may call a Mormon capitalist ethic, which tends to be doxic and somewhat scripture-based, including members who value a disposition toward globalizationist and neo-liberalist ideologies. Conversely, Stencilism tends to be populated by persons who have a disposition that is anti-capitalistic. The latter generalization is a bit less hyperbolic than the former. Stencilism is usually equated with anti-capitalist movements that are nearly universally anti-globalization, anti-authoritarian, and anti-corporate. Generally, anti-globalization serves as a catchall umbrella category that can fit any number of strategies to socio-economic systems that oppose neoliberalist policy. Stencilism is most visibly anti-capitalist in its practice, which entails the challenging of the doxa of private property rights in acts widely viewed as vandalism: the appropriation of public space for their own artistic use. Anti-globalization is correlative of a disposition toward anarchist thought, socialist politics, and eco-feminist metaphysics among many other alternative political systems. Stencilistas are heterodoxic in a world wherein the dominant political doxa is globalizationalist, and, as suggested by Kozul-Wright and Rayment, “akin to an irresistible force, driven by countless invisible hands and by a permanent technological revolution, and beyond the control of governments.\(^{55}\) In other words, the orthodoxy of hegemonic globalizing forces asserts that the whole process is beyond anyone’s control. The doxa, then, we are urged to consider as driven by supernatural, or magical forces.

\(^{54}\) Kozul-Wright and Rayment 2007.
\(^{55}\) Ibid.
Mormons, and perhaps we are speaking of American straight Mormons rather than their Chilean counterparts, might agree with the supernatural aura of globalization, but they would most likely attribute it to “the Lord’s hand.” Indeed, after the recent earthquake, I received an email from Utah that attributed the “Lord’s hand” to the disaster. The email, which came from the wife of one of the current mission presidents in Santiago, states that the earthquake has humbled the Chilean people to open their hearts to the gospel: “I had a very strong impression that March 2010 is going to be our best baptizing month we have ever had in this mission.”

Temple Mormons\textsuperscript{56} covenant to “give of our resources in time and money and talent—all we are and all we possess—to the interest of the kingdom of God upon the earth.\textsuperscript{57}” Recently, one of my colleagues from my mission in Chile reminded me that our mission president exhorted us during a conference to choose careers that would help make us as much money as possible so that we might pay a substantial tithing and contribute significantly to the building of the kingdom. My friend and mission colleague has done just that, as have many others of my former mission associates. Indeed, it is a commonly held belief among Mormons that the amount of money you have or make is directly correlative to your faithfulness. Indeed, earthly goods—material wealth—is indicative of Heavenly Father’s pleasure with one’s good works, which cause the windows of Heaven to open and pour the blessings of economic prosperity on the family.

The temporal and spiritual blessings of tithing are specifically tailored to us and our families, according to the Lord’s will. But to receive them, we must obey the law upon which they are predicated. In the case of tithing, the Lord has said,

\textsuperscript{56} I am including myself in this description of a Temple Mormon as one who made these same covenants during my personal endowment in 1980 at the Salt Lake Temple. 

\textsuperscript{57} Packer 2002 35.
“Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.”

The more wealthy one becomes, the more tithing one pays; the more tithing paid, the more material blessings one receives – a type of supernatural gift exchange with material and spiritual gains. It is also a circular logic that is strongly supported by testimony and personal experience. The personal testimonies of the power of obedience to this commandment come from the poor as well as the rich. However, the successes of the rich are exemplary of the notion that what exists on Earth is reproduced in Heaven. As literal descendants of the American Puritans, elite Mormons have evolved beyond the asceticism and austerity of their ancestors and canonized and sacralized the pursuit of capital as a means of manifesting divine approval and salvation.

The stratified afterlife – the “Three Degrees of Glory,” which at some point we might explicate as the Celestial (Elite), Terrestrial (Middle Class), and Telestial (Working Class) – that Joseph Smith designed (or revealed and explained, depending on your perspective) leads not only to prosperity, but also salvation, eternal progression, and ultimately godhood and translates remarkably well into a Mormon capitalist ethic. The Mormon ethic further illustrates how Smith’s charismatic imperative/call to build the kingdom of God on Earth, further elaborated by his successor Brigham Young and others, has developed into capitalist practice extraordinarily successful in its interpretation and implementation by some Mormons. Perhaps the following example will help argue my point.

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In March 2007, *LDS Living* magazine published an article about these prominent Mormon executives:

David Neeleman, founder and CEO of JetBlue Airways; Kevin Rollins, CEO of Dell; Jim Quigley, CEO of Deloitte & Touche USA; Dave Checketts, former CEO of Madison Square Garden Corporation; Gary Crittenden, CFO at American Express; Rod Hawes, founder and former CEO of Life Re Corporation, the world's largest independent life reinsurance company; Kim Clark, dean of the Harvard Business School; and Clayton Christensen, a leading Harvard Business School professor and consultant to Intel, Eli Lilly, and Kodak.

Obviously, these men represent extreme examples of material success. The article is insightful and revealing when it comes to certain similarities shared by these men that they felt were important to point out and seem to represent a Mormon business ethic.

Seven of the eight men are lifelong members of the Church, all born or raised in Utah, primarily in small rural towns. Only one, Rod Hawes, who grew up in a rural Idaho community, converted to Mormonism as a young adult.

Almost all of them had ancestors who crossed the plains as pioneers in the 1800s.

With two exceptions, the fathers of these executives had occupations that generated no notoriety and only modest income. They include a forester, a farmer, a paint store manager, a highway department road grader, a cattle herder, a schoolteacher, a civil engineer, and a mobile home salesman. Each of them said his father taught by example the value of hard work.

All eight men credited their mothers with having a profound influence on their success in business. A few of them had working mothers—three as schoolteachers and one as a store clerk. All eight said their mothers were heavily invested in them, instilling self-confidence, determination, and a core value set that has triggered a hard-charging, focused approach to business coupled with a high emphasis on personal integrity.

Six of the eight served a full-time mission.

Five of the eight executives live within three miles of each other in New Canaan, Connecticut, and belong to the same ward.
None of them works on Sundays except when unusual circumstances require their attention. Most of them try to do minimal business on Saturdays, too.

All of them hold significant Church leadership responsibilities and spend on average ten to fifteen hours per week on those assignments.

None of them has been divorced.\textsuperscript{59}

Mitt Romney also embodies what for some may be the contemporary American Mormon dream: politically and socially conservative, financially successful. As co-founder of Bain Capital, a private equity investment firm, and former CEO of Bain & Company, a management-consulting firm, Romney is located in the elite upper class of Mormons, and Americans.\textsuperscript{60} He is networked in the Church, national politics, multinational business, and among the most powerful people in the world.\textsuperscript{61} In Chile, however, there is no Romney-like figure. In fact, most Chilean Mormons have very little in common with most of their American counterparts.\textsuperscript{62} Obviously, the difference may only be temporal; though there is a growing population of second- and third-generation Mormons in Chile, but many, if not most, Chilean Mormons are first-generation converts, having joined the fellowship during the Pinochet regime. The longer I was in Chile, the more I encountered young Mormons who had been born under the covenant, indicating the transformation that awaits forthcoming generations. However, as a result of what Klein refers to as the neoliberalist tendency to "Hoover [vacuum] wealth up to the top

\textsuperscript{59} Benedict 2007 68.
\textsuperscript{60} In 2007 press reports indicated that presidential candidate Mitt Romney was worth over 250 million dollars.
\textsuperscript{61} Many consider him a frontrunner for the Republican presidential nomination in 2012, and should he win, he would certainly become the most powerful man in the world.
\textsuperscript{62} See http://www.famousmormons.net/bus02.html for an extensive list of Mormon executives beyond the nine I mention here.
and shock much of the middle class out of existence, most Chilean Mormons are still mired in the economic doldrums of the lower classes. Many of my Mormon consultants, both straight and gay, active and inactive, were politically left-of-center, though adamantly and doxically morally conservative. Indeed, many Chilean Mormons had a difficult time understanding the notion that capitalism is so closely associated with Mormonism in the United States. Mitt Romney is not necessarily an agreeable figure to most, and indeed his election to the presidency of the United States would most likely leave Chilean Mormons a bit cynical.

Most of my Mormon compeers work service-oriented jobs that are far removed from the capitalist ethic of American Mormons. However, the notion of service is doxic in Mormonism, just as it tends to be in gay society. Indeed, another artifact of globalization and the spread of neoliberalism is a continually growing need for low-paying service jobs – exactly what many Stencilistas argue against. In fact, while decrying globalization, Stencilism is quite obviously a globalized movement. The paradox does not escape the practitioners and leaders: “We can’t do anything to change the world until capitalism crumbles. In the meantime we should all go shopping to console ourselves.” Furthermore, Stencilistas readily assert the importance of global networks and the globalized influences, techniques, and strategies that they interpret locally. The gay rights movement is another globalized entity that informs gay Mormon practice, as well as some non-Mormon gay Stencilistas, probably impossible without globalization and a somewhat free-market exchange of ideas. Thus, the notion that my

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63 2007.
65 Banksy 2006.
objects are adversarial based on a capitalist/anti-capitalist dichotomy is an imaginary argument that fundamentally will not hold up under analysis. Meller emphasizes the point, which goes a long way toward suggesting that anti-globalizationist Stencilism is actually an iteration of globalization.

[Stencilism] doesn’t respond to any anarchist ideology, but rather it is a fragmentary set of ideologies with influences that range from advertising to pro-Nazi, anarchist, eco-anarchists, and anti-capitalist messages. These messages totally lack a core, or directional/ideological nucleus that suggests: “We’re going this way” or “We’re doing this” or “We’re leaving this out.” Basically, nothing is left out. Nothing is left out, or neglected by, the stencil movement; but many things are left out of museums, magazines, and political campaigns. Stencils don’t leave anything out.66

Meller suggests that Stencilism is all-inclusive, which I would argue is a bit hyperbolic. Any topic is fodder for the practice of Stencilism. Fredric Jameson suggests that this all-consuming nature is essential to late capitalism, which Westbrook interprets as modern capitalism and, thus, globalization and market rule.67 The wall then becomes an open marketplace of ideas, and stencils are the equities traded on that market, though they are devoid of price and value until they are appropriated and commodified in other milieus such as on the walls of bars, t-shirts, political campaign posters, and television set design.

Therefore, I argue that Stencilistas and gay Mormons are both caught up in the Chilean modernity impulse, though some of my Stencilista informants prefer a postmodern label, which is everywhere in Chile. Stencilistas tend to claim that their utopianist vision of the future is distinct from that of the corporate globalizationalists, and indeed it certainly appears to be heterodox, or outside, neoliberal capitalist globalization.

66 Interview transcript 2008.
as embodied by multinationals. However, what is most interesting, and perhaps troubling (if you are invested in a purist form of anti-globalization), is that many of the Stencilistas actually work for the multi-nationals they claim to counter. Now it is common to claim that working for multinationals is only a way to finance one’s unprofitable activist work. Nonetheless, such practice, which purists might refer to as “selling out” – muddies the water just a bit and persuades me to argue that perhaps the Stencilista movement, if we can call it that (and I am not so sure that we can), is a not-so-unwilling handmaiden of globalization. Stencilistas as a category includes those who pursue a number of disparate agendas, which for some includes making a name for themselves as artists. Bourdieu reminds us that artistic prestige is a powerful means of achieving symbolic capital that will for the most fortunate generate real economic capital, not just the symbolic capital the category carries.

**ORTHODOXY/HETERODOXY**

Heretical power... rests on the dialectical relationship between authorized, authorizing language and the group which authorizes it and acts on its authority.\(^{68}\)

Men never do evil so completely and cheerfully as when they do it from religious conviction.\(^{69}\)

Crisis is a necessary condition for a questioning of doxa but is not in itself a sufficient condition for the production of a critical discourse.\(^{70}\)

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\(^{68}\) Bourdieu 1977.

\(^{69}\) Blaise Pascal.

\(^{70}\) Bourdieu 1977.
Bourdieu's notions of heretical power strike a resonant chord in the research before you. Gay Mormons and Stencilistas are heretical potentates that upset the natural order, or in other words, they practice heterodoxies that go contrary to the doxa of straight Mormonism and neoliberal global capitalism. “The dominated classes,” of which both gay Mormons and Stencilistas are certainly members, “have an interest in pushing back the limits of doxa and exposing the arbitrariness of the taken for granted; the dominant classes,” of which mainstream Mormons and politicos are members, “have an interest in defending the integrity of doxa or, short of this, of establishing in its place the necessarily imperfect substitute, orthodoxy.” The two are very similar in their ability to challenge the doxa of mainstream Mormons, Christians, Democratic institutions, and the enclavist and elitist art world. While the prophets and political leaders from within the two groups blocked together here are indeed mobilizing entire groups of people in Chile and throughout the world, I will use this section to explore the dialectical relationship of heretical heterodoxy and orthodoxy. Indeed, as Bourdieu, Berlinerblau, and others assert, there can be no orthodoxy without heresy. Contained in the canon of religious studies we find numerous works that examine the historical transformation of the word hairesis (from which “heresy” is derived) as well as its present significance in Christianity. Though I am unfortunately unable to include them in this project, I will be

71 Ibid 169.
72 Berlinerblau notes with a bit of confusion that Bourdieu repeatedly equates heretical positionality with that of the role of prophet. I believe that Weber uses Joseph Smith’s prophet status as a means to discuss charismatic authority that Bourdieu seems to reject while asserting the role of heretic as being an “option giver,” if you will – a prophet with power to open people’s minds to heterodoxic possibilities.
including a rigorous engagement with the literature of heresy in future iterations of this chapter, either in article or book form. Some of the more salient works that I would engage include Walter Bauer, whose thesis asserts that the “unreflective, traditional concept of heresy is no longer applicable today; it must yield its place to the historical insight that heresy and orthodoxy are relative terms for religio-historical processes of quite different kinds.\textsuperscript{75} The two are intimately intertwined, existing in response to, and because of, one another. Indeed, “when there are no fixed norms set down in the doctrine of an exclusive community there is no room for ‘heresy.’\textsuperscript{76}” The so-called founder religions (or “confessional religions”) are subject to the orthodoxy/heresy dichotomy as a result of disputes that arise within the fixed, and exceptionalist, communities over the original teachings of the founder.

Orthodoxy is not present from the beginning as a fixed quantity (Islam is no exception here, though it might seem such at first glance). It is always a secondary development, establishing itself in the confrontation of divergent interpretations of the founder's “original teaching.\textsuperscript{77}”

As a Christian church organized around a corpus of revelations left behind by the charismatic founder Joseph Smith, Mormonism is inherently structurally amenable to heretical doctrines and schismogenesis,\textsuperscript{78} and is itself a schismatic sect – unless, of course, one chooses to view Mormonism as entirely distinct from Christianity, as Harold Bloom seems to.\textsuperscript{79} Most of Smith’s revelations were written down; however, critical examination leaves many important theological questions unclear, and interpretation varied even while Smith was alive. While this lack of clarity left space for divergent

\textsuperscript{75} 1971.
\textsuperscript{76} Ibid 3921.
\textsuperscript{77} Ibid 3922.
\textsuperscript{78} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{79} 1992.
views and resulted in a number of unorthodox splinter groups, the main body of Mormons – those who followed Brigham Young into the Salt Lake Valley after Smith’s assassination – do indeed, conform to a standard definition of orthodoxy and maintain a “certain uniformity among all his followers in regard to the basic norms of doctrine, belief, and behavior."

Orthodox Mormons are validated in their adherence to Smith’s doctrines by critiquing the heterodoxy of gay Mormons. As we have seen in the literature, the orthodoxy needs the “alternative” example of heterodoxy to remind them of the legitimacy of their interpretation of ideology.

Doxic practices in Mormonism tend to be essentially hierarchical, patriarchal, and heterosexist, homologous to the doxa of most organized religionists including Christians, Jews, and Muslims, as well as that of a good number of societies throughout the world. Mormons accept doxically that Heavenly Father (the preferred name for God) created this Earth and commanded his literal spiritual children to multiply and replenish it, and have dominion over it. This is the first and greatest commandment, and there is little here that differs from most Abrahamic religions. Thus, the existence and recognition of gay Mormons suggests an unacceptable heterodox response that destabilizes and decenters Mormon doxa, i.e. the heteronormative Plan of Salvation. In an exclusively heterosexist orthodoxy, homosexuality, or the practice thereof, is quite simply not an option.

We are sons and daughters of a Heavenly Father and Mother who created us “male and female” (D&C 20:18; Moses 2:27; Genesis 1:27). Thus, “gender is an essential characteristic of individual premortal, mortal, and eternal identity and purpose.” “[T]he Lord created male and female,” and He didn't have a woman's soul trapped in a man's body, or vice versa.

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80 Encyclopedia of Religion 3922.
81 For more on the doxa of the patriarchy, or masculine domination, see Bourdieu 2001.
82 Oaks 1995.
Mormon doxa dictates that in order to reach perfection and “godhood,” a faithful member must understand the gospel plan and participate in all the ordinances thereof— even if this means forsaking his “nature.” Dallin Oaks, one of the Council of the Twelve Apostles, the main governing body of the Church second only to the Prophet and his two counselors who make up the First Presidency, asserts the orthodox position: gender identification is eternal and immutable; there are no mix-ups and no mistakes. Moreover, since The Plan of Salvation is rational and orderly, there is no room for sexual inversion; it is irrational. The doxa is clear: the Father wants all his children to have eternal increase, it would make no sense that He would create some of those children outside the dichotomous gender roles, the perfectly dichotomous gendering of the gods, and of humans.

To further elucidate the orthodox position the Mormon Church continues to circulate a manual to help ecclesiastical leaders “understand and help” those who have “homosexual problems.”83 The booklet is a six-page supplemental to the Church handbook—a leadership manual for the all-male lay clergy, reflecting official policy.84

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84 Briefly, just as humanity is directed to communicate only with the Father in Heaven through the Son, though a Mother in Heaven is implicitly accepted, women are equally kept from most official capacities and responsibilities. Women are told that they hold the priesthood when “they hold their husband in their arms.” Males are given the responsibilities of the priesthood, which are considered onerous and burdensome therefore unsuited to women. Moreover, women have the blessing of bearing children and do not need the additional blessings of holding the priesthood; they receive those blessings from the righteous exercise of their husband’s authority. When the Church was forced by the United States government to rescind polygamy in order for Utah to become a state in 1890, several other doctrines were changed. Prior to this time, women were not explicitly denied the priesthood. In fact, the Relief Society was considered a branch of the priesthood. Joseph Smith ordained his wife and many other women to the priesthood.
The supplemental contains brief sections on “Understanding Homosexual Problems,” “Obtaining Professional Assistance,” “Helping The Spouse And Family Members,” “Church Discipline And Activity,” and “Fostering Healthy Sexual Development.” Its introduction suggests that homosexuality is essentially a “thought crime,” stating that while no general agreement has been reached on the genesis of homosexual problems, “regardless of the causes, these problems can be controlled and eventually overcome.” Orthodoxy asserts that same-sex attraction is not only to be contested, but when confronted as a seemingly uncontrollable urge, it must be rigidly controlled and prohibited; and without exception, those identified with the problem can and ought to be cured. Thus, while the Church proscribes premarital heterosexual intercourse, same-sex attracted individuals are proscribed from any sexual activity whatsoever. They are held to an even higher standard of life-long celibacy. Indeed, the orthodoxy demands homosexual practice be strictly avoided, and any heterodoxy “violates the commandments of God, is contrary to the purposes of human sexuality, distorts loving relationships, and deprives people of the blessings that can be found in family life and in the saving ordinances of the gospel.”

Emphasizing “faith in Jesus Christ, repentance and obedience,” the booklet assures leaders that the “sick” member “needs a better understanding of faith in Jesus Christ” – suggesting that scriptural study and prayer are essential to the “reorientation

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Today, women are ordained in order to officiate in some of the temple ceremonies, though they are only allowed to use their priesthood in the temple. For a far more extensive discussion of Mormon feminism and the history of women in the priesthood, see Maxine Hanks 1992.

86 I borrow this term form Orwell’s 1984 1949.
87 A paraphrase of the argument..
process.” After addressing the fact that many members may despair, requiring professional help to avoid suicide, the manual concludes with the assurance that “repentance leads to healing, peace of conscience, and joy,” noting that in some instances, homosexuals will reorient to heterosexuality and enter into a “happy, eternal marriage.”

The heterosexual union of the sexes is thus the only pattern of sexuality that is consistent with a doctrine of the family. It is not really conceivable that social pressures or liberalizing forces within the church will exact further concessions or accommodations from the church on this issue, beyond the expressions of love and acceptance into the fold that church officials have already proffered. 89

An important Mormon doxic tenant is revealed above, which is that Christ has the power to “change human nature.” Though it does not initially seem plausible that such a doxic notion would elicit violence (the idea that one’s very inborn, or dare I suggest “God-given” nature, can be changed), indeed, we see that it has and it does in fact continue to result in symbolic and real violence. The symbolic violence that ecclesiastical leaders inadvertently, or unknowingly, perpetrate on gay Mormons through policies and doxic understanding of gender and the purpose of life is evident in a practice that has been documented since the mid-1970s at Brigham Young University (BYU), the flagship educational institution of the Mormon Church. While this report of actual violence is so extreme as to be very nearly unbelievable, it can understood when we consider the doxa, which I suggest is another fundamental building block of Mormon habitus. This is the notion that any methods may be justified to achieve worth and righteous results. Rigid gender identity is one of the most fundamental of Mormon doxa,

89 Givens 2004.
we can see why those experiencing same-sex attraction must endure these forms of “necessary” violence.\textsuperscript{90}

Max Ford McBride outlines how the BYU Department of Psychology conducted experiments on at least fourteen males who self-identified as “suffering” from same-sex attraction. Following the heterocentric doxa that rejects heterodoxic gender identity, select individuals were subjected to what McBride calls “aversion therapy.” “The chief goal of aversion therapy is to reduce the probability of inappropriate response patterns which interfere with normal societal adjustment.”\textsuperscript{91} McBride describes attaching an instrument called a “penile plethysmograph” to the test subject’s penis in order to measure changes in size, or tumescence, indicative of sexual arousal.\textsuperscript{92} The subject was then shown erotic pictures of men and if he registered arousal, he would be jolted with electricity through a wire that had been attached to the bicep.\textsuperscript{93} “Electro-aversion therapy,” euphemistically referred to as “reparative therapy,” may resemble something out of Kubrick’s \emph{A Clockwork Orange}. While it has been discredited by professionals and publicly disavowed by the Mormon Church and BYU, there are those who claim that it is still secretly recommended and practiced by private psychotherapists in the Orem/Provo, Utah, area, where the BYU campus is located. A June 2002 episode of MTV’s \emph{True Life: I’m Coming Out}, featured a young Mormon who claimed to have undergone the treatment for a number of weeks as recently as 2001. The 2010

\begin{footnotesize}
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\item Bourdieu offers more on this and I will discuss it further in the next chapter.\textsuperscript{90}
\item 1976 3.
\item The penile plethysmograph (pluh-THIZ-muh-graf) (PPG) is a machine for measuring changes in the circumference of the penis. A stretchable band with mercury in it is fitted around the subject's penis. The band is connected to a machine with a video screen and data recorder. Any changes in penis size, even those not felt by the subject, are recorded while the subject views sexually suggestive or pornographic pictures, slides, or movies.\textsuperscript{92} McBride 1976.
\item McBride 1976.
\end{enumerate}
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documentary film 8: *The Mormon Proposition* contains an interview with a subject of these electro-shock treatments and asserts that this sort of "aversion therapy" is still occurring in private practice.94

Mormon orthodoxy rejects individual and social scientific assertions that homosexuality is an unchangeable, possibly biologically determined, variation of human sexual orientation. Denying that an individual is justified in assuming the identity of "gay" or "homosexual", Mormons prefer to euphemize orientation as same-sex attraction, a temptation to sin like any other moral transgression, only far more grave than those of the heterosexual variety.

We should note that the words homosexual, lesbian, and gay are adjectives to describe particular thoughts, feelings, or behaviors. We should refrain from using these words as nouns to identify particular conditions or specific persons. It is wrong to use these words to denote a condition, because this implies that a person is consigned by birth to a circumstance in which he or she has no choice in respect to the critically important matter of sexual behavior.95

In other words, gay Mormons who are sexually active and suggest heterodoxic responses to the broad dichotomy between their faith and their sexuality are heretics. The Mormon Church attempts to objectify gay Mormons as apostates; however, my experience and research suggests that the apostate label does not suit many gay Mormons. Referring to Lewis Cooper's *The Function of Social Conflict*, Berlinerblau suggests that heretics incite more ire than apostates because of their emic countenance.

Unlike the apostate, the heretic claims to uphold the group’s values and interests, only proposing different means to this end or variant interpretations of the official creed...The heretic proposes alternatives where the group wants no alternative to

94 Written by Reed Cowan and directed by Reed Cowan and Steven Greenstreet.
95 Oaks 1995.
exist...In this respect, the heretic calls forth all the more hostility in that he still has much in common with his former fellow members.  

As mentioned above, the Mormon Church prefers to objectify gay Mormons as persons challenged by same-sex attraction (SSA). The word play allows for SSA Mormons to be distinguished from the heretical positionality of the heterodox gay Mormons. Givens claims that this has the effect of mitigating “the shrill condemnation and intolerance of homosexual.” Givens also believes that the distinction circumvents the “troubling question of homosexuality's origins,” which allows members and leaders alike to place the responsibility on the individual’s acts – something that he or she can be held accountable for – rather than on the orientation or “propensities.” Indeed, rather than heretical or apostate, SSA Mormons tend to embody victimhood that permits a sympathetic reaction by orthodox Mormons. Attempting to live as celibates, or in heterosexual unions of mixed sexual orientation – the directive options issued by the heteronormative hierarchy – SSAs elicit more pity than censure, if you will. In fact, a whole new classificatory support system has arisen around these individuals.

Homosexual Latter-day Saints, accordingly, can qualify as members in good standing and even receive temple recommends, if they are chaste. Second, it allows for a moral posture predicated, at least in part, on a universal standard that makes any sexual relations outside of marriage, hetero- or homosexual, a sin. People of all sexual orientations, in other words, are expected to control their sexual appetites until they can find proper expression in (heterosexual) marriage. Obviously that is small comfort to homosexuals who have no hope of marital satisfaction in this life. To them, the Church can only insist that they obey and persevere regardless the difficulties.

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98 Ibid.
On the other hand, heretical homosexuals who accept a gay identity reject orthodox options in accepting their heterodoxic subjectivity. Gay Mormons, contrary to orthodox proscription, engage in sexual relations with members of their own gender. It is the “practicing homosexual” or self-identifying “gay Mormon” who embodies the heretic – who may in fact eventually become an apostate, though he does not necessarily start out that way – who is considered an enemy to the Church and, ultimately, an enemy to God. Even so, some gay Chilean Mormons attend church even after having been excommunicated from the fellowship. These same heterodox gay Mormons publicly declare their homosexuality in meetings regardless of the proscriptions of such participation. Indeed, some gay Mormons who have “fallen away” completely, as in the case of some of my collaborators, still retain membership, though they may not feel welcome to participate in church activity, and proclaim their testimony of the gospel, belief in the *Book of Mormon*, and the calling of the Prophet Joseph Smith, while all the time lamenting the fact that the church does not accept their heterodoxy.

