Images of a World: Is Propaganda Pedagogical?

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Abstract

Images are everywhere. To take one example, most of us carry cameras around in our pockets, use them apparently indiscriminately and then broadcast the images we capture openly around the world. These images, by virtue of the fact that they are broadcast, represent a thing to which the image creator intends to draw our attention.

Just as the image creator seeks to show their audience something, so too does the educator, using pedagogical reduction, and the propagandist, via propagandistic reductions. This thesis will argue that image, pedagogical reduction, and propaganda are interlinking concepts resembling a Russian doll-like conceptual framework: both pedagogical and propagandistic reductions are particular instances of image, and propaganda is an even more particular instance of a pedagogical reduction. From this, it can be suggested that propaganda is pedagogical and, indeed, that pedagogy has the potential to be propagandistic.

This is achieved by setting out definitions of image, pedagogical reduction, and propaganda before linking them together by examining the similarity in the process of creation and, using Barthes' concepts of *studium* and *punctum*, the relation between the image and its audience. The resulting argument will, I hope, inspire further discussion on the themes contained within; most notably the value that comes from juxtaposing a notion of education with a similar concept holding pejorative connotations. By exposing the similarities between pedagogy and propaganda, we can delineate the differences as the qualities that distinguish *good* education from *bad* propaganda.

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Chapter 1. Introduction

1.1   Introduction to the research project

The story of this thesis begins some years ago. I was simultaneously undertaking an intellectual journey in education studies and tutoring students in my local college, many of whom were studying courses in Film and Photography. Given that I had no prior experience in this field, I began to attend lectures in the college delivered by my colleagues so that I could better support my students. It was at one of these lectures – on the subject of Composition and Framing in Iconic Photographs – that I noticed a similarity between how these photographs were created and the idea of pedagogical reduction as it had been described by the lecturers facilitating my own studies in education.

In the naïve understanding of both photographs (images) and pedagogical reduction I held at this time, I saw how the elements of selection, simplification and representation occurred in both. As the photography lecturer explained: the photograph shines a spotlight on one tiny part of the world, while the rest of the world is obscured. Some iconic photographs could tell a different story if the frame opened outward to show what was happening beyond. This resonated with a description of pedagogical reduction as both revealing and concealing a representation of the world for the purposes of showing something (to a student).

I therefore became interested to consider whether the image could be a pedagogical reduction, and if that was the case, whether all images could be pedagogical reductions. Taking a definition of education as an intention to change a student's relation to content, I wondered if all images might be pedagogical in some way since they apparently intend to show something to their viewer. This idea included images with seemingly no link to that which is educational/pedagogical, such as the propaganda posters from World War 2 that I had been collecting for many years. Thus, the question of whether propaganda could be pedagogical was crudely drawn.

My initial question could only be very basically constructed in part because I had a very one-dimensional idea of "image", and the literature with which I was engaged reinforced this one-dimensional view. It is not without irony that I note Berger's influential work Ways

of Seeing (1972) indeed only denotes one way of seeing (via entirely visual recourse) at the expense of all others (perhaps exposing itself as a pedagogical reduction or a work of propaganda in its own right!). A much more open idea of the image is presented by Barthes in Mythologies (2009) – a work with which I was already familiar but revisited when considering image once more. The influence of Barthes is explicit elsewhere in this thesis; however, it was via Mythologies that I began to note that image was not only photographs, paintings, and film – it could also be literature, and the design of a car, toys, or bodies in interaction (echoed by Wulff, 2009).

Unfortunately, when one makes a cursory literature search for image and education, or image and propaganda, it is the one-dimensional idea of visual culture – such that images are photographs, films, and paintings - that persists. Thus, it became apparent that one of the initial tasks I would be undertaking was to construct a definition which was not so reliant on recourse to the individual objects we often ascribe as "images".

With regards to an attempt to link propaganda and education/pedagogy, I am, of course, not the first to do this; neither am I the first to note the role of the image in either. Schembs (2013), for example, discusses the role of the image in Peronist propaganda and its use by the regime as an explicit educational tool. Schembs puts forwards the idea that education may be a tool of propaganda, allowing for the efficient dissemination of ideologies among the population. Cunningham (2000) takes a different route to describe a time in which the British education system (during World War II and in the immediate post-war period) is itself the subject of propaganda films intended to shine a particularly positive light at a time when public confidence was at a low. This reflects two basic themes occurring across the literature I found when searching for propaganda, education, and image: education is either presented as a tool of propaganda, or as a subject of it.

Furthermore, both Schembs and Cunningham, when taken together, echo an idea offered by Ellul (1973), in which he suggests that education systems are a notable wellspring for propaganda, while propaganda simultaneously permeates in and through education systems. The relationship Ellul describes is certainly interdependent, if not symbiotic. Nevertheless, even in a symbiotic relationship, the concepts remain distinct while inextricably linked. Chen (1951) is one of the few authors who have made the point that there is no real distinction between education and propaganda, given that they are, in his view, both means of persuading – he goes further to include the concept of indoctrination

into this potent mix. Yet, for Chen to suggest that these concepts are not distinct, but still to assign different words to separate instances of them, can only connote that Chen understands there to be a nuanced difference between education and propaganda. The problem occurs when that nuanced difference is never examined or identified.

I take a starting point from Chen's consideration here in that I intend to investigate the possibility that there is no distinction between education (or pedagogy) and propaganda. I also understand the possibility that there is a nuanced difference between them. Unlike Chen, I intend to make systematic distinctions between them, and of the concept of image, so that they can/cannot be used interchangeably, depending on my findings as the case may be.

1.2   Significance

To ask the question of whether propaganda is pedagogical can be an uncomfortable one. I acknowledge the pejorative connotations of propaganda (which Fitzmaurice, 2018, explains is the reason why it is often re-labelled as publicity or re-education) which appear dissonant with the optimistic connotations of education. I would argue that this discomfort, rooted in common sense and opinion, is a primary reason as to why a study, such as this one, holds significance. Indeed, in coming to define the concepts of pedagogical reduction and propaganda, it may be discovered that, systematically, there is no real difference between them, which draws a further logical conclusion: if propaganda is pedagogical, then pedagogy is, or at least could be, propaganda. If there is the potential for this to be case, then it calls for our notions of propaganda and pedagogy/education, and the values that we assign to both, to be investigated further and a new perspective taken.

Pedagogical reduction takes a centre stage in this investigation. Despite its reverence as a central feature of education in German discourse in education theory, it remains under-explored in the anglophone world (with some exceptions which will be referenced later in this work). I speculate that this apparent oversight stems from the primacy of a technologized view of pedagogy as an algorithmic program for educating (explored in a later chapter) rather than the humanised view of pedagogy characterised by continental educators (Friesen, 2020). Inevitably, what is presented by me is an attempt at defining

pedagogical reduction in the continental tradition using translated texts from German authors, but with nonetheless unavoidable roots in the anglophone tradition (see methodology). Depending on one's point of view, this can be positively synthetic or horribly bastardising, but nevertheless unique.

I am privileged to have the opportunity to contribute to the nascent area of pedagogical reduction as it begins to be understood in the UK and elsewhere. In the same vein, this thesis also introduces *la transposition didactique* (translated as Didactic Transposition) to an anglophone audience. Conceived by Yves Chevallard in the 1980s[1], *la transposition didactique* is a concept which is similar in spirit to pedagogical reduction such that the thing to be taught goes through a series of changes from its economic/academic context through to the content that is actually taught. This slightly different perspective on the preparation of content *to be* taught, such that it becomes content *actually* taught, allows me to examine pedagogical reduction through this metaphorically filtered lens. In Chevallard's work, influenced by his time as a mathematics teacher, some elements of an algorithmic pedagogy can be found, yet the humanised element of the continental tradition can also be found in his idea *of la transposition didactique*. In parallel with his idea of the teacher-mediator, he too becomes a mediator between the two distinct camps of continental and anglophone thought, both geographically and conceptually.

It is my belief that Chevallard's text has value in the wider discourse of philosophy of education and theory. However, given that there is no English translation, the translations given throughout this thesis arise from the result of my own efforts, from which an inaugural, as yet unpublished, English translation of *La Transposition Didactique* has been completed. This side project carries with it its own significance, and so I will avoid reflecting on it here. The question of translation and interpretation, however, leads neatly into my discussion on the methodological approach I have taken.

1.3   Methodology

This study has three methodological elements. Since a comparison (between propaganda and pedagogy) is being made, an initial conceptual analysis is necessary. Both of these,

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[1] The version I have used was published in 2007.

however, are inevitably framed by hermeneutics: both by virtue of my interpretation of texts and image-objects I have engaged with throughout this project, but also in my interpretation and preconceptions of those concepts I will be investigating. For brevity, my methodology can be described as a hermeneutic conceptual analysis and comparison. To further explain how this methodology comes to be used, I will describe how each stage of my research will be carried out.

1.3.1   Dealing with preconceptions

At the outset, before any search or engagement with material could be made, in the interests of a hermeneutic analysis I took account of the preconceptions I held with regards to the main concepts at play in this thesis: Image, Pedagogical Reduction and Propaganda. This was not undertaken with the view that they should be rejected outright, since it is impossible to set aside everything that one already "knows" (Smythe and Spence, 2012), but as a means of pre-understanding "which in the course of a closer scrutiny or examination may be verified, falsified, or modified" (Fehér, 2015, 283). Indeed, as Fehér – invoking Gadamer – continues, it is only because of these pre-understandings that we can conduct a critical scrutiny resulting in the possibility of a view being formed. Acknowledging such pre-understandings, therefore, constitutes an important initial step in this investigation.

With all of this in mind, I composed short definitions (around two pages in length) of each concept as I understood them at the time, deliberately without explicit reference to literature (although each definition is of course the result of a lifetime's engagement with not only literature, but the entire sphere of my historical, social, and cultural context). Evidence of these rudimentary definitions can be found at the beginnings of the relevant chapters, in which the basic or popular understandings are laid out in preparation for closer, critical examination.

Furthermore, I understand the significance of context to the initial definitions I made. I am aware that my pre-understandings of concepts are rooted in a perspective that is highly influenced by my life as a white, Scottish woman, educated exclusively in Scottish institutions, living all of my life in Scotland. It is worth considering how much my

perspective would have been altered had I been writing from elsewhere with a different identity and experiences. The resulting thesis would, of course, have been vastly different. It also would not have been mine.

1.3.2 Searching and re-searching

If what I have described above is reminiscent of Heidegger's idea of fore-having (Heidegger, 1999), then his ideas of fore-sight and fore-conception refer in part to the next stages of my process (Heidegger, 1995 cited in Smythe and Spence, 2012). These *fores* seem to me to be elements of the same process. My pre-understanding influences my fore-sight – that is, it influences the decisions I make with regards to what literature and image-objects I feel are appropriate to my project. Furthermore, fore-conception suggests that I already have an idea of what will be encountered as I progress.

After reflecting on my pre-understandings of the main concepts at play in this thesis, I then came to the decision that it was time to read something about each one. My fore-sight was in play as I made a cursory online literature search with the name of each concept as the search term. I am in no doubt that fore-conception took a role as I decided on the books and papers that I did. I decided to choose only one piece of literature – core texts it may be said - for each concept (for reasons that will become clear later in this section). These core texts were as follows:

Image – Ways of Seeing (Berger, 1972)

While Berger holds onto a concept of image that I would later come to reject, I found it an important text to begin to challenge my preconception of image. I will admit that I chose this book because I was somewhat seduced by the idea that he boldly presents on the front cover; that the relation between what is seen and what is known is "never settled". Through a series of photo essays and interweaving ideas from Susan Sontag and Walter Benjamin – whom I would later also come to read – he presents his concept of image as something ethereal while rooting us concretely in a world that is external to us.

Propaganda – Propaganda: The formation of men's attitudes (Ellul, 1973)

This is the most comprehensive thesis that I could find dealing with the concept of propaganda. In it, Ellul is keen that he sets aside any normative idea of propaganda that he may hold (which I suggest in a later chapter may be impossible) in order to construct a systematic definition of propaganda. I was impressed by the scale and the scope of Ellul's investigation and so adopted this as the core text for this concept.

Pedagogical Reduction – Teaching as a Reflective Practice: The German Didaktik Tradition (Westbury, Hopmann & Riquarts, 2000)

Choosing a text for pedagogical reduction became rather more difficult as I was already familiar with, and somewhat influenced by, the work of David Lewin on this topic (2017; 2018; 2020). Given that pedagogical reduction was born in the German Didaktik tradition (*didaktische reduktion*), it made sense to return to its ontological roots and examine its conceptualisation by German educationalists in this edited, and translated, work.

After this relatively straightforward approach to finding literature, my methodology then becomes unorthodox. I took the decision after this point that I would no longer conduct any more systematic literature searches. Heidegger (1993) speaks of a person inclining towards that which inclines itself towards them, driven by a conceptualisation of interest as placing oneself at the centre of a thing and staying there. It is with this idea that I am inspired to construct my personal idea of "research" (or, perhaps more accurately, re-search). By placing myself in "interest," it is a preparation to receive that content which inclines itself toward me (and, as such, to which I can incline myself toward). I may make a search for material and content, but I also open myself up to the possibility for material and content to find me. Searching and re-searching are thus happening contemporaneously throughout. I do not think that this is a radical approach: I strongly believe that astute researchers are engaged in this process constantly, whether they can identify it or not.

Opening myself up to inclination and interest meant that I could, therefore, dispense with the traditional route of laborious literature search and trust in serendipitous finding. Beyond the three core texts that I have identified, all other literature referenced in this

thesis was discovered via citations in texts that I had already read, word of mouth recommendations, or literature that I happened upon in the course of other activities. The resulting thesis, I believe, suffers not from this unusual methodology. If anything, it is more realistically representative of an expedition along the frontiers of one person's imagination (a theme which permeates throughout this work), rather than a piecemeal journey, itinerated and steered wholly by the thinking presented in the literature of others.

I imagine that there will be objections to this approach, not least by those readers and defenders of academic integrity. To this I respond that in research which adopts hermeneutics as its primary approach (with an acceptance that any understanding that comes as a result of this approach can never be extricated from the researcher and the breadth of their context) requires the kind of openness I have described. Any claims that my chosen approach abandons academic (aka scientific) rigour can be swiftly disabused insofar as my suggestion is that academic rigour here, and indeed across disciplines, necessarily exists within this framework of subjective interpretation whether it is readily admitted or not. I admit that I may have tested the boundary of this approach in my work; but of course, in a philosophical sense, challenging a convention does not warrant the instant dismissal of an idea.

1.3.3   Reading and Conceptualising

Given the nature of my method, literature searching, and re-searching, was not a finite activity; that is to say, there were not three discrete periods of collecting, reading, and writing. Thus, collecting and reading often happened contemporaneously with writing. Reading was conducted with a hermeneutic eye – in which I attempted to understand the author's meaning while also realising the inevitability that my interpretation could not be separated from myself: what Heidegger described as a restless to and fro (1995 cited in Smythe and Spence, 2012). The realisation of this also supported a critical reading of the material I used. As such, I was able to analyse concepts as presented by the authors, use my understanding of these to critique them, and consequently present reimagined definitions more closely representative of my conceptualisations.

The reader will also note that, where possible, I have referred to original French literature where it has been available[2]. This is to encourage a less mediated interpretation of these works; in the interests of finding what an author means, the translator – while an indispensable tool for supporting our understanding of otherwise linguistically inaccessible texts – cannot help but impose their own interpretation onto the work-in-translation. Since completing some translations in the course of this project, I am ever more acutely aware of the myriad ways that the translator influences the reader in a particular interpretation of a text, via the decisions they make regarding word choice and inclusion of cultural references. Choosing not to use original French texts of Barthes and Ellul may constitute a limitation of this study; however, in their respective chapters, I have noted words and ideas that I believe are ambiguous, and which the translator may have chosen to present these in a way that sits outside of what I suspect is the intended nuance.

Reading, as I mean it here, does not only refer to literature: throughout my thesis the reader will see evidence of engagement with image-objects that are not textual in nature. Invoking Gadamer's idea that word and image share a common endeavour (2016), it is possible in principle to achieve the same result as with text – to interpret the creator's meaning while understanding that it cannot be separated from me and my context. Of course, the reading of text and the reading of the image has important phenomenological differences which means that the process must be different, but this does not assume that the result must be different. Any images I have used have been read with a semi-educated eye – the same college lecturers who inspired this project at the outset were also kind enough to give me a rudimentary course in image analysis. This informal advice was given with the analysis of photographs in mind; however, the basic analytic elements of framing, composition and symbolism were ones that I noted could be transferred to other images.

By no means do I purport myself to be an expert in image analysis; however, the images are used here primarily to illustrate the definitions I have made and so a deeply sophisticated analysis would not have been required. Indeed, I might suggest that such analyses would have been somewhat obfuscating.

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[2] With the exception of Ellul, Barthes and Sartre. As I had already read these texts in English, any interpretations I could have made from the French would have been heavily influenced by my readings in English.

1.3.4 Comparison

> [C]omparison as the capacity to see, first, sameness in difference, then difference in sameness is one of the key modes of analytic or conceptual thought.
>
> (Friedman, 2011, 755)

When definitions for each concept have been set out, then it comes time to make the comparison(s). In fact, there are a number of comparisons taking place in this work: initially, there is a comparison between image and pedagogical reduction. Later, I compare propaganda with image, which then evolves into a comparison between propaganda and pedagogical reduction.

The process of each comparison is the same: I set out the criteria for comparison and then I adhere closely to the definitions I have set out to examine each concept with regard to these criteria. In my decision to compare *something* to *something else*, I base my choice of criteria on the key aspects of the *something* in question before looking to see if those aspects appear in the *something else*. Thus, my comparison is very much influenced by the choices made as to what occupies the positions of *something* and *something else*. I will say, with utmost transparency, that I based this decision on the order that they appear in the thesis. As the reader will come to note, the order of appearance has been carefully chosen as moving from discussing the general to the particular (as evidenced most explicitly in the penultimate chapter).

The comparison method I have chosen to follow is that which Friedman describes as a juxtapositional collage (2011, 759). Friedman in fact refers further to this method as "cultural parataxis" with the idea that it should place two texts in comparison from strikingly diverse contexts; however, given that the majority of my chosen texts come from Europe (an admitted limitation of my research method), I cannot justify describing my method in this way. Nevertheless, I somewhat adopt the idea of juxtapositional collage as putting texts "side by side, each in its own distinctive context, but read together for their in/commensurability, texts in collage produce new insights about each, as well as new theoretical [or conceptual] frameworks" (Friedman, 2011, 759, parentheses added). It is not

only the texts that are in juxtaposition here, but the hermeneutic element of this study comes into play as my own context also becomes a part of the collage. This method becomes more than assessing the similarities and differences of each concept but noting that that these similarities and differences are there, and then using them to generate new ideas about that concept. Or, in this case, using them to illuminate something that is not new but has been hidden in plain sight all along.

A limitation of any comparison approach is the propensity of the researcher to force their definitions of concepts and, therefore, manipulating the resulting comparison to fit the mould of their hypothesis. A hermeneutic approach must also accept the possibility that an interpretation of such concepts by the researcher may be skewed not only to support a hypothesis, but also skewed by the researcher's preconceptions. Just as I had set out my preconceptions at the very outset of the project, so too must I reflect on any hypothesis that I may have had at the outset. Of course, this hypothesis would also be influenced by preconceptions. In the interests of transparency, I had a null hypothesis at the outset of this project: I would have suggested that propaganda was not pedagogical. Indeed, as my preconceptions were examined and investigated, thereby evolving into new conceptualisations, this hypothesis too became moot.

1.3.5   Structure

The completed work therefore represents a close following of this methodology, as much as in structure as in content. In the next chapter, I begin by looking at the concept of Image, rejecting the easy idea offered in Berger's text, and constructing an ontology of image and imagination which takes from ideas in Islamic philosophy as well as from elsewhere in Europe and the US. I look at the doxastic belief that image and image-object are the same thing, and I make a definition of image, before giving examples of what would constitute an image-object via this definition.

Chapter three – Pedagogical Reduction – starts with a definition of education. This is inevitable if pedagogical reduction is to be considered a central feature of education, as Lewin (2017) suggests. From there a definition of pedagogy is then given before this is used to further delineate the concept of pedagogical reduction. I look at selection, simplification,

and representation as the three elements of pedagogical reduction, and I also look at pedagogical reductions (noun) before offering a definition of this central concept.

With two major concepts identified, the next chapter deals with a comparison of image and pedagogical reduction to determine whether they can be linked. A solution is offered with the help of Barthes (2000) and his twin concepts of *studium* and *punctum* which I relate to both image and pedagogical reduction. Using the example of an image-object which is also a pedagogical reduction – the novel Flatland (Abbott, 1992)– I exemplify how *studium* and *punctum* is present in both. From here it is now possible to consider how propaganda might enter into the mix.

My conceptual investigation of propaganda occurs in chapter five. This begins with a deliberation on Ellul's intention that one should set aside any pejorative connotations of propaganda that are held by the investigator. In line with my methodological approach, this is of course not entirely possible, but I do agree with Ellul that the normative value one might place on propaganda can sully any resulting investigation. I take Ellul's definition of propaganda, and I dissect it in order to build my own definition which acknowledges the role of myth in propaganda.

The final chapter then takes image, pedagogical reduction, and propaganda to draw a conclusion as to whether propagandistic reductions and pedagogical reductions are the same, or at least similar. Firstly, I compare propaganda to image to examine whether the link I established between image and pedagogical reduction also holds up for propaganda. I then go on to compare propaganda to pedagogical reduction before I offer a conclusion as to whether propaganda can be considered pedagogical, along with a reflection on the limitations of the study and the potential for future research.

