

THE WHO I AM PROJECT

LESSON 1: INTRODUCTION TO IDENTITY

The goal of The Who I Am Project is to help us better understand the identity formation as a process by questioning our perceptions about how our own identities are formed. One might think of identity formation as a formula such as:

Who I Think I Am + Who Others Think I Am + Who I Want to Be = Who I Actually Am

This formula is a good place to start our project to explore the very nature of identity. The following lessons will take us through each part of this formula while examining the work of various artists and how they explore identity.

Let's take a look at the definition of identity. Language theorist, Derrida's concept of sous rature ("under erasure") "is the act of writing a word and then crossing it out" (Dimitriadis & Kamberelis, 2006, p. 103). For example: These were the best days.

ARTIST

Daniel Joseph Martinez

Contemporary Artist

The Los Angeles-based American artist Daniel Joseph Martinez often uses language, in the form of both found text and his own writings, to explore a variety of issues in contemporary urban society. Thought-provoking and sometimes funny, these texts address concerns including violence, personal and collective identity, political authority, and class struggle.

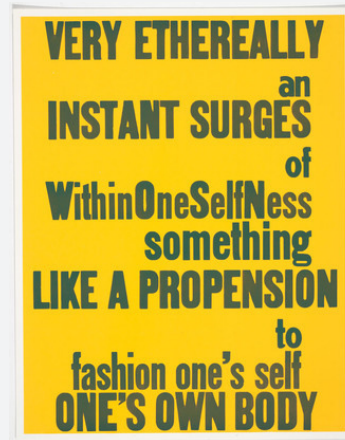
ARTMAKING

Found Text Self Portraits

mixed media, newspapers, magazines,

Instructions

1. Consider the "Who I Think I Am" dimension of the identity formula
2. Collect texts from books, magazines, and other print materials that you think relate to who you think you are (not).
3. Create a collage of these texts and apply Derrida's concept of erasure to illustrate who you are not
4. Take a picture of your collaged text portrait and post it to Instagram using #WhoIAmProject



If Only God Had Invented Coca Cola, Sooner!
Or, The Death of My Pet Monkey, Daniel
Joseph Martinez. 2004.