The ground is shifting somewhat on this issue and I would argue that many Mormons are taking the following scripture to heart: “the blood of saints shall cry unto the Lord, because of secret combinations and the works of darkness.”\(^{100}\) It appears that many mainstream Mormons were disturbed by the confrontations during the battle over Proposition 8 in California.\(^{101}\) Even more mainstream Mormons are shocked to learn of the history of suicides of SSA Mormons in the United States.\(^{102}\) While homosexuality is

\(^{100}\) Mormon 8:27.

\(^{101}\) See Mormons4marriage.org.

\(^{102}\) See Carol Lynn Pearson’s *No More Goodbyes: Circling the Wagons around Our Gay Loved Ones*. 
proscribed by Mormon orthodoxy, so is suicide. In November 2009, Bruce Hafen, a Mormon General Authority now Emeriti, spoke to a group of Mormons attending a conference of Evergreen International\(^\text{103}\) claiming that if they remain faithful and free of same-sex crimes they will eventually be blessed with “normal” sexual responses.\(^\text{104}\) Thus, I would argue along with Berger and Luckman that in grappling with heterodoxies and heretics, orthodoxies eventually incorporate “deviant beliefs into their theological frame” as a way to “neutralize them,\(^\text{105}\)” and despite recent political efforts to the contrary, Mormonism may be on the verge of adjusting to existence of SSA individuals in their midst, which may lead to some sort of attempt to incorporate the heterodox gay Mormon back into the fold.

On the one hand, according to a number of sources, Mormon membership growth has plateaued, contrary to the projections illustrated in the Rodney Stark’s model some years ago, which was based on Mormon rates of baptism during the 1970s and 80s. Thus, as the Mormons struggle to maintain growth and retain members, whose attrition rates are higher than ever, there has been a bit of oscillation between hard-line orthodoxy and reconciliation with, or accommodation of, heterodox gays inside the membership. Mormonism like most modernist institutions relies heavily on the doxa of unchecked, and limitless growth. Similar to global neoliberal capitalism, lack of marked growth indicates stagnation, and tends to be indexical of a withering of the institution, leading ultimately to its failure and death.

\(^{103}\) “The most complete resource for Latter-day Saints on same-sex attraction: If you want to diminish your same-gender attractions and avoid homosexual behavior, there is a way out.” http://www.evergreeninternational.org.

\(^{104}\) Bruce Hafen 2009.

Perhaps in order to regain ground and reanimate exponential growth, Mormon orthodoxy may, in effect, be reifying a doxic dictum: “For it must needs be, that there is an opposition in all things.” If as Berlinerblau suggests, orthodoxy is a reaction to heterodoxy, then the heterodoxy embodied in gay Mormons, whether American or Chilean, is a necessary evil that animates Mormon orthodoxy and may actually serve to accelerate growth. The gay rights movement in the United States, which is exported through globalization, or globalism, to Chile, becomes an easy target for animation of orthodoxy. As I have explained, the heteronormative family, as prescribed by Mormon doxa and *The Plan of Salvation*, is reiterated and reproduced at every level of Mormon patriarchal habitus. The bumper sticker maxim declaring the doxa of all orthodox heterosexuals – “It’s Adam and Eve, not Adam and Steve” – is uncritically canonized in the Mormon Temple drama. Furthermore, the exemplary first family serves as a model for all Mormon families, and was further structured in Mormon habitus by the 1996 press release, which has been converted into veritable scripture: “The Family: A Proclamation to the World.” The Proclamation, as it is called, now stands fixed to active faithful Mormon families throughout the world; I saw it in translation in the homes of Chilean Mormons. While concessions may be made, it seems likely that Mormonism will continue to target gay Mormonism, and the gay rights movement writ large, as anti-Mormon and anti-family.

Furthermore, as gays are antithetical to the doxa of the Mormon family – not only as heterodoxics, but also as a constitutive force that serves as a rallying cry to marshall

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106 2 Nephi 2:11.
107 October 3, 2010, President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, Boyd K. Packer claimed in his General Conference address that the proclamation was indeed scripture.
the faithful to reassert their resolve – the habitus of persecution inculcated in all Mormons from birth or moment of baptism, is reified. The opposition embodied in gays, Mormon and non-Mormon alike, moves contemporary Mormons into alignment with the pioneer ancestors of the restoration in Utah and the United States, as well as the early Saints from the time of Christ forward. This alignment also fulfilled in the gay Mormons, who share the doxa of persecution and who may raise that persecution to the most extreme level of martyrdom, even if by their own hand. Coming out of the closet and losing face, fellowship, and faith, the gay Mormon actually becomes the scapegoat for the orthodoxy espoused in contemporary Mormonism and is thus deployed unconsciously as the embodiment of the purpose of further retrenchment and activation strategies for the larger, straight congregation. Thus, the heterodox gay Mormon assists in the modernization of the traditionalist sacralizing doxa of persecution even more so than the orthodox SSA Mormon.

Comparing gay Mormon heterodoxy to that of Stencilistas now: Stencilistas tend to be heretics of a political, rather than religious nature. Stencilism seems to challenge the doxa of more secular milieus including politics and art, particularly troubling the orthodoxy of neoliberalist globalization. Stencilism challenges capitalist orthodoxies including private property rights: not the property rights of individuals, but rather those of multinational corporations, which they generally view as an invading neocolonial force. Banksy, the internationally celebrated “guerilla artist” who is lionized by some Stencilistas writes, “Crime against property is not real crime.” Stencilistas appropriate public space for their own use, or at least a place to display their art, heterodox to the

108 2006.
fundamental orthodox capitalist doxa of the rights of private property. Thus, the very act
of their artistic production reveals their heterodox disposition. Under the orthodoxy of
global capitalism, advocating a disregard for the private property rights is an untenable
heterodoxy, similar in gravity to opposing the heteronormative doxa of Mormonism.
Westbrook suggests that the nature of the *joie de moi* character of property ownership
may be shifting,\textsuperscript{109} but I argue that it is, like the heteronormativity of Mormonism,
shifting very slowly. Indeed, multinational corporations, which constitute the neoliberal,
globalizationist orthodoxy that the Stencilistas heterodoxy challenges, continue to view
stencil street art as criminal vandalism, property damage, and a public nuisance.

Stencilistas' doxa suggests that the public sphere belongs to everyone, including
private space that is owned by corporations, government property, and that owned by
churches. Moreover, they claim that since corporate interests have already colonized
public spaces contrary to the will of the people, their work is one of reappropriation of
what has been illegally misappropriated. Nonetheless, as I have mentioned, many
Stencilistas adhere to an unspoken code that usually prohibits stenciling on individual
private property, though from the evidence I have seen in Santiago, not all Stencilistas
feel bound to this code, if they are even aware of it. Many Stencilistas are motivated by
unbounded heterodox urges and may not recognize that there is any code whatsoever.

Another interesting heterodoxy that I noted among some of the Chilean
Stencilistas is a contartiness to the doxa of the global Stencilism movement. As I have
mentioned above, Stencilism tends to be doxically anti-globalizationalist, with the
exception that practioners use the internet and social networking sites to share ideas and

\textsuperscript{109} Westbrook 2004 87.
techniques, as well as to connect with like-minded practitioners across the globe; however, some of my interlocutors demonstrate a disposition that is markedly inclusive of some multinational corporate involvement. Indeed, contracted by some high-profile corporations, they market their stencil work, at least locally, to explicitly globalizationalist interests. These same Stencilistas have worked under contract for local businesses, governmental agencies, and multi-national corporations. The heterodox view of these Stencilistas is that such work helps pay for their public and activist street work, which is always unpaid and subject to sanction and fines by law enforcement.

CLOSETS/WALLS

Silence is the greatest persecution; never do the saints keep themselves silent. 110

We self-discriminate. We self-exile. Some of us are cordially invited to leave the church when we tell our story. But, we can’t stay quiet. We have to do something. In the church there will continue to be young people who are dealing with being gay and lesbian, and we have to do something to help them.111

*El Stencil Graffiti es la adaptación de una técnica milenaria a una estética y finalidad contemporáneas. Un arma de la reproducción del pensamiento silenciado; del homenaje personal e íntimo; o de la expresión espontánea que no busca entregar un mensaje, sino ataviar el muro.* 112

Gay Chilean Mormons who admitted their homosexuality to me were generally out-of-the-closet to many members of their family, in some cases their colleagues, in all

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110 Blaise Pascal, *Pensees* 1670.
111 Benjamin, gay Chilean Mormon interview transcripts 2007.
cases their friends, and in most cases their ecclesiastical authorities and members of their wards. One gay Mormon who lives completely closeted and celibate told of revealing his identity to members after being quizzed relentlessly about not being married, one of the most eligible bachelors in the ward. He decided to tell them the truth as though it were a joke and thereby silence their queries, yet leave the doubt in their minds as to the veracity. As he explained, “We were all standing around and as always they kept asking me ‘Miguel why don’t you have a girlfriend? When are you going to get married? You know it’s a commandment, right?’ I got really serious and I said, ‘Soy maricón!’ They all looked at me for a minute, and then we all laughed and nobody’s ever mentioned it again.”

Confrontation with or challenges to authority, specifically ecclesiastical authority, is anti-doxic for gay and straight Mormon alike. The anti-confrontationalist doxa of gay Mormons stands in marked contrast to the anti-authoritarian doxa of the wall-spraying Stencilista, who seeks the opportunity to challenge values, mores, and the status quo in a clearly unabashed clash with authority, which would be anathema for the more discrete, closet-restrained gay Mormon. Gay Mormons tend to be submissive and passive (if at times passive-aggressive) in contrast to Stencilistas, who tend to be dominant and aggressive (if also at times passive-aggressive). While there are gay Mormons who are more aggressive and confrontational, I suggest that these individuals tend to be converts rather than life-long members, as is the case with most of my consultants in Chile. The “born-under-the-covenant” gay Mormon’s doxa of submission to authority is probably more pronounced. Convert or not – and gay Chileans are probably more sensitized to this because of the years of military dictatorship where submission to authoritarian rule meant
life and aggression against that authority meant certain death – gay Mormons, as well as their straight counterparts, learn to be submissive and to practice the performance of submission, even if they feel aggressive/anti-authoritarian. The practice of Mormonism, like that of many other authoritarian sects, is based on a cosmological notion of patriarchal authority that emanates from the doctrine of the tripartite Godhead. In Mormonism, which has an unconventional notion of the structure of that Godhead, the Heavenly Father, who is called Elohim only in the temple, is the apex of the Trinity. He is the model for the earthly structure, whose most intimate iteration is embodied in the head of the household, the father. This structure than is the basis of priesthood authority, which in its perfect elucidation is based on lines of descent that pass to every male from his father who, as long as he is worthy, confers priesthood authority when the male comes of age. In cases where the father is not a member or he finds himself not worthy priesthood is conferred by the local ecclesiastical authority. Ultimately, the line of authority passes through the living Prophet and historical figures in Church history to the restoration’s Prophet Joseph Smith and from there to Christ, Melchizedek (the Old Testament Prophet who held the keys to the priesthood that bear his name) and on down to Adam, the father of all humanity. Mormon patriarchal structure is couched in terms of eternality that engenders a doxa fundamental to all structures within Mormonism and results in a deep-seated aversion, if not outright disability, to challenging any type of authority, be it in the home, at church, school, work, or in the political arena. Mormons are doxically habituated to submissive practice.

A fundamental habitus of practicing Mormons is obedience to authority. Mormonist doxa reflects the habitus of submission that many Mormons perform in all
areas of life; however, it is particularly marked in women, children, and authority-less males. It may seem that I am speaking of beta, or passive males, but in practice, all Mormon males are fluent in submissive performance. The only male not compelled to submit to any other male is the Prophet. Indeed, while power appears to be spread around in Mormondom, with pseudo-fiefdoms embodied in the leaders of the smallest congregations called, wards and stakes, the reality is far different. Every leader is subject to someone farther up in the hierarchy, or line of authority. The corporatist structure is not unique in the Mormon iteration; it is simply highly refined and rigidly bureaucratized.

The doxa is further dramatized, and thus reinforced, in the temple endowment where the principle of delegation and line-of-authority is illustrated through the creation story wherein Elohim directs Jehovah, who then commands his three favored apostles (Peter, James, and John, who also restored the Melchizedek priesthood to Joseph Smith in 1830), to go about the business of the Father. I suggest that this is the doxa of the majority of Mormons, straight and gay alike, but not necessarily the doxa of elite Mormons, who are accustomed to being part and parcel of authoritarian power elite, a privilege afforded the wealthy and genealogically connected class, and they act accordingly.

Mormon submission in the political arena is a bit trickier. The Mormon doxic practice when confronted by political power, particularly as asserted in totalitarian, right-wing rulership, is almost always submissive, which apparently captured the attention of Pinochet in Chile. This submissive abrogation to authoritarianism is further illustrated in the foundational Articles of Faith written by Joseph Smith in 1830, which declares, “We believe in being subject to kings, presidents, rulers, and magistrates, in obeying,
honoring, and sustaining the law. Smith and the earliest leaders of Mormonism did not follow this dogmatic assertion, openly flouting a number of American laws and eventually attempting to create an independent empire embodied in Deseret, an independent and sovereign state within United States territory. Since achieving Utah’s statehood in 1896, Mormons tendency toward theocracy, so pervasive in Brigham Young’s Utah Territory, has been sublimated. However, Yale-trained Mormon historian, D. Michael Quinn tells us that in the twentieth century, politics within the hierarchy has been fraught with battles between moderates and ultra-conservatives. Mormons have sometimes passively been on the wrong side of justice and history due to the hierarchy’s differences of political opinion. For instance, rather than rejecting Nazism and joining a resistance to Hitler’s totalitarianism and violence, Mormons collaborated with the Third Reich.

Hitler enjoyed at least as much popularity among German Saints [Mormons] as he did among the population in general. His apparent dynamism and self-confidence seemed to show a way out of the chaos and weakness of the Weimar years. Moreover, as ‘good Germans,’ the Mormons were acutely aware that Hitler had risen to power through legal channels....Some Church members even saw Hitler as God’s instrument, preparing the world for the millennium. Superficial parallels were drawn between the Church and the Nazi party with its emphasis on active involvement by every member....The vital importance of ‘Aryan’ ancestry gave new significance to genealogical research. And the Führer himself, the non-smoking, non-drinking vegetarian who yielded to no one in his desire for absolute law and order, seemed to embody many of the most basic LDS virtues.

The notion of political leaders being “God’s instrument” is repeated many times in Mormon history, specifically should they be conservative, or even militaristic and

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113 Articles of Faith 1:12.
114 Quinn 1997b 238.
115 Ibid.
totalitarian. This was clearly the case in Chile where the Church fell under Pinochet's all-attentive gaze. Indeed, Mormonism seemed to attain a certain legitimacy, if not outright government support, which Pinochet marked by the lifting of restrictions on missionaries throughout the country. Chilean Ph.D. in American Studies Francisco Javier Jara Arancibia suggests "Mormon leaders and missionaries helped [Pinochet] by teaching anti-Communist doctrines." Meanwhile, as Peggy Fletcher Stack, reporter for the *Salt Lake Tribune* notes, "Catholic bishops spoke out strongly against the [regime's] abuses and were soundly punished by the dictator." Stack goes on to indicate that the Mormon hierarchy supported Pinochet, "whom they saw as an opponent of Communism."

Furthermore, she reminds us that then Prophet Spencer W. Kimball declared, upon presenting Pinochet with a copy of the *Book of Mormon*, that he was "one of the great leaders of Latin America." Jara notes that the Pinochet regime responded to this support by calling Mormons "true Christians who stayed clear of politics," and recognizing the Church's contribution to the "spiritual and social well-being of the nation." According to Stack, Robert Wells, a Mormon executive in South America during the 1970s, claimed that Chile's *Golpe de Estado* was "an act that served the purpose of the Lord." I heard similar words spoken from the pulpit (during a Fourth of

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118 The American Mormon hierarchy has always had a tendency to be anti-Communist. Indeed, in 1936 the First Presidency published a "Warning to Church Members" to avoid any association with Communism. Quinn 1997b 304.
119 "Church was pushed, pulled during 'time of trouble'" Peggy Fletcher Stack, *Salt Lake Tribune*, 06/22/2006.
120 Ibid.
121 Ibid.
July all-mission conference at the Avenida Mexico chapel in Independencia, a suburb of Santiago) when I was serving as a missionary in Pinochet’s Chile.

Perhaps it is needless to say, the inheritors of the spirit of Stencilism, some of whom were born in exile during the late Pinochet period and others in post-dictatorship Chile, find the complicity demonstrated by Mormons to be reprehensible. Admittedly, though I lived through it, I also find it troublesome. Stencilistas’ doxa of anti-collaboration and confrontational aggression that is at once anti-capitalist, anti-authoritarian, and politically liberal, if not totally radical, is totally anathema to the gay Mormon doxa. Stencilism, even if accomplished under cover of night – making it more veiled than closeted or occult – is counter-submissive, embracing an aggressive habitus that is reflected not only in the practice of stencil street art, but in other life practices, or indulgences. Passivity does not fit the Stencilista model. Indeed, we might suggest that in a head-to-head, almost sexual and paradigmatic comparison, Stencilistas are active, and gay Mormons are passive.

However, I am not fully comfortable with suggesting that the straight Mormons model passivity as much as gay Mormons may. Furthermore, it is natural – in a Bourdieusian sense – for gay Mormons, (perhaps even more so for those “born-under-the-covenant”) to be passive (actively passive, perhaps?) in acknowledging or discussing their “heretical” sexual orientation, gender, or sexuality. This in turn might lead them to be more passive, or closeted, in the public sphere in all respects. In fact, some of gay Mormons’ most aggressive public acts – coming out, if you will – have been in rather
spectacular and dramatic suicides, which is another doxic example emanating from the self-denial and self-destruction implicit in the aggressively anti-gay institutional abuse that engenders a suicidal response in “otherized” (or demonized) Mormons.

Mormon lay members’ doxa requires intersubjectivity with male authority and submission to all ecclesiastical figures, above all to the prophet, whoever may inhabit that role. (The intersubjectivity that I suggest here requires the obedience, or submission of the individual Mormon to the ecclesiastical figure. Obviously, if the individual rejects the authority, then there is no real intersubjectivity.) In Official Declaration 1, Wilford Woodruff, the third prophet of the Church, and the author of the manifesto that would disavow the general practice of polygamy, thereby preparing Utah for acceptance into the fellowship of the American states, writes:

The Lord will never permit me or any other man who stands as President of this Church to lead you astray. It is not in the programme. [sic] It is not in the mind of God. If I were to attempt that, the Lord would remove me out of my place, and so He will any other man who attempts to lead the children of men astray from the oracles of God and from their duty.

In 1980, a new era emerged in Mormonism, and the notion of infallibility as part of the office (or mantle) of the prophet was widely asserted. Quinn reminds us in The Mormon

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122 For many accounts of public suicides in the United States by gay Mormons see Carol Lynn Pearson’s No More Goodbyes: Circling the Wagons around Our Gay Loved Ones 2007. During my mission, a Chilean missionary who I suspected of being gay committed suicide in front of his companion and a group of investigators by jumping head first from a tall ladder at the site of a new chapel construction.

123 Known as the Manifesto, Official Document 1 disavows polygamy. As it turned out, this was only upheld publicly and among the lay membership. The elites, Wilford Woodruff was the Prophet and at the top of the hierarchy, ignored the decree. Woodruff sent his nine wives to Canada. The practice continued in Canada and Mexico.

124 Sixty-first Semiannual General Conference of the Church, Monday, October 6, 1890, Salt Lake City, Utah. Reported in Deseret Evening News, October 11, 1890 2.
Hierarchy: Extensions of Power that in September of that year then-apostle Ezra Taft Benson instructed BYU students in the “Fourteen Fundamentals in Following the Prophet,” wherein he asserts that “the Prophet is the only man who speaks for the Lord in all things,” and “the Prophet will never lead the Church astray” and the “Prophet does not have to say ‘Thus sayeth the Lord’ to give us scripture.” Though Benson would later become prophet, the prophet at that time was Spencer W. Kimball who, Quinn tells us, was “concerned” about the “misunderstanding” that Benson seemed to be encouraging the notion that the Church espoused ultra-conservative politics – Benson was a notorious right-wing partisan whose son headed the John Birch Society for a number of years – and that members were being urged to take “follow-the-leader-mentality” in all things. Quinn tells us that while Kimball’s concerns circulated among the hierarchy, by whom Benson was called upon to explain, those concerns did not receive the circulation or notice of Benson’s original talk.126

In practice, most Mormons take their leaders’ infallibility quite seriously, suggesting that disagreement with a prophetic decree, such as that made by the current Prophet Thomas S. Monson in favor of California Proposition 8, results in disobedience that is akin to sin, endangering real, personal, eternal salvation.

Cursed are all those that shall lift up the heel against mine anointed, saith the Lord, and cry they have sinned when they have not sinned before me, saith the Lord, but have done that which was meet in mine eyes, and which I commanded them. But those who cry transgression do it because they are the servants of sin, and are the children of disobedience themselves. And those who swear falsely against my servants, that they might bring them into bondage and death—Woe

125 Quinn 1997b 873.
126 Ibid.
unto them; because they have offended my little ones they shall be severed from the ordinances of mine house.\textsuperscript{127}

Thus, among gay Chilean Mormons there is a type of orthodoxy, an orthodox objectification of the closet, while among the Stencilistas we might suggest that there is an orthodox objectification of the wall. Gay Chilean Mormons prefer to remain somewhat shielded within the closet.\textsuperscript{128} In most cases this does not necessarily mean being completely secretive about their sexuality, as most are out to some family members, some church members, and work colleagues. Sedgwick treats the subject of the closet at length in her seminal work \textit{Epistemology of the Closet}. Indeed, gay Chilean Mormons are a classic case study in the closet behavior – the doxa of the closet. There is a general tendency to avoid confrontation with the local church hierarchy to avoid excommunication, “which would destroy my father,” reported one gay Chilean Mormon. When another former leader of Afirmaci\-\-\-n stood with placard in hand protesting in front of the temple in Providencia he was summarily excommunicated by his home stake (as a returned missionary he had to be tried by a High Council court; he could not be disciplined by his ward bishop) and ostracized by the gay Mormon group for “being activist.” “We don’t want a confrontation with the Church,” reported one Afirmaci\-\-\-n member. “We prefer to lie low and work from the inside toward equality.”\textsuperscript{129} Sedgwick’s quotation of Miller seems appropriate to reiterate here in the gay Mormon context.

\textsuperscript{127} D and C 121:16-19.
\textsuperscript{128} There have been cases of activism, in particular the founder of Afirmaci\-\-\-n Chile, who during the 1990s received a lot of press both in Latin America and in the U.S., and another whom I will discuss below, they remain exceptions, generally.
\textsuperscript{129} Interview transcripts 2007.
The subjective practice in which the oppositions of private/public, inside/outside, subject/object are established, and the sanctity of their first term kept inviolate. And the phenomenon of the “open secret” does not, as one might think, bring about the collapse of those binarisms and their ideological effects, but rather attests to their fantasmatic recovery.  

Indeed, the U.S. Affirmation has until very recently avoided direct confrontation with the Church, embracing the “open secret,” preferring a strategy of one-to-one discussion of sexuality with straight Mormons and working toward gradual change and integration. Many members of Affirmation and Afirmación express ceaseless hope for a 1978-type revelation, which granted the priesthood blessings – full membership participation – to people of African descent. However, when in 2009 Affirmation leaders were rebuffed from a scheduled meeting with the newly ascended Monson administration, they subsequently chose to balk publicly at what would have been a reversal in the long-standing austerity policy. Upon the public “outing” of what the Church had pretended would be secret meetings, a flurry of accusations and recriminations were voiced, but were quickly eclipsed by the First Presidency’s very public entrée into California’s Proposition 8 campaign, which eventually rescinded same-sex marriage rights that had been approved earlier that year by the state supreme court. Moreover, in response to the very public policy statement issued by the Monson administration in favor of Proposition 8 in California, Affirmation again came out with a public statement decrying the Church’s activism. Overall, however, I would have to opine that Affirmation’s foray into the public eye has not been effective. Most Mormons

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130 Quoted from Sedgwick 1990:67.  
131 Manifest 2 is Spencer W. Kimball’s prophetic decree to reverse the policy.
remain undeterred by their efforts, deferring to the voice of the Prophet, who after all is said, written, and done remains the final arbiter of Mormon truth.

Stencilistas, on the other hand, are defined by their activism and confrontation. Their only closet, or inside, work entails the preparation of the stencil for final production, which can be an arduous task involving extensive design, computer work, and tediously meticulous cutting of the stencil, as well as the sometimes very strategic decision-making process leading to the “perfect” placement. The artwork is sprayed and displayed in the public sphere in the most confrontational manner possible. Of course, many Stencilistas mask their identity through a complex system of pseudonyms that sometimes are nothing more than acronyms, perhaps a form of the closet; however, they very often enough gain a certain notoriety more often than not they even if by no other manner than their “ghost identity,” or nom de plume. Banksy is a good example of this process on a global scale: people know him by his works, but his identity – though reported by journalists as two distinct individuals – is as yet not public knowledge. In the Chilean context, Stencilista “Acuario” is now quite “out” about his own identity as graphic designer and Stencilista, having mainstreamed his work and spotlighted himself and his collaborative in public venues and through a blog and Facebook presence.

Gay Chilean Mormons meet behind closed doors of member’s apartments, and when they do leave that protected space, they generally congregate in gay clubs like Fausto, or other gay sites where they may remain invisible and anonymous to their straight Mormon colleagues. I did meet one gay Mormon who attended church with his lover after he was excommunicated. He was open about his sexuality in all venues. I felt quite conspicuous and a bit uncomfortable when I attended church with him, knowing
that I was "guilty by association." Theoretically, this should not have bothered me, but my internalized homophobic doxa revealed itself.

To reiterate and clarify: in many ways, gay Chilean Mormons are not actually in the closet, but they have a tendency to practice closet behaviors which are illustrative of Mormon doxa. Gay Mormons' friends, relatives, neighbors, and colleagues know that they are gay – most would consider themselves to be "out." What I am suggesting is that in contrast to Stencilistas, whose doxa demands, encourages, and supports being aggressively public, very public, literally spraying their convictions, identity politics, and public critiques on the walls of the city (the frontlines of political, social, and cultural confrontation), gay Mormon's doxa elicits a habitus of secrecy, protectiveness, and anti-confrontation – passive or submissive actors in the same milieus that Stencilistas are active or aggressive. Gay Mormons that stray from this doxa into the heretical fields of activism are alienated, marginalized, and eventually separated from social intercourse with those who prefer the safety of the closet. In contrast, Stencilistas who do not share the doxa of aggressive confrontation and political engagement on public walls of the city could hardly be called Stencilistas. My ideally embodied gay Mormon Stencilista was never encountered, necessitating my attempt at analyzing, synthesizing, and performing the role.

**CONSTRUCTING A NEW CHILE: A CONCLUSION**

Holding gay Mormonism and Stencilism together as a comparative device is an interesting intellectual exercise, but I hope that it has been more than that. Theatrically,
to observe and participate in the movement of these two groups, loosely defined as movements in themselves, across the stage of metropolitan Santiago, is to be a part of the transformation of contemporary Chilean society. I have outlined a praxological study of two coterminous groups in metropolitan Santiago who are carving their way through the maze of modernization, which collapses into a praxology for and against globalism, and perhaps globalization, but only if we consider it as a movement somehow outside the more benign-sounding globalism.