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Having now described my rationale and my method, I invite the reader to step into the image that I present here – my description of this text as an image will become clearer in the proceeding discussion.

Chapter 2. Image

If one were to assert now that we live in a world which has a preoccupation with, or perhaps an addiction to, images, it is likely a comment that would pass without argument. Indeed, it is almost *de rigeur* for any musing on image to begin with such an observation - certainly now and seemingly over the past 50 years or so (Berger, 1972; Huppauf & Wulf, 2009; Leith, 2020; Sontag, 1973). Such assertions are made on the assumption that the reader has a clear notion of image; any discussions are usually about those images which are deliberately created (Wulf, 2009). Photographs, paintings, and films in this sense are popular artefacts - or image-objects - of study. In these particular cases, where the media is presented synonymously as defining the image, discussions fall rather flat – both literally and metaphorically.

Nevertheless, a general sense of the aforementioned image-objects as the common understanding of image (Lechte, 2013) is a pertinent starting point for an exploration which aims to deconstruct and (re)build a definition of image which can be effectively used to identify instances of image to be used in this and later chapters.

2.1 The doxa of image as image-object

The popular conflation of the image with the image-object – the doxa as it is described by Lechte (2013) - has considerable, historical roots. Mondzain (2009) tells us that it was an ambition of the Church[3] to gain mastery of image and vision leading to the creation of a doctrine intended to "maintain the monopoly of the visible and invisible" (82). This first propagated the belief that image is naturally related to vision. Thus, the image-object may have begun to gain capital at this point as the material incarnation, or visible representation, of an image as something invisible; however, it was certainly not the crux of the image-object's invention. We have been compelled to create such objects since the

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[3] Mondzain does not explicitly specify which Church but given that he writes of mediaeval times it can be safely assumed that he is referring to the Catholic Church in this instance.

earliest homo sapiens made primitive carvings on the walls of their cave dwellings (Leith, 2020).

Already, the briefest foray into the history of the image-object suggests a significant entanglement between it and image. It may seem to be a relation of one-sided dependency: the (visible) image-object cannot exist without the (invisible) image, although the converse may not necessarily be true. However, another reading could pit them as antonymous; visible and invisible can be considered clear opposites (of course, to regard a thing as opposite to another thing still denotes an interrelation). To define image in its own right, an unravelling must be attempted of image and object. Since we have been gifted a possible distinction with image as invisible and image-object as visible, I will use this is as a starting point for addressing this Gordian knot.

To say that something is visible seems to invoke particular suggestions of *looking* and *seeing* as faculties of sight. The visible is that which is perceptible by sight, as Aristotle asserted: "The object of sight is the visible." (cited in Mondzain, 2009, 86). Straightforward, indeed, if we accept that Aristotle is referring to *eyesight*, and thus looking and seeing as functions of *the eye*. This may well be the case, but this would then render every material object an image-object, by virtue of its visibility to the eye, and we might consequently be faced with the much more complicated task of arguing for or against all of material reality as image-object[4], which lies somewhat beyond the scope of this thesis. In any case, we can make ambiguous interpretations of sight, looking and seeing which indicate that Aristotle's apparently easy definition of the visible is actually fraught with complication.

If Aristotle is not referring to eyesight, then what else could he mean? I invite you to consider the concepts of blindsight, hindsight and foresight. I argue that each of these allows us to *look* and *see* with no recourse to, or from, the eye. Blindsight refers to the idea that non-visual sense data can be transformed by the brain into visual images (Huppauf & Wulf, 2009), and is perhaps a neater term to describe what Merleau-Ponty (2004) meant when he suggested that some blind people can picture colours when they are described using sounds, for example. Granted, this lies a little closer to eyesight, in that the *seeing*

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[4] An argument that Jean Baudrillard has already laid out quite eloquently in Simulacra and Simulation (1995).

aspect still pertains to the visual but interesting to note that these can be generated without eyesight.

Hindsight and foresight can be considered more distinct from eyesight. Hindsight refers to our ability to evaluate past situations and reflect on how they played out, possibly using these reflections to alter our future behaviour. Foresight is what we call an attempt to predict how situations might play out in future so that we can take appropriate measures to avoid (or exploit) them. In either case, the eye has no role, and visualisation only a contingent one if it is assumed that people employ either of these modes of sight via mental pictures. However, we still consider hindsight a method of *looking back*, and foresight of *looking forward,* to make realisations – perhaps to *see*. This indicates that there is perhaps more to looking than using one's eyes. These are only some examples; going broader, we encounter insight – the practice of engaging deeply with oneself (or some other subject) to achieve a higher level of understanding; and oversight – an error, usually minor, caused by not paying careful enough attention to the task at hand.

In common parlance, too, we ask people to look at things, and we often talk about seeing things, which do not relate to eyesight. We might implore our interlocutor to "Look!" before meticulously setting out what we wish to convey. We do so in an effort to get them to *see* our point, upon which they might even make such an exclamation: "I see!". In this case, we employ seeing as analogous to understanding, and what becomes visible, perhaps as the fog of obscurity and misunderstanding lifts, is not visual sense data but the essence of an idea.

Aristotle may well be right in saying that the object of sight is the visible; each of the aforementioned modes of sight offers the opportunity to *look* and *see*. If the image-object concerns the visible, then it can be the object of these modes of sight. It may be an object of any of the modes each taken separately, or altogether. We can say that it is not always necessarily a tangible object such as the photograph as artefact proposed by Sontag (1973) despite the suggestion that the immaterial mental visualisation and the material image-object are the same (Huppauf & Wulf, 2009). It can therefore be suggested that the idea of image-object as a material object which is also an image (Lechte, 2013) is inaccurate, given that instances of the visible (as idea, perhaps) may occur without any relation to the material.

Having considered the image-object as something which is visible, I will now consider the idea of image as invisible, away from its theological origins so described by Mondzain (2009). In the literature I have consulted, the image, when considered without reference to image-objects, has been spoken of as something that is not there (Schwarte, 2009), or an "utter transparency" (Lechte, 2013, para. 1). Both descriptions are slightly different from the idea of invisibility if we accept a definition of invisible as "impossible to see" (Cambridge English Dictionary, 2020). We might be able to accept that something that is not there is also invisible, given that it would indeed be impossible to see it. However, the connotations offered by the word *invisible* suggest something which is there but is unable to be seen or is yet to be revealed: it simultaneously holds the potential to be seen and not seen. Consider a cloak of invisibility - inspired by the fantastical world of witchcraft and wizardry, but now under development by the Vienna Institute of Technology (2017) - which shrouds the wearer so that they can no longer be seen but are still present. If the cloak were to be removed, the wearer would become visible. What Schwarte seems to suggest is that the image is never actually there: it is absent. Yet, he also describes it as the imaginative process of the viewer which relies on the active presence of the viewer. Image in this case cannot be absent, as it exists in the imaginative faculty of the present viewer.

I am unsure whether Lechte's description of utter transparency is any more in keeping with the idea of image as invisible. Transparency suggests something which can be *looked through*. It is a term used in many spheres – politics, research, journalism - to suggest a clarity (Han, 2015). Yet, invisibility is rather the opposite as it denotes a difficulty seeing, an obscurity. Lechte confuses his definition still further when he questions whether an image can "allow to appear that which is…forever hidden" (Lechte, 2013, para. 1), because he is now suggesting that image is a mode of making visible (a mode of sight). Indeed, to turn something from opaque to transparent can allow for something to be seen, but what is revealed lies beyond the transparent object. Think of a window: when it is placed in a wall, it reveals the world outside of the wall, but the window does not reveal itself without some reference to its opaque surroundings (a frame, a handle etc.). This window analogy is quite pertinent when we interpret Lechte's description of image as "utter transparency" to be a clarity which allows something to appear which would otherwise be hidden. Image as a transparency, then, does not refer to the image as the invisible object itself, but the lifting of the invisibility cloak to reveal the object underneath.

This idea draws somewhat from Aristotle. As mentioned, Aristotle defined the visible as the object of sight. However, he went on to say that for something to be seen, it needs to be coloured and it needs to have light. Colour is visible; light is not. Colour can exist latent in the darkness to be revealed by light. (cited in Mondzain, 2009). Light is a transparency which renders visibility; it can reveal but is, in itself, difficult to apprehend (Hughes, 2002). Once again, we can be forgiven for thinking that Aristotle may only be concerned here with colour as it appears, when lit, before our eyes. However, Mondzain offers a metaphorical position himself when he says: "seeing is…attaining the colour of life" and "Seeing an image is not dying." (91). Clearly, colour is now no longer referring to the hues of the spectrum; it is a symbol of life itself. It is not such an obtuse metaphor when we consider that we may speak of someone having had a colourful life, or the colour in a person's cheeks as a determination of health and vitality. Seeing an image (and thus not dying) needs both the colour and the light. So, while the colour and the light may exist independently of each other, it is only when they are together that we can live - or *see*.

Relating this colour/light analogy back to the entanglement of image and image-object, we might say that image is an amalgam of the colour- the visible image-object, and I reiterate that this includes that which can be *seen* but is intangible - and the light we need to see it; this is less the absence suggested by Schwarte, and more Lechte's transparency as a means of revealing something that would otherwise remain unseen. Considered in this way, both the image-object and the image are mutually reliant on each other and, as such, the idea that the two should be separated (while possible) is moot. It is fair to now say that an image is both the coloured image-object, and the revealing (image)light. The discussions which describe particular objects as images, are not inaccurate inasmuch as an image-object needs the (image)light to fulfil its purpose to be seen; as Belting (2009, 94) suggests, "Images are always intended to be looked at by someone". Even Benjamin's (2003) distinction between the cult image intended to be seen by no-one, and the exhibited image intended to be seen by everyone, still makes this case since all images will be seen by at least one person – those who create them. However, while we might end an attempted detangling here, this is not a definition of image. To say that image is the interrelation of object and light is, again, broad enough to render all of reality, when it is out of darkness, an image. Therefore, I am drawn to further investigate the ideas of colour and light in closer detail.

2.2 Light is Imagination

To rest on a definition of image as the interrelation of object and light is not only too broad, but it also assumes a superficial understanding of both object and light. I have mentioned already that image-object, as something which can be seen, does not necessarily refer to those tangible artefacts with which we are familiar. It can also be a mental picture, an idea, a dream, and I will come back to this in more detail later. I wish to deal with light first, as this is something that is only touched upon in the previous section, and the reader could be forgiven for thinking that it refers to light in its physical form, as the electromagnetic radiation that can be detected by the human eye (Stark, 2020). Again, this is only of relevance when what is to be seen is in fact visual. Even then, the physical light can only illuminate the material, offering it up as visible to the eye, but to *see* it needs something more. As Mark Twain pointed out: "you can't depend on your eyes when your imagination is out of focus" (1889, 422).

Figure 1 September. Screenshot adapted from Leith, A. (Producer & Director) (2020, March 2). A New Reality. [Television series episode]. In The Open University (Creator) *Age of the Image.* Scotland: BBC. Copyright 2005 by Gerhard Richter.

Consider the image-object above. Light, in its form as electromagnetic radiation, reveals here the material construction of the object as it appears to the eye: paint on canvas. It is only when the aggregate components of the image-object somehow come together that we are able to see the image. Therefore, light in the physical sense cannot fully reveal the image; it can only flirt with the superficial layers of the image-object.

Plato's Allegory of the Cave, in which a group of prisoners live in a world of nothing but shadows, is sometimes used in visual culture discourse for claiming the difference between image and reality (Leith, 2020; Sontag, 1973). However, Socrates' assertion that "The region which is accessible to sight should be acquainted with the prison cell" (Plato, 1994, 243) is applicable to limitations of sight, and light - in its form as electromagnetic radiation - as its prerequisite, as they are concerned with only the shadows of an image-object. An image cannot come into full visibility without something else: the investment of the viewer's imagination (Schwarte, 2009). I suggest that the imagination is the light we need to reveal the image in its entirety.

Going back to Figure 1, I have purposely resisted explaining anything about the painting, but I will wager that, even with little or no knowledge of the artist, the context or content, the reader has formulated an idea of it. It is a "basic, irresistible intellectual requirement of the spectator" that they look for meaning in everything they see (Balazs, 1970, 119). With a comedian's signature irony, Norm MacDonald perhaps inadvertently reinforces Balazs' point when he describes looking at a painting in his childhood home:

> I decided right then and there to see the picture as it really was. I stared at
> the thing long and hard, trying to only see the paint. But it was no use.
>
> (MacDonald, 2016, 32)

It might be taken from MacDonald's suggestion here that imagination is almost passive, but he goes on later to say that "it takes a powerful imagination to see a thing for what it really is" (32). The application of a powerful imagination cannot be passive. He furthers this point when also describes staring at the picture "long and hard" and imagining the detail of the story in the picture. This denotes that he really was searching for something – and that

something could not be the paint since he knew it was there and wanted to see *only* it. As Balazs suggests, whether he liked it or not, Norm MacDonald was looking for meaning in that painting.

Such a search for meaning is carried out in pitch-blackness without the employment of the imagination, given that in its absence the image-object is only the proximal elements of its material construction and nothing more. Indeed, in psychology, imagination is defined as the ability of the brain to combine elements of the familiar to create new propositions and behaviours (Vygotsky, 2004). If the imagination inspires and weaves the elements of the image-object into something meaningful (Balazs, 2009), then it is not unfair to suggest that it could be analogous to a light which foregrounds something (perhaps a meaning) otherwise hidden in the darkness.

Thus, when it is said that "All images refer to the imagination" (Huppauf & Wulf, 2009, 15), the above argument finds this to be true as it acts as the necessary light to make the image visible. Without imagination, there is no image. However, it is not so simple to render (image)light as imagination without first considering the notion of imagination itself.

When thinking about imagination, it could be suggested that we are dealing with the "realm of the head" (Hall, Barbour, Chamberlain, O'Brien & Harradine, 2015, 105). Imagination has indeed been historically considered from a psychological perspective, and this is perhaps the idea to which Hall et al are alluding. Despite the prevalence of psychological (and other brain-centric) research into imagination, it may be a folly to assign it a role as a mere cognitive function; this, according to Sepper (2013), would be not only a gross misunderstanding of the concept, but would turn imagination into something other than what it actually is. The issue with this assertion is that no one philosopher, psychologist, neuroscientist, or poet (and anyone else who has contributed to discourse on the imagination) can really decide on what imagination is and, therefore, all theories on its ontological base are flawed (Brann, 1991). This renders an all-encompassing definition a pipe dream – at least for now. Nevertheless, my argument that it holds an essential role in the concept of image demands that I at least speculate on what it could be, and what it might do, in this regard.

Retreating as far back as Ancient Greece, and again with Aristotle, we can see a psychological view of the imagination emerging which holds true among relatively contemporary psychologists. Unlike Plato, who held suspicions about images and

imagination, Aristotle found value in the imagination as a faculty which produces, stores, and recalls images used in a variety of cognitive activities (cited in Shields, 2016). Vygotsky's (2004) model of the imagination details it as consisting of two types: reproductive, which recalls previously stored images; and creative/combinatorial which allows a person to create an image (or mental picture) of things that may have happened/may yet happen despite having no previously stored pictures to recall. This relatively modern conceptualisation is reminiscent of Aristotle's view. This definition, which places the formation of images and the apparent memory functions of storing and recalling images at the heart of the imagination, is, in my view, insufficient in that it does not address how images are formed and how they are subsequently held in the mind. The experiments of Alain support my objections here. In his experiments, Alain asked Parisians to recall and count the columns on a staple of the Parisian cityscape, a building they passed daily - the Pantheon. The resulting difficulty they had in carrying out Alain's request suggests that images held in the mind are not so much fixed, but more fleeting (Sepper, 2013). It would seem, then, that imagination as a means of recalling stored images is not, as a primary function, very effective[5].

Taking a psychological position, the formation of images in the mind is a construction from data stored in long term memory (Thomas, 1999), and everything created by the imagination is based on elements taken from reality (Vygotsky, 2004), recombined to make something novel, but never outside the realm of experience. It can incur visual projections of a thing in its absence (Sepper, 2013), or allow us to project ourselves into a situation in order to think about the world from another perspective (Currie, 2002). It is said that imagination need not concern itself with metaphysical possibility. As Kung (2016) notes, it is possible to imagine a wizard casting a magical spell without imagining how magic works which suggests that absolutely nothing, including that which we have never experienced and never possibly could, is beyond imagining. However, the constructionist à la Vygotsky would argue that the image of the wizard casting the spell formed in one's mind is an amalgam of many different elements of deep representations of wizards and magic the imaginer has gathered throughout their life. Could a young child who has never heard the word *wizard,* or seen a picture labelled as *wizard,* possibly imagine one? Vygotsky claims no and argues – contrary to popular belief - that adults have much richer imaginations than

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[5] With some exceptions – for example, in people with eidetic or photographic memories who can recall images with great accuracy.

children by virtue of their greater wealth of experience. His claims are, however, based on the formation of what he calls "appropriate images," so there is every chance that a child can imagine a *wizard* which does not match the criteria for what is deemed an appropriate image. However, would not an imagination that does not rely so heavily on past experience actually be purer, and richer, as so many more doors to (im)possibility remain open?

In popular and technical conceptions of the imagination, the forming and holding of images in mind is on the one hand; on the other it is thought of as the source of creativity (Sepper, 2013), and this belief is the residue of the Romantic ideal of the imagination as opposing the rational view of the psychologists and philosophers. Dismissing the idea that the creative imagination is but a faculty for recombining stored images, they instead viewed the imagination as the "secret ingredient that turns mere mechanical receptivity into mental apprehension." (Thomas, 1999, p 232). Thomas goes on to say that the legacy of the Romantics is the conceptualisation of imagination as the faculty of mental imagery responsible for profound creative insights – insights brought about, it would seem, by the aforementioned elusive, secret ingredient. Clearly hoping for a great psychological breakthrough, Thomas seems to lament the fact that the poets were little inclined to give an account of how mechanical receptivity is indeed turned into mental apprehension, but it is my view that this "principle of synthesis" (so called by Shelley, cited in Thomas, 1999), the details of which remain unexplained by both the poets and the rationalists, lies at the heart of its exciting mystery, and fuels the vigorous pursuit to understand the imagination and its processes, as described by Brann (1991). However, I also speculate that a microcosmic delineation of the imagination and its associated faculties would lead us to be unable to imagine the imagination itself, since for something to be imaginable relies on a level of ignorance. Possession of, and belief in, relevant facts, changes that which was once imaginable to unimaginable (Kung, 2016): such facts when held about the imagination could only threaten its very existence.

Such an idea of synthesis, as posited by the poets, is not so distant from what is suggested by morphology, in which the question of the synthesis of the one and the many is central (Breidbach and Vercellone, 2015). Imagination in this sense is what unites the local and the global – the constituent parts with their immersive totalities. This echoes, in a sense, what was alluded to earlier in this chapter regarding the imagination's propensity to reveal the

image by virtue of its ability to merge the constituent elements of an image-object's material construction.

Whilst posited as opposing viewpoints, the psychological and the poetic definition of the imagination remain firmly fixed on the mental. Furthermore, I see little difference in the Vygotsky's combinatorial model merging images recalled from memory, and the principle of synthesis (as described by Shelley, cited in Thomas, 1999), given that synthesis assumes the fusing of at least two distinct things (in this case the multiple elements which account for mechanical receptivity). In both cases, something different arises when the merging process is complete: Vygotsky calls it a creative reworking of acquired impressions; the Romantic poets alluded to a mental apprehension. Either way, it is indicative of the idea that the imagination cannot create something from nothing.

Indeed, the very idea of spontaneous apparition, perhaps transmitted into the imagination from an external source, was something that could be claimed only by religious people and mystics, according to Vygotsky. I have yet to happen upon a view which categorically disagrees with him in this respect. The medieval Islamic thinker al-Ghazali, whose pro-imagination views stood distinctly apart from the common philosophical views of his time, and furthermore from the latter positions I have described, also assigns special status to the mystic; the symbolic visions of whom are capable of bridging the gap between the visible and the invisible, offering a mode of expression to the incorporeal (Hughes, 2002). As Hughes continues, in al-Ghazali's thoughts, the imagination is the method by which an individual receives knowledge as it arises in there supernaturally and directly from God. While this was only a faculty of the imagination for a select group of people, namely prophets, this remained in opposition to the philosophical enterprise of his contemporaries – notably al-Alfarabi - which promotes the primacy of the intellect.

Al-Ghazali's divine imagination may be called into question, however, in the following way: God inserts knowledge directly into the prophet's imagination, but how does this knowledge come to be interpreted in a way that is meaningful and communicable to the prophet himself, and to others? Even before this, is it necessary at all for the imagined thing to be interpreted and communicable? Perhaps the imagination need not rely on previous memory and experience, but this only is a factor if the imaginer intends on understanding what he/she is imagining and communicating this to others. How could this possibly be done without reference to something that the imaginer has already experienced, or to a

language with which they are familiar? Indeed, the idea of reducing a limitless imagination to fit the limits of the conventions of a language – any language – assumes that the imaginer has previous knowledge of such a language in the first place. For example, if I were to place into the imagination of a learned gentleman in the 19th century the image of a modern-day laptop, in order to make meaning from this he would be forced to use reference points from his own time and space and would not be able to say "It is a laptop" – as such a concept did not exist. He would describe, perhaps, its shape, its colour, its similarity in some respects to a typewriter. Thus, in order to communicate his imagining, he is constrained by the limits of his experience (and language), but in terms of receiving the imagining, in the sense that al-Ghazali's prophet does, he is not in the least constrained. In its faculty to receive, perhaps the imagination is limitless.

