

Kathleen Irwin
University of Regina
3737 Wascan Parkway
Canada
1 306 585 5519
Kathleen.Irwin@uregina.ca

Crossing Over: International Tele/digital Performance

This paper discusses Crossing Over, a hybrid collaboration, traversing disciplines, geographic borders (Holland/Canada), art and pedagogy, theory and practice. Central to the process is the bridging of communities and cultures through a web-based project using podcasts as platform for investigating virtual “performance”, and interlocative technology as a practical means of constituting social networks. Exploring ethical research procedures in the arts, the project assists students in developing an awareness of the ethical implications of their work.

Using web-mounted podcasts, participants exchange subjective narratives. Each “packs a suitcase” of belongings (images, dialogue fragments, personal data such as name, address, date of birth etc.) for transportation across a virtual border where contents are scrutinized, recorded and made public. The process replicates the crossing of international borders for purposes of immigration, emigration, asylum seeking, recreational travel etc. Through the process, participants consider the conditions and problems associated with sharing the signifiers of their identity in ways that may deleteriously affect outcomes.

While the project is a fictive exercise, the questions that the project asks are critical in light of the globalization of information that the web, and other “crossing points” represent. Indeed, while globalization purports to open borders, in fact, borders become increasingly difficult to negotiate. They have become opportunities to gather data and track identities. The purpose of the exercise is to question the ethics of such procedures and to determine our roles and responsibilities in posting and sharing information through technology assisted art practice.