Based on the evidence I have collected and exhibited here, I argue that heterodoxy is integral to the contemporary globalism. I am not sure that I can assert that gay Mormons are globalists and stencil street artists are anti-globalist, a tempting scheme. In fact, I would argue something that is more to the contrary. If we have learned anything by this praxological study, it is that none of the categories are fixed, but rather they tend to be permeable. For instance, while I found many Chileans oscillate between their disgust for what they perceive as American imperialism, a policy of “war without end,” and the arrogance and privilege of white citizens of the United States (all of which I will list under the category of Gringoism as practiced by Gringos), they also embrace what

132 Gringo does not mean all citizens of the United States for most Chileans. The category and qualification of gringo varies from region to region across Latin America. In rural Peru, for instance, gringo is used for anyone who is not from rural Peru. I was told by a taxista in Puno, Peru, on the shores of Lake Titicaca, that there they refer to Limeños (residents of Lima, usually mestizo) as gringo! In the metropolitan Santiago, I learned that it is generally used for Caucasian citizens of the United States, though some do not make a phenotypic distinction. Santiaguinos are quite aware that in the United States there are people from all areas of the globe and of all ethnic extractions; thus, they reserve the use of the term gringo, which can be both pejorative and a term of endearment, exclusively for the fair-skinned, and light-eyed. All others might be identified as norteamericano, estadounidense (a term I would like to adopt in English), or Americano. When referring to the government of the United States, or something that the United States does as a nation, it is labeled gringo, or los gringos. For instance, “A los
we might label as “Gringo culture,” which would certainly include much of what emanates from Hollywood and New York, or the totality of the United States if you prefer (for example music, television, film, and fashion). Without going into much detail here, however, it would certainly be an interesting topic to explore further. Where this becomes more complex, and indeed blurs the line of the Gringo label that I discuss above, is the distinction between what is generated in the United States and elsewhere, particularly in the context of fashion. What is the distinction between American and Global in Chilean perception? Unfortunately, my study does not accommodate these large questions, but they will make for an interesting subject, requiring a great deal more research and time.

Finally, I argue that gay Chilean Mormons and Stencilistas are no different in their complexity and oscillations than that of their straight counterparts, but with minor fluctuations in the particularities. Gay Chilean Mormons admit that gay Mormons in the United States inspire their own group. However, they draw a distinction between themselves and their Gringo counterparts, claiming that as converts by and large (aside from those few who had been born in the Chilean church), they do not have the same issues as the intergenerational Mormons in the United States, who struggle with the tyranny of family tradition. Their experience – asserts one compeer, more difficult and accounts for the problem of suicide that is not as evident in Chile.

*gringos les gusta pelear*” (“Gringos like to fight,” which was used in reference to the wars in Iraq, Afghanistan, and elsewhere).
TOWARD A PRAXOLOGY OF GAY CHILEAN MORMONISM AND STENCILISMO

All practice is "conspicuous," visible, whether or not it is performed in order to be seen; it is distinctive, whether or not it springs from the intention of being "conspicuous," standing out, of distinguishing oneself or behaving with distinction.¹

They shared neither a singular point of view nor a singular style of life.²

In chapter 1, I invoke a strategy of multi-sited methodological practice to create a comparativist portrait of Stencilistas and gay Chilean Mormons – two incommensurable social groups. Though I see them collectively, I imagine them for comparative purposes as individuals whose images are reproduced in life-size portraits that change every few seconds like a digital picture frame someone might have on her desk that rotates the

¹ Bourdieu 1984.
² Faubion 1993 5.
photographs in slide-show fashion. My portraits are super-sized high-definition photographs that during the transitionary moments of fading from one to another, we understand the blurring of the self and her individuality into the collective, represented in the overlap of portraits. The slide-show photographs also stand side-by-side in the middle of a great white wall—as they might be positioned in an enormous gallery—where they can be appreciated, inspected, analyzed, interpreted, and critiqued. Though I do little of the latter, it is always possible should one so desire. The not-quite-still reproductions of my interlocutors, compeers, and friends (my image is in the line-up as well) compose the research imaginary that allows for the social scientific description, comparison, and analysis I do here. Continuing with this blurry description and comparison, this chapter reflects an effort to push into those still images and watch them transform into moving ones—more akin to a videographic montage—to offer examples of the social practices characteristic, and not so characteristic, of members of the groups. As in chapter 1, the description of gay Chilean Mormons may continue to be thicker than that of the Stencilistas, however, in this chapter I endeavor to balance them more through exploring more the notion of practice, a study that will offer more dynamism to the descriptive layers of the preceding portraits.

Praxology is a study—both comparative and descriptive—concerned with modern and metacultural practices, suggests James Faubion in his early work on modernity in post-dictatorial Greece. Faubion argues that his praxology is a “descriptive and analytical experiment,” and that it is a “very blurred genre, an exploratory writing not of

3 Ibid.
Following Faubion, my work reflects a descriptive and analytical experiment of moderns who are deeply concerned with their place in a globalizing world as citizens in the cosmopolitan epicenter of post-dictatorial Chile. I take my experiment in a different direction, however, and as I will show later in this dissertation, I argue for artist-anthropology and a critical engagement with visual methodologies as a means to describe and analyze the ethnographic object.

In this chapter, I will look at metacultural practices of Stencilistas and gay Chilean Mormons focusing on what I observed, what I was informed about what I observed, what I think about what I observed, and in both subject cases, what I learned from my own practice. I will compare some practices across the two categories of Stencilista and gay Chilean Mormon while continuing to insert my own experience and theoretical orientation as a third category of comparison. Greg Urban defines metaculture as a “set of cultural elements and objects, such as discourse, with the ability to represent or portray or refer to cultural elements and objects.” His definition is further elaborated by James Wilce, who describes metaculture as “reflexive culture, bits of culture that are about other bits of culture. Criticism, praise, denunciation, and evaluation.” Certainly, a dissertation constitutes metaculture, and this dissertation includes an explicit discussion of the dissertating metacultural practice, as well as that evoked by the stencil and the practice of the Stencilistas, and the practices of gay Chilean Mormons, some of whom attend Afirmación, a U.S.-founded gay Mormon social/support group.

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4 Faubion 1993 19.
5 Urban 2009 224.
6 Wilce 2009 13.
Finally, in this chapter I fuse a discussion of the paraethnographic as argued by George Marcus and Douglas Holmes to my own praxology and metacultural practice. I consider as a type of paraethnography the practice of *Stencilistas* to observe problems in society and the work of their peers, to acquire a generalized understanding of the global zeitgeist, and to create metaculture. In other words, the Stencilistas that I am talking about here observe, analyze, and critique society through a strategy of reducing complex social discourse into metaculture – spray-painted stencils. I also test the notion that gay Chilean Mormons practice similar type of paraethnography as part of their “coming out” strategy, and gay identity-formation includes observing the behavior of non-Mormon gays found by going to gay bars, by engaging in gay sex, and by reading about gay life in Santiago and other parts of the world on the Internet, all are a means to transform their Mormon habitus into a gay Chilean Mormon habitus. First, we begin with initiating encounters with the quintessential mnemonic metacultural object: the stencil.

**AWAKENING TO THE STENCIL**

Street stencils are beautiful little booby-traps of information lying in wait; aesthetic gifts left behind as urban folk art, simultaneously revealing and concealing their purpose.\(^7\)

Aboard one of the more rickety *micros* in pre-Transantiago\(^8\) Santiago, I found myself staring out the window observing the people rushing on sidewalks and darting

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\(^7\) Western Cell Division, *Stencil Graffiti* 2002. This emic definition is a further instantiation stencil art is metaculture about metaculture.

\(^8\) Transantiago is the name given to the restructuring of Santiago’s public transportation network. When I arrived in Santiago in 2006, the Metro system was littered with signage
through the paralyzed vehicles on Independencia, a major thoroughfare that bridges the Rio Mapocho, Santiago’s infamous filthy landmark, which here marks the Northern boundary of El Centro (downtown). The Mapocho runs shallow most of the year; however, in the winter – flush with runoff from the Andean foothills – it can flood these vital transportation arteries. The river once spirited the occasional corpse – hapless victims of Pinochetismo – out of the city to an anonymous grave in the depths of the Pacific. The stone walls that line the river’s urban passage are often painted in colorful murals and political graffiti. The micro stopped in front of the International Police Headquarters. In between the press of people moving along the sidewalk and rushing around the cars stalled in the street, something on the white-washed wall caught my attention: a small, crudely designed, spray-painted stencil of a wrench falling into gears. The stencil was black and no more than six inches square, strategically placed for optimal aesthetic effect. At first, I could not make out what it was, but when I did, the mnemonic action occurred immediately. The power of the image – a metacultural object – swept me from my seat in Santiago to the desert of Northern Arizona.

In my mind’s eye, I was suddenly standing again on the monolithic Glen Canyon Dam near Page, Arizona, witnessing the striking juxtaposition of the white, man-made, concrete walls of the dam, and deep red of the desert canyon. I remembered the sense of preparing Santiaguinos for the upcoming transition, which eventually involved reducing Santiago’s fleet of 8000 public buses (micros) and directing nearly all cross-metropolis traffic through the Metro system. The dramatic transition and the social upheaval it caused threatened to overtake and replace my research project, and will be the subject of a paper. During the stressful first weeks of this transition, many of my interlocutors remarked that they had become “strangers in their own city.” Remarkably, for weeks life-long Santiaguinos scrutinized maps of the new transit plan, and many found themselves lost and bewildered by the complicated, convoluted, and seemingly counter-intuitive bus schedules and routes.
gnawing discomfort and anxiety in and around the dam. Next to the white-plugged red
canyon squats Bechtel Navajo Generating station, blighting the pristine prehistoric
landscape owned by the people whose name it mocks. Lake Powell, the anachronistic
reservoir that taunts the desert landscape with sparkling water is considered *chinde*, or
taboo, to the Diné, whose ancestor’s bodies lay entombed in the depths of the drowned
canyon. The reservoir is sometimes dangerous, and annually claims victims who
underestimate the unforgiving sheer cliffs of the Escalante plateau that guard much of the
water’s edge.

Weeks later, I encountered Edward Abbey’s environmentalist classic, *The
Monkey Wrench Gang*. His transgressive environmentalist ideas were astonishing,
fantastical, and seemingly impossible. Reading it made me feel dangerously subversive.
He wrote of upending the social order, something no Mormon I knew at the time would
have advocated, and he wrote of Jack Mormons, a group I could relate to spiritually,
though not yet practically. In Chile, I was startled, amused, and intrigued that a glance at
a crude, spray-painted stencil could conjure such a recollection, and I quickly reached for
my digital camera to capture a picture of the image that would become indexical of my
project.

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9 See *Koyaanisqatsi: Life out of Balance* directed by Godfrey Reggio for a surreal,
modernist vision of the stunning contrast I describe here. 1982.
10 1975.
11 “The Jack Mormons reveal what holds these tightly knit people [all Mormons] together
and what makes them special. Just as a jackrabbit looks like a rabbit but isn't truly a hare,
a Jack Mormon is a man or woman whose ardor has waned. A Jack Mormon is a
Mormon by birth or conversion, but a backslider by nature. Smoke a cigarette, start the
morning with a strong cup of coffee, or sleep in on Sunday and you're a Jack Mormon. A
Jack Mormon is not unlike an Easter Catholic or a bacon-lettuce-and-tomato Jew” Coates
1991 xi.
Like spray-paint on a porous surface, the stencil seeped into the walls that enclosed my primary research topic, gay Chilean Mormons. I began to see spray-painted stencils everywhere, and my artistic practice of photographing and collecting them began to share space with my research of gay Chilean Mormons. I was challenged by the constant juxtaposition of both fields jockeying for attention and focus. The stencil was a metacultural object that in Urban’s definition moves “culture” along, reproducing and changing through space and time. I think of this as the “stencil effect” – the power of the stencil to stick in the awareness, or just below it, and to affect one’s perception of the world. Tristan Manco, an American author who archives photographs of stencils from all over the world and publishes extensively about graffiti and stencil street art, echoes my experience: “whatever the message or motivation, all stencils become part of our environment. As they become absorbed into the city walls and as we discover them, they become part of our experience; they become, ultimately, part of us.” While the monkey-wrench stencil piqued my interest in the metacultural and mnemonic power of stenciled street art, inciting a response that found me spending time scanning the walls for further iterations of the art, Santiago native Edwin Campos was likewise affected and reports having felt driven to photograph thousands of stencils over a period of years. Like me, Campos knew there was something important happening with the emergent art form and decided to do something about it.

I am not going to challenge the notion of “culture” here. I am using the device of metaculture as Urban uses it, but I am looking at the practice rather than problematizing or elaborating on the “culture.” If I do here and there slip into conventional definitions of culture it is solely for expediency. Urban 2001 224-25.

Manco 2002.
Campos, who as curator of stencil street art, co-author of *Santiago Stencil*, and Stencilista in his own right became my primary source of Stencilista data, encountered a stencil that became the impetus for his work, which I will discuss further as this chapter progresses. Akin to my experience with the monkey-wrench stencil, Edwin relates a narrative of awakening to the mnemonic and aesthetic power of stencil street art that started him on the path toward establishing a website dedicated to the promotion of Stencilism in Chile, and moved him along the road to becoming one of Chile’s experts in the movement. Campos is also responsible for formally introducing stencil street art to Santiago’s art community. The “conversion image” was of a prescription bottle of Ravotril\(^{14}\) – an anti-anxiety medication prescribed in Chile for childhood melancholia. He describes how the stencil conjured memories from high school, and how he felt about being around friends who were on the medication, often barely coherent. Campos was reminded of his disagreement with the wide distribution of Ravotril because of the negative effects he witnessed. He felt inspired by the stencil, and impressed by the power of the icon. He wrote his master’s thesis on the topic. Now, he is working on a second book about stencil street art in Chile with his writing partner Alan Meller, and though his gainful employment is primarily in commercial graphic design, he has become the leading expert on the emergent stencil street art movement in Chile.

What makes the stencil such a powerful metacultural object? The simplicity of the indexical sign and its effervescent iconicity are fundamental to its metacultural potency. However, I think there is more to it. We are socialized to notice postings on exterior walls. The practice of wall advertisements, propaganda, news, directions, and so

\(^{14}\) Clonazepam or Klonopin.
on, demands that we take notice of wall postings. While many Chileans with whom I spoke of stencil street art disparaged the proliferation of it, their comments betrayed their knowledge of the practice and their awareness of its potency. Another, more potent source for the metacultural potency of stencil street art, comes from a rather unexpected canon, the Bible. In the next section I will discuss how wall-writing— and stencil street art, though not always orthographic, is certainly a variation of it— can be considered to be of divine provenance. Indeed, by closely examining the story of divine wall-writing, I think we can see how the modern habitus comes with extremely significant social capital. Thus, in the Christian canon, graffiti-like wall writing is created by God to command the attention of kings.

**WRITING ON WALLS: A HABITUS DIVINE**

The Moving Finger writes; and, having writ,
Moves on: nor all thy piety nor wit
Shall lure it back to cancel half a line,
Nor all thy tears wash out a word of it.  

Writers on the subject of Stencilism never fail to draw parallels to ancient practice of writing and drawing on walls. Graffiti is studied, photographed, disparaged and expunged; however, I do not consider stencil street art in the same category as graffiti, even if they are closely related.

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17 See Lindsay 1960; Abel and Buckley 1969; Kohl 1972; Oliver and Neal 2010.
18 See Cesaretti 1975; Grévy 2008; Rosenstein 2006; Sanada and Hassan 2007; Ruiz 2009; Sendyk 2009.
Stencils are more self-conscious than the spontaneous tagged graffiti messages of the coded confidence of hip-hop style. A stencilist will have a location in mind for both aesthetic reasons and for an audience. Generally, the artists have an affinity with the place they choose, they know its aspect and have considered its qualities of colour, [sic] shape and surface.\textsuperscript{19}

Certainly, spray-painting stencils on public walls follows the most ancient of human traditions, and perhaps we have some sort of genetic memory inscribed by our ancestral practice of scrawling on walls both natural and man-made as a communicative and expressive medium. I would argue that Judeo-Christian tradition elevates wall-writing (read graffiti and stencil street art) even one step further by canonizing the notion that \textit{God} writes on walls as a technique for warning and rebuking leaders (He writes on tablets also, but that was to establish commandments for the people, which is not our focus).\textsuperscript{20} I argue that wall-writing, or the type of stencil street art that is intended to critique power in all its forms, draws on this religious tradition and invokes the highest form of social capital available, thereby elevating to the level of divine rebuke the critique, however doxic the understanding of its divine merit may be. Continuing with this idea, then, in the messy montage of inter-mixing graffiti and stencil art found on the walls, an interpreter is necessary (or at a minimum helpful) to make sense of the language and decipher the divinely inspired, or divinely-created, messages. In Judeo-Christian tradition, prophets are the interpreters of divine messages in dreams written on walls. In contemporary society, anthropologists sometimes assume this role. Let me explain where I get this rather heterodoxic analysis of stencil street art.

\textsuperscript{19} Manco 2002.
\textsuperscript{20} See the story Moses and the Ten Commandments in Exodus 20.
In *Distinction*, Bourdieu argues that our taste (choices of clothing, career, food, entertainment, and art among other things) are shaped, determined, and quite nearly permanently fixed before we are cognizant of its development – a fact that reproduces our social class, intuition, and sense of good and bad, right and wrong, as well as to what we might want to pay attention or notice in the world around us.\(^{21}\) Not surprisingly, then, our favorite quotes, turns of phrase, word choices, and clichés are part of this unconscious habitus. We all betray our social class, our educational background, and that of our progenitors with every move, gesture, phoneme, and glance. Bourdieu’s is a powerful and instructive argument. Gesturing toward such action, I will examine in this section the root of why I and many others besides my research compeers notice and grant import to the writing on the wall – stencil street art.

Mormon habitus, as for many who would consider themselves religious, is marked by the unconscious practice of scriptural referentialism – a tendency to refer to the vast Mormon canon in order to make sense of the world. It is a matter of doxa for a Mormon, as well as those of other faiths, to compare one’s own experiences, and those of others, with that of the people found in the scriptures. Scriptural referentialism leads to a literalism in judging human behavior and acts of nature.\(^{22}\) Scriptural referentialist literalism is often most intrusive and symbolically violent in contemporary society when used to justify masculine domination in the spiritual and temporal milieus. Scripturally-based masculine domination is then used by those in power to deny equal rights to women, equal rights to gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgendered, and queer people, as well as

\(^{21}\) 1984

\(^{22}\) See Crapanzano 2000.
to justify killing abortion-providers, and a host of other discriminatory doxa.\textsuperscript{23} Lately, we have seen scriptural referentialism deployed in the symbolically violent act of blaming the earthquake victims in Haiti for a supposed long-ago Faustian pact with the devil,\textsuperscript{24} and recently, an Iranian cleric has claimed that promiscuous women are responsible for the marked increase in Iranian earthquakes.\textsuperscript{25} Earthquakes are often mentioned as a practice of divine punishment in the \textit{Book of Mormon}, as well. Some interpret the February 27, 2010, 8.8 mega-quake in Chile as a means of humbling Chileans and preparing them to receive Mormonism.\textsuperscript{26}

Considering the logic of scriptural referentialism, I argue that we might do well to examine Biblical and \textit{Book of Mormon} allusions to the hand of God writing messages on

\textsuperscript{23} See Bourdieu 2001 \textit{Masculine Domination}.
\textsuperscript{24} Pat Robertson 2010. He also blamed Hurricane Katrina, which devastated New Orleans, on gays and lesbians.
\textsuperscript{25} http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/8631775.stm.
\textsuperscript{26} "We were awakened this morning by a very strong after shock....Today, we attended a strong ward where [President Laycock] was invited to speak. The entire chapel and beyond was filled. People were so humble and so teachable. [He] taught the importance of doing the small things. He taught about Jesus Christ and the opportunity we have to love one another and to share what we have with others. It was a great blessing for us to be with these beautiful Chilean people. Some have lost their homes...or at least parts of their homes. But they are strong and they want to serve the Lord. He taught of the scripture in Luke 21:11,13 which says, 'and great earthquakes shall be in divers places...and it shall turn to you for a testimony.' He also welcomed the sweet young woman who was in the congregation with the missionaries...her first time attending church...and then [from the pulpit] he invited her to be baptized. He asked her to please invite us to her baptism, and she said, ‘I will.’ The Lord always knows what His people need. [Our son] Landon was reading in Alma 15:17 today. He said, 'Mom listen to this. This is what is happening here in Chile just like in happened in Ammonihah. The people were humbled and ‘checked as to the pride of their hearts and began to humble themselves before God, watching and praying continually that they might be delivered from Satan, and from death, and from destruction.’ First received in a personal communication. Full text available:
walls that only a prophet could translate and that seem always to portended doom for someone, usually a king. On one level, some Stencilistas do work with wall-writing in stencil techniques to challenge global hegemonies, and to usurp governments, or leaders. Most do not. I acknowledge that it is far too great a stretch for the rational mind to consider stencil street as art divinely created, which would attribute divinity to Stencilistas, and thus prophethood to those of us who attempt to translate the images. We can see how someone living a doxically scriptural referential lifestyle might pay close attention to the words and images spray-painted on walls; the practice is steeped in doxa.

Through this discussion, two elements of Mormon doxa are revealed, first is that messages can come from God, and they can come in any form. Walls have been used before. And secondly, prophets exist today and can receive revelation directly from God. Below, I will further detail the story of Daniel and the way in which Mormons share with their Christian and Jewish compeers the wall-writing doxa; but first I want to explore the Mormon doxa of the role of prophet, which most modern Christian sects have repudiated, particularly in the case of the founding prophet of Mormonism: Joseph Smith.

Aside from the Mormon Church, few other denominations recognize the calling of prophet as a contemporary vocation. One exception might be the Branch Davidians, but otherwise, living prophets are fringe characters – heterodoxic figures in the contemporary.27 Mormon doxa anticipates and expects that God (Heavenly Father) speaks to prophets everyday. Indeed, anyone and everyone is entitled to their own revelation and the so-called gift of prophecy. So for me, the notion of the calling of a prophet to oversee the Church, and the notion that any individual can become a prophet,

27 See Faubion’s Shadows and Light of Waco for his discussion of Rodan’s prophetic identity 2001.
if only for him or herself and their loved ones, is neither heterodox nor orthodox; it is doxic.

Though heterodoxic, the imaginary that I create around stencil art is in line with the notion of prophetic utterances and self-denying identities traditionally seen in Christianity. Indeed, much of the Judeo-Christian canonical literature suggests that the prophets never willingly assert themselves as such; but rather, they find themselves unable to resist the constant call. They are often burdened by and attempt to refuse their prophetic callings.¹²⁸ There is a reference to a wall-writing and translating episode in the Book of Mormon,¹²⁹ however, the Biblical story of Daniel came first, is much more detailed, and is more widely known, so I will discuss it.

King Nebuchadnezzar (the ruler of ancient Babylon) has an unworthy son, King Belshazzar, who defiles the temple of god by taking ritual gold and silver goblets for the profane purpose of using them to party with his nobles, wives, and concubines. They defy the one Hebrew god by praising the pagan gods of gold, silver, bronze, iron, wood and stone…a clear defilement of the very jealous god of the Old Testament who proscribed such behavior in one of the ten commandments, which calls for the worship of Jehovah alone.³⁰ The group is happily partying away when “Suddenly the fingers of a human hand appeared and wrote on the plaster of the wall, near the lamp stand in the royal palace.” Belshazzar is understandably disturbed by this supernatural event and calls together anyone who might be able to interpret what has been written, which is

²⁸See examples in the Bible: Noah, Isaiah, Daniel, and in The Book of Mormon: Alma, Samuel the Lamanite, and Mormon.  
²⁹Alma 10: 2.  
³⁰According to Mormon belief, Jehovah was Jesus Christ's name in the pre-mortal existence. In other words, to Mormons Christ is the God of the Old Testament.  
³¹(New International Version) Daniel 5:5.
illegible to him. "Whoever reads this writing and tells me what it means will be clothed in purple and have a gold chain placed around his neck, and he will be made the third highest ruler in the kingdom.\textsuperscript{32} No one can interpret it; they are all unworthy to read the hand of God. Reassuring him, his wife suggests that he send for the man that his father named Belteshazzar, the man who had interpreted his father's dream, and who had been appointed "master of the magicians, astrologers, Chaldeans, and soothsayers.\textsuperscript{33} He would interpret and explain what it meant. Daniel comes before Belshazzar and is offered the reward, which he declines while agreeing to interpret the wall-writing anyway. After expounding on the power afforded him by Nebuchadnezzar, he chastises the king for his arrogance and wanton disobedience to the will of Most High God reminding him what happened to his father when he gave into such pride. Daniel further upbraids Belshazzar for his abuse of ritual temple goblets and his worship of unworthy gods.\textsuperscript{34} Daniel then interprets the strange words:

This is the inscription that was written:
Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin

This is what these words mean:
Mene: God has numbered the days of your reign and brought it to an end.
Tekel: You have been weighed on the scales and found wanting.
Peres: Your kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and Persians.\textsuperscript{35}

Following Daniel's interpretation, not in the least favorable to Belshazzar, the later awarded Daniel the prize, which included being named to a position as third-in-command

\textsuperscript{32} Daniel 5:7.
\textsuperscript{33} Daniel 5:11.
\textsuperscript{34} Daniel 5:23-24.
\textsuperscript{35} Daniel 5:25-28
of Babylon. Not surprisingly, that very auspicious night, Belshazzar is killed and his kingdom is divided.\textsuperscript{36}

The Biblical tale is instructive of how an anthropologist engaged in doxic scriptural referentialism might act in a similarly interpretive role as the prophet Daniel and attempt to further illuminate the meaning of the stencil street art in Santiago, Chile. The politically-charged images and words stenciled there might be particularly meaningful for that anthropologist who is aware of the potentialities of this bit of metaculture in light of the history of such in other parts of the world.\textsuperscript{37} For the authors, orStencilistas who are caught in the patriarchal grip that institutionalized and organized religions hold on governments, the resources of the world, and the minds of people, the doxa of wall-writing would seem an attractive medium for counter-discourse. The writing on the wall (as seen iconically and pictorially) is subject to broadly controversial interpretation. The wide range of topics spray-painted on the walls seems to suggest that generally speaking, the youth of the day will not long tolerate the status quo. Stencils work as a conscious and doxic metacultural practice to transform the future.

But how can spray-painted icons hurriedly left by punk teenagers, anarchists, aspiring artists, and graphic designers approximate the heady mythology of divine messages of political upheaval based on abuse of power as indicated by the Biblical association I make here? Obviously, Stencilistas are not filling the divine role I allude to here, nor are those who document the stencils and attempt to translate them for a larger audience; but rather, the point I have made here is that for me, as for many others, the

\textsuperscript{36} Daniel 5:29, 30
\textsuperscript{37} The stenciling that appeared in Serbia that led to the downfall of Slobodan Milosevic is a prime example, but of course, there are many others.
doxa exists to valorize such a strategy. While many who encounter the spray-painted signs and icons may be able to dismiss them as so much garbage splattered on their neighborhood walls, others of us see the seeds of social change contained in many of these stenciled icons. Much like the mythic Daniel of old, we interpret the messages as assertive of a dynamic current of dissent moving just below the radar – a zeitgeist portending a major power shift.

A MORMON HABITUS

Bourdieu’s notion of habitus or “the internalization of externality and the externalization of internality,” which he simplifies for us as “incorporation and objectification” is as critical to the formation of a praxology as it is to the understanding of the doxa of both gay Chilean Mormons and Stencilistas. As I discussed briefly in the previous chapter, Bourdieu suggests that the body is a mnemonic for storing the fundamental and arbitrary content of culture. Furthermore, he discusses how values are “transubstantiated” into the body. Paul Stoller describes this type of embodiment as “not primarily textual,” but rather “culturally consumed by a world of forces, senses, textures, sights, sounds, and tastes all which trigger cultural memories.” Habitus is directly associated with metaculture as it transmits ritualized bits of culture as practice.