Al-Alfarabi, on the other hand, presented ideas which appear to be a precursor to the psychological model of the imagination. He saw imaginal images as the outcomes of purely biological processes; a result of the imagination's role to store and reproduce sense data (Hughes, 2002). Given that al-Alfarabi died c. 995, it is an interesting aside to note that this theory of the imagination, as akin to a capacious (if ineffective) function of the memory, has changed little over the past millennium. Al-Alfarabi shared more in common with the pre- and post-Renaissance Western traditional thinking about the imagination, than with others in the Islamic tradition. While the West took imagination to be necessarily introspective, the Islamic world (for the most part) viewed imagination as inspiration from without (Marks, 2016). For example, al-Suhrawardi argued that the world of images exists independently of the imagination, and that the imagination travels to this world, which he appropriately terms the imaginal realm (also known as *isthmus*).

This imaginal realm, according to al-Suhrawardi, is populated by suspended images. In his time, he described them as appearing in mirrors, metal sheets and still bodies of water (van Lit, 2017). We may recognise these images as those which we term *reflections*, but I do not think it would be unfair to argue that certain image-objects could take their place in al-Suhrawardi's imaginal realm. Indeed, as van Lit tells us, the image manifests on the reflective surfaces of the mirror, but the image is not *in* it; just as an image may manifest itself on a piece of paper (as in a photograph), but the image is not *in* the paper (thus, the photograph is not the image). The imagination, as a traveller to this realm of suspended

images, holds an active role in one's relation to an image: "The image may…be illuminated upon [by] the faculty of imagination" (al-Suhrawardi, cited in Khalilov, 2006).

Imagination, for al-Suhrawardi, was not like memory, but the two were related. He viewed memory as a faculty for remembering the sensual, whereas imagination was needed to breathe life into such sensual memories (Khalilov, 2006). Therefore, memory and imagination still are linked but not in the same ways as we have previously discovered. Whereas the psychological view somewhat repurposes memories by storing, recalling, and combining them – creating something new from old parts - imagination as a vitalising force cannot merely be the reshuffling of previously stored memories. To use an analogy from literature: if the combinatorial view of the imagination can be posited as a kind of inert Frankenstein's monster composed of memories and past experiences, then al-Suhrawardi's view is that the imagination is not the monster, but the jolt of electricity which penetrates its heart and brings it to life.

With the exception of al-Ghazali's divine imagination, it seems to be an accepted view that the imagination relies on the individual, their experience, and their memories in some way. So, to return to the conceptualisation of imagination as the light, or the transparency through which an image reveals itself to us, this view holds seeing an image as an entirely subjective experience. Images do not represent a reproduction of an external world; via imagination they transform an object from the external world into an image available to oneself (Briedbach and Vercellone, 2015). Despite this, some cling to a social notion by suggesting it is a necessary precursor of empathy (Currie, 2002), or that a collective imagination, if such a thing is possible, inspires activism among people by virtue of an intersubjective construction of meaning (Carriere, 2018). Whether entirely subjective, or intersubjective, still agreement remains among these parties that imagination draws from that which we have already experienced.

Of course, a general consensus does not render a definition true. I began this section with an idea of the imagination as the light in which the image can be revealed. As Schwarte (2009) notes, it is the viewer who must make the investment of their imagination for the image to be fully revealed. However, in doing so, the consensus suggests that we rely on the recombination of memories, and this can only impose a constraint on our imaginations, in that anything new which it creates is composed of mutated syntheses of that which has come before in one's personal journey of experience (or one's personal journey and its

relation to the journeys of others, if we accept intersubjective imaginings). It also means that the idea of anything *new* or *original* – in any sphere - is illusory, since anything which is gifted such a description can be nothing more than a reworking of the previous. I will admit to feeling disappointed at this prospect; it denigrates any romantic ideas surrounding the radically creative imagination. Imagination as a series of imaginary deposits from a divine source is an infinitely more inspiring and exciting idea, probably due to the inherent unpredictability of what, when and how they will be received. Provided the images remain in the imagination, in the purest form with no thought or language applied, then the imagination can perhaps remain limitless in the truest sense: both thought, and language, impose constraints. However, without the imposition of thought, or language, the imagination itself might become a prison for an image with no meaning and no means of being communicated, like a holding cell for an ephemeral trifle.

Imagination as (image)light, though, needs thought, at the very least. Without it, an image can only remain somewhat obscured since a full revelation requires an active investment of an imagination, not a passive reception of an image into one. For this reason, al-Ghazali's divine imagination is dysfunctional insofar as it is, provided no thought or language is employed, an example of a receptacle of images without meaning. I further reject the (re)combinatorial conceptualisation of the imagination. To rely on the reshuffling of memories and experiences to create something *new* is not conducive to the idea that the imagination can be open to something radically new. Indeed, a viewer who sees an image for the first time may make references to what they have seen previously in an attempt to make meaning in the image for themselves since we can only recognise something as new because such structures as our (pre-)conceptions allow us to do so (Briedbach and Vercellone, 2015) - but this should not be a full explanation of the imagination's faculty. There must be the opportunity for the new image to be absorbed, and for it to absorb us: if the image is endowed with an entry point, as Briedbach and Vercellone suggest, then imagination allows us to find ourselves in the image, and it in us. *Seeing an image* invites reciprocity, a balance between the passive property of the image waiting to be revealed, and the active faculty of the viewer to reveal it.

My notion of imagination is one which agrees with al-Suhrawardi's as an active, vitalising force. To reveal an image, the light of the imagination cannot remain inert else nothing would be revealed. Furthermore, the imagination cannot merely be a receptacle for images

placed in it by forces outside as, once again, nothing revelatory can come from this passive function until the subject/prophet employs it in an active way via thought, and it is here that a person's memory comes into play as they use what they have seen/heard/known before as reference points to understand the new. Thus, the imagination must be in part combinatorial as there is no way that one could express the content of an image or make meaning of it without reference to what they have experienced before, including use of a language with which they are familiar.

My suggestion is that the imagination could be analogous to a searchlight, or a stage light which alternates between panning the stage and halting where the action is, as these too concentrate themselves on something which has called itself (or which the director/creator wishes to call) to the awareness of the viewer; a curiosity on a stage pervaded, and crafted, by imaginative forces, perhaps (Schwarte, 2009). If it is both pervaded and crafted by imaginative forces, this implies that both the imaginations of the viewer and of the creator of the image-object would be at play. I submit that I have focussed largely on the imagination of the image-viewer over the image-creator, but I would suggest that the image-object itself is an active representation of the image-creator's imagination: he/she has shone their light while crafting their object but when it is offered up to others, it is the responsibility of the viewer to lift the shroud in a manner unique to themselves.

Thus, we can see why the (image)light of the imagination is active, but why is it justified to consider it vitalising?

Image (certainly image making) could be considered to have a relationship with life and death as the making of images was a historical method of survival after death; a way of suspending oneself from "the victory of time" (Bazin, 1960, 4). I am concerned here, however, not with the preservation of a life after death, but with the giving of life to the image. Film offers a straightforward comparison of image and vitality. As Balazs (1970) tells us, a film – as image-object - is nothing but a collection of separate, sectional pictures, an image manifested on celluloid, and it is only by the virtue of the viewer's imagination that they are not held in one's consciousness as a series of still pictures. Of course, this seems such an obvious example since a film is defined (at least legally) as a record of a sequence of visual images intended to show such a sequence as a moving picture (Fisher, 2001). The cinematograph could, arguably, be considered to be doing some of the *bringing to life* for us. However, the illusion of motion so offered by the strategic ordering and timed display of

sequential stills as in film, and of course animation, still relies on the viewer to be open to receiving them as the totality of a film/cartoon, rather than the composite parts of each still image, and each composite part within each of those images. This is true of all image-objects, not only those concerned with imitating movement as Boehm (2009) alludes to when writing on the logic of the image: "there exists a symbiotic relationship between the minuteness and state of elements on the one hand, and the appearance of the image as a whole on the other." (225).

An illusion of life, when considering the propensity of the imagination to vitalise the image, is therefore incidental. When I speak of the imagination as a vitalising force, I consider Briedbach and Vercellone's (2015) assertion that we animate the image that is in us: the image of our world and of ourselves becomes accessible should we traverse its *frame* – the word that Briedbach and Vercellone use to refer to the medium and the style of the image-object. The life that we give to images is, more accurately then both a reflection and a projection of our own lives. When we shine the light of our imagination onto the image, we are not only revealing it, but also, we project our vitality onto the image to see it reflected back at us.

I reiterate that this consideration of the imagination is only a speculation. Having set out the (image)light as the imagination which reveals and vitalises the image, I will now look at the second requirement of *seeing* according to Aristotle – that is, colour.

2.3 The colour is the image-object

Indeed, the imagination in its role as image(light) needs something to train itself on; an image requires colour to be *seen*. A light in an infinite void would be useless as there would be nothing for it to reveal; there is no colour there. Thus, we need a *something*. I suggest that that *something* is what I have been consistently referring to as the image-object.

Again, I emphatically assert: an image-object does not necessarily refer only to those objects we traditionally describe as images. A photograph is an image-object, yes; but so is an idea. It may be a painting, a poem, musical notation, a film, a dream… While I will come later to determine which image-objects are most pertinent with regards to the remainder of this thesis, I will first set out the characteristics of image-object. If, as I have alluded to

previously, the image-object is the place where the image can manifest (van Lit, 2017), we can potentially say that all the world is image-object, therefore an attempt to give a sharp definition might eventually become an attempt to define the whole world. Again, this is far beyond the scope of my investigation and an almost insurmountable task in any case. Instead, I intend to comment on the role of image-objects as the *colour* in the light/colour, image/object relationship before I go on to identify specific image-objects of note.

From engagement with the literature, I find that references to image-objects can be grouped into the following two broad categories:

2.3.1 Image-objects projected

This may be the most obvious group – perhaps what comes to one's mind when asked to think of an image. In this category, I place such objects as photographs, film, painting, sculpture, drawings, collage etc., but also stories, poems, and music, and provided that they are somehow communicated to another, ideas, dreams, predictions etc. Furthermore, we can include diagrams, models, and X-rays. Image-objects projected into the world require the creator to have the intention to reproduce – or represent – imaginings which are otherwise entirely sealed off from the rest of the world. We may question whether this can be said of objects such as diagrams, models and x-rays, given that they are considered to reproduce objective realities; however, we are reminded by Briedbach and Vercellone (2015) that such reproductions cannot be entirely separated from their subjects: a diagram and a model is illustrated by someone based on their interpretations of their observations (imaginative speculations), while an x-ray requires the ability of the operator to imagine the approximate output before they press the button (so they can point the beam in the right area).

These objects also require the potential to inspire imaginings in those who interface with them, as I have described in the section above. In the truest sense, these image-objects are the media – or mediators – of imaginings between multiple people, across multiple times and spaces.

Images are manifest here in the most explicit way. While the creator cannot expect to be in control of how the viewer interprets what is presented, in other words how they shine their

imaginative light, they do have a level of control over what may or may not be revealed. This is not to suggest that image-objects are created always with the intention that they are to be viewed by others. In days gone by – less so now in the age of the ubiquitous online presence – an intimate family photograph may have been taken and seen by the smallest audience. These would represent what Walter Benjamin (2003) may have described as cult images. However, I suggest that the size of the audience, if there is any audience, is of no consequence. By virtue of its coming into creation at all makes the image-object exhibitable and therefore viewable by another. We might go further to suggest that, even if the image-object was only ever viewed by its creator, that changes in the person occurring over the passage of time mean that he/she is never the same person they were when the created the work.

2.3.2 Image-objects held within (mental objects)

If the image-objects projected refers to a place for manifestation of an image which is external to both creator and viewer, the space of the objects in this category is internal to the creator/viewer. It is possible to say that the creator and the viewer are the same person here since the object is both created and viewable only by them.

Specific objects which may fall into this category include ideas, dreams, visualisations (including of the past and future), hallucinations. These image-objects are created by and only seen by the viewer. Unlike the projected object, which, once out there, stays static while the creator continually changes (and thus may not be the same person when they return to view the object again), these mental image-objects never lose the link. The mental image-objects continually change too, potentially reflecting or correlating the changes taking place in the creator/viewer.

External, projected objects can act as the inspiration for these objects – it is not uncommon for a person to have a nightmare after watching a scary movie, for example. This does not mean, however, that the creator of the external object also becomes the creator of the internally held mental image-object. Whatever the imagination comes to reveal after engagement with the external object is a new creation in itself.

In each of these categories, the image-objects represent the places where the images come to be manifest; they are the places where, with the application of the imagination, something can be revealed. In both cases, the imagination lies at the root of the image-object's creation. In the projected object, the creator makes explicit his/her own imaginings for others, in the mental object the creator discovers and engages with their imaginings with no desire for externalising them. Many more types of projected objects can be identified than mental objects; however, mental objects have the propensity to be the most imaginative as there is no constraint of intersubjective communication and no mediation between creator and viewer. These could, arguably, be the purest manifestations of image and thus the purest image-objects.

The image-objects in both categories necessarily call for imaginative engagement by a viewer. The projected object is open to engagement from a person who is not the creator, whereas the mental object can only be engaged with by the same person who created it. However, a distinction can be pointed out here. If the projected object sits external to the viewer, then this must call for a particular dimension of embodiment on the part of the viewer, and a staging on the part of the creator. For example, if one were to view a painting (a projected object) in a gallery, we would be bound by our gaze towards the object (Belting, 2009), which is, in turn, influenced by the environment in which it is placed – the object must at least contrast against the background in order for it to be called to our attention (Schwarte, 2009). This, while not identical, can still be applied when we talk about an idea as a projected object. If a friend speaks to us of an idea, we are bound by the manner in which we listen, remembering that the mysterious interplay of bodily gestures and what is picked up by the ear is what is really being communicated, and need not be entirely representative of the words being spoken. Just like the hypothetical painting mentioned above, for an idea to capture one's attention, it needs to be set against a contrasting background of other ideas; it has to call out to us. In the mental image-object, such embodiment is, arguably, less of an imperative. One can dream with eyes closed or eyes open; one can visualise laying down or standing up. There is no specific requirement for mental image-objects to be *viewed* in particular ways. Again, this is as true of an idea as of other objects that, when it is a mental image-object and not a projected one, it is not subject to the same requirements of embodiment so detailed above.

It can be said to be the case that projected objects necessarily begin life as mental objects – creations of the imagination become visualisations where the image-object is crafted internally before being externalised. What might the projected object come to look like? How can this imagining become manifest outside of oneself? These are questions that can be answered by visualising. Whether the end result bears any resemblance to the visualisation is neither guaranteed nor of any great consequence. We can further say that mental image-objects have the potential to become projected, and projected objects have the potential to inspire the creation of new mental image-objects when held by the viewer.

Thus, both categories of image-object are vitally linked to the imagination which is required for both to be created and seen. However, projected and mental image-objects are also linked to each other. There is what appears to be a parent-child relationship between them where projected objects are always the result of an original mental object[6]. Simultaneously, there is a reciprocal potentiality between them in that mental objects can, but do not necessarily have to, become projected; and those objects projected can, but do not necessarily have to, inspire the imagination of the viewer in the creation of new mental objects. It would seem that a clear difference lies in the locations of these places of manifestation – external and internal – with this difference in location having an impact on how the image (and the object) is to be viewed, and who the potential viewers may be. I have suggested that internal objects may be purer manifestations of image due to lack of external constraint, but in terms of value there is no conceivable reason as to why one location could be considered *better* than the other.

In neither category have I offered an exhaustive list of what could potentially be considered an image-object, only those which I have encountered in engagement with literature. Regardless of what particular object we are discussing, the most defining feature of the image-object is its ability to engage the light of the imagination. Image-object as colour, if the imaginative light is an active force, must be passive and lie in wait to be revealed: latent in the darkness and actual in light (Mondzain, 2009). It must also, if the imagination is a vitalising force, be without vitality thus must begin without life. In my discussion on the

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[6] One may argue that this is not the case for example in the absent clicking of a button on a camera phone. However, I suggest that the "photographer" in this case would not click the button without an idea of what they intend to capture – thus, a visualisation. This may or may not be inspired by events unfolding in front of them, but they still have to decide from infinite choices where exactly to aim.

doxa of image and image-object, I alluded to colour (the image-object) as a symbol of life itself, referring to Mondzain's quote that "seeing is… attaining the colour of life" (91). We can understand that such colour can only come to represent life when it has been revealed by the life giving (image)light: the imagination.

This further displays the mutual dependence of light/colour; image/object. As I continue throughout, any reference to image encompasses those objects which are places of manifestation for image which provoke imaginative engagement.

A definition of image must be given at this point, and it is as follows:

The image is the interplay between imagination and image-object which both offers up a suspended, snapshot view into the imagination of the image creator, and inspires the image viewer to use their own imagination to reveal the image for, and in, themselves.

2.4 Examples of Pertinent Image Types

As this thesis is, itself, an image-object which will be distributed for others to read it makes sense for me to identify those images which fall under the category of projected image-objects and which I will come to use in later chapters to exemplify aspects of my argument. Furthermore, as I will be considering education and pedagogy (suggesting a relation between two people) and propaganda (which relies on the dissemination of media across people) I will identify here image types that might be used in either a pedagogical or propagandistic endeavour, in the basic understanding I hold of these concepts at this point. In any case, image-objects held within would be impossible to consider given that they are inaccessible without undergoing a process of communication thereby making them projected images in any case.

One image-object in common use pedagogically and propagandistically is text. In pedagogical circumstances, we are likely to find text (sometimes accompanying pictures) in instructional books with regards to specific subjects, and in literature which becomes the object of study itself. Items commonly identified as propaganda – thinking especially of the propaganda posters identified by Schembs (2014) - use text alongside pictures, perhaps with the idea that one somehow enhances the message of the other.

Text can be considered an image in two ways: firstly, the letters and, consequently, words (and other markings) themselves are "juxtaposed static images in deliberate sequence" (McCloud, 1994, 8), static images which we can refer to as abstract icons or symbols, since they bear no resemblance to what they are given to represent. The resulting synthesis of letters, words and symbols into text refers no less to the imaginal world given the propensity of text to inspire mental images within the reader, although these are constrained by the semantic structures of the text according to Rastier (1993). Of course, image-objects projected are always constrained by the media through which they are communicated, and text would be no different.

Accepting text as an image-object means that speech can also come under consideration, for they can be thought of as different, but analogous to one another (Friesen, 2017a). There are notable experiential differences between reading a text and having the same text read to you; or a carefully written anecdote compared to a spontaneous story delivered with improvisational aplomb. Either way, in spite of the same information being conferred – the same descriptions and potentially the same words – the imagination of the reader/listener stands to be inspired in different ways due to the use of different media.

Speech is, again, used in ways that can be described as pedagogical and propagandistic. The teacher at the front of the class reading a story book to young children is a familiar sight, as is the lecturer stood at the front of the hall addressing their students (in both cases sometimes with accompanying graphics). Propaganda can be delivered through speeches of prominent public figures (this does not necessarily require pictorial accompaniment, but we are accustomed nowadays to the potential for it), or via word of mouth among the populace, perhaps via social media channels. Social media makes use of speech, but unlike in the classroom or on the podium of public attention, it is not as certain to be quite so edited and rehearsed. There is no reason, however, why less prepared speech should be considered of any less value than laboriously wrung out rhetoric; perhaps an argument could be made that unrehearsed speech is, indeed, more valuable although that is beyond the scope of this work.

The relationship between picture and word (of text and speech) is commonly acknowledged, such as in the proverb "a picture paints a thousand words". Whether or not we can agree that this is true, what can be induced from this proverb is that for each picture communicating the equivalent of a thousand words' worth of ideas, then the

converse might also be true – words can paint pictures. Wittgenstein (1986) proposed that a word can inspire a picture to come to mind, and that the picture that comes is predicated on the level of understanding the word. When words and pictures are placed side by side, they come to affect the viewer's understanding of one or other (or both) of the elements (Berger, 1972). This is used skilfully by artists such as Magritte in works like *The Key of Dreams* in order to unsettle comfortable ways of seeing and interpreting (Edson, 1984) by labelling somewhat realistic paintings of familiar objects in unexpected ways:

Figure 2 La clef des songes (1935) Copyright Rene Magritte

Text and picture when presented together become a unified whole; one image-object in itself, rather than two juxtaposed. Examples of such image-objects which could be considered here include: comic strips/graphic novels, labelled diagrams, posters and infographics, textbooks (with illustrations) and picture books, newspaper articles and most of the rich media content delivered online.

Having considered text, and text and picture combined, thought must also be given exclusively to the picture. As I have alluded to previously, the picture represents that which

we closely associate with image, and the reason for this is unclear. One thought is that it is an image-object which offers a more immediate manifestation of the image than, perhaps, text – it paints a thousand words somewhat instantaneously, whereas the picture painted *by* a thousand words requires a lot more effort and time to manifest. Although in both cases there is an element of decoding and perceiving, it is suggested that it takes longer and more specialised knowledge to decode the abstract symbols of language (McCloud, 1994). However, there are other image-objects with the propensity for an (almost) immediate manifestation of image – for example, sculpture, architecture, and music lend themselves to a certain immediacy (Kierkegaard, 1987). Yet, there remains something about a picture which we have accepted, at least in contemporary Western culture, embodies image and has thus become synonymous with it.

The picture surely does not assume this status by virtue of any idea of a sense of realism, in opposition to text which is a necessary abstraction, as this would discount abstract pictures, including icons and symbols, which are not in the least mimetic reproductions of objects. This is not to mention that any flat (but otherwise realistic) picture is rendered abstract by its depiction of a three-dimensional world in two dimensions (Linnet, 2018). Neither is it a unique propensity of the picture to enframe a parallel universe for an eager spectator (Leith, 2020) since text (particularly fiction) could be considered as adept at this. What can be construed from the notion of picture that may lead us to correspond it more closely with image than we would text, sculpture, or music?