There are transgressive practices that reflect a break from habitus and create new identities with new habitus that we have in the previous chapter described as heterodox. Douglas Davies suggests that Mormon ideas concerning the body are both explicit and

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38 1977.
39 1977.
40 1994 636.
implicit for two distinct reasons, both because the body possesses an eternal future and because earthly life is a kind of testing of obedience; the body merits care through a set of strong controls. Furthermore, he asserts that these controls are exerted through explicit rules on diet, sex, dress, family life, and other, more implicit controls of behavior. 41

Davies proposes that the habitus of modern Mormons as:

Consists[ing of] a sense of a divine presence; in the veracity of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints; in the authenticity of its prophetic leadership, past and present; in purposeful commitment to and receipt of support from its community life as a framework for family life and ancestry; and in the divine future identity after death, all expressed in an emotion-laden yet calmly controlled fashion. 42

Somewhere in the details – in the thick description of Mormon habitus as inscribed on and around the body – we can approach an understanding of practice and further the effort to construct a praxology of gay Chilean Mormons. Considering the description Davies provides, and what I have discussed in the previous chapter with regards to transgression, heresy, and heterodoxy, we can see how problematic the transformation of gay Chilean Mormon habitus becomes as the struggle to “come out of the closet” and free oneself of the orthodox compendium of “incorporated” Mormon practices. Thus, many practices discussed in my ethnographic sketch of the Afirmación meeting lead toward an understanding of the transgressive performances, which are meant to illustrate a radical shift from the “normal” Mormon habitus to a new gay Chilean Mormon.

I was deeply on the inside of Mormonism as a younger man, affording me an emic perspective that today permits a “thick” description that is autoethnographic;

41 2000 111.
however, I am now in most ways on the outside, giving me an etic gaze that allows me to make observations and critiques that are perhaps more revelatory than if I had remained embedded in orthodoxy. I remain now somewhere in the interstices – not really Mormon, not non-Mormon, the place of the cracks in which Hamid Naficy tells us that all exiles reside.\textsuperscript{43} There is something, perhaps a great deal, about the experience of Mormonism that has remained with me – akin to what Urban refers to as the sticky nature of culture/metaculture and how it passes through us, over us, and around us, while bits and pieces get caught, adhere and remain with us, sometimes for our entire lives.\textsuperscript{44}

Claudia Bushman is a life-long American Mormon and a faith-promoting historian of Mormonism. She asserts that the Mormon Church encompasses large numbers of people with complex histories who are affiliated with the Church for many different reasons, relating to its doctrines and lifeways in many ways. Bushman also claims that Mormons are affected to some degree by the “thick” Mormon heritage that encompasses a complex theology; “a history of western frontier migration; a detailed Plan of Salvation; myths of creation; an identity built on stories of divine intervention, persecution, and sacrifice; a warm family and congregational life; and a tradition of ongoing revelation, of God leading His people as He did Israel of old.\textsuperscript{45} Moreover, she claims that because so many members are converts with their own individual histories, isolating beliefs that might be unique to each is a difficult, if not impossible, task.

“People choose the aspects of the gospel that they like best.\textsuperscript{46}” What is more, Bushman quotes non-Mormon archaeologist Mark Leone who claims that the Church has a "do-it-

\textsuperscript{43} 1999.
\textsuperscript{44} 2001.
\textsuperscript{45} 2006.
\textsuperscript{46} Ibid.
yourself theology,\textsuperscript{47} which coheres nicely with my comparative strategy of gay Chilean Mormons and Stencilistas in Chile.

Leone "learned of Mormons" when he traveled to the Southwest – Arizona and New Mexico – on archaeological digs.\textsuperscript{48} I am not convinced of Leone’s notion of a do-it-yourself (DIY) Mormon theology. In fact, my experience is that the Church offers the antithesis of a DIY philosophy when it comes to doctrinal instruction and compliance. I imagine that Leone is speaking of the more esoteric or "deep doctrinal" issues: the Adam-God theory; the physics of the spirit body; and other questions such as at what point do we actually attain a resurrected body, and whether the restoration Prophet Joseph Smith has achieved Godhood. To be fair, my experience of Mormonism involves an institutional preoccupation with the more "body-oriented" mores: the \textit{Word of Wisdom}, the \textit{Law of Chastity}, the \textit{Law of Tithing}, and temple endowment and attendance.

The adult Mormon body is essentially a veiled body. This veil is mostly invisible to the uninitiated yet integral and compulsory to the vestment of the initiated. The veil of which I speak is known as the "garment of the holy priesthood" the prescribed undergarment that all "endowed" Mormons wear, which is emblematic of some Mormon mythical imaginaries.

To wear the garment is not only to affirm the personal commitment of the individual to the Mormon Church within the family and Church community; it also contributes to the personal sense of self-identity, marking the wearer as a temple Mormon.\textsuperscript{49}

The metaculture around the garment is interesting and includes folklore as well as

\textsuperscript{47} Bushman 2006 xii, xiii.
\textsuperscript{48} 1979.
\textsuperscript{49} Davies 2000 124.
literalist and figurative anecdotes that explicate the purpose of the clothing. The garment is meant to be a shield and a protection for the endowed and is worn following the initiation that involves contact with a person of the same sex who symbolically washes and anoints the body preparatory to wearing the garment. It is deployed as a mnemonic for “bringing to the mind” the covenants made in the temple – a ritually significant metacultural device.

Since the Saints are expected to clothe themselves with special undergarments that symbolize their covenants made during the celebration of the ordinances of the endowment in the temple, they are kept ever mindful that they are God’s people by what they wear as well.

The temple instruction informs the initiate that the garment is to be worn at all times. It is symbolic of the skins that were made for Adam and Eve to cover their nakedness, and it is inscribed/embroidered with symbols over the breasts/nipple, navel and right knee. Each locus is specifically chosen/selected to remind the initiate of certain themes in the temple ceremony/ordinance and to direct attention to covenants made between the initiate and the witnesses (unseen spirits and angels) in the temple.

[The garment is] a true multivocal symbol possessing layers of meaning and significance, both cultural and individual. It links modern Mormon life with Mormon history since the garment echoes the newly revealed rites of divine opportunity. In wearing it Saints are reminded of the key temple ritual and esoteric teachings that distinguish Mormonism from other forms of Christianity.

Davies suggests that by wearing the garment the “temple Mormon” is linked to the past both historically and mythically. Historically, the connection reverberates all the way back to the genesis of humanity. Indeed, Mormons are instructed in the temple ceremony
that following Eve’s disobedience to the commandment not to eat of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, she convinces Adam that in order to fulfill another of God’s commandments, to be fruitful and to multiply and replenish the earth, he would need to eat of the fruit as well. Because of their mutual enlightenment after eating the fruit, the first couple realizes their nakedness and are ashamed to be in the presence of the Father. They initially cover themselves with fig leaves, which are represented in the temple ceremony by an apron (green with embroidered fig leaves). The Father searches for his creations and discovers that they have eaten of the tree that he forbade them do, and He then forces them out of the garden. Returning to His dwelling place, in Mormon parlance, Kolob, the Father then instructs Jehovah (Christ) to go down to Adam and dress him (and Eve) in skins. Following this, he is to teach him the proper manner of prayer. Christ delegates these tasks to the premortal Peter, James and John. This story is meant to instruct the temple attendee in the hierarchical structure of Heaven, and also to teach delegation – all doxic Mormon practice. The garments of skins given to the first couple are believed to be the model used by today’s Mormons. Mormons have been wearing versions of the garment since the practice was instituted at Nauvoo in the 1840s.

The habitus of wearing the garment as a shield and protection – a temple promise to those who faithfully wear the garment throughout their lives – creates a complex sign not easily understood. As noted, the garment is inscribed with four “markings:” one over each nipple, the navel and the right knee. Each has its own meaning, however, the navel mark is most salient for this discussion. The promise accompanying the navel mark goes something like this: “Health in the navel, marrow in the bones, strength in the loins and in the sinews, power in the priesthood be upon me and upon my posterity throughout time
and all eternity. Actually, I am not really sure that this can be called a promise. It seems more like an affirmation that is instilled into the mind and is meant to be remembered particularly when contemplating the marks and each time the member returns to the temple and repeats the refrain in performative practice.

Some years ago, the CBS television show 60 Minutes interviewed several notable Mormons and asked about their garments. San Francisco 49er's quarterback, and great-great-great-grandson of Brigham Young, Steve Young, reported that he wore his garments at all times except for when he was practicing or playing football. Senior senator from Utah, Orrin Hatch, then the sitting chairman of the United States Senate Judiciary committee, related a story of an incident when a boat he was traveling in caught fire. He happened to be wearing his garments at the time and he testified that the flames burned his legs but only up to the point on his thighs where the garment fit snugly.

I do not have a story that would corroborate the power of the garment to protect the physical body as testified to by Senator Hatch; however, I can offer my experience of the power it holds psychologically. When I had made up my mind that I was going to venture into the previously untried waters of sexual activity, I found it impossible to do so while I was wearing the garment. I had ceased attending the Mormon Church not long after I graduated from BYU and I began to drink alcohol, which is not uncommon for those who stray from the orthodoxy, including gay Chilean Mormons. All this time I continued to wear my garments. Two years after I had stopped going to church I was still wearing my garments. I had decided that even though I was not keeping all the covenants that I made when I went through the Salt Lake Temple, I should still wear the

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54 I have repeated the statement so many times that it is committed to memory.
garment; besides, I had no other underwear and would have felt strange wearing anything else. The first night that I chose to remove the garment, I found myself shaking uncontrollably with adrenaline about doing something that I felt was wrong. Later, when I returned that evening, I replaced the garment before going to bed. I went through a similar on-again, off-again ritual for months until I was finally able to keep them off without feeling exposed and vulnerable. Since then, I have worn the garment sporadically. I initially wore the garment during my fieldwork in Chile, but later I stopped, as it made feel disingenuous.

A major tenet of Mormonism defines the human body as a literal “temple of the God,” a temporary abode, where His spirit as manifest in the ethereal body of the Holy Spirit can visit and dwell temporarily or permanently in co-habitation with that of the individual spirit. The Holy Ghost (known also as The Spirit) can co-inhabit the physical body, according to the care that has been taken to maintain a state of “worthiness” and “purity” – in accordance with the dictates of God’s laws or the Law of the Gospel. The Holy Ghost is said to be a constant companion for the individual whose body is pure, chaste, and clean.

One of the most outwardly demonstrative indications of purity in the Mormon habitus entails the dietary law known as the Word of Wisdom. Terry Givens reminds us that Mormons are not unique in their attempts to constrain dietary behaviors. Indeed, Mormons are much like members of other New Denominations that emerged in Frontier America, as well as devout Jews, Hindus, and Muslims – all have dietary laws that forbid

55 Underwear worn by boys before they are ordained Elders and serve missions are commonly referred to as Aaronic Priesthood underwear. The allusion is to the Priesthood of younger men and boys.
56 Doctrine and Covenants Section 89.
the ingestion of certain substances. The Mormon diet first suggested by Joseph Smith proscribed practices of stimulating the body with commonly used substances such as coffee, tea, tobacco, and alcohol. There were other suggestions regarding the consumption of meat, which was to be consumed “sparingly,” as well as a prescription of wheat and vegetables, though much more attention is focused on the habitus of negation, which is uppermost in most Mormons’ minds, and which can keep a member from full participation in the temple and other rituals specific to Mormonism. A preoccupation with diet marks Mormonism as one of the churches most anxious about the body, its purity, sanctity, and virtue. Much of current Mormon consciousness and practice is consumed by the prohibitions, which makes any deviation from the purity codes a marker for heterodoxy and indicative of an individual who has succumbed to the undesirable habitus of the non-Mormon.

A GAY CHILEAN MORMON HABITUS

The Afirmación meeting was held in one of the wealthier neighborhoods of the Región Metropolitana – the financial center of Chile. The apartment, shared by two leaders of the organization, in an area of high rise apartment buildings, was decorated modestly with a surprising smattering of Mormonia: a miniature replica of the Golden Plates, a poster replica of the Arnold Friberg rendering of Mormon, seated on a jaguar skin, pensively considering his next entry on the graven plates, and a picture of the

59 Givens 2004 122.
Santiago temple. The leaders of the meeting had created a formal agenda, not unlike what one might see at a Fireside meeting, or other semi-formal Mormon gathering. We sang a hymn, and someone gave an opening prayer. This was no ordinary Mormon gathering, however, because by the end, after completos had been consumed, and conversation had moved from Church-related topics to more titillating subjects such as boyfriends and sexual encounters – and many of the participants had left – several members lit up cigarettes and poured drinks of bottled Appletinis. Smoking is as common in Chile’s gay community as anywhere else, and it appears to be one of the things that some gay Chilean Mormon men practice following their “coming out.” Most mainstream, or orthodox Mormons would consider it tantamount to apostasy for members to conduct a meeting with a hymn and opening prayer, and then closing the meeting with cocktails and cigarettes - extremely transgressive and heterodoxic. It is important to realize that because many gay Chilean Mormons feel completely alienated from the Church, and some are either disfellowshipped or excommunicated, they feel no need to keep the Word of Wisdom or other commandments that index Mormonism.63

On the subject of indexical habitus, some of the members wanted to know if I was a spy from Church Headquarters. I assured them that I was not. A couple of the recently

60 At some point in the future, I would like to do an analysis of the homoeroticism of Friberg’s illustrations that are so widely distributed in Mormon circles.
61 Firesides are usually held on Sunday evenings and are meant to give single adults an additional opportunity to socialize and receive instruction on doctrinal principles.
62 The reproduction of the Mormon hierarchical structure in Afirmación is another locus of practice that deserves a great deal more discussion.
63 Despite my excommunication, I have never considered myself to be out of the Church," said Brus. "My relationship with God is personal. In this day and age the Church has to come to realize that its conceptions about sexuality are wrong. I stubbornly continue to consider myself a Mormon."
returned missionaries noted that I was not wearing garments, so they assumed that it was unlikely that the Church had sent me. I decided to ascertain if they were wearing theirs. When I was attending BYU a joke circulated about how women would make sure that a man they were dating would be a good marriage prospect and had served a mission. At the opportune moment, the women would casually rub her hand across her date’s leg just above the knee, which would reveal the garment underneath. With this in mind, I jokingly rubbed his lower thigh and asked if he was wearing his. He said, “Yes,” which I was also able to feel. The good-natured, humorous exchange continued all evening.

There was always a lot of joking. To further “prove” my credentials as an inactive member, and thus, not a spy, I revealed part of the tattoo on my shoulder and one of the guys asked, "How far down does that go?" In the context of the evening and fieldwork, I was clearly inviting flirtation; however, I felt that such minor ethical transgression was necessary to set their minds at ease regarding my membership with the Church.

Among the men present that evening – no women attended on this night – one told me that he was never baptized Mormon, but his mother had always taken him to Church when he was a child so he was socialized in Mormonism, and he enjoyed the company of other gay Mormon-affiliated men. Another man showed a great deal of interest in me, but I deflected his performative advances. Later, he shared stories of sexual conquests of Mormon missionaries, bishops, and other leaders, as well as laborers, bus drivers, and a carabinero. According to him, the more you perform the roll of cola (submissive partner) around a “straight” guy, the more likely he is to want to “try you out.” As long as the straight man does not feel that his masculinity is being threatened, he will do
anything. Eventually eighteen men showed up to the *completazo* (hot dog party).\(^{64}\) Another of the men present was former president of Afirmación and a gay activist. He had an air of self-confidence well above that of most of the attendees. He reported that he had a web page, and he spoke at length about his participation in the gay rights movement, elaborating in rapid-fire speech details of the organizations and their accompanying acronyms – as with any specialized group such as Mormons and gay activists there are a lot of acronyms used as short-hand for long-titled organizations, meetings, and practices.\(^{65}\)

At one point the conversation shifted to discussing another member of the group who was not present, but with whom I had already met and interviewed. One of the men made it clear that I had befriended the missing member, and discussion was immediately curtailed. Nobody wanted to say something that would likely get back to this person.\(^{66}\) Several of the attendees discussed their sadness about not having a boyfriend. After the meeting, when some were still hanging out looking at books and chatting about more personal matters than the meeting would have permitted, there was discussion about going to a local gay club. I was interested to follow the event to the end, but I was

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\(^{64}\) I have no doubt that the men intended every *doble sentido* for the party. I have noticed that Chileans are very fond of innuendo. On many occasions Chileans would translate for me because they knew that I could not possibly understand the allusion. Sometimes, they were right.

\(^{65}\) For a more detailed review of the early gay rights movement in Chile see Víctor Hugo Robles' *Bandera Hueca: Historia del Movimiento Homosexual de Chile*. 2008.

\(^{66}\) I quickly recognized that there was a considerable amount of disagreement on what Afirmación was all about. There were ongoing discussions over how to run the events, where to have the meetings, and what the agenda ought to be. One member reported, “They follow absolutely none of the principles of the gospel.” Some members of Afirmación claim that they want a spiritual meeting that reproduces Church-sponsored activities, while others indicated that they saw the meetings as a type of social-network and support system well-beyond institutional purview.
concerned about getting back to my apartment, which was quite a distance, and I also needed to get home for my evening medication. I had not anticipated that the meeting would go on so long into the night. The hosts offered their spare bed, but I politely declined.

The example I present here of the first night I attended an Afirmación meeting in Santiago illustrates how the performance of orthodox Mormon habitus and practice that I spoke of in the preceding section conflicts with the performance of that of gay Chilean Mormon practice. I argue that looking at these examples in the Chilean case may be representative of the larger international community of gay Mormons. As part of the coming out process a self-identified gay Mormon negotiates certain points of transition from an orthodox to heterodox habitus, which includes a number of transgressive practices. For some, there is yet one step further to a position completely outside the fellowship, the position of a non-Mormon or ex-Mormon, either through excommunication or conscious decision to sever the tie; however, it seems that many in that position continue to feel connections to Mormonism, particularly through scraps of residual metacultural practice, such as through direct confrontation with orthodoxy including many form of protest, participation in marginalized organizations like Afirmación, interviews for media, and documentaries that are not church-sanctioned.

Afirmación Chile, like chapters I know of in the U.S., is different things to different participants. The stated objective of the organization is stated thusly:

Although many of us are no longer members of the LDS Church, we celebrate being part of the great Mormon tradition. We are a family that consists of active members of the LDS faith, former members and non-members. Our membership
consists of individuals situated all over the sexual mosaic. We are all at different places in our coming-out process.\(^{67}\)

My work in Chile shows that Afirmación is a contested space of gay Mormon practice. For some it is a locus for fellowship, and perhaps for acquiring a life companion or arranging a sexual liaison. Others see it as a place to continue affiliation with Mormonism and would like it to have a much more religious or spiritual focus. Those that fall in this category are often disturbed when orthodox Mormon practice is violated, and they tend to be more negatively opinionated about the plurality of the organization. Another subgroup emerging within Afirmación consists of those who would use the fellowship as a political action group. The latter group is one that I think requires much more research both in Chile and in the United States.

THE PRAXOLOGIC OF PARAETHNOGRAPHY

The gay Chilean Mormons discussed above and the Stencilistas who will be discussed below reveal a distinctively paraethnographic tendency in their formation of identities and organizations.

Positing a new subjectivity for the elite “natives” of the sophisticated, educated, and crypto-ethnographically-informed expert class who have become more “epistemic partners” than the somewhat inert “key informants” of the past, George Marcus and David Holmes’s deploy the \textit{ready-made} device of paraethnography as a means to wrangle the collaborative impulses of ethnography. Marcus describes this research device as a

\(^{67}\) http://www.affirmation.org/about/
“messy baroque” marked more by an elaborate, irregular shape that resurrects what he claims is the now nearly lost art of ethnographic evocation nostalgically-loaded with “power, originality, and considerable interest.”68 The paraethnography is meant to refashion the experience of encounter between the anthropologist and her expert research subject into a “contemporary ethnography and the ethnography of the contemporary” and to invoke a collaborative practice that the contemporary expert subject has “so deeply embedded in their consciousness and aligned to their practices as to be virtually invisible.”69 The reflexive “expert” subject is capable of performing her own practice of paraethnographic mediations in the multi-site, as described by Marcus and Holmes in their study of paraethnographer par excellence the former United States Federal Reserve chairman Alan Greenspan.

Here, we suggest a particular strategy for re-functioning ethnography around a research relation in which the ethnographer identifies a para-ethnographic dimension in such domains of expertise—the de facto and self-conscious critical faculty that operates in any expert domain as way of dealing with contradiction, exception, facts that are fugitive. . . . Making ethnography from the found paraethnographic redefines the status of the subject or informant, asks what different accounts one wants from such key figures in the fieldwork process, and indeed questions what the ethnography of experts means within a broad, multi-sited design of research.70

And we may find further examples of this expert/expert research paradigm in Holmes’s71 work with central bankers, Paul Rabinow’s geneticists72, Dominic Boyer’s German intellectuals73, Arturo Escobar’s development policymakers74, as well as others. Boyer

68 Marcus and Holmes 2007.
69 Holmes and Marcus 2005.
70 Holmes and Marcus 2005 236–237.
71 2006.
73 2003; 2008.
argues that while unsettling though it may be to encounter paraethnographers in the field a modicum of appropriation – he refers to it as “categorical jurisdiction” – occurs that allows the anthropologist to do her work, however problematic.\textsuperscript{75}

Thus, while it may appear that anthropologists have lost hold of ethnographic practice – it has become such an oft borrowed and reproduced methodology that it is becoming doxic for some purposes – we remain the mediators and interrupters of the expert/expert encounter, and we confront a new problem that our experts are ill-equipped to address, in Boyer’s terms, “too many instruments that do not recognize, let alone comprehend, each other across the labyrinth of our cultures of expertise.”\textsuperscript{76} Boyer addresses this problem by looking at practice, which I touch on in chapter 1 and as I continue to do in this chapter; however in this case, I deploy the theory of paraethnography through a praxological lens.

I frame my Stencilista informants and gay Chilean Mormon compeers as collaborators who recognize the need to be self-conscious and reflexive about their crypto-emergent identity and practice, which is what I am doing with them. The research and writing of Stencilistas Edwin Campos and Alan Meller serve as the basis for my argument of their expert embodiment and status as paraethnographers.\textsuperscript{77} Perhaps they are more aptly named proto-experts in that their expertise is emergent rather than in full florescence, but I would prefer to go into that a bit later. On one level, Campos and his comrades have been my Chilean “counterparts” whose expertise and knowledge of the stencil street art phenomenon has been indispensable to my own understanding and

\textsuperscript{74} 1997
\textsuperscript{75} 2010
\textsuperscript{76} 2010
\textsuperscript{77} Santiago Stencil 2007
interpretation of the movement in Chile. Indeed, they are the movement. Let me explain. If it were not for Campos's efforts that comprehensively chronicle the emergence of Stencilism and publicize the advancement and dissemination of the stencil art movement in Chile, my work here would look entirely different. In fact, before I met Campos, I was planning to analyze Stencilism through an entirely image-based methodology. I had imagined a process whereby I would simply interpret the stencils as though they themselves were texts evocative of agency; not the kind of agency Alfred Gell discusses, though I find it an intriguing theory. Rather, I imagined analyzing the intention of the Stencilistas by observing and interpreting, in a sort of archaeology of metaculture, the icons and spray-painted artifacts left behind as evidence of a movement, a subaltern zeitgeist. The notion of an archaeology of stencils is not one that I have utterly abandoned, but it is beyond the scope of this current project. Thus, as a result of Campos and Meller's work, I can only guess at what that project would have looked like. Campos activated his expansive network of Stencilistas – specifically the Contra-Golpe collaborative – and made it possible for me to do much more traditional ethnographic research in a community that I had been unable to locate myself.

**STENCILISTA PRACTICE**

In Santiago, there is a large community of Stencilistas capable of developing the urban art scene to European levels. Nevertheless, to do so requires a unification of artists and the intervention of professionals who can bring this cast together and put them on par with other heavyweights in the market.

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78 Gell 1998.
79 Campos, Edwin *Santiago Stencil* 2006
While I argue that Campos is a paraethnographer in practice, his habitus is that of a praxologist like myself. Graphic design students schooled in techniques that will eventually lead them to careers in advertising, web design, product branding, and professional art create much of the compelling stencil street art seen in the streets of Santiago. Stencil street art flourishes in the university and bohemian sectors of town where wall space is colonized by these students and transformed into public canvas for graphic stenciled experimentation and expression. Stencilista university students, then, are experts in their disciplines, and may or may not be temporarily engaged in grass-roots activism and the visual agitation of stencil street art practice.

Experts in graphic design and the associated arts are not the only ones working the technique; however, they are often the best. When we consider that some Stencilistas receive remuneration for their work, say in contracted jobs for municipalities or multinational corporations, while also being recognized as professional graphic designers, and that others never see one peso for their work, yet they remain prolific producers, the line between expert and amateur becomes a bit muddled.

If stencil street art practice, as explained by Campos, may be a transitory experience for the producers as well the aficionados as they move from the streets to the gallery, then the practice might be considered a type of material artifact emerging from the liminal communitas of the university experience, or the emerging artist and critic. However, my research suggested that the practice is not necessarily or clearly bounded by those who attend university or solely for the duration of the formal education. Looking at the practitioners' demographic, based on my own observation, we see the bulk of the work comes from the hands of teenagers and young adults (roughly, the ages of fifteen to
twenty-five). Some of the professionals in Chile, Britain, and the United States skew a bit older, but they have become famous as their skill and technique has improved. The stakes are too high, perhaps, for older artists, economically and socially established members of society, to spend the time working on an idea, cutting the template, and venturing into the night to swiftly and surreptitiously spray-paint an originally-designed stencil on a public wall. The university is also a place where young people are learning about and engaging with ideas that may challenge the way they had been socialized to perceive the world. They may begin to develop critical thinking skills and the stencils street art serves as a facile form for flexing a newly acquired muscle of symbolic power.

Stencilistas’ expertise may indeed be found outside the orthodox model of expertise of elite(ist) professional society that led Marcus to theorize about the paraethnographic; however, as embodied by youthful university students, it is always operating adjacent to, and moving toward that expert society as an ultimate goal, even if this goal is never fully articulated. 80 I argue that Stencilistas are experts in many ways including heterodox forms of public contestation, propaganda, and the networking and graphic technologies necessary for their skilled artistic labor. To perform this work, Stencilistas engage in micro-scale paraethnographic practice. Stencilistas who are interested in social commentary – an integral constituent of the contemporary 81 – versus those who are only interested in creating public art, practice micro-scale paraethnographic labor that is vital to their creative process. Arnd Schneider and Christopher Wright discuss the ethnographic practice of contemporary artists in their

80 2006.
81 Marcus and Holmes 2006.
treatise calling for a more systematic intercourse of art and anthropology, which I will explore further in the chapter 4.82

SANTIAGO STENCIL: A PARAETHNOGRAPHER’S PRAXOLOGY

We assume we are dealing with counterparts rather than ‘others’ – who differ from us in many ways but who also share broadly the same world of representation with us, and the same curiosity and predicament about constituting the social in our affinities.83

Near the close of two years of fieldwork, and after hours of videotaped interviews of Chileans from all walks of life, walks through countless neighborhoods taking thousands of pictures of stencil art, graffiti, people, and architecture, as well as logging countless hours of fieldnotes, analyzing visual and written media, and reading gay Chilean literature, I stumbled upon, and into, a bookstore near one of the most prolifically-stenciled areas of the Santiago metropolitan area – Lastarria. I asked the clerk if there were any books on street art – I always asked but there were usually very few, and those focused on murals. He directed me to a recently published, slim, small book Santiago Stencil. After buying it and reviewing its pages, I was thrilled to see that others shared my intuition about the significance of stencil street art in Santiago.84 The

82 2006.
83 Marcus 2005 256.
84 One of the first observations I made when researching stencil art both in the United States and in Chile is the type of texts that have been published: archival and photograph-based. In fact, Santiago Stencil is no exception; stencil art books follow a populist genre of art books, which primarily illustrates the art through photographs. While many books of the genre have some written contextualization, it is usually limited and primarily of historical import. Meller has written a poetic introduction to Santiago Stencil that I have
authors were not just participating and observing with Chilean collaborators, they were Chilean Stencilistas themselves, and local archivists theorizing the phenomenon: expert collaborators practicing a form of paraethnography and praxology – even if the ethnography was somewhat thin. Prior to the release of this book, nothing had been published about the Chilean iteration of the global stencil street art phenomena. Frankly, I had fantasized about creating my own book. Meller and Campos had struggled to get their work published, ultimately receiving governmental funds to do so, which was particularly remarkable considering they subject was an art form that is universally critical of government and its failures and widely disparaged as an eyesore.85

Campos maintains a large archive of the photos, some of which appear in the book. "I went around the city, wrote the locations of the stencils so then I could go back with my camera. Every two months I took my bicycle and went to the Barrio Brasil, República and Bellas Artes.86 The Santiago Stencil collective came together under the direction of Edward Campos, who as part of his master’s degree project, came up with the idea to pull everybody together to raise awareness of the artistic practice and to elevate the visibility and cultural capital of the art.87 The process resulted in an on-going cohesive collective, a book that is now in its second printing, a website that functions as the online meeting place for Chilean Stencilistas and the clearing house for all things stencil-related in Santiago, as well as a place where those who want to contract stencil

been sorely tempted to reproduce in large part here, but I have refrained and chosen to simply reference some illustrative fragments.

85 Jameson might offer an explanation of why this was a wise governmental strategy 1991.
86 Interview transcripts 2008.
87 Campos’s book collaborator, Alan Meller, a writer, and bon vivant who left for India to study literature a few days after I met him, had also been archiving photographs of the stencil work in Santiago for a number of years.
work can go connect with potential artists. Campos’s thesis work, which made the book possible, resembled that of an action-oriented, or applied anthropologist. 88

Campos is a community-organizer; he is an expert graphic designer, web designer, and seemingly tireless advocate of Stencilism in Chile. Distinct from Marcus and Holmes’s research of Greenspan, which looked at how he marshaled all the resources he could to try to set monetary policy and understand actors knowledge, Campos was interested in the practice of Stencilism: as he understood what the practitioners were doing and Chilean society’s reception of the art movement, he assessed and anticipated the needs of the group, formed a collective, implemented measures to fill meet their needs. His goals were: greater understanding of the Stencilism, wider dissemination of the art form throughout the art market in Santiago, an increase in the market and marketability of stencil art, and an elevation of the cultural and social capital of Stencilism in Chile’s art community.

Campos’s work and that of his comrades in the Stenciling Santiago collaborative is based in an artistic practice that engages with contemporary issues and offers visually aggressive icons to activate consideration of alternatives. He perceived a need, researched how best to fulfill that need, designed a plan that he reckoned would meet the goals, and then successfully executed the plan – he is a praxologist/paraethnographer par excellence.

88 Marcus and Faubion 2009; Pink 2007. I will discuss this more at length in Chapter 4.
CRAFTING THE STENCIL: A TECHNIQUE

Forgoing the pencil for a technical process like stencil creation draws a certain type of artist to his medium. These artists share the similar fate as Kuper does with his imaginary Italian dinner. They all go through a lengthy process of creating the actual cutout stencil before they ever get to paint the image. They all employ the basic items needed to make that cutout image, and they almost always get lost in the detail of the cuts and the control of putting the pigment through the final stencil. 89

I recycle culture. I recycle images. 90

Stencilistas tend to be pragmatic and understated about their work: “Stenciling is a technique. Do not try to define it. Do not try to label it. It is beyond definition. Just do it.” Campos, who has been studying the practice for five years emphatically states, “Look, it isn’t rocket science. It’s a piece of paper, an X-ACTO knife, and a can of spray paint.” I believe it my task to prove that it is the technique that leads to an understanding of the practice, and the practice offers much about the contemporary to think about.

Meller claims that it is all about the tools, not the music 92 and not the scene 93 but rather it is the medium itself that is the message – he is clearly aware of Marshall McLuhan. 94 In the way Meller describes it, and the way I have understood it from early in this research, the practice of Stencilism is analogous to the practice of ethnography where the

89 Howze 2008.
90 Ecco, Santiago Stencil 2008.
91 Manco 2002.
92 Hip-hop music was very instrumental in the dissemination of tagging and graffiti in the 70s, 80s, and 90s. Stencilism in Britain and the US emerged out of this graffiti movement, but it did not have the same connection to the music and fashion. Stencilism became much more mobile and de-ghettoized.
93 Stencilism does not have a “scene” per se. It is a phenomenon that is transcommunal, a bit like Transantiago: it moves through neighborhoods, drawing in participants that transit the downtown and student-centered boroughs.
94 “The medium is the message.” McLuhan 1964.
technique, the tool, and the product are also all the same. Stencilism assumes the strategies of juxtaposition, montage, and *bricolage*\(^{95}\), which are all deeply embedded in the practice. Creating the actual stencil is relatively simple, of course. The most difficult part of the work is the mental labor involved in imagining the message and strategizing how best to communicate it in a stencil. The mental labor is probably the most salient practice of Stencilism that takes time to cultivate and nurture. Rabinow articulates the cognitive deliberateness of practice; “Thinking is a practice, and practices are learned gradually over time.”\(^{96}\) As I have stated, some Stencilistas are more disposed to create a simplistic image that catches and pleases the eye, while others want to invite more challenging critical thinking that they hope will inspire change on the local as well as global level. The aesthetics of simplicity, on the other hand, may be a strategy deployed by some to mitigate the anxieties of contemporary urban life.

Stencilistas have hybridized, syncretized, and radically aestheticized the salient technologies, techniques, and strategies used by graphic designers, as well as graffiti and pop artists, and appropriated them for their own use. The process of contemporary stenciling, which follows the tradition of stenciling but moves the craft beyond the boundaries of graffiti creates a contemporary art practice rooted in the ancient practice of wall-writing. Initially, the lone Stencilista acts with perhaps little skill but with a sincere desire to paint some kind of stencil on the wall. Similar to newly converted Mormons, though markedly distinct in the lack of hierarchical forms of domination and information, neophytes learn and perfect the practice from others, either online through the vast

\(^{95}\) Levi-Strauss

\(^{96}\) 2003 89.
resources deployed there aiding dissemination of the technique, or they watch others and learn from their experience. They may at first struggle to perfect the technique and test with simple projects, but eventually, if they are going to take it to the street, they are will look for something meaningful.

The Stencilista decides what she would like to produce, and if she is handy she may create her own piece from her own original drawing or from her own photograph; however, the emerging Stencilista may also choose from thousands of templates offered online. The original artwork or photograph may be manipulated in any photograph-editing software program. Some have "posterizing" or stencil tools embedded. She then uses the pattern to cut the stencil from material suitable for spray-painting. More often than not in Chile, the stencils are no more than the size of the average x-ray film from which many stencils are actually cut (approximately 14" x 17") – the preferred medium for cutting. The democratization of the technology has enabled the proliferation and dissemination of the craft out of the urban centers of the North to those of the South.

As mentioned before, graphic design students create much of the stencil art, the more technically proficient designs. Near the design school at the University of Chile, a large wall displays works in a complex visual symphony of color, though it is not an officially sanctioned space. Campos and Meller define the marginales as those "anarchists or punks who are not interested in patriotism." The marginales do not generally have access to the same resources as the students, so their work does not show

97 Websites often have a how-to page that details in written or video format the process of stencil construction. Campos, in his paraethnographic research reproduces the same tutorials. This is not so distinct from contemporary Mormonism, which now has vast Internet resources to aid the newly converted in the internalization of Mormon habitus.

98 Interview transcripts 2008.
much evidence of training or developed craft. Campos explains that while anyone can do it, Stencilism "requires certain resources. It all requires materials. It’s not just about getting some spray paint.” However, Campos relates that young people with fewer resources than graphic design students will dumpster-dive for materials such as discarded x-ray films. They are a convenient size, easy to cut, and durable enough to hold up to repeated use. The Stencilista does not have to buy the art-stores template material, and cheap plastic box cutters work as well, if not better than, X-ACTO knives, which are much more expensive.

The facility and speed with which the reproduction of the work can be disseminated contributes to the popularity technique. Campos states, “It’s not the same as graffiti, because if you make one and it gets erased then you can’t make the same one again. You can make a stencil every day, in the same place.” This almost mechanical reproduction of the stencil is certainly evocative of the seriography pioneered by Andy Warhol and others; however, I will reserve further discussion of the “art” for chapter 4. I will say that I became enchanted by the idea of repetition and deployed the same practice in the gallery rather than the street.

THE PRACTICE OF VISUAL ANARCHY

Anarchism, then, really stands for the liberation of the human mind from the domination of religion; the liberation of the human body from the domination of property; liberation from the shackles and restraint of government. Anarchism stands for a social order based on the free grouping of individuals for the purpose of producing real social wealth, an order that will guarantee to every human being free access to the earth and full enjoyment of the necessities of life, according to individual desires, tastes, and inclinations.  

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99 Interview transcript 2008.
100 Emma Goldman 1917.
Anarchism is founded on the observation that since few men are wise enough to rule themselves, even fewer are wise enough to rule others.¹⁰¹

Stencilism is a type of anarchist, non-hierarchical technique/art that initially slipped past the gatekeepers of the art establishment, though it is beginning to gain entrance to milieus beyond the streets, particularly at the hands of certain notable gatecrashers. Stencilism requires no curators, no art agents, no teachers, no censors, except those who later paint over the work. This censorship practice still does not prohibit it from being created and seen. Meller introduces the notion of “visual anarchy” as the aesthetic of the work. He and Campos suggest that there is no filter for image quality as in the North American graffiti scene, which, dominated by the most technically skillful, seems to devalue those who do not paint well: “In stencil work all that matters is if the message is good. The message is far more important than image quality, and there is no way to filter that. Nothing gets left out.”¹⁰² I differ with my interlocutors on this point. As I observed the walls and the constantly changing stencil art, I came to see the process as a discursive that, over time, did result in an active critique of stencil messages with other stencils contesting, re-stenciling, or stenciling-over an original stencil. In the older Santiago neighborhood where I lived, which was adjacent to the largest of the student districts, homeowners and business owners worked tirelessly to paint over stencils. Neo-Nazi stencils are defaced, marred, and altered by Punks, and vice versa,

¹⁰¹ Edward Abbey
¹⁰² Interview transcript 2008.
while some stencils remain untouched and in situ for years, while others are gone in a matter of hours.\textsuperscript{103}

Some may perceive the practice of stenciling a public wall as a way to claim ownership of the city. To communicate and challenge notions of a public versus private environment requires the appropriation of space in a constant play of territorialization and reterritorialization. “Painting the streets means becoming part of the city. It’s not a spectator sport.\textsuperscript{104}” Stencilistas, by staking a claim their piece of a wall, challenge and reorient its ownership as well as the aesthetics of the city, an embodied technique of claiming space in the community.

It’s always easier to get forgiveness than permission. Mindless vandalism can take a bit of thought. Think from outside the box, collapse the box and take a fucking sharp knife to it. People look at an oil painting and admire the use of brushstrokes to convey meaning. People look at a graffiti painting and admire the use of a drainpipe to gain access.\textsuperscript{105}

Banksy’s work is probably more recognizable than most. It has been imitated and reproduced through the vast on-line networks disseminating and proliferating the practice. Banksy considers himself a guerrilla artist, and while he got his start stenciling and continues to create iconic stencil images that fascinate and inspire, he continues to also work in other art media. Writing this dissertation in the winter of 2010, as the Sundance Film Festival was opening in Park City, Utah, I learned of a documentary about Banksy entitled \textit{Exit Through the Gift Shop}, screened as part of the festival’s “Surprise

\textsuperscript{103} The notion of people with phenotypically indigenous features embracing neo-Nazism seems quite absurd to most Chileans despite, and in light, of Pinochet.
\textsuperscript{104} Banksy, \textit{Stencil Graffiti} 2002.
\textsuperscript{105} Banksy, \textit{Wall and Piece} 2006.
Spotlight.” The Salt Lake Tribune reported that several “tags” were left in Park City, and a billboard was “defaced” in Salt Lake City in anticipation of the event. In fact, several of Banksy’s signature-styled stencils popped up including one of a boy with his hands in a prayer position kneeling next to a can of pink paint. The boy was adorned with pink angel’s wings and topped with a pink halo and scrawled to the side of the stencil a short plea, “Forgive us our trespasses.” Executive director of the Salt Lake Art Center Adam Price said, “Banksy’s work speaks to people at a very fundamental level. They find his work exciting and thought-provoking. There is a lot of conceptual depth to what he’s trying to accomplish.”

Banksy was born 1974 in Bristol, England, and got his start in stencil street art in the so-called great Bristol “aerosol boom” of 1980s. He seems to intuitively recognize the potency of stencil art to generate bold images with clean lines that can transform perception by little more than a glance from the passing spectator. “All graffiti is low-level dissent but stencils have an extra history. They’ve been used to start revolutions and to stop wars. They look political just through the style.”

People react to Banksy and his work as if he were a famous painter. In a YouTube video from London, Banksy created a stencil and then placed a camera on the other side of the street to observe people’s reactions. Passersby took photos of

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106 Salt Lake Tribune January 2010.
107 Ibid.
109 Manco 2002.
110 For the most part, I have tried to avoid graffiti as a label for stencil street art because of its negative connotations. Here, however, Manco draws the parallel, and while I understand that it certainly fits our understanding of graffiti, I argue, like others in this dissertation, that it stands out and above the tagging that constitutes popular notions of graffiti.
111 Manco 2002.
themselves in front of the stencil as if they were part of the piece – characters in the stencil. In Banksy’s early days, authorities and individuals used to erase his stencils. Today, though that still happens, his style is much more recognizable and it is seldom covered. Indeed, his name has acquired the cultural capital of a “legitimate” artist. Londoners have gained a high regard for Banksy’s work, illustrating the power of heterodoxy to influence and change orthodoxy. Where Banksy was once representative of the radical heterodoxy of art practice, and arguably he yet remains, in many circles he has altered the orthodox art establishment and entered quite literally through the back door.

The same process is beginning to emerge in Santiago, where Stencilistas have been hired to paint subway stations, bars, tiendas, and other community-friendly projects. Though the majority of Stencilistas continue to operate outside the mainstream the heterodox stencil art practice is transforming the orthodoxy in Santiago, as well. As the art movement has achieved commercialization and commodification, the orthodox establishment has accommodated and begun to embrace a sort of detente: Santiaguinos have learned to live with Stencilism, as long as it is bounded by certain parameters.

Whereas corporate advertising tags its viewer as a consumer, my interlocutors suggest that stencils, as a transgressive, criminal form of expression, has a way of turning everyone who gazes at the stencil into a spectator-accomplice. “You’re relating to the Stencilista in a different form than to advertising. It takes you to another place.”

My interlocutors say that when they stencil in daylight and garner an audience, the reactions

112 Campos interview transcript 2008.
vary widely. Many are impressed and comment, “How beautiful. They are creating art.” Others are less than enthused and question, “Why are you doing this to our city?”

**STENCILISM AND GAY MORMONISM IN CONTEMPORARY CHILE: INCONCLUSIVENESS**

Imagine a city where graffiti wasn’t illegal, a city where everybody could draw wherever they liked. Where every street was awash with a million colours and little phrases. Where standing at a bus stop was never boring. A city that felt like a party where everyone was invited, not just the estate agents and barons of big business. Imagine a city like that and stop leaning against the wall – it’s wet.

Just imagine if they built walls that said, “Use these for stenciling.”

Stencilism reveals a youthful zeitgeist and perhaps a global movement toward a democratic, or anarchic, aestheticization of contemporary discourse. Historically, Stencilism has tended to precede or attend civil unrest and social revolution, serving both as a harbinger of popular discontent and as exhortation to join the struggle. In my praxological encounters, I have come to understand Stencilism as being closely affined with what Rabinow describes as the anthropology of the actual, which “works with problems, diagnoses, and exemplars rather than theories, hypotheses, and data sets.”

Stencilism, then, emerges as an art practice of the contemporary.

Ever since my first attempts, stencils have become part of my everyday life. I can’t stop cutting, painting, and photographing them. The opened up a world of public expression to me, and I want to share that with everyone that’s ever felt like they had no control over their environment. There is no way to document all of the hundreds of thousands of stencils being painted on the streets.

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114 Banksy 2006.
116 2003 130.
117 MacPhee 2004
Gay Chilean Mormon practice is also representative of a contemporary discourse bursting out of orthodox religious practice into the heterodox. By definition, more and more gay Mormons in Chile trust their own opinions and reject the orthodox proscription on homosexual practice.

Confronted by an intense and somewhat dismayed young Frenchwoman after a talk about masculine domination and symbolic violence, which was recorded in the documentary *Sociology is a Martial Art*, Pierre Bourdieu asserts that all is not lost (though we might suspect so), though perhaps little will change, “What little we can do, we should do.” “I often say sociology is a martial art, a means of self-defense,” continues Bourdieu in another part of the documentary. “Basically, you use it to defend yourself, without having the right to use it for unfair attacks.” This praxology and the chapters that follow illustrate my movement toward a practice of anthropology as martial art, which what animates this entire study. In contemporary society, martial arts couple science and art in a bodily practice that allows the defender to protect against unexpected, unwanted, and sudden aggression. I have striven to mix science and art in my research methodology, analysis, and practice.

I have begun to explore these two disparate groups and their distinctive practices, but I have explored their juxtaposition in the solo art show that is attached to the back cover of this dissertation. There you will find the visual evocation of the practice as I synthesized it, internalized it, interpreted it, and re-externalized it – the Bourdieusian definition of habitus. Perhaps the visual re-externalization of the synthesis of the gay

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118 Directed by Pierre Carles, produced by Annie Gonzalez & Véronique Frégosi, 2001
119 From the film and the propaganda: http://icarusfilms.com/new2002/socio.html
Chilean Mormon and the Stencilista in chapter 5 and the attached DVD will offer more insight than possible in this praxological chapter.
CHAPTER 3

AHUMADA
EXCLAMO A LA EDUCACIÓN EJERCEMOS LA MEMORIA Y CONSTRUIMOS NUESTRA HISTORIA
ESTUDIANTES DE PEDAGOGIA
Licenciatura en Educación Matemática y computación. USACH
EDUCACIÓN
GRANADA
YA!
IMAGINING ARTIST-ANTHROPOLOGY: 
A METHOD AND PRACTICE

The communicability of an unusual image is a fact of great ontological significance.¹

I paint images that are derivative of my personal exploration. I leave it up to others to decipher them, to understand their symbolism and implications. I am merely the middleman. I gather information, or receive information that comes from other sources. I translate that information through the use of images and objects into a physical form.²

Every man creates without knowing it, as he breathes. But the artist is aware of himself creating. His act engages his entire being.³

¹ Bachelard 1964 xiii.
² Keith Haring, Journals 1996 35.
One of the most challenging problems I confront in this dissertation is the articulation – in written text – of a project concerning practices and techniques that are visual, phenomenological, sensorial, and sensuous, which in my analyses and representation approach the non-writerly – or post-writerly. In its final form, I intended for the work to be sensorially experienced and subsequently intellectualized through memory of, and interaction with, the senses – in a manner that is not necessarily dissimilar to those conjured by the act of reading. What I am attempting is more akin to a whole-body sensation that sparks singular, individual interpretation and an intuitive response. In other words, I attempt to produce a phenomenological experience that is evocative of my fieldwork experience and the process and practice of data collection, interpretation, and analysis that I undertook, yet generative of an entirely new personal encounter. I suppose much of this could be attempted through an engagement with the traditional literary dissertation write-up; however, I am not content to leave it there. Through my process of creation and curatorialism I move to sacrifice explicit and scientifistic expositional, theoretical, and analytical text in favor of the sensorial experience. I have come to appreciate how the two work methods work in tandem to benefit the project and its impetus toward immortality, whatever that means for a text of this sort.

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4 The notion of the “post-writerly” category locatable in some contemporary ethnographica comes from personal communication with James Faubion. Contemporary discourse of post-“writerly” work is centered around discussions of the hypertext and the web. See Landow 1994.

5 Stephen Tyler

6 I am toying with Alfred Gell’s notion of the agency of art and overlaying it on the dissertation as an agentive, though I find it all a bit problematic. Perhaps Latour would be a better model here.
The notion of an anthropologist practicing artistic methodology, or pretending to be an artist as a means to approach novel sorts of ethnographic representation, evocation, and description is well-established as situated far outside the traditional and institutionalized purview of what is acceptable anthropological practice. Such a practice very nearly creates textual illegibility. That said, my dissertation embraces and embodies multi-media so that critical engagement with the material may transcend the boundaries of somewhat restrictive ethnographic models that are solely text-based. This chapter is a meditation on the emergent artist-anthropological practice and includes a discussion of the historical background of the approach, the methodological considerations of artistic practice in ethnography, and an exposition of my attempts to engage with such methods and practices. I argue that the visual is a comparable field for ethnographic work and data collection, and that visual evocation is on par with textual. While my own practice of artistic methodologies is imperfect and fragmentary, the result is constitutive of a valid and significant contribution to the ethnography of visual communication and art that cannot be easily dismissed as marginal, transgressive, or anarchic, and thus irrelevant. Following the work of Arnd Schneider and Christopher Wright, I argue that artist-anthropology employs a distinctive and alternative methodology available to anthropologists who seek to augment, and perhaps transcend, the somewhat fluid, though noticeably bounded, paradigm of social scientism commonly deployed in ethnographic practice. Furthermore, I argue, along with Sarah Pink, that artist-anthropology is an ethnographic practice well suited for more activist-centered applications, with significant potential for intervention in social phenomena.\(^7\)

\(^7\) Here I am influenced by Pierre Bourdieu’s notion that there is sadly little we can do to
THE SEDUCTION OF ART

Everything is sexual. Everything is political. Everything is aesthetic.  

Like art as defined by Yeats (‘Art is a social act of a solitary man’), everyappropriation of a work of art, which is the embodiment of a relation of distinction, is itself a social relation and, contrary to the illusion of cultural communism, it is a relation of distinction.  

For some, artist-anthropology may serve as seductively compelling alternative to traditional written ethnography and research. In the hierarchy of the senses, the visual maintains hegemony. Indeed, today the visual may exert ever greater power as technology allows the dissemination of information at the speed of light.  

Why is visual culture so seductive? Not because it is simple. Simplicity is generally not interesting enough to call people back again and again. In fact the best popular visual culture is both complex and highly sophisticated in aesthetic terms. It is seductive in large part because it is highly complex … a seductive image may provide important insights into social conditions, influence human behavior in positive ways, or be simply entertaining.  

Visual seduction can be variously interpreted. A seductive image may contain aesthetic value in formalist terms but promote content that is offensive, exploitative, or gratuitous. On the other hand, a seductive image may provide important insights into social conditions, influence human behavior in positive ways, or be simply entertaining.  

change the realities of our world that are unconsciously reproduced in infinitesimal all its imperfections; however, this should not stop us from doing what we can. See Sociology as a Martial Art directed by Pierre Carles, and produced by Annie Gonzalez and Véronique Frégosi 2001.
8 See Pink 2007.
9 Baudrillard 1993.
10 Bourdieu 1984 227.
11 Tyler 1987 150.
12 Boughton 2004 265-269.
Krzysztof Ziarek envisions art (and the work of art) as a “force field.” This notion may be somewhat resonant with Walter Benjamin’s ideas of the “aura” of original works that are made by hand, exclusively and distinctively singular, versus those produced by mechanical reproduction, or by machine. Ziarek continues by arguing that art and its “work” is today somehow beyond aesthetic, what he likens to spatial/temporal play or performance and re-performance, a “different internal momentum and a new set of relationships to society.” I might argue that this “force field,” or what Henri calls “spirit” and Benjamin calls “aura,” is compelling like that of a charismatic figure. Of course the artist herself may be a charismatic: Haring certainly was, Banksy is, and my primary paraethnographer Chilean Stencilista Acuario seemed to be as well. Their seductive charisma goes beyond their person (which is elusive in the case of Banksy, but quite evident in Haring, and to a lesser degree in Acuario) and seems to accompany, encapsulate, and surround their art.

To linger for a moment with the notion of the seductive, sensual, semiotic, and compelling nature of art let us recall that, Walter Benjamin refers to original art as having an “aura.” While we may lament that the mechanical reproductions of art lack such alluring power, I suggest that Benjamin did not live long enough to see the power of reproduction, part of what has made Haring’s art so memorable and what I believe makes stencil art so compelling. Somehow Haring’s work, like other masters of what might be considered the fine arts, have come to be represented in reproductions that transcend the

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14 Curiously, today art goes well beyond the confines of Benjamin’s reproduction. Videos “go viral” – a phenomenon that sometimes furthers Andy Warhol’s prediction that in the future, everyone will be famous for fifteen minutes.
depersonalization indicated by Benjamin. Indeed, their nearly universal appeal and iconic sophistication, resonance, and appeal, contradicts his dire assumptions. In the age of Internet it may be difficult to argue that Googling and viewing artworks in millions of pixels is necessarily less compelling than standing before the painting itself in vivo. Or perhaps the comparison is meaningless. The experiences are uniquely incommensurable yet we get “something” from the digital experience.

Here is where the seduction operates. Paul Stoller calls for more sensuous scholarship that may help. He and others assume the engagement of all the bodily senses in the ethnographic project and suggests not only Marcel Mauss’ techniques of the body as subject, but also as reflexive object. Sensuous scholarship is ultimately a mixing of head and heart. “It is an opening of one’s being to the world – a welcoming. Such embodied hospitality is the secret of the great scholars, painters, poets, and filmmakers whose images and words resensualize us.” Schneider and Wright remind us – as do many other visual anthropologists – that while the borderlands between art and anthropology have been relatively porous, visual anthropology has remained on the margins of the discipline. The only way for an anthropologist to inhabit these borderlands is to engage in art practices. First these must be identified if they are to be deployed. We have already discussed the notions of seeing, or looking at subjects with an artist’s eye, but what constitutes art practice? How does artist-anthropology translate to my own work or the work of others? I began to look at art practice in Santiago and to imagine the field through the Stencilist eyes. The politicized and aestheticized gaze of

16 1997 xviii.
the Stencilistas elicited a shift of my gaze at the gay Mormons from the empirical and data-oriented toward an activist aesthetic. I felt compelled to contribute to their cause, which in a significant way was my own cause, too. How could I translate the experience of the Chilean gay Mormon, which has unmistakable affinity with that of the American gay Mormon as embodied auto-ethnographically by me? This is where the installation I created was more methodological than necessarily illustrative or representational. I used the work of the installation as a hermeneutic to consider how a Stencilista, who happened to be gay and Mormon, might think about critiquing or aestheticizing his identity and its trappings within the institutional and organizational repression of Mormonism.