The picture is certainly a broad category of image-object. Here we can include photographs, paintings, collages, drawings/doodles/scribbles, film, and animation (as sequential pictures), icons and symbols. Pictures came before text – there were cave paintings at Chauvet and hieroglyphs long before the evolution of letters and words – although text in itself is a particular kind of picture. Mitchell (1996) tells us that pictures are "things that have been marked with all the stigmata of personhood… they speak to us" (72), and that we often speak of them as if they "had will, consciousness, agency and desire" (73). This somewhat echoes what I have said about the imagination acting as a vitalising force for all images, although what Mitchell seems to be suggesting here is that the viewer perceives the picture itself (or the subjects of the picture) to have a life independent of them (while analogous to them – a personhood). I cannot agree with this, given that I have already described the image-object as necessarily lifeless without the imaginative engagement of

the viewer; however, I will concede that pictures, in some cases, may open themselves more easily to the faculty of the imagination than other images might. They are more closely aligned with the (mental) images we hold within ourselves – a relation between viewer and picture is much more easily established than with text which goes through multiple processes of mediation: the translation of the writer's imagination to word form; words then written to fit a particular linguistic convention; the reader then engaging their own imagination with the text, provided that they hold sufficient literacy skill in which to read it (and this is an approximation of a process – there may be other steps depending on the text).

One's sensibility for engaging with the picture, on the other hand, seems to develop by virtue of basic exposure to the picture. Balazs (1970) tells us, with regard to film, that as the art of film developed, so did the capacity of people to intuitively understand it:

> we have learnt…to integrate single disjointed pictures into a coherent scene, without even becoming conscious of the complicated psychological process involved. It is amazing to what extent we have, in a couple of decades, learnt to see picture perspectives, picture metaphors and picture symbols

> (Balazs, 1970, p.35)

The picture seems to be the most intuitively engaging of the image-objects with their well speculated upon tendency to direct thoughts and feelings in a more subconscious way than words (Leith, 2020), although Gombrich (1984) discerns that this seemingly intuitive capacity is only instinctive to an extent. Like text, there is an element of learning the code in order to decode; unlike text, this can be done with surprising speed when we are told what we are expected to be looking for. This returns, then, to the idea that the picture offers a more immediate route to *seeing* than some of the other image-objects.

The immediacy and urgency in which the picture manifests the image, I suggest, is also a contributor to the most definite characteristic of the picture in my view: the picture is a delimited version of the inner world (imagination) of the creator. Regardless of whatever picture type is being created – photograph, painting, film, animation etc. – it can only ever

be a snapshot of the visualisation that took place before the object came into creation. As a link to a complex internal world (of the creator) and also to a complex external world in which the object will come to exist, the picture represents a reduction of both of these worlds to whatever within the creator's imagination they have deemed important enough to reproduce and project to others. Unlike the author, who can indulge in unnecessary literary flourishes which do little to progress a story but can delight an audience (à la Oscar Wilde), or the concerto furnished by grace notes which add nothing (except virtuosity) to the overarching melody, the picture creator must give import to each individual element of their creation as, when viewed, they come together to make a unified whole almost immediately. The creator must instantly shed what is unnecessary here lest it distracts from what they want the viewer to see.

The reason I suggest that picture and image are most often conflated is because, as I have defined it above, the active light of the imagination – or (image)light – trains itself on that which calls itself to our attention, and the picture is created with the intention of provoking that attention by exploiting our (somewhat) innate capacity to be susceptible to them (Leith, 2020). Pictures employ the dual siren calls of intuition and immediacy to make us feel like it is easy to *see*; perhaps this is why we show children picture books before we introduce them to text.

Alongside text, picture and text/picture combinations, the final image-object I feel is pertinent in this thesis is sculpture. Like picture, sculpture also lends itself to immediacy and is somewhat intuitive – Gombrich (1984) suggests that it could be more so than the picture. In any case, sculpture as a place of manifestation for an image is one that is most open to an experience over and above *looking*. Granted, one can perhaps hold a picture, or flick through the pages of a book; however, in either of these cases, the image is not what is being interacted with. In sculpture, it is possible for the image itself to become conducive to a multi-sensory experience – the image manifests in the material, rather than upon it.

Sculpture can be found in the pedagogical sphere in the form of representations of so-called *real-life* objects (that is, simulations or reproductions of objects found outside of the classroom). For example, I would suggest that every toy is an elaborately created interactive sculpture, mass produced or not. A toy kitchen is created – sculpted from otherwise inanimate material - complete with familiar accoutrements, with which a child and their imagination can interact. That the child knows that this is a kitchen is immaterial if

it can be agreed that there is no such thing as an appropriate engagement of the imagination.

It is also a medium that is exploited in the public sphere – sculptures are placed in prominent locations within towns and cities to call public attention to people/events/artworks that have achieved a certain level of importance or reputation, so much so that it is felt that the general public should be reminded of it in the following generations. While we could point easily to statues of people created with the subtext of retaining the presence of the person in their absence (think of the Lincoln memorial in his fatherly repose, keeping watch over the political comings and goings of Washington DC or Christ the Redeemer atop Rio de Janeiro), the austere images of war memorials in parochial towns serve as a good example of honouring people, and particular events, by sculpture in a more abstract way. Indeed, there are also public sculptures which are neither meant for honouring people nor events such as The Angel of the North (near Newcastle) or The Kelpies (in Falkirk), for example.

In any case, regardless of the reason for the installation, it is a sign of great disrespect to deface or remove a public sculpture. In 2020, the wide removal of statues depicting public figures who reached prominence because they were linked to the exploitation of black people (Parveen, Tait, Sabbagh and Dodd, 2020) became symbolic of a rejection of past values and an exposition of what the sculpture itself had come to hide: the questionable morality of the subject against an ever-changing moral tide. The sculpture then was no longer the suspended embodiment of the person, but also the embodiment of outmoded values. The erection of a statue (particularly of a person) sends a message to the public regarding this person's reputation and worth; the removal does exactly the same.

To summarise, pertinent image-objects in relation to this study include text objects (including speech), pictures, text and picture combinations and sculpture. Again, this is not an exhaustive list. For example, architecture can be considered a sidebar to sculpture, and I am in no doubt with regards to its pedagogical, and political, weight. Music, too, is an image-object of considerable influence, especially in a propagandistic sense. I do not refer to music in this research, however, because I believe one dimension of the image of music – speaking here of the notation and the decoding of this – requires of the reader an ability that they may not necessarily hold. Furthermore, given that I cannot print sound, the other and most important, auditory dimension of music remains lost.

Having now offered a definition of image and exemplified this with image types of pertinence in this study, the next chapter examines and delineates the concept of pedagogical reduction.

Chapter 3. Pedagogical Reduction

Pedagogical reduction is a curious concept. It is neither considered nor discussed to a great extent (in an Anglo-American context) yet might be considered a central feature of education (Lewin, 2017). It occurs to me that this lack of discourse (certainly in the context particular to me) might be for two reasons: first, as a central feature of education, the ubiquity of the process could be as such that educators feel little need to dissect it theoretically – it almost becomes *common sense,* given its embeddedness in practice, and does not require a name. This is reminiscent of the thoughts of Chevallard (2007) who discusses the similar, yet not identical, notion of *la transposition didactique* (didactic transposition) in which he suggests the teacher is unconscious of the change in an object of knowledge as it moves from its application in the *real world* (in academia/in society) to become something that is taught. The second potential reason for pedagogical reduction's omission from (anglophone) discourse is that the notion of a reduction, at first thought, appears dissonant with the idea of nurturing and growth that is valued implicitly in the way that we educate, or at least think about education.

It is my intention to address both of these points: I intend to dissect the concept of pedagogical reduction in order to define it, potentially to disrupt any impression that it is but the inevitable *bruit du fond*, or background noise, of teaching. This dissection will consequently challenge the easy definition of a reduction as either a process of making smaller, or the result of such a process, and this, in turn, will raise questions of a dissonance with education. To this end, given that pedagogical reduction has been suggested as a central feature of education, it is entirely sensible to begin with a discussion on the concept of education itself.

3.1 Education

Let me immediately dismiss the idea that I intend to offer a definitive answer to the question: What is education? In addressing this question, any answer that I give will be a speculation, as with every definition offered by every person who has thought about it before me. I would not necessarily disagree if it were to be described more as a position

than a definition. As Philip Jackson asserts, any such answer to the question – what is education? – can only ever be "a single, very tentative, and quite idiosyncratic answer" (2011, 2).

In his own investigation, Jackson tells us that an effective method of challenging one's preconceptions - in order to reconstruct an idea from the ground up - is to state a belief, check the strength of its foundation and build a definition from there. I, on the other hand, will take the opposite route of appropriating someone else's definition (constructed from their belief), digging into its foundation, and using this, in conversation with my own thinking and my interpretations of other literature, to beat my path here being, as I am, less assured in the validity of my preconceptions as Jackson seems to be. Fortunately, at the end of his thesis, he offers what he describes as a detailed definition, and as a beginning, this seems as good a place as any:

> Education is a socially facilitated process of cultural transmission whose explicit goal is to effect an enduring change for the better in the character and psychological well-being (the personhood) of its recipients and, by indirection, in their broader social environment, which ultimately extends to the world at large.

(Jackson, 2011, p. 95)

The social facilitation, and the process of cultural transmission are, according to Jackson, immutable components of education. The idea that the goal of this process is to change people and the world for the better is apparently not immutable. This suggests that at various times and places the goal of education might be different to what Jackson has laid out here, but whatever the goal, it can only have been achieved through a "socially facilitated process of cultural transmission". Breaking this definition down a bit further in its original context, some contradictions arise.

The first immutable component – that of social facilitation – suggests that education requires a co-operative effort within societies to enact education. Education does not happen by accident. Yet, he later confuses himself by describing it as neither a facilitation,

nor a co-operation, but an obligation. While "socially facilitated" can be interpreted to mean that the process of cultural transmission is more easily brought about in societies, we can infer from his use of "obligation" that it is something that societies are, in fact, also duty bound to carry out. Upon those who take up this duty, a responsibility is conferred – what Arendt (1961) suggests is both a responsibility to the world and to the younger generation. The older generation stand as representatives of a world for which they are responsible, thus they assume responsibility for preserving it from the disruptive propensity of the young.

It is inevitable that cultural transmission will be socially facilitated. It is logical that to carry out any kind of transmission requires there to be a transmitter and a receiver of some kind, and for cultural transmission, it is imperative that the transmitters and receivers are situated within a society where such a culture permeates (such that the people themselves stand as cultural transmitters). Outliers who attempt to change their society and culture to a radical degree may find themselves (initially) without receivers. Society, then, can facilitate cultural transmission by producing – and preparing - transmitters and receivers of culture. I do not agree, however, that it is an inherent obligation to transmit. If, as I have suggested, the people within a society themselves stand as cultural transmitters, inherent in the way they live, we can suggest that cultural transmission is something that is *always* happening, thus the idea of an obligation as an imposed duty would be moot. Furthermore, if cultural transmission were to be considered a process it must have a distinct beginning, middle and end (which will be discussed further in this chapter). This suggests that, in Jackson's definition, it would be something within the *process* which sets cultural transmission-as-education apart from cultural transmission-via-living.

I do not disagree with Jackson in that education is something that cannot occur by accident. Consider the following scenario: A parent reads a bedtime story to their child. In this simple scene, there is much cultural transmission taking place. First, there is the exhibition of an established norm that parents (from particular cultural traditions, perhaps) will read stories to their children before bedtime. Second, the story that is chosen will most likely be written in the language most familiar to the parent, which in turn will become familiar to the child as the parent reads. Even translated works will try to fit the cultural framework of the language into which the text is to be translated – this is perhaps why occasionally nuanced meanings can get lost. Would we describe this scenario as educational considering the

cultural transmission taking place? The answer to this would depend on the intention of the parent. If this bedtime story is part of a routine of a daily life, something which is carried out to soothe the child to sleep, perhaps, then this would be cultural transmission-via-living because, even if the child were to pick up some vocabulary as an aside to this nightly routine, or learn a moral from their story, there was no stand-alone process initiated with the intention to teach the child. It would be a happy aside to a peripheral process, a side effect. If, on the other hand, the parent begins with the explicit intention to teach the child new words using the situation of the bedtime story and the book as pedagogical devices, then this can be described as cultural transmission-as-education. The process has an explicit educational intention and the soothing to sleep now becomes the happy aside.

The *something* in the process which distinguishes cultural transmission-as-education from cultural transmission-as-living is then, I suggest, actually characteristic of a process itself. It is rooted in an intention to begin, with meaningful actions driving towards a desirable specific end. Cultural transmission, which is not initiated with intention, nor has any discernible end point – in the way that people stand as inherent cultural transmitters through everyday actions and words – is not a process since it happens unintentionally and is thus not educational. This is not to say that culture (and the transmission of it), when initiated in an educational process, cannot be educational – just that not all cultural transmission is education, and not all education is necessarily cultural transmission.

So far, I agree with Jackson that education is an intentional act - a process - but since I do not agree that it is necessarily a process of cultural transmission, I also cannot agree for now that it is necessarily socially facilitated, although further investigation into the process might prove enlightening in this regard. Given that it might be the specific, desirable end of such a process that is likely to drive the intention to begin and the meaningful actions thereafter, we are led to wonder what such an end may be.

Arendt (1961) tells us that "education…must have a *predictable* end." (195-196, emphasis added). Although she alludes to an end around the same time as one graduates from college (which, in turn, assumes that a person cannot be fully educated *unless* they graduate from college), she also tells us that education should aim to prepare children "for the task of renewing a common world." (196). As I have mentioned above, she refers to such a task being the domain of adults and so we can safely infer that Arendt believes that the end of education may come at such a time when a child becomes an adult. She admits

that how and when the transition from childhood to adulthood takes place differs between individuals, countries, and time. It would seem that the predictable end she describes is not quite so predictable after all; yet I agree with her assertion that there must be an end in mind otherwise we might surely find ourselves in a perpetual state of beginning.

A process can be employed to create something or to change something. It seems unlikely that one would begin any process with the express intention that its end would result in nothing happening – even if this ended up being the case. In an educational process, I am unsure that there is much difference between creating and changing: Biesta (2013) describes education as open to the event of subjectivity (creating moments where students can realise their identities as subjects of action and responsibility). He tells us that it is also the case that subjectivity is not something constant – it is a transient attribute we possess only during subjective events. Education, in Biesta's account, both creates and changes, but neither the creative events that he describes nor the change(s) in the student during them can be considered ends in themselves. Indeed, he says himself that there can be no guarantees about what might happen in education, which suggests a futility in trying to plan for, or predict, a particular end.

Biesta is in direct disagreement with the definition offered by Jackson. Education as the creation of occasional events of subjectivity during which the student becomes aware of their subjectivity, cannot be aligned with effecting an enduring change in a student – this would be a temporary change occurring only during those moments created, with any potential endurance of these effects merely a contingency. Can we say that any change described by Biesta or Jackson is definitively for the *better*? No, since first of all, this is a normative judgement which would depend on subjective interpretation to determine. Consider that if we were to make the attempt at judging what is *better*, we would have to know what the before-change state of affairs would have been, and the after-change, and in order to discover this we would be forced to rely on the testimony of people who, by the very nature of their potential for subjectivity, retain a subjective bias. People, we could argue, have a predictable unpredictability which does not align itself well with such methods of measurement. This unpredictability is echoed in Biesta's idea that education comes without guarantees. While we debate whether any change made is for the *better*, a parallel debate could rage on as to whether we could know if any change has taken place at all. An education that is recognisably endowed with risk, as Biesta describes, would surely

be unconcerned with either of these arguments as it would be undertaken in hopeful uncertainty.

However, while we may not be able to predict or accurately measure changes made, if any, I would suggest that input from an educator, if it is engaged with even passively, retains a level of influence. It may have a direct influence, in that the student's behaviour/attitude changes after a direct engagement with the educator, or an indirect influence, such that the student chooses to ignore/subvert input from the educator. All the educator can do is create the opportunities for students to open themselves up to change if they are willing; again, there are no guarantees that the change will happen (rendering inelegant any attempts to measure the success of education on something so precarious).

Thus, to detail a speculative end to the process of education, we return to Biesta: "The educational concern…lies in the *transformation of what is desired into what is desirable*" (2013, 3, original emphasis), which he clarifies as meaning a change from what is actually desired to what can be justifiably desired. We might pose the moral and/or ethical question as to why that which is actually desired might not necessarily also be justifiably desired, and what the criteria are for justified desires (I suspect it would be inevitably diverse). What exactly would be being transformed? Such vagueness opens anything actually desired (which can possibly become justifiably desired) up to the educational concern.

I am also not entirely sure whose desire is being met either way. Given that Biesta goes on to say that his theorised three domains of education – qualification, socialisation, and subjectification – refer to both the individual and society at large, and that all domains overlap, it is necessary to consider both the individual and society in an end to the process. In this respect, he agrees with Jackson that education has an effect on the individual, which, in turn goes on to affect society and the world. Since society and the individual are inseparable, and as such their desires might also be related, perhaps the transformation taking place might be of the individual's desire to one that prevails within the limits of what is acceptable in the social context of the time/place. If this is the case, it is always the individual that is being invited to change, rarely society, but the transformation is socially facilitated; in fact, we might even say it is socially determined.

While I can agree that a desirable end to the process of education is more plausible than one which is undesirable – no-one would start a process in which the end would, on the balance of probabilities (no guarantees, of course), be something that they did not want

unless they were forced into doing so – I cannot consider that it is a process of transforming the *desired* into the *desirable*. By virtue of a thing being desired, though, makes it desirable. In my view, it is more the case that the socially desirable comes to influence the individual desire (and maybe vice versa). We might call this influence a transformation – although this seems an exaggeration – but there also exists those individual desires which resist the influence of society and offer opportunities for chastisement. The most extreme examples of this might be obvious from a cross section of the prison population.

The influence on one's desire aside, transformation may well be the key. It surely reflects the idea that a process can set about changing something. It need not be as lofty an aim as effecting an enduring change in a student's psychological wellbeing which has a knock-on effect on the rest of the world; it is acceptable for modest goals of education to become ends in themselves (Bruner, 1977). If an educator sets out to teach a student to play the piano, it is unlikely with the view in mind that this one student's ability to play will result in anything greater than an understanding of the mechanics and (perhaps) a love for the instrument; the intention is to change the student's relation to the piano. Whether that student then goes on to become a virtuoso, with compositions and performances which take their place alongside the greatest composers in history, whether that student can find beauty in the music of the piano which acts as a beacon for them in times of difficulty, or whether that student retains a respect for the instrument, or not, but nonetheless chooses to no longer play are examples of both radical and modest consequences of an enduring change in relation between student and piano.

We might recognise changing a student's relation to *something* to be the intention of, and the end of, the education process. Such as in the piano playing example above, the intention and desired end may be a modest one. It may also be that smaller changes are intended to lead to one great change: I think of Froebel here when he notes that "Education should lead and guide man to clearness concerning himself and in himself, to peace with nature, and to unity with God" (1886, p.5). This denotes a gradual shift from modest to great desirable ends for the educational process: from obscurity in one's relation to oneself, to nature, and finally to God. In either the piano playing example, or that of Froebel, we can say that education is seeking to make a change in how the student relates to something in the world, whether that be the relation with themselves or something else.

It is at this point I wish to proffer my definition, or position, on education. It differs somewhat from Jackson's definition as offered at the beginning of this section. I agree that education is a process, and it begins with the intention of effecting a desirable change in a student's relation to something (internal to them or external to them). Thus, if it begins with this intention, then it would be the effecting of this change that would signal the end of the process, although such a thing would not necessarily be straightforward to measure quantitatively or qualitatively, and education should proceed in the assurance that it is a risky process in this regard, devoid of guarantees. The question of a desirable change for whom, looms heavily here. If education is socially determined, then the desirable change would be that of the society; if education is socially facilitated, then the desirable change could be that of the student, with the role of society being to help them work towards a change. I suggest that all instances of education will not be one way or the other, and so I negate to say in my position whether it is socially facilitated or determined. For now, my position is that:

Education is a process which begins with the intention to instigate a desirable change in a student's relation to something internal, or external, to them (we might call this content, as in contents of the world). It creates the conditions for the change to take place, allowing for meaningful actions of the educator (and student) to work towards the desirable end. Although such an end may be immeasurable, education ends when either the educator judges that the student's relation to the content has undergone a desirable change, or the student chooses to withdraw.

There are arguable points here, which is why I am inclined to describe this as a position rather than a definition, although it serves the purpose of a definition in that it is the basis of further arguments. First, I have not spoken about how the educator creates the conditions for the desirable change to take place, or what meaningful actions take place, and how. I use this as a foundation for a discussion on pedagogy, which will take place in the next section. Second, it might be possible to suggest that a student could spend their life working towards a desirable end, especially if the relation they are trying to change is with themselves. The end of education in this case would be death – is this a desirable end? Is it really still a process if there is no discernible end? I say it is. The intention itself posits an end, whether that end is reached is not always possible to predict given the messy unpredictability of human endeavour. As such, the true educator will rely on judgement to

determine whether a change has occurred; the increasing reliance on quantitative measures of assessment suggest that this is not an easy task, nor one that those responsible for formal education systems (such as in the UK) feel can be entrusted to teachers alone. This judgement is also a feature of pedagogy, and it is to pedagogy I will turn my attention now, as a central feature of the education process and a driver of the reduction I will come to investigate.