Marcus Banks discusses the shift from abstract systems towards experience in terms of visual systems that “are culturally embedded technologies and visual representational strategies amenable to anthropological analysis." Banks states that visual anthropology is “an exploration by the visual, through the visual, of human sociality, a field of social action which is enacted in planes of time and space through objects and bodies, landscapes and emotions, as well as thought.”

EXPLORING THEORIES OF ARTIST-ANTHROPOLOGY

The artist is a model of the anthropologist engaged.

After the critique articulated by James Clifford and George Marcus and their collaborators in 1986, later followed by that of Ruth Behar and Deborah Gordon and their

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18 1998.
19 Ibid 19.
20 Kosuth 1969.
collaborators in 1996, anthropologists have struggled to reinvent and renegotiate representational strategies, some few of which have included a more significant engagement with the arts and humanities. Art worlds\(^{21}\) have been a frequent site of discourse and theorization; however, examining art practice remains generally outside most anthropological research parameters. Following the work of Schneider and Wright, I argue that artist-anthropology approaches a distinctive and alternative methodology available to anthropologists who seek to augment, and perhaps transcend the somewhat fluid, though noticeably bounded, paradigm of social scientism commonly deployed in ethnographic practice. My imaginary of artist-anthropology joins the growing chorus of visual anthropologists traversing the marginal territory of sensory-sited research that straddles the always-contested chasm dividing science from art.

I would like to emphasize here that the ethnographic methodologies of observation and participation, and the subsequent creation of ethnographic evocations and representations are always already part of an artistic milieu: a locus for art practice and the practice of anthropology.\(^{22}\) Transcending standard scientific methods that form the orthodoxy of ethnographic research design and practice for dissertation projects, this chapter will discuss visual and artistic methodologies not only to extend “the scope of image-based forms of ethnographic inquiry by means of a fuller engagement with artistic practice”\(^{23}\), but also to explore the methods integral to my understanding of Santiago’s Stencilista and gay Mormon communities.

\(^{21}\) See Becker 2008.

\(^{22}\) See Clifford and Marcus 1986; Taylor 1994; Marcus and Myers 1995; Stoller 1997; MacDougall 2006; Schneider and Wright 2006; Pink 2006, 2009; and many others.

\(^{23}\) Grimshaw 2001.
More than a means of illustrating and evoking ethnographic encounters, I am arguing for the deployment of art practice as an ethnographic methodology, and an epistemic and ontological strategy, as well as a primary means of data collection and analysis. Unexpectedly, when I created my ethnographic art show *Stenciling Power*, I discovered that it opened up new and exciting ontological and epistemological spaces that provided me with new ways to think about the research in Chile, my informants’ identity parameters, as well as my own problematized status as researcher and activist. Recently, visual anthropologist Sarah Pink has written extensively on the applied use of visual methodologies, doing sensory ethnography, and the future of visual anthropology, and I found her work useful in the construction of my exhibition.

The non-writerly materialization or embodiment of my project developed to illustrate a critical engagement with the art practices of Chilean Stencilistas, I filtered pseudo-autoethnographically through the lens of my gay Mormon subjects, and subsequently transformed into multi-media ethnographic evocation. I created a three-dimensional, multi-sensorial space that represented the merging of the two social groups within my experience and my mind. The title *Stenciling Power*, alluded to the visually stimulating response to street stencils while ironically challenging the notion of an art form that tends to suggest the lacuna of social and economic power inherent in the practice. The show moved my research toward visual and sensorial autoethnography by exposing my mind’s eye to the outside world and producing an experiential and sensory

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25 I use the term *pseudo* here to acknowledge that this work is not actually autoethnographic, I am not discussing my own experience as a gay Mormon, and I am a multi-generational American with no ties to Chile other than those forged during my twenty-two months there as a Mormon missionary. Neither am I a stencil street artist, and my stencil work was installed in a gallery and not the street.
ethnography that operated as an “outing” in much more than the queer sense of coming out of the closet about one’s sexuality.26

Schneider and Wright argue that more and more artists see their work as anthropological and many engage in anthropological fieldwork – ethnography – to research their art subjects and projects while using ethnographic methods to enhance their own material.27 The introduction of social scientific methodology in the creation of works of art has been evolving for a couple of decades. While art practice is ever more informed by anthropological and ethnographic practice, anthropology resists being informed by artistic sensibilities, methodologies, and aesthetic intention. That said, anthropologists who use art as a medium for exploring research concerns and questions and then use these data to create artistically informed ethnography continue to occupy the liminal and interstitial28 spaces at the intersection of social sciences and the humanities.

Susan Hiller is a proto-artist-anthropologist who studied anthropology at Tulane University in the 1960s, but afterward became disillusioned with the discipline and turned to art.29 She noted in 1991 that “ethnographic items” are being moved out of “scientific” contexts into “aesthetic.”30 Such movement, as noted above, continues to be fraught with theoretical, practical, and methodological perils. In thinking about such perilous territory at the margins of accepted anthropological inquiry, Clifford turned to avant garde artists31 including poet and surrealist theoretician André Breton, who claimed that he had in his automatic writing process “discarded clarity as worthless,” asserted that

26 See Sedgwick 1990.
27 2006 19.
28 Hamid Naficy.
29 Schneider and Wright 2006.
30 1991 186.
31 1981.
“working in darkness, I have discovered lightning.”\(^{32}\) Oh, that anthropologists could work with such creative abandon and still be fungible, hirable, and tenureable.\(^{33}\) I experimented with several episodes of automatic writing practice in the process of whittling ideas about my work into a reasonably coherent structure.\(^{34}\) Of course, my pursuit of clarity made for a counter-Bretonist practice. Perhaps, however, on some level my own gesture toward the union of artist and anthropologist, though borrowed from the ideas, writing, and practice of others, was a move into an opaque realm of practice that is aperiodically punctuated by startling bolts of creative illuminations that continue to generate thunderous rumblings long after having dissipated. Unfortunately, such bursts of creative energy and insight tend to be waylaid in the press for more traditionalistic theoretical and/or utilitarian, practical anthropology that shuns the aesthetic as marginal to the anthropological project.

Casual survey among my peers in the academy encountered in graduate programs as students and faculty, at professional conferences, and in other informal occasions where such inquiry is possible suggests that many anthropologists (among them archaeologists, physical, cultural, and linguistic anthropologists) are “amateur” photographers, painters, illustrators, graphic artists, filmmakers, videographers, dancers, actors, and musicians. Whether or not many anthropologists might be described as

\(^{32}\) Breton 1959

\(^{33}\) Hiller works with automatic writing, but as an artist, not as an anthropologist; however, considering the fact that she is a trained anthropologist, might we argue that she is, in fact, an artist-anthropologist par excellence? See Susan Hiller Tate Gallery Liverpool. 1996.

\(^{34}\) Elsewhere I will discuss some of my automatic writing experiments and how I used them to brainstorm.
frustrated artists, personal writings indicate that they are aware of their creative processes and their full-body engagement with the process of ethnographic production, and while many may embrace the social scientist within, they may also pine for the artist struggling within. Not surprisingly, in private conversation I have heard anthropologists despair over the lack of respect given to visual research, while simultaneously snubbing those who spend too much time in these “non-scientific” areas of research. Art is often delegitimated as a methodology for epistemological inquiry; thus visual anthropologists may need to define their practice not in the same terms of “written anthropology but rather as an alternative to it.” Certainly there are anthropologists who have experimented with a wide variety of visual media, but by and large, there is little academic space for these transdisciplinarians.

James Clifford advances the notion that ethnographic production is inherently artistic and that the art of ethnography is essential to the discipline.

The boundaries of art and science (especially the human sciences) are ideological and shifting, and intellectual history is itself enmeshed in these shifts–its genres do not remain firmly anchored. Changing definitions of art or science must provoke new retrospective unities, new ideal types for historical description. In this sense, "ethnographic surrealism" is a utopian construct, a statement at once about past and future possibilities for cultural analysis.

One of the most powerful tools anthropologists and ethnographers have at their disposal is their imagination and innate sense of creativity, something Marcus refers to as

35 I think it would be make for an interesting research project to explore this suspicion at some point in the future.
36 Schneider and Wright 2006 8.
37 1981 540.
the “research imaginary.” As naturally adaptive and creative strategizers, we have learned to be innovative, thoughtful, and powerful—we now subject most of nature to our design. However, our most powerful ability seems to be that of learning from past experience. By learning from our personal and collective past we adapt—working to make our lives more meaningful and purposeful.

Seemingly in a state of perpetual emergence, but never full florescence, visual anthropology once seemed to be on the verge of revolutionizing ethnography and anthropology. Schneider and Wright contend that it was the seminal moment of Bronislaw Malinowski’s separation from his friend the photographer Stanislaw Witkiewicz in Australia just before Malinowski’s paradigm-forming fieldwork in the Trobriand Islands that resulted in the separation of visual research from “scientific.”

Since the early work of visual anthropologists such as Robert Flaherty, Margaret Mead, Gregory Bateson, and Dziga Vertov, anthropologists have attempted to use film, and now video, as a medium for reporting and sharing research as well as analyzing data, expanding research questions, and stimulating further research. Now, with the latest advances in digital technology, visual anthropology is positioned to take a leading role in anthropological method and evocation.

Today, while much of visual anthropology is occupied with new media and the vast array of visual, cinematic, and artistic forms, Schneider and Wright assert that many

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38 “Provocations to alter or experiment with the orientations that govern existing practices” 1998 6.
39 Witkiewicz was more inclined to avant garde photography and would have most likely exerted a strong influence over his friend, as he had done during their photography in Sri Lanka; however, rather than travel to the Trobriands, he returned to Russia to fight in the Tsar’s army. 2006 6.
40 See Lucien Taylor, David MacDougall, Trinh T. Minh-ha.
of the contributors to their edited volume, suggest that art continues to be widely ignored by anthropologists. Meanwhile, as anthropologists have eschewed the less than scientific strategies and practices of artists, many of these artists have themselves embraced the methodologies of anthropologists and are producing ethnographically informed art. Schneider and Wright’s assertion is that turnabout might not only be fair play in this non-isolated case, but also grounds for a very fruitful research practice.  

Not at first cognizant of this fact, I found myself in these theoretical and practical interstices, to borrow a term from the Iranian-American film theorist, Hamid Naficy. My whole career has been an exercise in coping with the methodological crisis or dilemma, of art versus science, and indeed, visual texts versus the written word.

[The answer is] to recognize that the textual and the filmic are both multiple rather than monolithic, and culturally and historically variable in their imbrications rather than God-given in their differences. Through dialogue and narration, subtitles and intertitles, end credits and opening credits, film is shot through with language, just as imagery ineluctably infuses language.

While there are a small number of anthropologists who use video or film for the production of documentaries, or filmed ethnographies, and larger number of anthropologists who are willing to use photographs as illustrative of salient points for emphasizing a research datum, we are still left searching for anthropologists who are artists and will admit to it, and who furthermore inform their ethnographies with such radical revelations.

41 Ibid.
42 For a discussion of “interstitial” artists/filmmakers see Naficy 2001.
43 Lucien Taylor 1996 88.
Australian anthropologist and ethnographic filmmaker David MacDougall has
been working in the artistic spaces of filmic ethnography since the 1960s. He notes some
years ago that visual culture was becoming a more popular area for study (including film,
video, and television, and their associated means of production) because these visual
expressions “form strands in larger cultural systems.”⁴⁴ A pioneer in so-called native
anthropology and autoethnography, Trinh T. Minh-ha is an important figure in
experimental, visual, and artistic anthropology. She has created memorable works of
film, as well as art installations and theoretical books. Margaret Mead called for the use
of film for data collection long before the technology became as accessible as it is today.
Mead’s and Bateson’s seminal work on movement and dance are illustrative of the
socialization and performance of affect in Bali.⁴⁵ Avant-garde filmmaker Maya Deren
utilized anthropological fieldwork methodology to produce substantive ethnographic
work. Shooting over 18,000 hours of film footage in Haiti, she wrote a comprehensive
volume titled *Divine Horsemen: The Living Gods of Haiti.* The footage was
posthumously edited into a film of the same name. Though she was not a trained
anthropologist, she was befriended Margaret Mead and Gregory Bateson, who advised
her on her work in Haiti. As with Mead, Bateson, and Deren, my work is both visual and
textual.

Images are deployed as illustrative of practice and empirical data in all
anthropological subdisciplines; however, this work is almost always supplemental to a
written text and is usually used to support the written materials rather than acting as the
focus of the research. With some exceptions, including the controversial and pioneering

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⁴⁴ MacDougall 1998 62.
⁴⁵ 1942.
work of Robert Flaherty with the Inuit,\textsuperscript{46} the novel photographic work of Gregory Bateson and Margaret Mead in Balf\textsuperscript{47}, the photography of John Collier Jr. among Native American populations of the Four Corners region, the amateur anthropologist avant-garde filmmaker Maya Deren whose seminal work on Haitian Voodoo that may have cost her her life,\textsuperscript{48} John Marshall’s work with the San of the Kalahari,\textsuperscript{49} the films of Jean Rouch and Robert Gardner, Tim Asch and Napoleon Chagnon’s work among the Yanomamo,\textsuperscript{50} Tim Asch’s earlier work with the Dodoth of Uganda\textsuperscript{51}, the film work of Australian David MacDougall, the avant-garde autoethnographic work of Vietnamese-American Trinh T. Minh-ha,\textsuperscript{52} most anthropologist avoid using visuals for anything other than supplementary data for their empirical evidence.

In “Artists in the Field: Between Art and Anthropology,” Fernando Calzadilla and George Marcus lament the opportunities lost by not exploring the relationship between art and anthropology following the \textit{Writing Culture} critique.\textsuperscript{53} Together, they claim that pursuing an “aesthetics of inquiry” requires styles of thinking, rhetoric, and practice “keyed to the notion of experimentation” that are once unacceptable to the academy that requires anthropology to be social science. The result of this structural retrenchment and

\textsuperscript{46} \textit{Nanook of the North}, which while declaring itself as ethnographic has come to be an example of the creative artistry involved in the production of ethnographic film and the performance of authenticity.\textsuperscript{47} 1942.

\textsuperscript{48} See \textit{The Legend of Maya Deren.}\textsuperscript{49} See Peter Loizos 1993 21.

\textsuperscript{50} Partial list of collaborative films by Asch and Chagnon: \textit{Yanomamo: A Multidisciplinary Study} 1971; \textit{Ocamo Is My Town} 1974; \textit{Firewood} 1974; \textit{A Man and His Wife Weave a Hammock} 1974; \textit{The Ax Fight} 1975; \textit{A Man Called "Bee": Studying the Yanomamo} 1975.

\textsuperscript{51} \textit{Dodoth Morning} 1963.

\textsuperscript{52} For more comprehensive history of ethnographic filmmaking see Heider 1975, and for photography see Edwards 1992.

\textsuperscript{53} This chapter is found in Schneider and Wright’s edited volume mentioned above.
censorship tends to be the marginalization of any researcher who invokes art practice as
an ethnographic practice and methodology – yet another instance of heterodoxy
confronting the iron fist of orthodoxy.

OTHERS IMAGINING ARTIST-ANTHROPOLOGY

Art is manifested in praxis; it depicts while it alters society.\(^{54}\)

Participants in the 2009 American Anthropological Association (AAA) Meetings
in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, witnessed the rare occurrence of two competing art show
openings featuring anthropologists\(^ {55}\) who seemed to be responding to Schneider and
Wright’s call for new research practices that draw together both art and anthropology:
“Our main argument is that anthropology’s iconophobia\(^ {56}\) and self-imposed restriction of
visual expression to text-based models needs to be overcome by a critical engagement
with a range of material and sensual practices in the contemporary arts.\(^ {57}\)” The show
exhibited works that were ethnographically situated, yet sensuously and sensorially
represented, or (con- or anti-) textualized, in an art gallery. Coincidentally, my own
ethnographically situated art show was in its third of four weeks installed at the Rice

\(^{54}\) Kosuth 1991.

\(^{55}\) The Ethnographic Terminalia exhibition featured original works by: Trudi-Lynn
Smith; Erica Lehrer and Hannah Smotrich; Kate Hennessy and Oliver Neumann; Marko
and Gordana Zivkovic; Chris Fletcher; Roderick Coover; Jayasinhji Jhala; Craig
Campbell; Mike Evans and Stephen Foster; Stephanie Spray; and Scott and Jen Webel.
“While these works are deployed within the rubric of anthropology they answer visual
and aesthetic questions in unique and particular fashion, decentering the privileged
categories of both ethnography and art through various media.”
http://www.metafactory.ca/terminalia/

\(^{56}\) Here Schneider and Wright are borrowing from Lucien Taylor’s 1996 article
“Iconophobia: How Anthropology Lost it at the Movies.”

\(^{57}\) 2006 4.
Media Center gallery, displaying both reproduced for the purpose of curation and archiving, and originally created works of stencil art, photography, and video art.

Artist-anthropology is perhaps progressive, radical, and activist in ways that orthodox anthropological practice is not. Simply to attempt to evoke the fieldwork experience and anthropological data unconventionally, and alternatively, for instance, by any artistic means beyond that of the written text, documentary film, or photography, is an act of experimentation dancing perilously on the fringes of alterity, marginality, and academic exile.

Evolving technologies are fueling a number of emerging ethnographic genres and urging anthropologists to reconsider the process of gathering, analyzing, and disseminating ethnographic research far beyond what was dreamed of at the time of the Writing Culture critique. I propose that we have no choice but to examine these technologies with an eye toward exploiting them to suit our ethnographic purposes, while understanding and accepting that these technological advances are accelerating and may actually outpace our ability to keep up with them for our own academic and pedagogical. Certainly though, many are doing their best to do so.

James Kosuth has argued that artists are “engaged,” as opposed the “dis-engagement of non-native anthropologists who are concerned with maintaining the “objective” distance of scientists.

Because the anthropologist is outside of the culture which he studies, he is not a part of the community.... Whereas the artist, as anthropologist, is operating within the same socio-cultural context from which he evolved. He is totally immersed and has a social impact. His activities embody the culture. 58

58 Kosuth 1993 Schneider and Wright 2006 24.
Artist-anthropologists (or visual anthropologists attempting to transcend the traditional boundaries of visual research) may be few in number at present, but as a space opens up for research into the sensory, more are moving into this field. The dueling exhibits at the AAA were not so very innovative, however. Since 1996 the Graduate Association of Visual Anthropology at Temple University has organized an annual Conference on the Future for the Anthropology of Visual Communication, apart from but coterminous with the AAA meetings. I have attended these sporadically, and have had on occasion the opportunity to show some of my work. These events have involved film as well as other alternative ethnographic architectures. The Ethnographic Terminalia was an extension of these conferences.

This exhibit will be of great interest not only to professional anthropologists but other publics as well. By drawing the studied methodologies of ethnography into a familiar art environment this collective exhibition delivers an all too uncommon challenge to disciplinary and professional boundaries. By engaging with the politics of representation, memory, documentation, and archive Ethnographic Terminalia will impress upon all visitors their own stake in the interpretation of cultural worlds.59

Ethnographic Terminalia ran conterminously with the later half of my own exhibition. During the exhibit I spoke with Chris Fletcher, who created an aural installation of Paris street life. What I found most revelatory was his offering that though he was not really an artist, he was attempting to capture the aural fieldwork experience of the “being there.” I could relate on a visceral level because I too had only recently tried to convey the sense of being on and in the streets of Santiago. The fact that this show appeared simultaneously to my own show Stenciling Power in Houston at the Rice Media Center gallery, represents a remarkable confluence of consciousness, or something more

59 From the website:http://www.metafactory.ca/terminalia/.
difficult to explain. Clearly, my own work joins the growing number of anthropologists who see themselves as artists, and who find themselves choosing to use art to express their ethnographic work.

IMAGINING ARTIST-ANTHROPOLOGY

Since first embarking on my career in anthropology at the turn of the twenty-first century, I have imagined a new identity for myself as artist-anthropologist that permits me to perform a variety of roles, and allows me to exploit expertise acquired in my previous career in television and film. As artist-anthropologist I am also videographer and documentary filmmaker, photographer and photo essayist, blogger, and installation artist. Furthermore, as an artist-anthropologist, I am moving toward an engagement with art practice as a way of thinking about anthropological work, ethnographic evocation, autoethnographic representation, and art as therapy, activism, and a model of intellectual inquiry.

60 Here I claim the identity of artist while also admitting that I am not necessarily comfortable with the identity. I represent a do-it-yourself (DIY) class of artist similar to that often deployed by amateur Stencilistas. With a Bachelor’s degree in English, I trained on the job as a television segment producer—a job that often required creating a story from limited videographed material. My master’s thesis involved substantial self-taught skills including Final Cut Pro editing software, as well as other elements of video production and videography that I had only supervised professionally. Some formal training enhanced my endeavors at computer design; however, my art practices with acrylics, spray paint, and later stenciling have all been learned through observation and imitation.

61 Along this path, I created a number of examples of this imagined artistically experimental practice, many of which I will not discuss here in just the same manner that the many iterations leading to the final version of this dissertation cannot be published.
Recently a question was posed of a dissertator during her defense at Rice University. She was called upon her to imagine her research in terms of a material object. Though this question is not posed to me, I argue that my solo show was the sensorial materialization of my research, the defining point of my research goal and agenda. The question was certainly atypical, but it happened to occur just days before I defended my solo show: my three-dimensional sensorially experimental art exhibition was on display at the Rice Media Center. The next week, I brought the three members of my committee to the gallery to defend my work as anthropological and ethnographic. I know of no one in anthropology who can deploy film, performance art, or art. The writing is the valorized performance act that creates the academic anthropologist, not the production of a documentary film, art exhibit, or photographic project, or other devices that may avail a student in the arts or humanities. Even today, as the boundaries that hold the discipline together as a social science are being challenged by technological developments in “new media,” the democratization of creative technologies, and the overwhelming dominance of the visual far beyond what Tyler described in 1987: “[T]hings, both as fact and concept, are hegemonic” and “the hegemony of things entails

62 In her homage to sociologist and Art Worlds author Howard S. Becker, contemporary artist Elizabeth Chaplin suggests that “To see something as art requires something the eye cannot descry – an atmosphere of artistic theory, a knowing of the history of art: an art world,” the development of which she argues is a discursive process that eventually, and when fully formed, “will always find expression in writing” (1998). Many would agree with this assertion, but those who lean more toward the category of artist, rather than that of anthropologist, seem to find the writerly move more problematic. Fred Myers discovered that artists agree that art and words should coalesce, but often prefer an academician to take up the task of writing about their work (Marcus and Myers 1995 27). Here is the difficulty in what I am doing. I am both an artist (producer of visual media – a text for some) anthropologist (producer of writerly texts).
the hegemony of the visual as a means of knowing/thinking. Thus, ever-so-evident today: a purely visual project is subordinate to one solely written, though it is unclear how a multi-variant project might be perceived.

More so than their counterparts in other subdisciplines of anthropology, the visual anthropologist must do double duty: to create a visual product she finds conducive to the exploration and analysis of her object, and then to produce a written text that explicates what she intends to illustrate with the visual project. Integral to this multi-part project is the shift in consciousness that literally moves the researcher from the left brain to the right and back again. Schneider and Wright suggest that “to engage with art practices means embracing new ways of seeing and new ways of working with visual materials,” a challenge I have taken up throughout the present project. In her essay *Eyeing the Field: New Horizons for Visual Anthropology* (a brief discussion of observational cinema), Amanda Grimshaw reminds us that the history of the discipline is riven by skepticism about the anthropological value of working with visual media as a tool and product of ethnographic inquiry. In the same volume, Amanda Ravetz proposes that the “visual be given a much bolder and more radical role” in anthropological investigation. In this chapter, I explain how my fieldwork practices were influenced by art practices that I was already familiar with and had used in previous fieldwork and research, including digital photography, videography, and journaling. As my fieldwork in Chile progressed and I witnessed the practices of Chilean artists – not only in the gallery exhibitions I visited, 

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63 1987.
64 2006 25.
65 2005 17.
66 2005 69.
67 Wendy Gunn is editor of a collection of essays discussing the comparison of *Fieldnotes to Sketchbooks* 2009.
but also, and most profoundly, the stencil street art I encountered — I found myself compelled to employ even more diverse visual and artistic practices in my research. Later, interested in continuing the stencil practice as part of my post-fieldwork write-up, I created the exhibition, not only to curate the extensive collection of stencil street art photographs, but also to deploy the practice as a meditation on alternative ethnographic methodology and as a (de)textualization of my data analysis and dissertation “write-up.” Through my observation of stencil street art — and artists — I learned from their practice, and influenced by their thinking, I took the opportunity to creatively think about gay Mormonism and anthropological methodology in unique ways and to elicit an “iridescent-metamorphosis” in myself that would mark the intersection of art and anthropology.68

1- THINKING THROUGH THE EYE

Keith Haring thinks in poems
Keith Haring paints poems
Paintings can be read as poems
If they are read as words instead of images
Images that represent words.
Egyptian Art/Hieroglyphics/Pictograms/Symbolism

The public has a right to art
The public is being ignored by most contemporary artists
Art is for everybody

I am interested in making art to be experienced and explored by as many individuals as possible with as many different individual ideas about the given piece with no final

68 1986 5.
meaning attached. The viewer creates the reality, the meaning, the conception of the piece.

I am moving towards a work of art that encompasses Music, performance, movement, concept, craft, and A resulting record of the event in the form of a painting. 69

Garrick70 and I talked a lot about my project yesterday. He suggests projecting the film on three walls. We talked about the short videolets that I am shooting and how to incorporate them in a full project. It is all stuff that I have been thinking about. I'm concerned with evocation and the aesthetics of the overall project. I want to make the dissertation as artistic as possible. I am visualizing a lot of disparate videos cut together, so I need to shoot much more video. The videos are very simple and sort of grainy and unprofessional looking, which I find interesting. I have been open to Garrick's ideas, which seems to have helped me be more receptive to a lot of interesting possibilities for the trajectory of the work. Yesterday, we went to the Museo Bellas Artes and saw a project that was employing the ideas that we had been talking about, including the projection of film, which was very inspiring.71

One early spring day in 2007, I was considering a number of different video projects, including taking my camera down to the Plaza de la Constitución in front of the north-facing side of La Moneda (the once bombed-out presidential palace with its now wide-open gates and central plaza sculpture garden that has become a symbol of post-Pinochet Chile's political openness) and setting up a video camera to tape person-in-the-street interviews on any number of topics from media representations of the United States to the subject of evangelical religions in Chile. I began to consider a number of ways that I could deploy visual and artistic practices in my ethnographic fieldwork. I visited art

69 Keith Haring wrote this in his journal after his first month in art school on October 14, 1979. Deitch, Geiss, and Gruen 2008. Here, I share Haring’s sentiments, which I purposefully draw into anthropology. Just as the personal is ethnographic, the ethnographic is public. We can read the above statement, replacing the word “art” with “anthropology,” and further still understand my thoughts on artist-anthropology.
70 Garrick Biggs is my nephew. He spent six weeks with me in the field offering a very interesting perspective on the experience of contemporary Chile.
exhibitions, including several at Centro Cultural Matucana 100, just blocks from my rented apartment on Huérfanos in Santiago’s “old city.” I also visited the Museo de Bellas Artes where a Chilean artist who had created a tripartite video installation was influential in shaping my thinking about installation ethnography.72 A diverse consortium of artists had created a film festival at Matucana 100 with some avant-garde films that I also found particularly inspirational.

I started taking photographs of the street and the passersby focusing on the street where I lived. I was interested in the movement of people and means of transportation through the camera’s line of sight. The Transantiago controversy was in full fluorescence, and I was thinking of a way to address the notion of change, adaptation, and transitory metamorphosis. (I mean the word transitory in several different ways.) I was deeply interested in how citizens of Santiago began to see themselves as foreigners in their own city because of the restructuring of transit routes and the elimination of thousands of buses and bus stops. Commuters were forced to take new routes and travel into and through areas of town that were unfamiliar and in some cases frightening. Change was in the air, and while it was exciting for someone like me who thrives on change, most Chileans were discomforted and ill-at-ease. People were put out, put off, and put upon. In this unfamiliar air, I found the strangeness quite magical.73 I began to take pictures of normal, everyday things and people because they felt somehow unusual, and not in a sense of the fetishization of the exotic so common in the history of

72 Unfortunately, I did not note the artist’s name and I have been unable to retrieve it from the website.
73 “At certain points along the copper footbridges, the platforms, the stairs, which run around the covered markets and the pillars, I thought I could judge the depth of the city!” Arthur Rimbaud, Illuminations In Collected Poems (2001)
anthropology and American tourism; rather, I saw the opportunity to capture an eccentricity drenched in the mundane.

2 – AUTOETHNOGRAPHY

Autoethnography follows the anthropological and social scientific inquiry approach rather than descriptive or performative storytelling. That is, I expect the stories of autoethnographers to be reflected upon, analyzed, and interpreted within their broader sociocultural context. 74

Autoethnography is a qualitative research methodology that emphasizes a more personal, almost intimate level of study. It renders the researcher-participant opportunities to explore past and present experiences while gaining self-awareness of his or her interactions and their socio-cultural effects. Nevertheless, this methodology requires planning and implementation with the same rigor required by other types of research inquiry. 75

In standard ethnographic writing anthropologists cite the bodies of work and thinkers within which they situate their own work analytically; for the artist-anthropologist, visual artists also serve that role. Here I will delve a bit into my early exposure to the seductiveness of art, as well as autoethnographic details of my history and my very limited childhood exposure to art and artists, which mirrors that of others of my age and social status. Like some of the contributors to Faubion’s The Ethics of Kinship, 76 who explore their own personal history to consider theoretical inquiry, I will

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74 Heewon Chang 2008 46.
75 Butler 2009.
76 For further discussion on the usefulness of autobiography and autoethnography as well as examples of such, see Faubion 2001, Davies 1999.
explore my own process of aesthetic development with a Bourdieusian eye toward understanding the development of my own aesthetic taste as particularly revealing.\textsuperscript{77}

Deborah Reed-Danahay describes the autoethnographic project as falling into three categories:

(1) “Native anthropology,” in which people who were formerly the subjects of ethnography become the authors of studies of their own group; (2) “ethnic autobiography,” personal narratives written by members of ethnic minority groups; and (3) “autobiographical ethnography,” in which anthropologist interject personal experience into ethnographic writing.\textsuperscript{78}

Heewon Chang speaks more directly to my task here, explaining, “in autoethnography, the insider and the outsider converge. During data interpretation you excavate meanings from two different contexts and wrestle with contradictions and similarities between them.”\textsuperscript{79} Chang and Carolyn Ellis both argue that autoethnographers must “connect the autobiographical and personal to the cultural, social, and political.”\textsuperscript{80}

The nativistic and reflexive nature of autoethnography and my intention toward it is problematic and imperfect. Such work alludes to what Pnina Motzafi-Haller calls “birthright writing,” a genre that suggests that I am writing about my own people and my own experience as a type of personal(ized) ethnography. However, this is not a perfect description of what I am doing. Rather, my work is infused with a tension

\textsuperscript{77} “Taste classifies, and it classifies the classifier. Social subjects, classified by their classification, distinguish themselves by the distinctions they make, between the beautiful and the ugly, the distinguished and the vulgar, in which their position in the objective classifications is expressed or betrayed.” 1984 6.

\textsuperscript{78} 1997 2.

\textsuperscript{79} Chang 2008 127.

\textsuperscript{80} Ellis 2004 xix.

\textsuperscript{81} Motzafi-Haller 1997. According to Motzafi-Haller, I am entitled to write on this subject in an autoethnographic way because I come from this cultural background. Though as a religious birthright my authority is somewhat distinct from Motzafi-Haller’s mizrahi status, it is comparable argument.
suggestive of, and approaching, autoethnography, but only semi-emicly and also being semi-eticly. Reed-Danahay relieves some of my tension by arguing that the autoethnographer is an anthropologist who is a “boundary-crosser” with “multiple, shifting identities,” which nicely captures much of what my work entails. Indeed, Carolyn Ellis and Arthur Bochner further influence my position concerning the autoethnographic as follows:

Autoethnography shows struggle, passion, embodied life, and the collaborative creation of sense-making in situations in which people have to cope with dire circumstances and loss of meaning. Autoethnography wants the reader to care, to feel, to empathize, and to do something, to act. It needs the researcher to be vulnerable and intimate. Intimacy is a way of being, a mode of caring.

Thus, I can state autoethnographically, reflexively, and subjectively, I am gay and Mormon; however, as non-Chilean and multi-generational Mormon, or RLDS, I have a different experience of my sexuality (and the so-called coming-out process) in a distinct social context to that of my compeers, and my experience of Mormonism is cluttered with a multi-generational history of the faith unlike that of the Chilean converts, who for the most part are first generation Mormons, all of which challenges the definition of autoethnography. Furthermore, my artistic experience is primarily rooted in on-the-job

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82 Auto/Ethnography: Rewriting the Self and the Social (1997 3)
83 Ellis and Bochner 2006 434
84 RLDS or Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, now known as The Community of Christ, was a non-polygamist sect led by direct descendants of Joseph Smith following his assassination and until the 1990s. My mother’s paternal grandparents baptized her RLDS in the early 1950s. Both descended from several generations of RLDS, my great-grandfather being a descendant of early Mormons Leander and Susan Perry, who were early members of the fellowship in Kirtland, Ohio, and who appear to have traveled to Missouri when the persecution in Ohio became too acute. I have yet to discover whether they lived in Nauvoo, or whether they defected sometime before Smith’s death.
training in commercial Hollywood television production, as well as publicity for a major studio, which is completely dissimilar to graphic designers who make up the majority of the Stencilista population I researched, who have formalized university training in their profession, thus entirely chanllening any notion of autoethnography. The end result of all this rather convoluted boarder-blurring is that I am not able to claim any sort of pure autoethnographic authority, though my methodology approaches it. I recognize that my compeers and I in this research share affinities despite not sharing the same cultural, professional, or social identity.

Before my family rejoined with my mother’s ancestral Mormon roots, we had a few memorable reproductions of artwork in our home. 12 inch plaster reproductions of Auguste Rodin’s The Thinker and The Kiss moved around our living room bookshelves, coffee and end tables, and I spent countless hours examining them. A taller plaster reproduction of Venus de Milo resided on my parent’s dresser. My mother had also purchased a reproduction of Rembrandt’s Man in a Golden Helmet, though it never had a prominent place in the home and was often hanging in the hall.85 While the Rembrandt stayed around for a few more years after we became active Mormons, my mother took the suggestion of one of the many young male missionaries that visited our home for the first couple of years after our baptism, and disposed of the Rodin reproductions for being too “suggestive” for a “righteous” home. Two original paintings, a large acrylic painting of an individual traveling up a winding path toward a distant shadowy city, which our baptizing missionaries suggested was symbolic of the path to heaven, and a large oil

85 Turns out many people had reproductions of this piece in their homes in the 1960s and 70s. Today, art historians are unsure it was truly a Rembrandt, some suggesting that it is the work of his student, Carel Fabritius. Whether or not it is a Rembrandt may be difficult to determine, however its definition of late twentieth century kitsch is not.
impressionist-style painting of a lake scene, adorned the walls of the living room and dining room. Both of these commercial pieces had been purchased at a furniture store in Oklahoma City in the mid-1960s. As commercial artworks, they could claim no historical contextualization other than as decorative art from that era. The “pathway to heaven” piece was my favorite, though it troubled me. The teachings of the Church were suggestive of a “straight and narrow” path to return to the Father. I often looked at that piece and wondered how it could be representative of this scripture if the path seemed so winding, an effect imposed by the artist to evoke an upward movement. This suggests the depth of my literalist thinking. I had infrequent art classes in the first years of elementary school, which I always looked forward to and remember details of even today. However, these programs were eliminated by the time I reached the fourth grade, and I never took another art class.

As an undergraduate at Brigham Young University, I took a general education course in art history that required memorizing an assortment of art works and associating them with their movements/periods and individual artists. In a class of 300-400 students, I found little to hold my attention. The photographs that would flash on the overhead projector became a blur, and I recall cramming with flash cards before taking the Scantron tests. One of the traveling poster companies that sell their products on college campuses throughout the country offered me the opportunity to buy my own masterpiece knock-offs, which I did. I had been attracted to the nineteenth-century landscape works of Albert Bierstadt, and I recall buying a poster print that hung on my wall all during college, I cannot seem to recall which one. I also hung a large print of Van Gogh’s
Starry Night that had first been brought to my attention by the saccharine but haunting 1971 pop tune “Vincent” by Don McLean.86

Over the years, I attempted, in one form or another, to imitate Haring’s iconic style, even at times the exact icons87 – performative acts of artistic appropriation that presaged my interest in stencil art and the politics of making and disseminating iconic political imagery. I would borrow his motifs, which he in turn borrowed from archaic motifs.88 I never went too far with these exercises, regardless the depth of feeling behind them. Still, I attribute my own interest in the stenciled icons of the Stencilistas to my early fascination with Haring. And though my interlocutors never referred to Haring as a source for their material, or as an influential figure, I see an obvious affinity not only for myself, but also for those street or guerilla artists who inspire the Stencilistas, such as Blek le Rat, Banksy, and Shepard Fairey.

I cannot remember when I first became seduced by the vivid, vibrant, and iconic images of pop artist Keith Haring. He is completely interwoven into my initial coming-out period while living and working in Los Angeles. Haring’s impish persona, coupled with the bold lines and activist sensibilities, struck harmonious chords within me, and I felt his art in ways that I did not feel about other artists.89 In Haring I saw an age peer who was also queer, and who was making an impressive impact on the world with iconic

86 To read McLean’s the lyrics and more on his inspiration for the song see: http://www.don-mclean.com/whatsyournumber.asp.
87 “One can be tempted to analyze Haring’s images from a semiotic point of view. The stubby crawling baby, for instance reads not just “baby,” but such things as human vulnerability, a sense of unfettered freedom associated with a baby’s developing consciousness, and a polymorphous sexuality...His images are insightfully chosen and carefully worked out with a sensitivity toward layers of meaning and sexual connotations.” Jeffrey Deitch Keith Haring (Tony Shafrazi Gallery Book) 1982 19
89 See also Robert Henri 1927, who according to Deitch, inspired Haring 1984.
images that in their simplicity allowed for very little interpretation. They were memorable “texts” or statements that continue to illuminate some twenty-five to thirty years after he first scrawled them on the subway walls and streets of New York City.  

The radiant baby, space-ships, flying dolphins, and dancing dogs, among so many other iconic figures and messages, demonstrate how Haring was an artist, activist, and archivist of his time who spectacularly lived up to his own manifesto to make art for the people.

When I arrived in Bangladesh during the middle of Ramadan in December 2000, I did not speak Bengali, and I struggled to make myself understood even to Bangladeshis who spoke English. After being awakened the first morning by the *azan*, I later hopped a rickshaw with the Christian woman who was the caretaker at my hostel. This was a quintessentially Malinowskian moment. To assuage my culture shock, which though considerable was not as unmanageable as when I had first arrived in Santiago as a young missionary twenty years before, I took out my camera and began to document everything. A hand-sized, Sony digital video camera, it was barely noticeable if I wanted it to be. To my Western gaze, everything on the streets of Dhaka was exotic and fresh. Any anachronistic sign of Western modernity tended to surprise me, and I made sure to capture it in context. To my eye – and in hindsight, a frightfully exoticizing eye – the Bangladeshis were exquisitely beautiful, and I wanted to take pictures of all of them. Since the language barrier impeded any substantive one-on-one social exchange, I hid your sexuality fearing that it was inorganic and a temptation that needed to be confronted and overcome, a common strategy for many in a similar position, regardless of religion or social class. I had learned well the necessity of the closet. On the other hand, Haring had long left the closet and moved his sexuality out into the streets and onto the walls.

While Haring had nurtured his artistic sensibilities mine were subverted into religious dogma. Where Haring embraced and celebrated his sexuality from his late teens, I occulted my sexuality fearing that it was inorganic and a temptation that needed to be confronted and overcome, a common strategy for many in a similar position, regardless of religion or social class. I had learned well the necessity of the closet. On the other hand, Haring had long left the closet and moved his sexuality out into the streets and onto the walls.

behind my camera. My first language lesson at a Christian seminary provided me with the terms to ask for permission to take photographs of individuals, *(Ami apnar chobi tulte pari?)* but I did not feel restrained from shooting video of everything as long as I did not get the camera directly in somebody’s face. I found that the camera served as a kind of protective barrier that shielded me from direct interaction and simultaneously served as a way to connect with Bangladeshis, limited though that connection might have been. The camera afforded me a sense of security and gave me a feeling of purpose on my first foray into fieldwork, which lasted four weeks.

Conversely, when I returned to Chile, where I had lived and worked for twenty-two months during the Pinochet regime, I found myself much more interested in using my Spanish and talking to people directly. I went with the intention to shoot pictures of everything, everyday, but immediately found the camera more intrusive and burdensome. I carried the camera with me but was reticent to pull it out and photograph or shoot video. Whereas in Bangladesh I was as exotic to the Bangladeshis as they were to me, in Chile I looked like just another wealthy gringo on holiday – the idea paralyzed me. I felt that if I took out my camera to take pictures or shoot video, I would simply reinforce the imaginary that Chileans had of me as tourist, and I would be delegitimated. I struggled to understand why I encountered this barrier to my planned research agenda and eventually came to a number of interesting conclusions. Since I spoke Spanish fluently, I was distinct from my gringo compatriots who were there on vacation, and I wanted to prove it. Once Chileans got over the fact that the gringo standing before them was speaking Spanish, and with Chilean inflection no less, I was no longer an average tourist, or
gringo, which gave me access to information and rapport that was never possible in Bangladesh.

Later, when I did begin to use the camera to document stencils, passersby would ask why I was taking pictures. On only one occasion did anyone openly harass me – a neighbor who happened to have been drinking, and he clearly had issues with gringos in his neighborhood. I had actually expected more hostility than I experienced. At protests there were always a few people who shied away from my camera, and a few people who would ask me why I was there shooting video. However, it was clear that many people from all over the world were shooting video at these protests, and even more interesting, by the time I was concluding my fieldwork, I would frequently encounter others taking pictures of the stencils, usually with better equipment than I had.

My research priority shifted over time, and I did not digitally document everything the way I did in Bangladesh. I was most comfortable shooting stills of stencils and documenting protests, then conducting conventional on-camera interviews; indeed, I conducted the majority of my interviews more casually and did not use video or recording devices. In the familiar fieldsite, like Chile, the camera becomes more of a barrier to communication and serves to inhibit a deeper sense of connection, however imaginary it may be, for successful, or at least seemingly fulfilling, fieldwork.

With the camera alert to that which our eye and ear may not initially perceive, we can capture everyday life, and therefore a sense of the interactive experience that is culture creation. What is more, we can see the very visible hand of the ethnographer as she and her subject co-create a cultural evocation. Indeed, the presence of an ethnographer and camera must affect the nature of the witnessed activities. Therefore,
representing them both, as well as their influence (subtle or overt), is very important to understanding cultural accommodations inherent in ethnographic research, as well as in suggesting a type of cultural diffusion that takes place in any interaction between ethnographer and subject.

The video camera's moving, visual image adds a dimension to ethnographic analysis that writing and still images cannot necessarily match, nor would we want them to. The video camera creates data that can be revisited and reanalyzed in ways that are not the same as revisiting one's hand- or type-written notes. You cannot re-see an experience that you have described in your notes regardless of your attention to detail. When a digital tape is replayed, you can see the event with new eyes. You can see things that you might have missed the first time—the time that your notes would have recorded. Our memory is not as reliable as the recorded image. You may catch something on tape that your eye does not catch and you may forget that you even recorded it until much later when the tape is replayed. Of course, the camera has an operator/anthropologist who is naturally subjective and, dependent upon the stimuli present at the moment of taping, and the set-up of the camera whether it be hand-held or locked down to a stationary tripod, will inherently guide the lens, or cine-eye to certain material.

3 – BRAINSTORMING AND AUTOMATIC WRITING

In automatic writing the subject supposedly relinquishes the entire learned process of self-control involved in writing on a sheet of paper, and yet continues to write.  

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92 Brett, Guy. *In Susan Hiller* Tate Gallery. 1996 22.
“My” hands made the marks that form the inscriptions, but not in my characteristic handwriting or voice. My “self” is a locus for thoughts, feelings, sensations, but not an impermeable, corporeal boundary. I AM NOT A CONTAINER.93

I am going to use two examples of moments that approached automatic writing for me during my research and write-up. During my fieldwork I would often use my journal and my blog as opportunities to free-think, brainstorm, and write out my thoughts in a practice of stream-of-consciousness. I had done this in Bangladesh, and I found it to be an interesting way to let the thoughts percolate out onto the computer screen for future reference. While much of it was worthless, there were moments that I later would remember and refer back to for direction. The first of these moments that I am reproducing here was part of an early idea that occurred to me as how I might organize my research and write-up. I am impressed by the cyclical reproduction of violence that occurs in Santiago on significant historical dates. I was thinking about walls and the stencils on them; however, I had not as yet surrendered to the notion that the stencils would play an integral part of my research and ethnographic evocation. The following emerged from my processing the material discussed here. I started with the phrase “THE WALL” and then began to meditate on the dates and words that reflected the dates. I elaborated on the device as a methodology to contemplate the contemporary in Chile, as well as a possible direction for my work, a visual project, film, or solo show or exhibition, and ultimately, my dissertation. In the end, only parts of these early thoughts made it into the dissertation, but I find it interesting and revealing to share part of my “design studio” process.94

93 Hiller 1983 emphasis in original.
94 Marcus 1995.
T-December 12: Torture (Pinochet's Death Day Carnival) The tortured - Monday

H-March: 29: Harvest (Dia de Joven Combatiente) The Ill - Tuesday 2 young men's lives given up and results in the annual mini-uprising. The dictatorship's opportunity to make martyrs of kids and for it to be remembered as self-inflicted violence

E-May 1: Evil (Worker's day) The religious - Wednesday Carabineros' quick and excessive reaction/repression, excommunication, public ridicule and castigation while eliciting private/self torture and suicide.

W-August 29: Whine - (CUT's labor stoppage) The Persecuted - Thursday Attempts to try and get the Church to listen and change. Formation of Afirmación/Affirmation and the existence as protest against the established norm. The minority "making a fuss." But a universal fuss.

A-September 11: Anarchy - (Allende's Memorial Riot) The Alternative - Friday

L=September 29: Lies (Gay Pride Carnival) The Deviant - Saturday

L=December 12: Loves (1st Anniversary of Pinochet's Death) The political - Sunday A new beginning - like Easter. The first year of grieving/asumiendo. 95

During the process of creating the solo show, I engaged in a long process of brainstorming, some of which I can claim to be a type of automatic writing, though perhaps different from that of Susan Hiller. I used my MacBook Pro 12" laptop and journaling software downloaded from the Internet. I did not usually take out a pen and paper, though I did on occasion. The following is an example of digital automatic writing that involved a bit of editing ex post facto, which transgresses the model. The preliminary ideas happened in the midst of fieldwork as I was yet in the process of collecting data.

These were thoughts that I had in 2008 about possible stencils that I would create for the Stenciling Power show. I did not create most of them thought I have not abandoned the possibility for future projects:

95 Fieldnotes September 22, 2007.
Guatemalans being baptized with Texaco and Coke logos
Moai with LanChile logo saying BanChile across it.
Pink Triangle and Moroni
Salt Lake temple and the pentacle inverted
Pinochet and Bush Kissing. Pinochet as Colonel Sanders.
Pinochet cock like the colonel wearing the suit but with cachos and KFCruel
Spencer W. Kimball with horns.
Kimball and Packer like stencil with Bush and Kerry kissing with horns coming out of their heads.
Stencil an image of the infamous image of Abu Ghraib guy with electric shock
"Anarchist anthropology" spelled out
Michael's Bats.
The running mushroom men.
Stencil of Cherokee...Sequoyah and Mapuche...Caupolican
Me saluting in the Boy Scout suit with pink triangle for badge, me in my missionary outfit with a nametag that says Jesus written like the Coke logo.
Project the metro train move on the wall upstairs.
Axis of Evil: Moroni, Coke, and Texaco
The Banksy guy throwing something that represents ethnography? A book? How about throwing Writing Culture and another throwing The Book of Mormon?

In the chapter 5, I will describe the works that finally made it in the show. Some of the final stencils resulted from this types of brainstorming or automatic-writing.

4 – BLOGGING

To stay apace the latest technological innovations of contemporary ethnographic fieldwork and to perform a public fieldnote record, I blogged throughout my twenty-two
months in Santiago. My intention with deploying the blog was to bring an immediacy to my work, and to engage with anyone who might be interested in my fieldwork from anywhere in the world. However, I had the unfortunate experience of seeing some of my data appear unattributed in an article penned by a journalist. These data were public, so I could not cry plagiarism; however, I have a particularly unique style of titling my work, and the journalist “borrowed” this style with no attribution either – so, it goes. I would not say that this experience necessarily dissuaded me from continuing the blogging as a Marcus-style “design studio,” however, it had a chilling effect that left me reserving much of my data for my private field notes and journaling.

Here is an example from my blog:

“GREENGO!”

September 26, 2007

Walking down Pedro de Valdivia from the Metro I smelled the smoke of the burning campfire before I saw it. It’s funny how the smell of burning trash always reminds me of being 7 years old and living in North Little Rock, Arkansas. My mom would always send me out to the backyard to burn the trash in the 50-gallon barrel used for that purpose. It seems like another world: the very idea of burning trash seems absurd today and in this city infamous for its smoke-filled skies. I see the guy who lives with dogs by the side of the road near a private university and I’m thinking about being a little kid. He is burning trash to keep warm, it’s cold this evening, while I burned trash as one of my favorite “chores.” “Don’t stay out there all night. I need you to help set the table before your father gets home,” my mother would always say knowing that I would probably stay out there all night if she’d let me. You couldn’t just put the trash in and let it burn by itself, you had to tend it or piece of burning paper might fly out and set the neighbor’s house on fire. It was fun and fascinating to watch the flames eat things and then see what was left behind. There were always metal things and weird shaped ashen pieces, as well as melted piles of plastic. In 1969 there were only vague discussions of environment and the crying Indian on that TV commercial. I learned about sunfish, and the population explosion that was devastating Africa. The filthy old guy crouching in the ditch in Providencia tending his burning trash couldn’t have imagined all that was going through my head as I and many others walked past on our way to other places. I have seen him there many times. He usually has a dog out there with him and sometimes you can see where people have left food for it. I’ve only seen him warming something in a tin can over the
fire a couple of times. I haven’t been able to tell what it is. So many people walk down this street and so many cars, some very expensive, pass by him everyday. Only at couple of times that I walked past the spot has he not been there. I’ve actually missed him when he wasn’t there. He seems like a hobo from the Depression era. It doesn’t seem possible that he is able to stay there – that no one takes him to a shelter or locks him up. It is unimaginable that another human being lives like that. The way the shallow and narrow ditch runs by the side of the road reminds me of Bangladesh and he could be a Bangladeshi. Like the man I saw crouching over the edge of a ditch in Dhaka, I wonder if this man too uses the ditch as an outhouse, only late at night when nobody is looking. He is covered in grime and is so filthy that the fire serves as incense to cover his putrid stench. How can a human being stink so horribly? Why isn’t there some kind of help for him? Couldn’t there be someplace where he could go? I wonder if he is mentally ill and this causes me to fret. Just like the thousands of homeless still on the streets of cities all over California, thrown out of mental institutions by the never compassionate Ronald Reagan, this man is a victim of policies that favor the wealthy and deprive the poor, sick, and needy. For someone to be forced to live like this is a disgrace regardless the country. Yes, he may have chosen this place to set up camp, but I don’t believe that in his right mind anyone would choose the daily misery that he obviously suffers.

CONCLUSION:

ART AS CULTURAL CRITIQUE

Cultural criticism must include an account of the position of the critic in relation to that which is critiqued, and secondly, the critic must be able to pose alternatives to the conditions he is criticizing. 96

The need for ethnographic projects to incorporate reception among the sites of ethnography thus pushes on the limits of ethnographic genres, and while it does not question writing or representation itself, or the remaining textual tropes of ethnography, it suggests other forms of these tropes displaced into the scenes of fieldwork. Ethnography in its present textual tradition would thus present itself as mediational, as situated among its multiple sites and would develop coherent positions of cultural critique from these contexts. In my own current view this would be the work of the dissertation, and where perhaps an experiment with for me is most needed. 97

96 Marcus and Fischer 1986 115.
97 Marcus 2007.
Artists and artist-anthropologists have used various media to critique not only the discipline of anthropology, but also the cultures within which they work. Art is meant to stir emotion and tease convention. Speaking of the anthropologist's ethnographic urges, Marcus states that while many ethnographers relish the opportunity to describe exotic others, or banal versions of us, ultimately we all always harbor motives implicitly aimed at "disturbing [our] cultural self-satisfaction."\(^98\) This chapter has explored my interest in synthesizing anthropology and art. I have problematized and criticized the boundedness of my discipline while also availing myself of its porousness.

Art is a "genre of criticism" to wit we can use art to critique any number of cultural constructs, including political agendas and religious ideologies. Moreover, "ethnographers simultaneously [have] a marginal or hidden agenda of critique of their own culture, namely, the bourgeois, middle-class life of mass liberal societies, which industrial capitalism has produced."\(^99\) Marcus and Fischer suggest that Margaret Mead was "the model of anthropologist as cultural critic."\(^100\) Trinh T. Minh-ha’s work critiques not only the entire Orientalist subjectivity of Western culture writ large, but also the anti-feminine aspects of traditional science. Like anthropologist and artist-anthropologist Trinh T. Minh-ha, who critiques the hegemony of discourses of power that leave women – and particularly women of color – out of the structures of power and creativity,\(^101\) I too critique regimes of power including the discipline itself, fieldwork and its institutionalized practices, the intrusion of religion (specifically Mormonism) into

\(^{98}\) Marcus In Marcus and Fischer 1986 111.  
\(^{99}\) Ibid.  
\(^{100}\) Marcus and Fischer 1986 130 emphasis in original text.  
\(^{101}\) 1989.
concerns of the state, for example same-sex marriage, the global art establishment, globalism or globalization, neoliberal politics, and, perhaps most importantly, myself.
ART PRACTICE AS ETHNOGRAPHIC METHODOLOGY:
A PERSONAL EXHIBIT

SOMEBEWHERE OVER THE RAINBOW...
IS THE FACE OF MORMON FOUNDER JOSEPH SMITH

Mormonism and South American leftist politics don’t exactly mix like chocolate and peanut butter, but Rice student Michael Adair-Kriz will bring them together for his multimedia show “Stenciling Power.” The anthropology doctoral candidate - who, as a gay Mormon and former Young Republican, knows something about unorthodox combinations - recently completed two years of fieldwork in Santiago, Chile. “For my research, I decided to compare Mormonism and stencil artists as two opposite extremes of ideological battles we see going on...the idea of the left versus the right, of horizontalism versus hierarchy,” he says. The show will feature photos of spray-paint stencil work in Santiago and a video interview with some of the artists, as well Adair-Kriz’s original work. Highlights of the latter will include a 5-by-23-foot rainbow stencil featuring seven depictions of the face of Joseph Smith, the founder of Mormonism, as well as a provocative video installation that juxtaposes photos of the Mormon temple in Salt Lake City with very, shall we say, secular pictures. “Is it art? Is it ethnography? Is it anthropology?” Adair-Kriz asks. Decide for yourself. 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Mondays through Fridays. Through December 15. Main Gallery Space, Rice Media Center, 6100 Main. For information, call 713-348-4882 or visit www.events.rice.edu. Free.