3.2 Pedagogy

The reader may be forgiven for assuming that, since I have equated pedagogy with those meaningful actions which link the intention with the desirable end in the education process, I am about to outline a series of steps which constitute an algorithmic method of educating. This would not be impossible, but is, in my view, ineffective. As Dilthey noted: "the study of pedagogy … can only begin with the description of the educator in his relationship to the educand" (cited in Friesen, 2017b, 743), and we also know from Biesta (2013) that it is this relationship between two people, inherently unpredictable, which makes education (thus pedagogy) a weak, existential relation. To disregard this human relation would be to disrespect pedagogy's, and education's, most essential feature. To disregard it would relegate education to the realm of true automation, without human input at all. A cynic may be inclined to suggest that we are not so distant from this now.

I entertain imagined protests that the connotations of *process* suggest a progressive journey/development from beginning to end, and that such a journey should be charted or guided. When a baker starts the breadmaking *process*, they follow a set of instructions to guide them to a particular result. If the educator is not following such a set of instructions, or steps, how can education still be described as a process? I say that the processes of making bread and the process of education are not comparable beyond an intentional start and a desirable end, as they are characteristic of two different types of process which I categorise as the purely procedural, and the (inter)subject oriented.

I borrow somewhat from the realm of computer programming to conceptualise these two different types of process. The [purely] procedural program relies on the programmer inputting a set of instructions to be followed. There is no room for flexibility, the reaching

of a desirable end rests on the prescriptive following of the procedure – deviation results in failure, denoting that the desirable end can be measured using the binary paradigm of success/failure. This is reflected in the purely procedural process, in which the desirable end, such as the successful loaf so produced by our hypothetical baker, requires adherence to a set of instructions that will, outside of exceptional circumstances, guarantee the success of the process.

The idea of the (inter)subject-oriented process is a play on Object Oriented Programming (OOP). In OOP, objects hold individual properties, are capable of performing actions and interacting with other objects in the program; however, they remain constrained by the algorithms already set out by the programmer. In an (inter)subject-oriented process, however, there can be no such constraints. Objects are replaced by subjects – of action and of responsibility (Biesta, 2013) – which are not only capable of interacting with each other, but with any other object/subject outside of the process. An (inter)subject-oriented process relies on at least two subjects in interaction, and it is for this reason that no guarantee can be made to a uniformly successful end to such a process even if a desirable end for any and all subjects can be identified. It is this unpredictability ensuing from two interacting subjects which renders the (inter)subject-oriented process incapable of adhering to the rigid flexibility of algorithmic instructions. Since it exhibits the characteristics of unpredictability and subjects in interaction, education - I say - is an example of an (inter)subject-oriented process.

To understand what, in an (inter)subject-oriented process, may replace the method of rigid instructions, it is prudent to consider other such processes and draw a parallel with the educational process. Since I have already touched upon the image creation process (specifically images projected to others) in a previous chapter, I am willing to say with confidence that this is characteristic of the same kind of process as education in that it places [the imaginations of] two subjects (creator/viewer) in conversation with each other. The creator *intends* for the viewer to view their image with the desired end of communicating something or drawing them into their imaginative world. The viewer may not necessarily interpret the image in the way that the creator intended, but this does not denote a failure in the creative process. As with educator/student – the desirable change may not manifest itself in an obvious way, but this is not a failure of the educational

process. In both cases, these perceived failures are the successful result of a wonderfully unpredictable enterprise.

Like the image creator who lovingly expresses their imaginings and offers them up for potential viewers, the educator also, in the first instance post-intention, creates the conditions to offer up the gift of teaching something (which can only be offered and never enforced according to Biesta, 2013). The image creator will consider and select the means of manifestation of image onto image-object – the medium, the materials and the environment for display; the educator, too, must consider and select the means by which content can be offered up. Both of these processes must have at least two interacting subjects in mind[7]: this is implied by the intention to create, thus exhibit, an image, and the intention to change another's relation to something. As such, the conditions should be suitable for both the adequate expression of content (image), and for the subjects in mind and this is why flexibility becomes imperative – to suit the needs of the content and the needs of the interacting subjects. So, rather than the central feature of the educational (and other (inter)subject-oriented) process being a set of instructions designed to reach a measurable result, it becomes the creating of conditions to offer the opportunity for a desirable result to be reached.

Therefore, this is what pedagogy, as the centre of the educational process, must be:

A flexible setting of conditions which offer the student the opportunity to effect a change in themselves [reach the desirable end], fundamentally characterised by the relationship between educator and student.

I will now come to examine these conditions, beginning with the relationship between educator and student, and using the model of the pedagogical triangle as a means of identifying the other conditions which must be set for pedagogy – and education – to

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[7] I have addressed this image creator/image viewer dichotomy with regards to them being the same person in the previous chapter: even if an image is created by someone and is viewed only by them, the idea that the projected image is a snapshot in time infers that the image creator may not necessarily be the "same person" they were when the image was created. The image viewer has a (backwards) temporal relation to the image creator – they are likely to have changed and might view their image differently. In the autodidact, the educator has a (forwards) temporal relation to the student. The educator labours under the assumption they as the student will change. In this regard, the student and the image viewer can be considered as not the same person as the educator and image creator (drawing on the ideas of exdurantism/stage theory).

transpire.
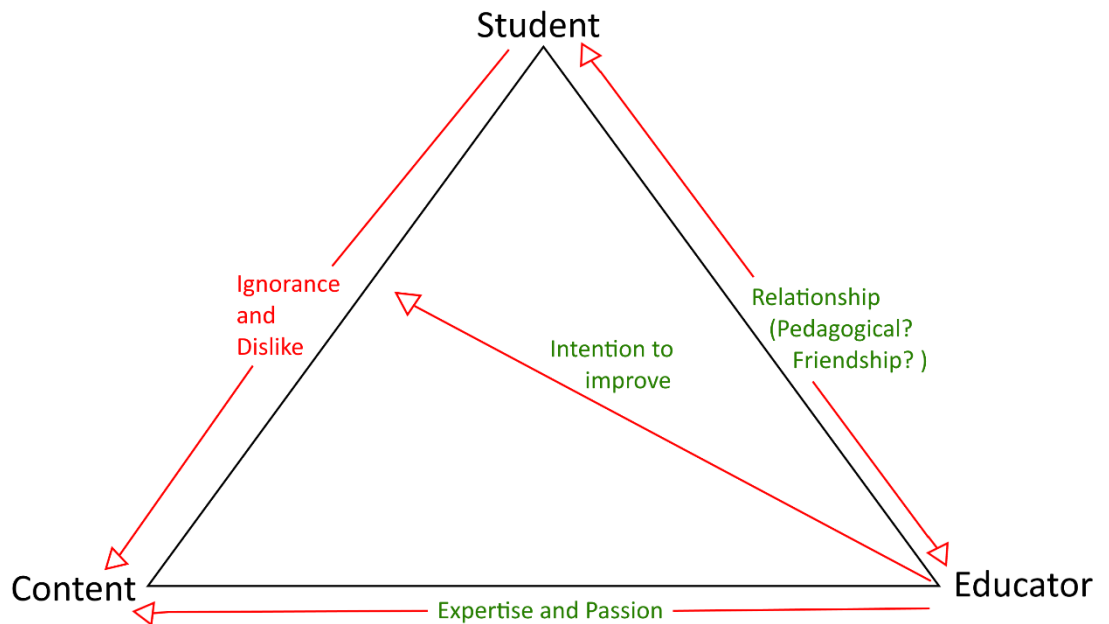
Figure 3 The Pedagogical Triangle (Robertson, 2022)

3.2.1 Educator – Student: The Fundamental Condition

Indeed, we might say, before anything else, the educator-student relationship is cultivated as the first condition to be set. Returning to the motif of unpredictability in the (inter)subject-oriented process, the quality of the student-educator relationship cannot be expected to be identical in every instance. How this relationship comes to be established, the level of (dis)harmony in the personalities of the involved parties (Kenklies, 2019) and plays of power will all have significant influence on the educational experience whether we realise it or not. I decline to make comments on the differences between generalised types of educator-student relationship. This borders upon the realm of psychology and so I will leave it to the expert proponents of that field to discuss such things. It suffices for me to say that different students and different educators will come to have different relationships. What is important for pedagogy is that they have a relationship at all.

In the establishment of such a relationship there are two routes: the routes of choice and no-choice. Pedagogical relationships between people established in educational institutions, for example, can mostly be characterised as following the no-choice route: upon starting a class, or course, it is often the case that neither the students, nor the educators, choose who they will be taught by or who they will teach. Granted, either of the parties can exclude themselves from the situation if competing personalities and the balance of power are too contestable to continue. Still, in my view this represents what I would characterise as a pseudo-choice – a choice which arises from a lack of choice in the first instance.

The route of choice, on the other hand, allows for either the student, or the educator, or both to initiate a relationship on a mutually agreed basis. This is common in informal settings – for example, it is usual for someone wishing to learn to drive to choose their own instructor, often based on personal recommendation and research into who they believe would be the most suitable, with the question of whether the person is formally qualified to be a driving instructor taking a back seat (since anyone with a full licence over the age of 21 can teach another to drive in the UK).

To borrow an example from the literary world, the relationship between Professor Higgins and Eliza Doolittle in Bernard Shaw's Pygmalion (Shaw, 2003) would be characteristic of the route of choice on the part of the educator. For those unfamiliar, Shaw's play tells the story of a professor of linguistics who sets out to transform a poorly educated, brash and ineloquent flower seller into someone who will pass as a member of the aristocracy. Although we can question whether his intention to improve Eliza's elocution has moral integrity given that it arises from a hubristic wager with a colleague (and we may also question his idea of improvement as based on perceptions of the respective values of the higher and lower classes) we know that he chooses her on whom to flex his pedagogical muscles, albeit quite serendipitously, and she submits to this choice, thus creating a mutual educational relationship.

It might be suggested that qualities of a chosen and not-chosen relationship are different. In fact, I disagree that this is necessarily the case. It is not justified to suggest that introducing the element of choice facilitates or denigrates a relationship in any which way – often the relationships we have with friends we choose can be as turbulent, or as rewarding, as those we have with those people we do not choose to relate with – often

referred to as family, though not exclusively. This is also true of the student-teacher relationship: a teacher and student who are pushed together by the locale of the institution or the structure of a timetable may find that their relationship grows into one of considerable strength which extends beyond the initial confines of their situation. However, the converse is also true – teacher and student for whom the educational relationship begins with mutual agreement might find that they grow to despise each other rather quickly (as with Eliza and the Professor). Indeed, the only clear difference between relationships established through choice and no-choice is how easy it is to abandon it when it becomes unbearable for either party. It is much easier to break an informal mutual agreement than to negotiate an escape route through labyrinthine formal institutional rules, regulations, and conventions.

There is ultimately, however, at least one element of agreement in all (educational) relationships – chosen or not. It requires a mutual reciprocity of recognition: the student must recognise the teacher as such and vice versa. It is only from this recognition that, to paraphrase Kierkegaard (2009), the student becomes the occasion for the teacher to understand him/herself while the teacher becomes the occasion for the student to understand him/herself. It rests on mutual and complete reciprocity (Spiecker, 1984). How might they come to recognise each other in their respective roles? Whether formally or informally, the educator must hold some quality, or at least behave in a way, which allows the student to identify them as *teacher* – perhaps it is enough for the teacher to say, "I can teach you how to…". The student, on the other hand, might be identifiable by behaviour which signifies that they are ready to receive what the teacher intends to give; by appearing physically and cognitively present and displaying attentiveness, for example. It is only when the educator and the student enter into this state of mutual recognition that they enter into a relation with each other from which all other conditions can begin to be set.

3.2.2 Educator's Intention and Relation to Content

As I continue in a somewhat logical order, I find that once the educator-student relationship has been established, the effort of the educator begins. One might argue that, perhaps, the educator's intention and, obviously, their relation to the content to be taught should exist

before they establish a relationship with a student. At the very least, it seems to be common sense that a person cannot lay claim to be able to teach anything unless they have some awareness that there is such a thing. This argument – that intention and content knowledge *necessarily precedes* the educator-student relationship – precludes most institutional educational arrangements, with measures to realign relationships taken retrospectively, only after teaching has started. In the course of my description of these conditions, I will also come to show how intention and relation to content might be in place before the pedagogical relationship is established, but it is only by the mutual recognition, an opening of relation, between student and educator does it become pedagogical.

First, concerning intention. The educational intention, as evident in Figure 3, is to improve the student's relation to content (in some way that is perceptibly an improvement in the view of either the student or the educator). When the intention is in place in the absence of any relation between educator and student, it can only take on the property of a scattergun, aimlessly firing into a crowd in the hope that it might hit someone. And, indeed, the violence of this analogy is not out of place since the actions of an intention trained on someone not prepared, or is unwilling, to receive them[8], inches us towards the notion of manipulation, which is arguably a fitting bedfellow of education, if largely unwelcome in the overall discourse.

Yet, this scattergun approach to intention is the one that appears to be most recognisable. Considering the structure of the Scottish school system (perhaps not so dissimilar from other systems around the world), subjects to be taught are chosen, curricula are written and learning intentions/objectives are identified and plans made before any student or teacher steps foot in a classroom. Ironically, this might be viewed as an efficient method given that it is employed as a means of educating a large number of students simultaneously. It appears rigidly scientific in its execution and denies its reliance on luck and hope that something *might* get through to someone (and, again, the unpredictability of education rears its head). What this method does, most convincingly, is attempt to dissolve each individual student into a student body, which results in the assumption that if one individual can be struck by a stray pedagogical bullet, then everyone else can be too. It

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[8] A further question here is whether it is necessary that students are aware of the intentions of the educator. It is my view that students are aware that the educator is trying to teach them something by virtue of the conditions set, and that this is enough. This, however, raises further questions about early years education or in any student where a presence of mind may not be so readily available.

further assumes to target each student, as aggregate components of the student body, before allowing the student(s) to decide whether they wish to become a metaphorical bullseye. The subjectivity of the student is negated from the outset, and they become objects upon which one's intention can be trained.

Since I proposed earlier that intention is the beginning of the education process, what I have said above may now lead the reader to believe that instances of education cannot occur between educators and students who have never met. In fact, this is not what I am proposing. Let us take, for example, the author of a textbook. The author writes with the intention to improve students' (whom they will never meet) relation to some kind of content, but the intention remains inert until someone picks up the book and comes to recognise the author as educator (and this person, by virtue of the fact that they have picked up and started to read the book, may be recognised as student). The student retains their status as subject, given they can pick up, or put down, the book as they choose. They may read the book in its entirety and learn nothing – or learn everything and remain indifferent. The author writes not knowing whether there will be a student; the work can only be offered and received on a contingent basis. Unlike the latter scenario which leads with preconceived actions born from an intention without a relation – the scattergun approach – this scenario requires for there to be a relation (the opening of a book) before the actions of intention can play out. The intention can only come to fruition when it is accepted by another, and not ejaculated indiscriminately under the assumption that it will be.

Thus, we can say that the educator has an intention to improve a student's relation to *something*, upon which they can act when the condition of their relationship with the student allows them to do so. The intention exists, but why? Is it a question of the older generation targeting their wants on the younger (Schleiermacher, cited in Friesen, 2020); or an attempt to rescind the destructive capacity of youth (Arendt, 1961)?

While focussed largely on the macro view of education, these are valid questions to ask; however, I propose that not every educator's intention is concerned with such lofty ambitions (while they may remain rooted somewhere in the background) and has more in common with their relation to the content – the *something* that they intend to change in/for the student. Chevallard (2007) suggests that the educator exists within a buffer zone (*la noosphère*) between the representatives of society, the representatives of the subject

discipline (the experts/academics) and, although he merely alludes to it, the students. Their role, Chevallard goes on to say, is to ensure content maintains a close relationship with the subject discipline while avoiding the trivialising[9] influence of society. In this case, we might conclude that the educator's intention is to offer the content up to students with a degree of integrity and respect for the discipline. This does not, however, assume that the educator holds a significant degree of knowledge about the subject, merely that they know and value it enough to offer to the students; whom, by extension, the educator must also assign a certain positive value to believe that it is worth passing on to them this thing that they find to be valuable.

When an educator feels able to share this valuable thing, whatever relation they once held with the thing necessarily changes. The expert professional, bound up - by definition - in exhibiting superiority which can only be achieved by somehow measuring and evaluating performance (Ericsson, Prietuala and Cokely, 2007), cannot educate in this same sphere with this same attitude lest they risk the "enforced stultification" (Rancière, 1991) of adapting their subject matter for so-perceived inferior minds, or non-experts. The expert has no choice but to suspend themselves from the professional world and all its trappings if an attempt at education is to be made.

An adaptation of subject matter is further inevitable, however, based primarily on the concurrent relationship between student-educator, and educator-content, and it is here that, regardless of the educator and their original relation with the subject, things necessarily change. An adaptation of content cannot be made without some understanding of the needs of the student regarding what is required to change the student's relation to the content, and without some understanding of the content itself (in order to make the most appropriate adaptation). This adaptation is what I will come to define later as *pedagogical reduction*, and it is, as I will explain further, born out of a degree of loving care for both the content and the student (Masschelein and Simons, 2013). Furthermore, it is employed, knowingly or not, with some degree of *pedagogical tact* – about which I will provide a note along with pedagogical reduction, although it is important to note that it is necessarily present in all relations in the triangle, not only with regards to the educator and

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[9] This is a direct translation of the word used by Chevallard – *vulgarisation*. While I have been unable to find a more suitable alternative so far, I remain unconvinced that this word accurately depicts the nuance of Chevallard's meaning.

their content. For now, though, I will continue on my journey along the relations of the pedagogical triangle to examine the final one – student-content.

3.2.3 Student-Content

I have said so far that the establishment of the student-educator relation (or mutual recognition of each other in these roles) is a fundamental condition for pedagogy, and it is upon this that educational intention and educator's relation to content can be shaped, if not initiated completely. Pedagogically, the student-content relation cannot be independent of the fundamental condition, although like the educator-content relation, the student may have had some experience of the content before any attempt to teach it – or improve the student's relation to it - has been made. It is only with the introduction of the educator – their relationship, their intention, and their adaptation of content - that the capacity for change in the student's relation to content can begin to be realised.

The student-content relation is one which is characterised by change, or at least a belief in the capacity to change so identified by the educator and, perhaps, the student themselves. Indeed, the educator-student relation is also changeable, necessarily so in order for the required reciprocal identifications to take place (such that the student and educator are not just two people who happen to exist in proximity). Furthermore, the educator-content relation must also be changeable since, as I have shown above, the educator adapts the content to suit the student(s). The student-content relation, however, is distinct from these, in that it both represents a condition to be set in the process of education, and it is also the hopeful potentiality for change in the orientation of the student towards the content which drives the intention, which otherwise starts the process of education and steers towards its end.

I understand that this now begs another question: If the relation between student and content drives the beginning and the end of the education process, why is this not then considered the fundamental pedagogical condition? I reiterate that there is no such thing as a student or an educator until a person is recognised as such (by the other and/or by themselves), and the educational intention (the driver of the process) remains inert until this relationship is established.

Furthermore, the conditions set in pedagogy are antecedent to the process of education. It is only after each relation is established, and – referring to Figure 3 – the pedagogical triangle achieves structural integrity, that the situation allows for education to happen. While I believe the relation between educator and student to be the most fundamental, it is not independent of the other relations, just as the others cannot be independent of it. Education requires all the pedagogical elements and conditions to be in place before it can begin, and while it continues (Friesen and Osguthorpe, 2018).

In the previous section in this chapter, in the section on Education, I said that this change in relation between student and content should be a desirable one, but the question remains whose desires are being met by instigating the change: perhaps the educator's, perhaps the student's, perhaps those of society at large. It is fair to say that it will be different across every instance. Also, the change that happens – if any – may not resemble the change that was desired. There is no predictable end to the process, despite attempts to assign such an end to it. However, there must be something in the quality of the relation between student and content which allows for the educator to train their intention upon it. The educator and/or the student must be able to identify that there is something (undesirable) in this relation which they want to change (the motivations for changing will be different in each case but are likely to drive towards an improvement in some capacity – an improvement to the ends of who or what is not important here). The educator and/or the student must also assume that the relation is capable of being changed, or at least hope that it can entertain the possibility of changing, otherwise any motivation to begin the process would quickly dissolve into questions of why we should bother.

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All of the relations on the pedagogical triangle can be considered to simultaneously exhibit vulnerability and strength. The human relation of the educator and student requires that each is open to the other for the relationship to gain the strength of recognition. The educator must jettison the security of their expertise in order to imagine their students seeing content for the first time – a strong foundation for adapting content to fit the student(s). The student has to submit themselves to a change, but in doing so recognise

their own capacity to change. Furthermore, all relations in the pedagogical triangle must work dynamically to remain sound over and above inherently shaky human relationships, adaptations of content and the (desirable) change taking place within the student. The idea of education as an (inter)subject-oriented process which is characterised by the unpredictable outcomes of subjects in interaction, and pedagogy as a flexible setting of conditions to support this process to reach some kind of end, gains credence when we consider the interplay between the relations as I have done. From what I have written here, underscoring the complexity of pedagogical relations, it may become easier to understand the attraction of pedagogy as a step-by-step "How to…" of education, but my argument above exposes some of the inaccuracies in this way of thinking.

Now that a conceptualisation of pedagogy has been made, and a description of the conditions to be set in its name, I now return to discuss the concept of *pedagogical reduction*.

3.3 Pedagogical Reduction

Having touched briefly upon this notion while discussing the educator-content relation, it is time to dive deeper into this so defined central feature of education and address the question of what it is. I will do so by considering the term itself – when is it justified to refer to something as pedagogical, and what happens when one makes a reduction, specifically a pedagogical reduction. A brief note on pedagogical tact is included here due to my perception of its pivotal role in the making of pedagogical reductions.

3.3.1 Why pedagogical *reduction*?

I mentioned that pedagogical reduction is an adaptation the educator makes to content when preparing to orient the student towards that content. Immediately, further questions arise from this seemingly innocuous comment: when is it justified to describe an adaptation as pedagogical rather than, for example, a general change made for convenience, and why might these adaptations be described as reductions?

Based on the definition of pedagogy I have already given – *a flexible setting of conditions which offer the student the opportunity to effect a change in themselves [reach the desirable end], fundamentally characterised by the relationship between educator and student* – it should now be straightforward for us to identify something as possessing a pedagogical quality. We can say that *pedagogical* is an adjective used to describe something (an object, an interaction, a relation, or an intention even) which supports the flexible setting of conditions with the further aim of offering the student the opportunity of effecting a change in themselves. Thus, in order to be considered pedagogical, whatever is to be employed is done so with the express aim of supporting the change in the student's relation to content. Is this enough?

I say no. Given that it does not address the fundamental condition of the educator-student relationship, this description of what is pedagogical limps close enough to a definition to be acceptable for most; however, in my view, it falls decidedly short. In my discussions above, I have deliberately omitted what I am about to introduce here as I do not view it necessarily as a condition to be set, but something which stands *after* all the relations are established, and the process of education is in its beginning. What I suggest is that, born from all this rational practicality, there must exist some kind of love and/or care.

With this point of view, I stand in partial agreement with Max van Manen (1991) who describes loving care as a "precondition for the pedagogical relation to grow" (66). I do not disagree that this is the case, but I also suggest that it is required that the pedagogical relation is established before the same loving care can be created, which in turn goes on to nurture the pedagogical relation itself. In my conceptualisation, it might be considered cyclical.

I imagine that one's thoughts may immediately journey to the idea that I am referring only to the quality of the relationship between the student and educator here, therefore let me make it clear that this is not the case. Referencing Erich Fromm (1956):

> Love is not primarily a relationship to a specific person; it is an *attitude*, an *orientation of character* which determines the relatedness of a person to the world as a whole
>
> (46, original emphasis)

It has been noted in the relevant discussion in this chapter that the quality of the educator-student relationship is not so important as the establishment of any relationship at all. In spite of my mention of loving care, this is still the case. It is possible for the educator/student to dislike the other while remaining open to mutual reciprocity of identification. The loving care that I will come to describe, in fact, affects every relation in the pedagogical triangle – a framework in which lies the intention to affect the student's "relatedness to the world".

To illustrate and examine what I mean, I refer to the following quote from Sartre:

> All that wise lore I culled for you with loving care, like a bouquet
>
> (1989, 59)

I will continue to dissect this quote throughout my discussion on pedagogical reduction. However, first to place it in context: these are the words spoken in Sartre's play *The Flies* by The Tutor to his young charge, Orestes. Orestes has come to visit the kingdom of his father, since usurped by an enemy, and a place where the locals are paying a heavy price for the deeds of the past. At this stage in the play, Orestes has vengeance on his mind – and little else – and the Tutor is attempting to reorient him towards the refined contents of his past education to encourage him to consider the potential consequences of his desired actions. These are words, I interpret, that are spoken not only out of concern for Orestes, but also out of exasperation as the Tutor comes to experience first-hand that there are no guarantees that education will be received as it is intended.

While I will come to examine the whole quote when I come to consider reduction in greater detail, in terms of the pedagogical, the words that I am most interested in here are "with loving care". Consider how different the nuance of this statement would be if the Tutor were to declare that he had culled the wise lore without loving care. One can almost imagine the indiscriminate hacking away at centuries of literature, much in the way that a horticulturalist might take a scythe to a field of flowers to find those suitable enough to construct their bouquet. Then, when a selection is made, without loving care - or to put it another way, without due consideration - it is perhaps tossed with indifference to the

target of the literature/bouquet. What reason then would a student have to care about something which is so obviously treated with disrespect; why would Orestes take any stock in "wise lore" from a Tutor who cares little about what he gives; who potentially cares little about him? Arguably the Tutor's description of the lore as being "wise" refers to his reverence of what he has chosen to purvey, however we can also argue that such words become empty rhetoric, or even deliberately misleading, when employed without having first given the "lore" the due reverence to deserve this title.

Given that this play is set in Ancient Greece, we can possibly place the character of the Tutor as occupying the role of a pedagogue of the time – not in the pejorative sense as the word is now understood but fulfilling the role as it was defined in antiquity. The Tutor here takes an intellectual responsibility for Orestes, but also a protective one since he accompanies him to this once familiar, yet now strange land (as a pedagogue might have done on a child's first day at school). Furthermore, by attempting to dissuade him from exacting the bloody revenge that he so desires, the Tutor also takes a moral responsibility for Orestes. All of these were usual tasks of the pedagogue (Laes, 2009), as was the idea that they would act *in loco parentis* (Peers, 2006) – something Orestes may have appreciated given his distance from both his biological and adopted parents.

Acting, as he does, *in loco parentis*, the loving care directed from the Tutor towards Orestes could be considered similar, but not identical, to the love exhibited between a parent and a child. The fullest parental love relies on an amalgam of unconditional love (*I am loved because I am*), and conditional love (*I am loved because I deserve it*) (Fromm, 1956). Any love, or care, exhibited in the pedagogical relationship, on the other hand, can only be conditional, given that it relies upon the conditions of pedagogy being set before it can come into existence. Thus, pedagogical loving care might omit the unconditional love to be found in the parent-child relationship; but also, the conditions upon which pedagogical love is based are not related to any person or object of the relation being deserving of it through any kind of action, in the way that Fromm suggests is inherent in parental, conditional love. Although, there must be an element of value enough to create an intention: value of the content, value of the student upon which to bestow this valuable content. Pedagogical loving care may be bound up in sensing the value of the other elements of the pedagogical triangle; but does not necessarily suggest a relation of close emotional bondage in the way that one might ordinarily conceive such notions.

The conditional love described by Fromm sees the child earning the approval of the Father; pedagogical love, while also conditional, does not and cannot ask for such approval, given that while there may be some thought as to the content and its value to the student, as well as the value held by the student and the educator in their entwined mutual identities, none of these earn their value (or approval in each of their respective states) by doing something in particular – in the same way that the child might seek the approval of their father/father figure by behaving in ways that they observe may please them. They are *valuable because they are* – a barren tautology, indeed, and one which sees pedagogical love err into the same conceptual boundaries as unconditional love, while never quite settling into it, given that it must always have recourse to the conditional. Thus, similar to parental love, pedagogical love is both conditional – in that it relies on the conditions of pedagogy to be set – but remains bound to the unconditional – in that each element of the pedagogical relation has inherent value without earning it. However, as van Manen (1991) advocates, while there are similarities in the parental and pedagogical relations, there are also differences – most notably that educators eventually let go of their students, while parents remain parents forever which, again, denotes that there is no necessity for a close emotional bond between student and educator (or content).

Of course, the loving care of which the Tutor speaks may not necessarily be only directed towards Orestes. Even though I have explained that pedagogical love can only be achieved upon the setting of all conditions of pedagogy – one might say it is reliant upon the structural integrity of the pedagogical triangle – it is all too easy to negate the role of content in the creation/expression of such loving care. When the Tutor speaks of culling the wise lore "with loving care", an accurate interpretation would also be that he is directing such loving care towards the contents he has chosen.

Masschelein and Simons (2013) describe an educator's love for their subject as "a kind of respect and attention for the 'nature of the matter'" (68), which in turn implies devotion and, furthermore, passion and inspiration. They further expound the idea that a teacher need not necessarily be an expert in what it is they are teaching, although they admit that a level of knowledge and competence offers the teacher the kind of authority which comes with being considered an expert. What gives the teacher *mastery*, as they describe, is the "presence, care and devotion" (68) which comes from the aforementioned respect, attention, and passion for their subject.

When the Tutor talks of making his selections "with loving care", he may as equally be talking about how he employed his respect, devotion, and passion for the content at hand in picking out valuable works; or he may be referring to the pedagogical love he directs to Orestes in recognising that he is worth offering the opportunity to experience this valuable content, or he may be simulating the love for Orestes as someone might who is *in loco parentis.* On the other hand, he may be referring to a mixture to all of this, such is the wonderful ambiguity of the quote. Indeed, a loving care for one's subject and a loving care for one's student may be "inextricably intertwined" (Masschelein & Simons, 2013) as, perhaps, might be the loving care that a student could feel for one's educator – potentially a reflection of the love they receive or a result of the contact they are given by their educators (see note on pedagogical tact below).

What does this mean in relation to the question of when something can be described as pedagogical? It means that the description I gave at the outset of this section - *In order to be considered pedagogical, whatever is being described must have express aim of supporting the change in the student's relation to content* - must now be open to the adding of a further dimension. The presence of loving care is pre-empted by the construction of a set of relations exemplified in the pedagogical triangle. However, I am sure that the reader might try to find examples where education happens without any loving care. To counter this, I invite you to consider the disenchanted teacher who is no longer excited by their subject and is resentful every day they must turn up to class. They still have a relation with their students, they still intend to improve their student's relation to it. Yet, there can be no love here as it appears there is a breakdown somewhere in the relation between the educator and the content and thus, already what we want to describe as pedagogical is inherently not because the structure of the pedagogical triangle is compromised. Therefore, I suggest that to fully describe something as pedagogical, the following definition can be employed:

Something is pedagogical when it aims, with loving care[10], to support the change in the student's relation to content.

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[10] I have considered whether love and care can be extricated in this case to be two entities, therefore creating the possibility that care can exist without love and vice versa. Setting out specific criteria for when these arise separately is not conducive to the nuanced ambiguity I interpret in Sartre's quote.

This definition is intentionally ambiguous since loving care could be directed towards the student, the content, the educator, or all of the above. Anything which is employed in this manner, including a pedagogical reduction, is rooted in a nurturing aspect since it encourages a change through loving care. The idea that I raised in the introduction to the chapter regarding the notion of reduction running counter to the notion of nurturing and growth is moot in this case. The connotations of what it means to nurture something are the caring and protecting of a thing as you support it to develop. Given what I have described as pedagogical, the idea of nurture could be almost synonymous with it.

Before moving on to consider what makes a reduction – and thus, a *pedagogical* reduction – it is important to say a few words about a further concept related to loving care: pedagogical tact.

3.3.2 A brief note on pedagogical tact

The brevity of this note should, in no way, be an indication against the idea that pedagogical tact is a thoroughly difficult and complex notion to untangle. It is brief merely because it does not lie entirely within the scope of my project enough to make a thorough conceptual delineation, but my idea of pedagogy does make use of one (and only one) perspective on it. The reason I make my brief note on pedagogical tact at this point is to invoke Herbart's description of tact as a "link intermediate" (1806, 20). While Herbart describes tact as the link between theory and practice, upon which those skilled in both can call to make on the ground decisions while teaching (and I do not disagree with this definition), I am using it to link the idea of what is pedagogical towards asking the question: what is *pedagogical reduction*? It is possible to use the concept of pedagogical tact in this way because the conceptualisation I will draw upon is, in my view, rooted in my idea of pedagogical loving care discussed above, and is employed by the educator when they conduct the acts of teaching (such as when they make their pedagogical reductions). In this respect, I am again inducing it as important for praxis (in van Manen's (1991) words, tact rules praxis since it is conceived in thought but expressed in practice).

Pedagogical tact might be considered the expression of the loving care that I have detailed above. It may be said that it is "an expression of the responsibility with which we are

charged in protecting [and] educating" (van Manen, 1991, 128), and van Manen himself admits this relationship to be asymmetrical – skewed not only towards the educator more than the student, but also disregarding the non-human elements in the pedagogical triangle. I agree that pedagogical tact is in part the expression of such a responsibility but is also partly constituted in a respect and devotion to the content to be taught. The tact one displays towards one's students will support the choices made when selecting content and, I might suggest, the converse is also true: if an educator can tactfully choose appropriate content, then it might allow for tact towards the student to manifest itself. If an educator can display the *situational confidence* required to select their content with loving care, while remaining open to the student's experience and *attuned to their subjectivity*[11] (i.e. reacting and adapting to how the content is received) then we know that pedagogical tact is being employed with in that particular situation but, as with pedagogical loving care, it has recourse to every relation in the triangle – not only that between student and teacher. Indeed, tact has etymological roots which suggest it is not something that is unique to our relationships with other humans. *Tact* is derived from the latin tactus which means *touch* – it is certainly true that we can touch, and be touched by, almost anything, both material and immaterial in a physical sense, and in an emotional one. Therefore, it is logical that we can be tactful to things both material and immaterial. This is, of course, dependent on whether we hold the requisite level of respect for these things, and whether or not we intend to manipulate them for our own ends (van Manen, 1991).

It is with recourse to pedagogical love, and its expression through pedagogical tact, and to the definitions of education and pedagogy/pedagogical that I have set out, that I will now come to consider the role of reduction before drawing everything together in a definition of *pedagogical reduction.*

3.3.3 Reductions

Setting aside anything particular to pedagogy or education initially, let us consider the particular connotations of a reduction. Immediately, the word might call to mind instances of removing or subtracting components of something to make it smaller. This might be in a

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[11] *Situational confidence* and *attuned to their subjectivity* are phrases used by van Manen (1991).

physical sense such as when we reduce the volume of water in a bathtub by letting some of the water out; or it could be in an abstract sense such as in a mathematical equation. In these cases, reduction refers to the act of reducing. Simultaneously, though, reduction can refer to the end result of the reducing act. It is now fashionable in some restaurants for chefs to serve reductions to their customers when once they would have been given sauce or gravy. The reduction in this case refers to the end of the process of boiling down stock and vegetables, and not the process itself. Parallels can be drawn here with the notion of education: while I have defined education as the process of educating, it is also very normal for those people who feel that they have successfully completed this process to say that have received an education, or for us to implore members of the younger generation to "Get an education!" Both reduction and education are words commonly used to represent the processes and the commodifiable ends of these processes.

Taking this definition of reduction, we might now be able to make a simple, logical deduction about the nature of pedagogical reduction. Based on my conclusion regarding what is pedagogical, we might now say that pedagogical reduction is:

The act of reducing something, with loving care, which aims to support a change in the student's relation to that thing. The reduction is both the process, and the end result of that process.

This assumes, however, that pedagogical reductions are always somehow less than the original. Something has to be made smaller or removed in order to be reduced. Let us investigate this assumption a little further.

I refer back now to Sartre's quote in which the Tutor tells Orestes he has "culled" the wise lore for him "like a bouquet". Indeed, the notion of culling anything can only infer an act of reducing – and in fact quite a violent act of reducing. Culling is a term most commonly used to refer to the ancient practice of selective animal slaughter – where the weak and sick animals from a herd were killed in order to promote the reproductions of stronger, healthier livestock (Palmer & Ulbricht, 1997). However, it does hold an archaic meaning with regards to the picking of flowers and/or fruit (Collins English Dictionary, 2020) and this is likely what Sartre was trying to connote with the use of the word in this quote, given that he explicitly mentions a bouquet, as well as drawing the reader's attention to the idea that the Tutor has made his pedagogical choice from the widest selection of "wise lore".

3.3.4 Selection

In picking out literature for Orestes, the Tutor is making a *selection* with regards to the content he wishes for Orestes to engage with. Just as one might make selections of flowers with the intention that they should make an attractive bouquet, so too does the educator intentionally select content in terms of what they believe to be most worthwhile or important for the student (Lewin, 2018). In making their selections, and essentially thrusting them under a spotlight for the student's attention, it can also be said that the educator has deliberately obscured (at least for that moment) everything else that could have been chosen. The very act of selecting inevitably involves rejecting. Lewin describes it more artfully as a revealing and a concealing.

It is a precariously thin line that which separates content to be selected, and content to be obscured. There would no doubt be considerable arguments for the educator to include anything in either camp. To ensure that selections are made pedagogically, then the educator must make decisions based on best interests of the student – tactfully employing the loving care which characterises all that is pedagogical. Problematically, the best interests of the student as seen by the student, and the interests of the student as seen by the educator, or by those great institutions of *la noosphère* (academia, society, politics) for whom the educator acts as mediator (Chevallard, 2007), may not necessarily resemble each other. Given my own experiences of teaching students often much younger than I am, it is not unfair to suggest that ideas of what lies in someone's best interests is almost always a point of contention, especially in intergenerational interactions.

Mollenhauer (2013) illustrates this with an example of a teenage girl desperate to leave school, while her parents insist that she stay in school for their own, respective reasons. He describes this is a clash in the "*ways of life*" (49, original emphasis) of the actors in the family unit. I may be more inclined to describe it as a stand-off between the worldviews of the teenager, her mother, and her father. While we know that the way of life for each of these people is unlikely to change in spite of the teenager making her declaration, it is possible that, upon hearing her mother's reflection that leaving school too early for her was a mistake, that the view of the teenager might be influenced. We know that the Tutor had also hoped that Orestes' worldview might be influenced by his education, sadly that was

not to be the case. Therefore, in intending to change a person's relation to something, the educator is also hoping to change the student's worldview – paradoxically they may try to broaden it by first narrowing it through the selections of content that they make.

The *selection* element of the reduction process has a twofold intention – firstly, it creates a palatable amount of content for the student. Imagine if the educator were to present the entire history of the world to a novice student. Not only would that prove a nigh on impossible task, but it would almost certainly overwhelm the student to the point of quitting. Employed with suitable pedagogical tact, the educator knows what, and how much, is right for the student to be engaging with at this particular stage in their study. Secondly, it also feeds into the protective factor which runs across all that is pedagogical, and so includes pedagogical reduction. Mollenhauer describes this as "the safety zone that protects children and teenagers from feeling the full weight of life in society" (2013, 49). While he mentions children and teenagers specifically, we might say this safety zone is in place for all students, of any age, since the situation of being in study similarly places one into the safety zone free from having to take the subject into the real world. University students might argue that they are straddling the conflicting spaces of the educational world and the adult world, but while they are on campus, they are very much protected from the realities of living fully in society. They do not have to produce work with economic purpose and intent (and if they are being asked to do so, then they are arguably no longer students but members of staff). In selecting content for their students, the educators emulate the walled gardens of their educational spaces, shielding their students from life outside its walls.

At the same time, what is selected is representative of the worldview of the educator making the selection as they decide what is important to reveal to the students. It is reliant upon the tact of the educator to know just how much to select to avoid overwhelming one's students with content which, largely, could be deemed unnecessary for that moment, while at the same time ensuring that they are not hiding so much that they could be accused of exerting some kind of epistemic injustice to their student (Fricker, 2007) – disrespecting their capacity as a knower via obfuscation.

Certainly, then, the process of *making a selection* is significantly reducing the vast amount of *savoir savant* (real world knowledge) which might then be drawn from as *savoir enseigné* (teachable content) (Chevallard, 2007). Selection, however, cannot be the end of the

reduction process. Speculating on the Tutor and Orestes again as an example, imagine the Tutor's surprise when, upon presenting a 5-year-old Orestes with his selections of wise lore for the young boy's delectation, he finds that Orestes has neither the interest, nor the means of understanding, the works he has been given to read. Something has to happen to the content between the educator's selection of it and its representation to the student (to be discussed in greater detail later) in order to transform this "wise lore" from its position and application outside of the pedagogical scenario, into something that can be taught. Chevallard refers to this as the internal workings of didactic transposition (while selection is considered external) in Lewin's interpretation of pedagogical reduction, it is referred to as *simplification.*

3.3.5 Simplification

At first consideration, simplification may seem like a simple dumbing down of content to make it easier to grasp. It may be observed in some ways that this makes sense, and yet, there are those who believe not. Certainly, those who follow Chevallard would agree:

> Loin d'être une simple vulgarisation du savoir « savant », le savoir transposé est une création originale.
>
> (Far from being an easy simplification of knowledge that is "known", transposed knowledge is an original creation. – *author's translation*)
>
> (Gauvin and Boivin, 2012, 13)

Furthermore, Wagenschein (1999) talks of teaching beginning with an entry point that is more complex and moving towards the elementary, rather than the opposite approach which one may be tempted to consider is what is necessarily meant by simplification. If simplification, then, is not (always or necessarily) reducing the complexity of the content in such a way that it becomes easier to understand, what might be meant by the use of this word in pedagogical reduction – could it be a misnomer for this stage in the reduction process?

I suggest not. Beginning with the selections of the educator themselves sets the stage for simplification. "Culling" or selecting content already begins to simplify a field or a discipline by removing the unnecessary, the unimportant. The educator must then take their selections and remove them from the complex interplays of this knowledge in society (or in *la noosphère*, as it were), outside of the constraints of productivity (Chevallard, 2007; Masschelein and Simons, 2013). Now the content exists in this simplified, as suspended, state ready to be used in furthering the aim of improving the student's relation to it. However, it is not fully pedagogical at this point. It is now up to the educator to further employ the tact and loving care, which is characteristic of all that is pedagogical, to make further adjustments in order to ensure that this content is endowed with an accessible "entry point", so eloquently described by Wagenschein, which encourages their potential for enthusiastic engagement with what is being offered. These further adjustments may take the form of the removal of some more elements, but it may also be the addition of something to support the student. For example, a child learning to ride a bicycle may learn using a balance bike (where the bike's pedals and brakes have been removed, and the child uses his/her feet along the ground to propel the bike as a means of cultivating the requisite balance to use a full bicycle), or they may learn on a bike using stabilisers (added to the back wheels in order to keep the bike from tipping over while the child starts to cultivate the same requisite balance). Both of these are cases of pedagogical reductions as they are employed with an educational aim in mind – to ride a bicycle – and with a mind to protect the child from falling and injuring themselves – a recourse to the loving care inherent in pedagogy.