1 Blake Whitaker, Houston Press 2009. This epigraph is reproduced from a write-up in the Houston Press (free alternative paper circulated in the metropolitan area that announced my ethnographic art show.)
Originally conceived as a blueprint for installation ethnography and what my own iteration of such would look like, this chapter has become the visual example of my move toward evoking ethnographic knowledge artistically. This chapter and the accompanying DVD exist in the present form because of the generous opportunity offered me by Brian Huberman and Tish Stringer, who took a chance on my radically transdisciplinarian concept of artist-anthropology and gave me the entire gallery space at the Rice Media Center to create my solo show: Stenciling Power. I used the gallery to open my ethnographic design studio beyond the confines of the somewhat limiting closet-like space of my laptop computer, and literally to spray and spatter it all over the walls of a very public place.

This brief chapter is meant to give a curatorial explication of the material that is available on the attached DVD – found on the back cover in the printed version and maintaining a permanent home in the Rice Digital Repository, which can be found at the following URL: http://hdl.handle.net/1911/35296.

Since my master’s work in Bangladesh in 2000, I have tried to deploy visual methodologies as part of all of my ethnographic inquiries.\(^2\) The present work is not necessarily an evolution from the videotaped documentary of my earlier work, but rather

\(^2\) The following is extracted from my Master’s thesis: Made in Bangladesh: Global Cloth, Local Hands, and the Ethnovideographic Gaze, Flagstaff: Northern Arizona University 2002. “Ethnovideography represents my attempt to “hybridize” an ethnographic documentary style ‘filmed ethnography’ with more contemporary, ‘modern’ aesthetics. Ethnovideography borrows from the work of documentarians and visual anthropologists that has preceded it, yet it also critiques the older aesthetics of ethnographic film and attempts something new. Anthropology labeled ‘visual’ is a research technique, a field of study, a teaching tool, a means of publication, and even a new approach to anthropological knowledge (MacDougall 1998:61). My concept of ethnovideography borrows from the visual anthropological knowledge already accrued and updates it with a post-modernist twist.”
a lateral maneuver to expand on the possibilities for visual evocation, which I have explained at length in chapter 4. Technological advances have revolutionized and wholly democratized videography, which has as a result exploded on the Internet. The fusion of practices of indigenous media, independent media, and amateur videographers, which have wedded with the software of Web 2.0, now flourish and predominate on such sites as YouTube, Vimeo, Google Videos, and many more. Part of my fieldwork habitus included shooting short videos to upload for public consumption and commentary on YouTube and on my blog Alojamiento Chile. Stenciling Power was an experiment with the design studio Marcus speaks about, but challenges its current iterations at University of California Irvine, which invites research collaborators to join in the ethnographic project as consultants in a formalized setting literally within the site of academic knowledge production. My design studio was a literal art space where I was able to reproduce images captured in the field and elaborate on sentiments and data gathered and internalized, synthesized, and then re-externalized—a process of Bourdieusian practice. It is in its lack of totality and incompleteness as a messy baroque that I want to evoke the ethnographic moment I experienced in Chile, a moment in which modernist globalizing forces coalesce, incompletely fractured by both time and space, within which we all find ourselves embedded, mostly compulsorily.

**ETHNOGRAPHIC EXHIBITION AS CURATORIAL**

On a very basic level, the exhibition was an experiment in curatorial design that entertained an element of the anti-curatorial, intended to further challenge the notion of a

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3 Marcus in Faubion and Marcus 2009.
standard art exhibit. While much of the show featured reproductions from photographs of stencils that I captured and archived over a period of two years from the streets of Santiago, I offered very little textual reference, indeed, none to identify the individual pieces. *Stenciling Power* was titled ironically to evoke confrontations with power (or, as the idiom states "speaking truth to power"), suggested by the stencils I reproduced and created that allude to the symbolic violence perpetrated by such institutions as Mormonism and the elite in international politics, multi-national corporations, and globalization writ large.

One of my primary goals with this exhibition was to allow the visitor to share the observational process with little curatorial direction and to allow for individualized reaction and analysis.

**THE SHOW**

Making an exhibition is a form of storytelling, and one of which the artist is fully aware.\(^4\)

The Art we look at is made by only a select few. A small group creates, promote, purchase, exhibit and decide the success of Art. Only a few hundred people in the world have any real say. When you go to an Art gallery you are simply a tourist looking at the trophy cabinet of a few millionaires.\(^5\)

Each piece of art encountered in the exhibition tells a story of its own. I kept much of this private, preferring not to write detailed descriptions for the gallery attendee to read and know. On the practical level, this meant that very few had a complete entée

\(^5\) Banksy 2006 171.
into the secret world that animated the creation of each piece. Perhaps this left many of
the attendees at a loss; however, this loss was purposive. I wanted each person to have
her own experience much as I did on the streets of Santiago. I am aware of the pitfalls of
such an approach: much of the meaning might have been lost to the experiencer, which
may have caused frustration and anxiety. I felt fine about this possible result because the
viewer will have taken away an impression, even if they assumed that it was false – they
would have been mistaken, of course, as no false impressions were possible. Below, I
offer a little background on each piece, doing the work that was not part of the show.
This text is purposively curatorial and elaborative of the visual experience that suggests
the transformative post-exhibition necessity. I offer each piece in the order that I would
guide a visitor, the same order as in the attached DVD.

**San Cristobal de las Casas**

At the entrance of the gallery from the hallway at the front of the Rice Media
Center I leaned this piece constructed from an old mirror door with the mirror broken out
and replaced by printed photographs taken from the cover of a 1981 issue of Liahona, the
Latin American Mormon magazine. I sprayed stencils of the Angel Moroni and Coca-Cola as well as two stencils of the president of the quorum of twelve apostles, Boyd K.
Packer. This piece was incomplete. I also wanted to include stencils of the Texaco logo,
but I did not get to that before the show opened. I left it in the show as a testament to the
fractured and incomplete process of ethnographic evocation that I find more real than a
tidy, complete analysis. As it happens, the Texaco logo was not necessarily true to what I
wanted to express anyway, and the piece "worked" without it.
This piece was inspired by my visit to San Cristobál de las Casas, Mexico in 1996. I had been working in television, in Los Angeles, and a friend and I decided to travel for a few weeks around southern Mexico and Guatemala while I was in between shows. We visited a small vegetarian café, and the owner found a willing audience with us to discuss her politics and that of the region. At the time, I was only slightly informed about the Zapatista revolution of 1994, and I found her explanation very informative. She made an allusion to neocolonialism that, however pop cultural it may seem, continues to sticks with me. She claimed that rather than the original colonists of Mexico, conquistadores and missionaries looking for gold and preaching Catholicism, today the neo-imperialists arrive first as Mormon missionaries, then as Coca-Cola distributors who offer Coke products and buy up fresh water sources, and finally as oil companies displacing landowners and leaving the indigenous people of the region to fend for themselves, landless in the urban areas of Mexico. This work is inspired by my pre-anthropologist self, but marks some of the subtle transition I have made from reality television producer/proto-anthropologist to visual anthropologist and artist-anthropologist.

**MONKEY WRENCH**

As I have explained at great length in chapter 2, I was deeply inspired by the tiny monkey wrench stencil on the wall outside the headquarters of Chile’s International Police. This stencil is a reproduction and homage to that one, though the original was considerably smaller. Here as elsewhere throughout the show, I sprayed the stencil and then affixed the stencil pattern to wall below. This stencil is dedicated to the environmental work of Edward Abbey and particularly to his colorful character from the
novel *The Monkey Wrench Gang*, Seldom Seen Smith, a Jack Mormon river-raft guide with three wives living in villages a day’s drive from each other.

*IKE*

Seemingly precariously hung from the wall ten feet above the floor, I placed a New Mexico-shaped piece of plywood salvaged from the detritus left on Bolivar Peninsula near Galveston in the wake of Hurricane Ike. Six months before I left Santiago in 2008 I told everyone that I had to return to Houston in the fall because I wanted to be there for the big hurricane that I knew was coming. Of course everyone laughed at my prediction. I was quite surprised when it actually happened. I went out to the peninsula days before Ike came ashore to see what would be no more in just a few days. When I went back and retrieved this piece of plywood, I was intrigued by the odd hole burned into it. The hole on the board suggested the area of the state of New Mexico where the first nuclear bomb was tested and inspired me to stencil it with the chemical formula for ozone: $O_3$. The smell of ozone, which is quite prevalent in the summer months in Houston reminds me of my childhood when I would have occasion to go to work with my father, a technical representative for Xerox. In those days, the copiers he fixed were often found in very small rooms redolent with the ozone created by the cooling fan inside the copier. The hole could mean the ever-expanding hole in the Earth’s ozone layer, or something else. I was reminded of the fact that 03 is also the year that I was to start my doctoral program, when I experienced total kidney failure and straddled the border between life and death for several weeks. Subsequently, I would live on dialysis for over three years before receiving my cadaveric transplant at University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston, very near the Bolivar Peninsula.
BRICOLAGE

On the same wall as Ike, I created a reproduction of a wall that one might see in Santiago, covered with graffiti and stencil art. It is a bricolage of many of the stencils I had on-hand and is evocative of Levi-Straussian notions of the bricoleur in socio-cultural anthropology.6 “The term comes from the French verb bricoler – ‘make creative and resourceful use of whatever materials are to hand (regardless of their original purpose)’; in contemporary French the word is the equivalent of the English ‘do it yourself.’”7 One of the opening night attendees was from Chile, and she paid me the highest complement by stating that the wall reminded her of being in Valparaiso, Chile’s most important port city.

FIFTY FOTOS AND A POSTER PROJECT

Early into my exploration of melding social scientific methodologies with artistic practice, I selected fifty photographs of stencils that I had collected, and printed them along with a photograph I had taken of the poster Machismo Mata to present to interview subjects for comment and critique. One of my close compeers, a Mormon, communist social worker, helped me make my final selections of photographs. At the outset, I was curious to learn what Mormons thought about the stencils and what their comments might be, considering that in casual discussions with Mormons in Chile about my day-long forays into neighborhoods around the capital to photograph the latest works, I was often

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6 1966.
7 Wikipedia.
met with disapproving comments. In the end, I only discussed the photographs with a
dozen of my interview subjects.

The exhibit displays the actual photographs I used for this experiment, which are
numbered on the back. For exhibition, all were hung on thin copper wire that was strung
from copper screws, and each photograph was affixed with copper clips. I used copper as
the element to hold the piece together in order to evoke the mining industry that
continues to be backbone of the Chilean economy. Also, after a two-week period in
Santiago when I first arrived as a missionary, I was sent to my first official area, which
was an extremely poverty-stricken neighborhood in Calama, the town that was home to
the miners who worked the gargantuan open-pit Chuquicamata copper mine in the remote
Atacama Desert.

**DIA DE LOS MUERTOS**

During the preparation of the exhibition, I attended the *Dia de los Muertos*
celebration at Multicultural Education and Counseling through the Arts (MECA) in the
Heights neighborhood of Houston. Walking there from a friend’s house, I saw a pile of
wood from a fence that had been torn down. I salvaged this bit of the gate and
reproduced stencil of the skeletal astronaut that I had photographed in Santiago’s
República neighborhood. While it is literally a piece of a dismantled wall, the piece also
represents a bit of the parade of non-sequiturs one encounters in the day-to-day of
fieldwork as well as the ephemera of relationships, walls, fences, ideas, theories, life
experiences, and dreams. The piece adds to the *bricoleur* feel of the show and also serves
as a memento of my friend Tish Stringer and my friend Valerie Olson, whose
ethnographic work was at NASA in Houston.
**REMINGTON**

The series of three stencils leading to the second floor of the art gallery are reproductions of the 1858 Remington sidearm that Orrin Porter Rockwell carried with him as he worked as Brigham Young’s so-called “avenging angel.” Rockwell had served as Joseph Smith’s personal bodyguard, and when he was assassinated, Brigham Young employed him. He was feared and revered in the early Mormon Empire of Deseret. This piece is also a gift to the chair of the Visual and Dramatic Arts Department at Rice University who is an expert on the American Western film, and responsible for making this show possible. The three stencils have a permanent home in the gallery.

**LEO**

February 8, 2006, I received a cadaveric kidney transplant at University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston, Texas. After having been on dialysis for three and a half years, the transplant freed me from the tether of mechanized blood filtration – a gift that made the research in Chile possible. This piece is a memorial for Manuel Deleon, the donor. His surname translates to “of the lion.” As tribute, I named my kidney Leo. This stencil of a lion is reproduced from a stencil I photographed in Santiago.

**EAT THIS**

One of the largest and most controversial pieces in the show was my eight-by-eight foot reproduction of Contra-Golpe’s stencil that I have entitled Eat This. The stencil was created by Acuario and was included in the anti-war calendar the collective produced in 2004, which came complete with cardboard stencils for mass reproduction. Acuario has gone on to show the piece in various parts of the world and to stencil it on
many different media, including a McDonalds’ food tray; however, it had never been reproduced in the United States, nor in such a large format. When I first encountered the stencil on a wall in Providencia – Santiago’s financial district and former home of my mission offices – I was startled by its frankness. The stencil, like so many I discuss in this dissertation and that I reproduced for the show, embeds multiple layers of meaning and affords a wide range of interpretations. Before the show opened, the iconic McDonald’s image and color – red and yellow – caught the attention of students attending English as a second language classes across from the gallery, and many photographed the stencil, while others wanted to know when the restaurant would open for business.

I included a five-minute video of an interview with members of the Contra-Golpe collaborative as a part of this section of the exhibit. Acuario and others were kind enough to invite me to their shared apartment where they allowed me to videotape the production of a comic-inspired stencil and interview them for my project. In addition to the video and the stencil, I displayed three photographs from the interview on an adjacent wall. The three parts comprise the entire piece, *Eat This*.

*José Smith (Prop 8)*

The largest stencil in the show was the series of seven stencils taken from a daguerreotype of Joseph Smith. The seven Josephs were in different colors borrowed from the first rainbow flag used by the gay rights movement, and thus includes two shades of blue. The stenciled busts were five feet high and together extended thirty-three feet.

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8 Later, I would find that a merchant “stole” the design from Acuario and printed t-shirts for sale in his retail outlet.
feet in length. Each color required an entire can of spray paint. This piece is boldly
colored to evoke the work of Keith Haring, who chose to work in bold bright colors. The
show was produced after the proposition to ban same-sex marriage in California was
passed, largely due to the monies provided by lay members of the Mormon Church
within California and throughout the United States. Despite my knowledge of Mormon
document, as explained in chapter 1, the effort was very disappointing. Many American
gay Mormons retain hope for an amicable resolution to the doctrinal conflict that
excludes them; but non-Mormon gays felt blindsided by an institution that has fought
against codified gay unions at every turn throughout the United States. I was most
saddened to learn that one of the members of the Rice University Board of Trustees, a
fellow Mormon, Lawrence E. Simmons, donated $25,000 to the “Yes on 8” campaign.
This piece was intended to be my own form of protest; indeed, it is the quintessential
example of what I learned during the course of this research project. I internalized the
modes of stencil production, which included observing local political controversies and
externally responding in a “visually aggressive” form of stencil art action. The rainbow
Joseph Smith is a direct response to the Mormon Church’s openly aggressive campaign
against gay rights.

TOTEM

In homage to five anthropologists and sociological theorists who influence my
work – implicitly or tacitly – I painted a totem in turquoise, black and red to evoke the
traditional heraldic poles of the Pacific Northwest. True to the traditional purposes of the
misnamed totem poles, I invoke my theological “ancestors” as a means of declaring my
anthropological lineage. Low man on the totem pole was actually a woman, American
anthropologist Margaret Mead, who together with her then-husband Gregory Bateson was one of the first to use visual methodologies in ethnographic research. I stencil her here the way I saw her appear on the Phil Donohue show when I was a young teenager: adorned in her red cape and carrying her Arapeshian staff. Above her on the pole I placed Michel Foucault, to whom I have not referred to in the dissertation, but whose work underpins much of the way I think about anthropology and society. Next I placed a young, handsome Claude Levi-Strauss, who wrote the influential study Totemism, and whose theories of bricolage inform much of my work. Next, I placed the iconic image of Franz Boas photographed posing as a Kwakiutl Eagle Dancer. The crowning figure on the pole is an iconic representation of Clifford Geertz, the father of interpretive anthropology: a cock. The cock is in full ruffled-feather stance and poised for attack. The stenciled evocation of Geertz is to represent his most well-known article: “Deep Play: Notes on a Balinese Cockfight.”

STILETTO

At the base of the staircase leading to the second floor of the gallery, I stenciled a red high heel shoe to invoke the spirit of transvestitism – an allusion to the notions of the two-spirit found in some Native American traditions including the Mapuche of Chile. Also, this was a dedication to a friend who has seen me through the dissertation process, art historian and counselor, Susan Romanelli. Her office is adorned with various artistic renderings of high heel shoes. Finally, the stilleto was placed strategically to be seen and

9 1963.
enjoyed by my friend Rachel Boyle who is fond of high heels, and the women who wear them.

**ARCHAIC REVIVAL**

Proceeding up the stairs, I sprayed small figures above the handrail that I took from a book written by avowed techno-psychonaut Terence McKenna, entitled *Food of the Gods: The Search for the Original Tree of Knowledge*. Before I became an anthropologist, McKenna inspired me to consider an alternate version of the creation stories that I had been socialized to believe as a Mormon. The running figures in his book were reproduced from rocks on the Tassili plain of North Africa where, McKenna posits, the artists who etched them into the rock wall were members of an ancient entheogenic mushroom cult.

**WHERE THE STREETS HAVE MANY NAMES**

Upstairs on a wall eight-by-twenty feet, I painted stencils and affixed with wheat paste photographs of stencils printed on translucent paper. The photos were part of my computer and Flickr archives, as well as original works. This part of the exhibit was an attempt to reproduce an outdoor city wall, but more so, an innovative approach at displaying the large number of stencils in a limited amount of space.

**PISS: A SELF-PORTRAIT**

The three pictures on this wall illustrate some of the conflicted sentiments I have about institutionalized religion. The centerpiece portrays a stick figure urinating on the side of a Christian church. I was reminded of Andres Serrano’s *Piss Christ*, which
caused a stir in the United States in 1987\textsuperscript{11}, when I really began to come to terms with my sexuality and the conflict with Mormonism that I embodied. Another level of this commentary might include the fact that for the first three and a half years of my doctoral program, urination was problematic and infrequent for me as a person undergoing dialysis for complete renal failure.

\textit{CHILLÁN}

On this wall, I affixed photographs of stencils and as reproduced stencils that I saw being produced by a group of teenagers on a wall in the south-central town of Chillán. The young men talked to my nephew Michael Biggs and me, and allowed us to photograph them and their stencils. When we came back later, they were gone and they had painted over all the stencils.

\textit{PLANTING A SEED}

I procured handcrafted paper with embedded wildflower seeds for this piece, which is a printed photograph of a stencil depicting an anarchist sprinkling water on a flowering anarchy symbol. This is my only evocation of David Graeber’s work \textit{Fragments of an Anarchist Anthropology}, a work that informs some of my ethnographic anarchism.\textsuperscript{12}

\footnote{11 For an interesting discussion of Serrano’s piece see: http://dlibrary.acu.edu.au/staffhome/dacasey/Serrano.html.}

\footnote{12 2004.}
Spiral

The footbridge crossing a major Santiago highway was the locus of a number of stencils that appear in the exhibit or on my Flickr page. I generally crossed this bridge everyday on my way from my apartment in Old Santiago toward the center of town. On the east side of the bridge a yellow spiral-shaped sculpture served as a canvas for a number of stencil artists. Apropos of the color, Woodstock (of Charles M. Schultz’s Peanuts comic strip) appeared one morning stenciled all over the sculpture.

Gay Rights

The photographs hung on the wall here were representative of the emergent gay rights movement in Chile. I chose photographs of metacultural objects from the 2007 Pride March and a dramatic, visually arresting image of two women kissing stenciled on red wall.

Otpor! (Resistance!)

The raised fist is a nearly universal sign of resistance, rebellion, and solidarity. When I first became interested in stencil street art, I encountered information about the Serbian youth movement that grew to overthrow Slobodan Milosevic. Otpor was formed on October 10, 1998, in response to repressive university and media laws introduced earlier that year. In the beginning, Otpor’s activities were limited to the University of Belgrade. As the movement grew, and the stencil was reproduced all over the nation, Milosevic’s totalitarian regime crumbled. I borrowed the design of this stencil and reproduced my own version painted in pink to represent the Gay Rights Movement.

SNAPSHOTS

On this large wall, I spread with significant space between each, photographs from my fieldwork that were evocative of the street experience, including the chaos caused by Transantiago, which is discussed in earlier chapters. These photographs, like all the others in the show, were hung with copper wire from copper screws and affixed with copper alligator clips.

CASA DEL SEÑOR PEEP SHOW

This piece is a multi-media installation that could stand alone without the rest of the exhibition. The gallery and I chose to put a notice outside the installation to discourage minors from entering and viewing it. This sign is not dissimilar to the full-access temple recommend issued only to worthy adults in the Mormon Church. However the reasons for my notification were not at all the same. The installation is evocative of Jeffrey Kripal’s notions of telling secrets – institutional and personal. The deepest secret is revealed in the video, which explicitly alludes to my personal struggle with the cognitive dissonance I experienced as a gay Mormon before such a category existed.14 The four-minute played on a television set at the back of a small, closed space, above which were projected in a distorted angle a slideshow of photographs of Mormon temples. The video begins with a young man  

14 Throughout this dissertation I have shown that this category continues to be contested by members of the Mormon hierarchy and faithful followers.
The allusions are clear. The television and the slide projection are situated between stencils of two black and gold phalli, placed to echo the black and gold stencils of the iconic Angel Moroni that adorned the entrance to the peepshow outside. Moroni’s fictive gold-leaf image is placed atop every Mormon temple where his trumpet proudly and erectly announces the coming of the *Book of Mormon*. Moroni faces east to index the fast-approaching Second-Coming of Christ – a commonly held belief in the otherwise modernist Mormon Church. On opposing walls, as witnesses to the pure and profane juxtaposition of phallus and temple, I placed stenciled images of

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15 I have chosen to delete the video from the attached DVD and its explanation to avoid provoking scandal, offense, and litigation.
Boyd K. Packer and Dallin H. Oaks, two Mormon apostles who have been particularly strident in their anti-gay rhetoric.\textsuperscript{17}

\textbf{Mystique}\textsuperscript{18}

The final stencil of the show is a representation of the X-Men Comic character, Mystique. For my purposes here she was iconic of the end result of the entire project: a new entity that is capable of incredible shape-shifting theoretically, in translation, and interpretatively. The show became for me a mysterious creation: a visual ethnography like nothing I had personally ever witnessed. The stencil of Mystique was a four-layer piece (meaning that it require four separate stencils cut and sprayed in reverse sequence) that was flawed by a erroneous cut made during the stencil creation. The flaw in the stencil works to index the flaws inherent in any ethnographic research, and necessary when one attempts to create something with few precedents. Mystique also represents the shape-shifting necessary for any ethnographer who must learn to adapt to each new site within a field and to position herself in the most advantageous way for the optimal observation and the most salient participation for successful ethnographic practice.

This chapter can only approach an elaboration of the sensorial experience of standing in the gallery and seeing the exhibition. The closest approximation to that sensory experience now can only come from viewing the DVD of the show that you will find attached to the back cover, or the video that is housed permanently on-line.

\textsuperscript{17} I have discussed this anti-gay rhetoric in both Chapter one and two.
\textsuperscript{18} "Mystique is a mutant shape shifter with the ability to psionically shift the formation of her biological cells at will to change her appearance and thereby assume the form of other humans. She can also alter her voice to duplicate exactly that of another person. Originally, it was clearly stated that Mystique's powers were limited to appearances only; she could not assume the powers of the people she morphed into or alter her body to adapt to different situations." http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mystique_(28comics).
Presumably, there is no conclusion to this work, however terminal the written document may be. I imagine the ideas, like the individuals and groups discussed here, continuing to live and breathe; and that can only be accomplished if they remain somehow fluid, inconclusive, and incomplete. I am happy to note that the DVD of the exhibition will reside not only in the pocket affixed to the back cover of the printed edition of this dissertation, but also will be accessible through the Rice University Digital Repository on the Internet, a first for the Rice Department of Anthropology. That makes the work pioneering and befitting its subject matter: emergent social and art movements.

Gay Mormons and Stencilistas who participated in this research continue to change beyond what I have been able to document here. The perennial dilemma of the ethnographic present is that it is always already receding into the linear past. Indeed, the gay Mormons who participated in this research may have moved beyond the fellowship
of Afirmanión, which is often little more than a temporary refuge for those seeking to emerge from the closet and leave the Mormon Church. Likewise, many of the Stencilistas may no longer skulk the streets spray-painting their work on public walls, as this practice tends to be the purview of young people with few responsibilities associated with full-time careers in graphic design or the “legitimate” Santiago art world. Afirmanión continues to be a heterodoxic group outside the mainstream fellowship of the Chilean Mormon community; however, Contra-Golpe and other Stencilistas have moved well into the mainstream Chilean art community.

A standard dissertation conclusion requires that I recapitulate the arguments made and elaborated in each preceding chapter being sure to inform the reader what she should have learned from my research, and perhaps suggesting what might be done with the findings. It would explain how I juxtaposed the two categories of gay Mormon and Stencilista, embedding myself as the third and mediating category, which permitted me to discuss the supposed incommensurability of the two social groups, and how my comparative work indicates that they are more commensurable than first expected. The conclusion would suggest that this work contributes another glimpse at understanding the diversity of experience common in the human condition.

If this were a traditional dissertation, I would suggest that this project has not necessarily been an ethnographic account, but rather a praxology: a descriptive comparison of practice. In this praxology of Chilean Stencilistas and gay Mormons, we have discussed heterodoxic practices that coexist and generate practices of orthodoxy, which for some within these very fluid and unbounded categories creates a disquieting tension, while for others such tension provides material for creative expression and
critique. I might suggest to the reader that this praxology was most prosaically and artistically evoked through my practice of artist-anthropology, which allowed me to create an art exhibit in a public/private space quite unlike the streets in Santiago which was yet mimetic of the practice from those streets. As with the Stencilistas who populate this research, the space of critique is found near the universities.

Finally, if this were a traditional dissertation, I would suggest that the process of doing fieldwork has led to my development of a praxology of gay Mormons and Stencilistas, while also developing a methodology of artist-anthropology that makes this praxology somewhat distinctive. I developed and implemented a research practice as my fieldwork evolved. The writing process for this dissertation accompanied the production and implementation of a visual project that embodied my research practice and thus embodied the theory and illustrated theoretical positions that were always already embedded in that practice. In other words, the practice elaborated the theory that was implicit in the methodology. That strategy, I have determined, is what a multi-sited, visually praxologic approach in contemporary anthropology is all about.
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