It may be argued that the addition of something – stabilisers in the above example – is not entirely conducive to a reduction, nor a simplification. Yet, all simplifications carried out with a pedagogical slant, even when it involves the physical removal of something, can be said to be always removing *something* – in the bicycle case, it is the need to balance – yet is thereby always making an addition: the simplification in pedagogical reduction adds an element of *protection* to the situation.

By protection, I am not inferring that the pedagogical endeavour is without risk. Given how I have earlier explained, via Gert Biesta, that education (thus, pedagogy) is an inherently risky enterprise with all its subjectively human entanglement, I would argue the contrary. The protection I imagine here is a run on of the care of the educator and it is brought about

by the suspension of the selected content from its original sphere. The little child on the balance bike is somewhat protected from falling (not entirely) by the removal of the need for pedals to make his bike go. The child learning to swim is somewhat sheltered from the risks of drowning in the deep water by the addition of water wings and a float. The student learning computer science is safe to make a mistake in their code, knowing that they are not expected to publish their program, perhaps for an irascible client, outside of the lab. Simplification is as much about creating a protective space for practising (how to ride, how to swim, how to code) – with its connotations of sheltering as it is described by Lewin (2020) – as it is about taking away the complexity of content.

In the same way that selecting involves both a selection and a rejection (concealing and revealing) simplification also has a double concern in subtraction and addition. Every simplification subtracts the complexity which surrounds the content in its real-world context. In doing this it adds protection and safety to the pedagogical situation. It would be a tactful educator who could discern the speed and level at which complexity was added to ensure the student's relation to the content did not remain at an inhibiting level for the student. The student should be made aware that the reduction is not the whole entity – such is the distinction between pedagogical reduction and reductionism (Lewin, 2020). Not acknowledging the limits of the pedagogical reduction may once again edge into the sphere of epistemic injustice at best, stultification at worst.

Now that the educator has selected the content, and simplified it, the time comes for it to be offered up to the student as *savoir enseigné* – taught content. Just as Gauvin and Boivin (2013) say, what is left after the selection and the simplification cannot be considered the same object that existed before the process of pedagogical reduction was employed (or, in an interpretation of Chevallard's words, before the didactic transposition took place). This can be pointed to by a change in how we name the reductions. For example, qualifiers are often used to distinguish the real object from its reduction: one would have to ask for a *balance* bike in order to get that particular object. Similarly, we would not consider the swimmer endowed with water wings to be really swimming – perhaps more like floating with purpose. What are the students getting when an educator makes this offering?

We might say, turning back to the Tutor and Orestes, that they are getting "a bouquet". Consider, when the Tutor has completed his culling of the metaphorical flowers of wise lore for Orestes, he then gifts it to him "like a bouquet". However, a bouquet is not merely a

bunch of chosen flowers, taken from their field and thrown together with abandon. They are carefully arranged and presented in a way that the florist thinks the person receiving them will appreciate. This is what the educator is doing when they present content to the student; however, now invoking Mollenhauer (2013), I will explain why the educator is not just presenting their educational bouquet but *representing* it.

3.3.6 Representation

In discussing this final element of pedagogical reduction, it is necessary to first of all make a distinction between presentation and representation.

Presentation, according to Mollenhauer, is something that inevitably happens when bringing up children. It is what happens when "adults present to children the lives they live and the values they live them by." (19). Fundamental to this is the development of language so as to provide the child with the structures required to give meaning and interpretations to what the adults are pointing out to the children. Thus, the adults' utterances are a means of presentation in themselves. This is not dissimilar to the discussion I presented at the outset of this chapter regarding the difference between cultural-transmission-as-living, and cultural-transmission-as-education. The former allows for a parent/pedagogue to present a desirable way of life by, effectively, living that life – they be, and they do, what they wish to point out to the child/student for the child/student to emulate. Cultural-transmission-as-living could be considered a means of presentation, a way of upbringing.

As education, however, something more is required – and Mollenhauer suggests this too. In education, the world being pointed out is no longer being played out and directly emulated by the children in real time, such as in the examples of the woodcuts he gives where the child takes direct part in the working practice of the adult. It is the "gradual emergence of a barrier" (25) between the child and the reality of the adult which has brought us to the situation where we are now: we have built something of an elaborate *educational reality* which is a filtered version of the reality of the older generation. The building of such an educational reality can only be an intentional act – by virtue of its description as educational on the one hand, and by the very notion of construction on the other. While

Mollenhauer explicitly names this an educational reality, I suggest that it can as accurately considered a *pedagogical reality* given that the process of pedagogical reduction acts as its foundation.

In its transformation from object of knowledge to teachable content, the content charts a trajectory through *la noosphère* – from academia, through society, via teacher to student (Chevallard, 2007). One might suggest this is the journey that takes it from the real world to the pedagogical reality, or educational reality, that Mollenhauer talks about (going through its process of simplification en route). What we end up with is an object, or some content, which is not the same object it was at the outset, but "a facsimile or reproduction of the world… that is "better", for the sake of the children." (53). What exactly is *better* about it?

Once again, it invokes the protective idea of what is pedagogical. At various points, Mollenhauer talks about filtering and shielding. The connotations of both are to keep the *bad* things out; filtering, especially, makes one think of keeping purity in. A representation is as much about offering a sense of protection as the other two elements of the pedagogical reduction, if not more so given that this is where the content and the student finally meet. Paradoxically, with the pedagogical shield now firmly in place, a kind of freedom arises for the student to explore this content without recourse to the reality outside of the educational one. The student can now fully engage in "pedagogical rehearsal or practice" (Mollenhauer, 2013, 31) with the content as their changing relation to it develops.

Representation is the inevitable result of selection and simplification if they are to be employed pedagogically. It is the offering up of the finished product from a process of reducing the world of content available to the educator – it is the Tutor presenting his educational bouquet to Orestes carefully chosen, cleaned, and pruned so as to protect his young charge from any hidden thorns, nettles or biting insects. Whether Orestes comes to accept the bouquet – whether any student will accept the offering up of pedagogically reduced content – is another matter entirely.

It is here that I now wish to make a definition of pedagogical reduction to conclude this discussion. If that which is pedagogical is *Something which aims, with loving care, to support the change in the student's relation to content,* then a pedagogical reduction – recalling all that has featured in my description of it – becomes:

A process (or the end result of such a process) of selection, simplification, and representation of contents of the educator's world which intends, with loving care, to offer the student the opportunity to change their relation to content. The content which has been pedagogically reduced exists in a pedagogical reality – it is not the same content as it exists outside of this reality. This adds a shielding element to allow the student the safety to access and explore the content's "entry point".

§

Before moving on to explore the links between image and pedagogical reduction, I wish to briefly describe some examples of pedagogical reductions (noun), although it is the case that anything, provided it has gone through the process outlined, with an educational intention to change a student's relation to content, and applied with the requisite love, care and recourse to protection can be considered a pedagogical reduction. I mention a couple of things here to reinforce my point.

I mentioned above the balance bike, and the bike with stabilisers (both reductions). Most children's toys which emulate other so-called adult objects (a toy kitchen, for example, or a ride on car) can be considered pedagogical reductions inasmuch as they represent the contents of the adult world and can be used as a means of rehearsing, safely, and graduating towards the use of the real things.

Picture books are also pedagogical reductions. A student reader may use the images to support the reading of the text. With time and practice they can gradually move on to books with fewer images and more text. Furthermore, fictions and the allegorical are exceptionally conducive to creating a safe space for engaging with a world – consider this example from Dahlbeck:

> a fictional account can provide an emotionally engaging example for talking
> about bullying [or anything else] without situating the problem in the
> actual life-world of the students
>
> (2020, 226).

More than this, fictions as a way of explicating are often woven into the fabric of a culture – the reader may be familiar with Aesop's fables or Kipling's Just So Stories. This raises further questions about the value of myths and fictions, which I will come to discuss in a later chapter. For now, we can say that, given as it is an entry point to inspire wonder and interest, it can perhaps be agreed that for some students, these stories which attempt to explain the world via fiction are somewhat more engaging than the so-called truth.

Further to tangible objects, I also suggest that the relationship between student and educator is itself a pedagogical reduction. Consider that it exists in a pedagogical reality – both people exist in their own right as complex beings outside of this reality. For the purposes of education, they remove themselves from it and become, in the moment, only student and only educator. Sometimes this happens in a specific location (such as a classroom), sometimes it happens through specific actions (with an educational intention). It is a notably bizarre and awkward experience when the boundary between pedagogical reality and real life are breached, or blurred, such as if you meet a teacher from school out with their family, for example. While outside the scope of my investigation here, it would be interesting to consider whether the strongest student-educator relationships are those which are dutifully respectful of the boundary between realities, or those which allow for some blurriness.

In the next chapter, I will use the definitions of image and pedagogical reduction I have set out with a view to making a comparison of them as both processes of reduction, and as the finished products of these processes. We will come to find that they are more similar than one might first imagine.

Chapter 4. Bridging Image and Pedagogical Reduction

It may be noted that the discussions in the previous two chapters dealt with two very discrete concepts: Image and Pedagogical Reduction. From the outset, one might suspect that there is no justification for the linking or comparison of these two concepts. Perhaps they come to represent the apples and oranges of my thesis. The intention of this chapter is to first justify the criteria for making the comparisons. I will argue that image can be considered a reduction, before comparing its reduction process to that of pedagogical reduction, and also to look at them both as objects of reduction. Finally, I will cement my case by invoking Barthes' twin notions of *studium* and *punctum*, and by offering up concrete examples of pedagogical reductions/images for consideration.

4.1 An Image Reduces but is also a Reduction

While it was inevitable, in a treatise on pedagogical reduction, that one must refer to reduction, this was less so important when discussing the ontological basis of image. However, this does not assume that there is no reduction in the image. Much like pedagogical reduction, an image can be considered both the process of reducing and the end result of this process.

In order to further explain why this is the case, I return to the definition of image I gave in Chapter two:

The image is the interplay between imagination and image-object which both offers up a suspended, snapshot view into the imagination of the image creator, and inspires the image viewer to use their own imagination to reveal the image for, and in, themselves.

The conceptualisation of image as reduction relies on our understanding of what a suspended, snapshot view is, how the image creator comes to create such a view, and what occurs when they project it. As I look into this in more detail, I refer only to projected

image-objects – that is an image manifested explicitly so as it might be communicated to another. With a view to streamlining my argument, I will refer to one exemplar of a projected image-object – in this case, a photograph – but the reader should understand that the intention is that my explanation via the photograph can be generalised to all projected image-objects as listed in chapter two of this thesis. I have no justification for choosing a photograph other than it is an image-object that is easy to access and can be reproduced most effectively in print.

4.1.1 A Suspended, Snapshot View

Figure 4 The Causeway Coast (Author's Own)

Since I aim to make a generalisation, the actual content of the photograph – and, indeed, the photograph itself – is not terribly important except as a concrete image-object upon which I can make my argument. However, I have purposely resisted choosing a shot featuring people to promote a more neutral interpretation of it (admittedly never completely neutral). As Balazs (1970) discussed, the hubristic nature of humans causes us to be irresistibly drawn to other humans when looking at things, and I am keen that the reader does not get too drawn into the photograph as it is only an intermediary of my argument. Of course, everything that I am about to say will also apply to photographs in which humans are featured (and texts, speech, sculpture, paintings etc with or without people). The above photograph is a landscape shot of the Causeway Coast in Northern Ireland – a remarkable landmark in and of itself, but here, it should be regarded as relatively mundane insofar as it is but a utility in my discussion.

Given that the image relies upon the interplay between imagination and image-object, I can imagine that the reader/viewer now has made something of an interpretation of this image. They have shone their image light upon it and revealed something in the image (perhaps they have recognised the location) and something in themselves (a memory, a thought). I am unable to predict exactly what the image viewer makes of this photograph. I can speak, on the other hand, of its creation since I am, by virtue of my choosing the view and pressing the button on the camera, this photograph's creator.

I took this photograph because at the moment, where I was stood, I was enchanted by what I could see. I had the choice to move my camera inches, or feet, horizontally or vertically in a 360-degree rotation. Each time I did this, I would have happened upon a different point of view all equally valid enough to be photographed (if the criteria for validity was simply because it was there, and that I could point a camera at it). I could have given the camera to someone else who is likely to have taken a different shot from their perspective. It remains that, despite vast and numerous possibilities, this was the view that sparked my imagination (as a viewer and creator) enough to make me want to press the shutter. I *selected* it.

Thus immediately, I have reduced the number of infinite possibilities to one. However, as Barthes (2000) asks of the photographer: "why choose (why photograph) this moment, rather than some other?" (6). The ubiquitous availability of camera technology means that I am sometimes not so inclined to carefully plan the photographs that I take – this photograph represents one of those times. As I say, I was enchanted by the view, and I wished to retain something of a reminder of it. I am subject to the "cult of remembrance" so identified by Walter Benjamin (2003) although while I have chosen not to capture the fleeting aura of a human face as he describes, I have captured the fleeting aura of a location, seen through my eyes and imagination, which will never exist again outside of that particular moment (although the location itself may live on for millennia). The individual justifications for selecting the content to be subsequently reimagined as a projected image-object (as above) vary. All that can be deduced is that in each case the image creator finds whatever it is from the contents of their imagination to be valuable enough to preserve and/or offer up to their viewer depending on whether they intend to project their image or not.

This is certainly true of my photograph. It sparks the memory of the place and time that I visited which is valuable to me, and when I look at it as a viewer, I can imagine what it was like to be there. However, while it might invoke memories/feelings of being there (whether the viewer has visited or not), it is *not there*. Most assuredly, this photograph is NOT the Giant's Causeway on a sunny day in July – in fact, it can be suggested that in a viewer's eyes it is not any place, or any time, at all: "by slicing out this moment and freezing it, all photographs testify to time's relentless melt." (Sontag, 1973, 11). The image, as it existed in my imagination at the time of visit, has changed in its transition to image-object. Most notably, it is no longer bound up in the context of my imagination.

I suggest that a projected image-object is a suspension of an image that exists, or has existed, somewhere in the imagination of the image creator. It may begin the product of a complex interweaving of the imaginary historical and present life of the creator, and the entire context of their relations to the world (social, cultural, spiritual etc.), but when it is offered up as something external to themselves it is necessarily suspended from all of these knotty complications (so that the viewer can introduce it to their own internal life in order to make an interpretation). The viewer of my photograph can appreciate it (or not, depending on their opinion) as an image-object on its own without having to know exactly

what was going through my mind at the precise moment I took the shot – although an astute analyst might be able to deduce this just by examining it.

Not only is the image, as projection, now suspended from my imagination (its original space), but it is also suspended from the time in which it originally existed. In terms of my photograph, it no longer exists in my imagination in the same way that it did at that particular time. For example, the image is ephemeral in that it is sometimes there – often when sparked by the photograph – but often it is not. Also, the unreliability of the imagination, as Alain's experiment at the Pantheon (see chapter two) showed, ensures that I probably never remember the same thing twice; as I think about it now, I am mostly focussed on the searing heat and the hilly terrain that I remember more so than the beauty of the landscape. The viewer may look at it and not assign it to any particular time – this could be any moment of any given year as far as they are concerned. That being said, it necessarily becomes an object of *their* time, the time in which they are viewing the image themselves. While the photograph is suspended from a particular time, it can never really fully be suspended from time entirely.

What I have done, as this image's creator, is removed this image from its original geographic location; from its original time; from its place and time in my imagination, and I have transformed it, invoking the idea of a transformation as a change occurring in which something of the original remains or is carried over. The fleeting aura of the real-life location at this moment in space and time is captured in this image-object, while everything else about it has either changed or is gone completely: the curiously formed rocks on the shore and the mountainous hills are now two-dimensional representations of these same things. The sounds of the water lapping on the shore and feet crunching on the gravelly footpath are now gone, as is the distinctive smell of the North Atlantic Coast. I am left with a view suspended from literal and (my) imaginary space and time, but it can only be a snapshot as it does not give a full account into the entire workings of my mind, or the entire complexity of the locale. When this is projected, the viewer does not get transported physically to the Giant's Causeway to experience this for themselves, they may not even get transported there via their imagination; they get something which comes to represent my view of the Giant's Causeway for them to do with whatever they wish. I selected what to photograph, I suspended it from its context, and I offer it up to the viewer to engage their

own imagination with it. The photograph, as with all images, thus reduces and is a reduction.

I now expect a question will arise from this. The use of the term snapshot strongly connotes characteristics pertaining to photographs and photography in general, and so can be easily applied to an example such as the one I have given. How can we say that other image-objects are comparable to the photograph in the way that they reduce/are reductions? Are these still suspended, snapshot views?

In order to test the hypothesis that they could be, let us look at another example from my list of image-objects set out in chapter two, but one which is somewhat remote from the way in which the photograph is constructed so as not to confuse the similarities in construction with the similarities of the media. As such, I believe that text serves as suitably different enough from the photograph to fulfil this purpose.

4.1.2 Text as a Suspended, Snapshot View

In the latter section of chapter two, I have somewhat delineated the differences between picture (of which photograph is a type) and text. To summarise, I suggested that the picture seems to offer a unified whole for immediate digestion from which an idea can be communicated and gathered in one look – whether the viewer discerns any kind of proper meaning in that one look is irrelevant. Text, on the other hand, while it is a particular kind of picture indeed, requires significant coding and decoding on the part of the creator/reader and while we might appear to understand short words or phrases very quickly upon looking at them, we must not forget that this ability is the result of (often a lot of) time and effort. This is not to mention longer texts which almost certainly cannot get anything across in one look. Nevertheless, texts – even the longer ones – remain suspended, snapshot views. To illustrate this, I will again use an exemplar as I did with the photograph.

The studio was filled with the rich odour of roses, and when the light
summer wind stirred amidst the trees of the garden, there came through
the open door the heavy scent of the lilac, or the more delicate perfume of
the pink-flowering thorn.

(Wilde, 2001, 5)

I have no real justification for choosing this piece of text as the example image-object other than it was close to hand, and it features within a larger text that I hold dear. In any case, the piece of text here, just as the photograph above, is immaterial to the advancement of my argument. In these opening words of *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, Oscar Wilde tells his reader of a place. In this respect, it is not dissimilar from my photograph in that both feature a location.

The instant, formal difference between this piece of text and the photograph is striking, but what has occurred is no less the same. This place he is describing – whether a place he has once visited or not; whether it is a place which exists in the real world or not – has as similarly been frozen and sliced out of its original time and space (in Wilde's imagination) as had the photograph shown above. It is now a product of his reader's time, and it is now introjected into their imagination.

It would be wrong to attempt to guess at the form this image took as it was held within Wilde's imagination, pre-projection. We cannot be sure that this is the fullest manifestation of the image he held in his mind before starting to write – he may have been nursing a highly populated scene from which he had to draw only on particular points for the sake of brevity, although my interpretations of Wilde's many other writings suggest this was rarely his concern. Nevertheless, we can say that he has made choices here about how best to convey the characteristics of the location he wishes to describe. A textual frame is built from the word choices and literary devices used here: he chooses to focus particularly on accentuating the olfactory delights of the garden flowers, with the prominent use of alliterative rolling *R* and plosive *P* sounds to add texture to the sound, rather than offering a brick-by-brick description of the studio itself to suggest a more literal picture. This is an overtly sensual description which, it may be suggested, is offered to appeal less to his reader's reasoning intellect and more to the base hedonistic capacities he wants to be

awakened in them – the same capacities we later discover are awakened in Dorian Gray himself. In short, his choice of language is no accident, he continues to make a selection from an expansive language, although still somewhat bound by formal rules, in order to effectively manifest his image.

We learn that this scene is set in summer. This passing reference to a time – but not to a *particular* time, lest we forget that a summer comes along every year – serves to reinforce Sontag's idea that, although it is not a photograph, it is still testament to time's relentless melt. Wilde's 19th century English summer may be markedly different from the summers of his readers across the years and locales; still, it is identifiable to them as a time, but not one *particular* time. Furthermore, as I read this extract on a relatively cold Scottish winter's day, I am given to project my idea of summer (scarce though it may be) on to Wilde's description. This summer's day in the artist's studio is now removed from Oscar Wilde's imagination and offered up, in timeless suspension, for the reader to visit with the illuminating fluorescence of their own image light.

Of course, this is not to suggest that all images can exist in timeless suspension. Some images are very much bound in time (and, perhaps, space) such as live, unrehearsed speech, performance art or, as Wulff (2009) points out the images of our bodies as we perform our everyday activities. Still, it is in the performance here that the images are given over from creator to viewer – even if this is done unconsciously as in the movement of our bodies in day-to-day life. This removal creates a suspension as the images make themselves available to the audience's interpretation. The temporal and spatial distance may be shorter, but the giving and receiving remains the same.

What they find in all of the aforementioned images is just the same as what is found in the photograph: the fleeting aura of something imaginary. In Wilde's case, it has been transformed from an idea, perhaps an image held in mind, to a series of carefully chosen letters and words. When the words are placed on the page and offered to the reader, Wilde's image is projected; therefore, it is no longer bound up in the complicated network of his thoughts and ideas but has an identity of its own for the reader to assume into their own context. It is as much a snapshot as my photograph. Furthermore, by virtue of its status as an image, it is also a reduction.

4.2 Two Ways of Reducing

Images, therefore, reduce. Something happens in the process of image creation – and, again, I can only speculate on projected image-objects given the inaccessibility of mental objects other than my own - which reduces. Does this bear any similarity to what happens in the process of pedagogical reduction? To investigate this, I want to consider first of all what influences the initiation of both processes and then to look at how the processes unfold.

As I mentioned in the previous chapter, any process must have an intended beginning which drives towards a desirable end. The process of image creation is intentionally begun, certainly where there is a view to projecting image-objects. Yes, there are instances where the motifs of divine inspiration or inexplicable savantism on the part of the artist will be alluded to by some creators (Sarapik, 2000); nevertheless, an intention to create is always in the hands of the creator, regardless of where the inspiration originates.

The intention to begin a process drives towards a desirable end. As has been discussed at length in the previous chapter, pedagogical reduction, featuring as it does within education, drives towards the educational end of (hopefully) effecting a change in a person's relation to something else. It cannot be said that image creation drives towards this same end. Of course, regardless of what Schultz suggests in terms of a generalisable account of a creative type of person (2022), it is impossible for us to know what the creator intends beyond just making something. Do they want or care for their work to have any impact on their audience? Surely it is enough to assume that by the very act of offering up of their work to an audience that this is what they are hoping for, even if the creation has deeply personal undertones. It is suggested that Sylvia Plath wrote poetry to exorcise the demons of her father's untimely death (Schultz, 2022). This can be seen as an intention to create for personal benefit, but the subsequent publication of these works imply that they were intended for an audience - that they shifted from cult to exhibitable value (Benjamin, 2003). If this was not the case, Plath would not have agreed to their publication. Besides which, in chapter two, the possibility of the image creator and viewer being two versions of the same person has already been discussed, such that images are *always* being exhibited to another, even if the other is the creator advanced in time. Thus, in image creation, as in pedagogical

reduction, an intention is directed from one person to another: image creator to audience, educator to student.

This is not to say that image creators are, or are not, intent on changing a person's relation to something. Indeed, the reader who takes Plath's poems and finds a perspective on grief they had never encountered and consequently come to introject will have had their relation to something (i.e., grief) changed here. The difference between this and pedagogical reduction is that the educator begins with that explicit intention; without interrogating the author herself, and relying on Schultz's descriptive speculation, it seems more likely that Plath was interested in communicating her own feelings (perhaps as a method of catharsis) than trying to change anyone else's. This suggests a one-sided relationship between image creator and audience but, in fact, this relationship still relies on a reciprocated recognition in the same way as that of the educator and student. It is the audience who give the image creator the occasion to create, and the image creator who offers their work to the audience – to paraphrase Kierkegaard once more.

On the other hand, while Plath may not have intended to change her audience's relation to something, there are creators who do begin with that intention. Schultz (2022) also considers the creative efforts of the comedian Jerry Seinfeld: "It's all about the laugh and only the laugh" (63). The reader need not be reminded, of course, that speech, as much as text, can be considered an image-object (as laid out in the Image chapter). Stand-up comedians – regardless of genre – create their work by playing around with the mundane. Seinfeld, as an observational comedian, intends for his audience to appropriate his unique image of the mundane (created by pointing out minor absurdities in everyday occurrences) in order to make them laugh. To reference one of his most famous routines:

> And why does the pharmacist always have to be two and a half feet higher
> than everybody else? Brain surgeons. Airline pilots. We're all on the same
> floor level. But not this guy. Why?

(Seinfeld, 2020, 174)

Seinfeld wants the audience to change how they see the pharmacist's platformed working space from something so ordinary it barely warrants a mention, to a humorous curiosity. He intends to change how the audience relates to the pharmacist, if only *en route* to getting a laugh.

As we can see, while the image creation process must begin with an intention, as must pedagogical reduction, images are not necessarily bound by the same intention in the way that pedagogical reduction is. Images are created for a variety of reasons, and not always necessarily with the effect on the audience in mind – although there are some images which are explicitly created for this purpose. What we could say, however, is that in both cases the educator/image creator wants to show something to someone. In a way, this could perhaps be characterised as a meta-intention in the sense that it can give rise to the very particular intentions of changing a person's relation to something, or making them laugh, or offloading one's personal trauma. In terms of intention, both images and pedagogical reduction retain an element of wanting to show someone something.

Whether or not they begin with the intention to show, or the intention to show comes subsequent to respective intentions (to educate, to entertain etc.), these processes then have to take actions to show something to somebody. In taking these actions to show something particular, a parallel action is carried out where everything else is obscured. The actions a creator/educator takes to show something are the methods of reducing. In pedagogical reduction, as I laid out in the previous chapter, these actions include the selection of content; simplification; and representation. In my discussion of the photograph earlier in this chapter, I explained how I selected what to photograph, I suspended it from its context, and I offer it up to the viewer to engage their own imagination with it. Although some of the terminology looks similar, it cannot be taken for granted that these processes bear any similarity to each other. Let us investigate a little closer.

4.3 Imaginary and Pedagogical Selection, Simplification and Re-presentation

4.3.1 Selection

Selection in pedagogical reduction, as previously discussed, concerns identifying the valuable contents of the world for the educator to offer up to their students. In some ways, it can be suggested that this is a refinement of a world(view). Of course, the identification of valuable contents requires that which is considered less valuable to be obscured and, consequently, rejected. While I say that to be truly pedagogical the selections should be made with the student in mind, it cannot be escaped that the educator is the person in control of what is chosen.

In image creation, it is my view that some elements of the selection process are similar. For example, it is the image creator who decides what they offer up to their audience (again, discussions of divine interventions aside). The audience, like the student, has no control over what the creator chooses to present to them; however, they can turn away if they wish – as can the student. What the image creator gives in the image is a snapshot view into a creator's imagination as I have previously said. The very notion of a snapshot view suggests that there are things outside of the frame that are not included. Once again, this is a refinement of a world(view) as it exists in the creator's imagination. The image creator, unlike the educator, need not necessarily have their audience in mind when they are selecting what to show although it is true that they do in some cases (à la Seinfeld's example above).

4.3.2 Simplification

As I have referenced *suspension* when referring to the image creation process so far, the reader can be forgiven for suspecting that this element of the reduction process(es) is not so easily comparable. Yet, something similar does happen at this stage in pedagogical reduction and the creation of an image.

I have said that simplification in pedagogical reduction is doubly concerned with subtraction and addition: that is, simplifications take away the complexity which surrounds an object of study when it is found in its context beyond the pedagogical sphere, and in doing so it adds protection and safety for the student who comes to study it. This is true even when considering such innovations as pedagogies of discomfort (Zemblyas & Boyer, 2002). Introducing uncomfortable topics to induce students into questioning their views

may appear to carry risk (to the student). However, the idea that this is done with the guidance and support of the educator is what gives it its protective element. It is in the removal of complexity and the addition of protection by which a suitable entry point into the subject matter is given. The suspension of images certainly performs a similar function in terms of subtraction – depending on the perspective, it can be said that the image itself is subtracted from the complicated inner workings of a creator's imagination, or that these inner workings are subtracted from the image. In either case, the result is the same: some complexity is removed. Considering the photograph discussed above, the reduction in complexity is two-fold given that it has not only been sliced from my imagination, but spatial and temporal dimensions have also been removed to flatten this particular image-object into a 2-dimensional format. In text and speech, the flattening goes further still when colours and shapes give way instead to abstract ciphers intended to invoke (the idea of) the image in the reader/listener. Even the most hyperrealistic sculptures – perhaps such as those to be found in Madame Tussaud's wax museums – present 3-dimensional images (or abstractions) of recognisable people and things with something noticeably removed. It might be glib to suggest that what has been removed here is *life,* which is a complex notion all its own.

Furthermore, I recognise the characteristic of protection and safety in images – clearly more so for the viewer, indeed, rather than the creator or those who may feature in distressing images[12]. As a viewer, and by virtue of the image's suspension, one is free to explore, and introject into their own imagination (or inner life) whatever the image offers up to them. Remaining with the sculptures of Madame Tussaud, although the museums are now more associated with models of the rich and famous, originally, they contained sculptures of victims of the French Revolution. Her museum in London exposed the horrors of Tussaud's recent past as it had unfolded across the Channel. In a time when newspapers may not have been accessible to many, this was a safe place for viewers to see what was going on – they were protected from experiencing Tussaud's reality of life in revolutionary France. A similar comparison with Mme Tussaud can be drawn with journalism and photojournalism today, where images give the general public a protected space to enter into the snapshot views of the world as it is offered by these journalists.

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[12] I agree with Ambrossi (2019) that we are morally obligated to interrogate the use of such images not just in education but beyond.

Therefore, simplification in both pedagogical reduction and image creation can be considered to both remove complexity and add protection to the student/viewer as they come to engage with whatever is being offered up for them. It could be argued that one distinction may lie, however, in intentions once more. Educators intentionally simplify for their students. Although Chevallard (2007) states that some educators are not aware that they are doing it, I would suggest that any educator, employing pedagogical reduction in servicing the overall educational intention, carries this same intention throughout their practice whether they are aware of each nuanced instance or not. I cannot fully agree that simplification is done completely without thought, however. Image creators, on the other hand, may appear in some cases to give no thought to this element in the process of their creation given that they may be more concerned with the selection and representation elements: what are they going to show and how will they show it? Yet, simplification still happens in the image creation process whether the creator can recognise it is happening or not and, again, the creator's overarching intention can still be found in this simplification.

Furthermore, it is a feature of pedagogical reduction that it invites the gradual re-introduction of complexity to suit the situation[13]. For example, there is no imperative that the student learning to ride a bicycle must progress beyond the use of the balance bike – although one may be inclined to suggest that if they do not, they have not *really* learned how to ride – but it is relative mastery of the balance which allows the student to progress on to the use of a bicycle with all of the recognisable features, and the mechanics of the balance bike invite such a gradual re-introduction. While they may not share the same pedagogical intention, image-objects too can be adapted/modified/added to for the purposes of their original intention. Even the seemingly instantaneous, thoughtless clicking of a camera shutter can, in these days of pocket sized, lightweight photo-editing applications, be cropped or have filters applied in order to present their shots in a particular way. Authors will sometimes present subsequent editions of texts with added forewords or material. Movies are often re-released with added content that has been rescued from the cutting room floor. The act of simplifying in images too paves a way for the subsequent reaction of complexifying.

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[13] Although there is no obligation that complexity must be reintroduced; for example, if a student chooses to withdraw or does not show willingness or readiness to move on. This is not the same as stultification - cases where the students are unaware that there is something beyond the reduction and are deliberately held back.

4.3.3 Representation

Representation, as was discussed with regards to pedagogical reduction, is the offering up of content after it has gone through the selection and simplification stages of reduction. It is Chevallard's finally and fully transformed *savoir enseigné* – that which is taught to students.

Recall that what students are offered is what Mollenhauer described as a "facsimile" of the world – nothing but a reproduction of an educator's worldview. However, given the transformative process this worldview has gone through to get to this stage, it cannot just be a mere copy. Of course, the idea of facsimile as a close as possible copy of an original further suggests that it cannot be the original. There is an easy, but inelegant, comparison to be made from Mollenhauer's use of the term "facsimile" and its connotations with certain image-objects (photographs and text especially). I will avoid this potential cliché and consider whether representation in pedagogical reduction as the offering up of something to students post selection and simplification, bears any resemblance to what happens at the end of the image creation process.

Indeed, it seems that it does. As I have noted above, the image creator has selected what they want to show, and in creating they have removed it from the context of their imagination thereby simplifying it for the purpose of their audience. Now they have something to offer up – something which has also been transformed, just as Chevallard's *savoir* has been, but instead from mental image-object to projected image-object. Once again, it should be noted that any intentions behind the offering made by the image creator are not necessarily pedagogical.

Mollenhauer further suggests that what is represented is constituted in an educational (or pedagogical) reality, which resembles something of a filtered version of the real world of the educator. Since it can be agreed that not all images have a pedagogical intent, then it would be wrong to try to suggest that they also exist in this alternate reality. However, the reality of an image does resemble a filtered version of the imagined world of the image creator – this is essentially what the processes of selection and simplification achieve. In this respect, the idea that images populate a separate realm, as in the thinking of al-

Suhrawardi that I mentioned in chapter two, seems less of a distant notion when we consider how images are transformed and projected from one person (creator) to another (audience). Image-objects are surely artefacts of intersubjective realities – as are the objects of pedagogy (pedagogical reductions).

What we come to see, therefore, is that in spite of initial differences regarding the overall intentions of image creators and educators, the process that they undertake to show something – and thus reduce their worldview into an accessible object to their respective audiences – is the same. To cement these findings, let us briefly consider the finished objects of these reducing processes: the imaginary and pedagogical reductions themselves.

4.4 Imaginary and Pedagogical Reductions

In the representation phase of the reducing process, something from the educator/image creator's world is ready to be shown and, given that whatever it is has come through the process, it can be considered a reduction in itself.

In the previous chapter, I gave the example of the balance bike as a pedagogical reduction, but it is possible to point to many more: lectures, textbooks, myths, and fairy tales to name but a few. Pedagogical reductions are employed by educators to allow students freedom to practice in relative safety while allowing room for complexity to be added at an appropriately judged time. For example, a biology textbook might offer an introduction to concepts and theories in the academic discipline of biology, gradually increasing in complexity as the book goes on, but there is no expectation that the student, at that level, should participate in the current research and discourse taking place in the field. Thus, a student can cultivate an understanding while being free from the economic/academic requirements of working in Biology.

The biology student who studies the textbook becomes the recipient of the distilled field of Biology so interpreted by the author of the textbook. They are subject to the author's biases and prejudices, which are likely to be influenced by a consensus in the field – or a traditional way of doing things – that what they are writing about is the necessary information for an elementary biology student. Educators making pedagogical reductions cannot avoid making certain assumptions about what is important, and about what is the

best strategy to improve their students' relations to the world as they see it. With this in mind, astute educators will realise that they are not responsible for communicating an objective truth to students; instead, they are showing but one (highly subjective) worldview. This is the case even in subjects like Biology and their ilk; disciplines whose research and findings are often accepted, communicated, and taught, as objective truths with little opportunity to question.

One may note that the few examples I have given of pedagogical reductions can also be placed under categories of particular image types as I have defined them in chapter two: the balance bike could be considered a working, mechanical sculpture; lectures constitute rehearsed (and sometimes unrehearsed) speech; textbooks comprise text, and often pictures; and literary myths and fairy tales are projected using a variety of media. In a much broader sense, pedagogical reductions and images share features which go beyond the similarity in process and are not bound by the sub-types contained within. Of course, as I have already said, images and pedagogical reductions are artefacts of intersubjective realities. Contrary to popular conception, a photograph is as much a representation of a highly subjective worldview than the aforementioned biology textbook. The camera can most certainly lie in these days of massively accessible photo editing technology, but in any case, the photograph is always hiding something – this is inevitable in the image creation process. The subjective worldviews offered by both the educator and image-creator become intersubjective when they are accepted and introjected by the student/audience.

Another feature that is shared between the image and the pedagogical reduction is that there is no guarantee how they will be received by their respective audiences. Both image creation and education (thus pedagogical reduction) are (inter)subject-oriented processes which assume at least two subjects in interaction and so there is no guaranteed recipe that will see these objects of reduction achieving their intended aims (if any). Sure, the image creator can manipulate their materials and environments, thus surreptitiously also manipulating their audience into receiving their work in a particular way – whether this pertains to Wilde's laborious wordplay or the manner in which a painting is exhibited in the gallery. Similarly, the educator also manipulates two-fold in terms of their material resources and their audience. Perhaps they present their pedagogical reductions in a specifically assigned space, at a specifically assigned time (sometimes called a classroom or a school) with the aim of concentrating engagement and attention on to what it is they

intend to show their students. Nevertheless, this does not ensure that the audience will engage with the image in the way that the creator intended; nor might the student readily accept what they are being shown just because they have been herded into a classroom to see it[14]. Thus, the image creator and the educator are taking significant risks here in the exposition of their world (or themselves) to others.

So too, does the student/audience expose themselves to vulnerability if they choose to engage with the object at hand. The student is submitting themselves to the educator's intention to change them, and/or their relation to something. This requires a (passive) observation of what is being shown to them, as well as the (active) will to engage with it. The pedagogical reduction is a technological means of acting upon this intention but remains inert if the student has no interest in it. The audience of the image creator also open themselves up to observing what they are being shown but, similarly, the image remains inert if the audience are but passively observing and not actively engaging.

The above might be reminiscent of the distinction between *looking* and *seeing* presented in the previous chapter on Image. For now, I will draw on what I have discussed above to make a conclusive proposition regarding pedagogical reduction and image:

All pedagogical reductions are images; but not every image is a pedagogical reduction

The similarities and differences in process and result that I have set out lead me to conclude that pedagogical reduction can be considered an image, but that not every image can be considered a pedagogical reduction. As I have noted, pedagogical reduction follows the same process as image creation: both select, simplify, and represent the filtered worldview of the educator/creator. Both processes result in something which can be offered up to another. Pedagogical reductions, however, are created with a very specific intention in mind – the educational intention to improve a student's relation to content – whereas images could be created for any multitude of reasons (or, once again considering divinely created images, arguably with no intention at all), some of which could include

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[14] As Kierkegaard (1987) suggested, resourcefulness via daydreaming can manifest at times when a person is confined in situations they find boring – the concentration of engagement and attention has no chance against such a wilful force as boredom.

pedagogical reasons. The reader may have already noticed that any examples I have given of pedagogical reductions in this chapter and the previous one also fit into the image examples as I defined them in chapter two: text, speech, pictures, and sculpture. Thus, it seems that pedagogical reduction can be considered to reside as a particular sub-category under the umbrella category of image. To make this point more comprehensively, and to ensure that pedagogical reduction and its status as image are not further confused as analogous processes/analogous objects, I refer now to Barthes' investigations in Camera Lucida (2000) to strengthen their conceptual bridge using the notions of *studium* and *punctum*.

4.5 Barthes' *Studium* and *Punctum*

It is imperative, before being able to use these dual notions in my own investigation, to justify its inclusion when Barthes acknowledges that his work refers to photography – and only photography. In my discussion at the outset of this chapter, I compared the construction of photograph and text as a means of showing that the definition, and construction, of an image is applicable to objects beyond those that we typically consider images. Already, something of a case has been made where it can be said that at least some aspects of the photograph and its creation can be generalised across all images.

Barthes, rather helpfully, in setting out his ontological framework of photography further reinforces some of the points that I have made. He tells us that a "photograph can be the object of three practices (or of three emotions, or of three intentions): to do, to undergo, to look." (9). The Operator (Photographer) does; the Spectrum undergoes (is photographed); and the Spectator looks. I would suggest that these are practices undertaken in the creation of any image and I have referred to the three elements undertaking these practices throughout this chapter as image creator, image content, and image viewer. When considering image, and pedagogical reduction within it, Barthes' description of the process and result becomes particularly striking:

> I might suppose that the *Operator's* emotion… had some relation to the "little hole" (*stenope*) through which he looks, limits, frames, and perspectivizes when he wants to "take" …
>
> (10 original emphasis)

> It seemed to me that the *Spectator's* Photograph descended essentially, so to speak, from the chemical revelation of the object… and that the *Operator's* Photograph, on the contrary, was linked to the vision framed by the keyhole of the *camera obscura*.
>
> (10, original emphasis)

Barthes is essentially setting out the selection, simplification, and representation of a world here, via the medium of photograph; but his description is elegantly transferrable on to any image, with the image creator's worldview astutely symbolised by the photographer's stenope. The idea that the operator reveals something to the spectator calls to mind that the image creator (or educator) is revealing their world for a viewer (or student) who, in turn, may or may not accept what they are being shown. What the operator shows and what the spectator takes (if anything) is unlikely to be the same in the view of either. The content of the operator's world is transformed by its reduction via the stenope, and the materials chosen to represent it.

A further point to make is that Barthes' investigation takes a heuristic approach so described by Djuraskovic and Arthur (2010) as a method of deep self-inquiry. As such, he does not avoid making subjective assertions. Since *studium* and *punctum* are notions that Barthes identifies as part of his own experience when he acts as a Spectator, it could be argued that they are not valid for use in a conceptual investigation such as this. This is, of course, an easy argument to reject given that what I am producing here retains a heuristic element, therefore if his findings are invalid then the same can also be said of this work. I feel justified to include it given that I can identify with the experience that he describes, both when I play the role of Spectator or, indeed, the role of student as I will come to show.

Studium, says Barthes, is a "kind of human interest" (26). It is the potential for the image viewer to show a vague interest. To use a metaphor from chapter two, it is the faculty of the viewer's image(light), shining indiscriminately around in the darkness. Nothing is necessarily revealed, but the image viewer is interested enough to search. Barthes is quick to note that *studium*, while one might be tempted to assume, does not translate immediately to study. However, we can draw similarities between his idea and ideas of study. Both can be said to be an "application to a thing" and "a kind of general enthusiastic commitment … but without special acuity" (26). Consider that when a student begins to study, they are applying themselves to whatever content they, or their educator, has chosen. They are doing so without special acuity, since if they held such acuity then there would be no desire to study. Finally, while I might question that a student need have an *enthusiastic* commitment, a general commitment is nonetheless required if only to motivate the student to begin to study in the first instance. The student engaged in their study, like the image viewer in their pursuit, is also vaguely interested, also shining their light in darkness in the hope (or expectation) that they might *see* something.

It is the active state of *studium* which prepares for something to be seen. It is active despite Barthes' description of it as being exercised via an idle gesture: "to leaf through, to glance quickly and desultorily, to linger, then to hurry on" (49). The connotations of gesture itself suggest that an action is being taken. He confuses the notion further still by suggesting that, although idleness gives the impression that such gestures are thoughtless unrehearsed actions, *studium* is not something that is innate; there is no *studium* without first being socialised into culture. He goes further to describe the *studium* itself as "a kind of education" (28) – although his description suggests that it is more a process of socialisation than of education as I have defined it previously in chapter three - which allows him to recognise the intentions of the Operator and the function of the captured image: "to inform, to represent, to surprise, to cause to signify, to provoke desire." (28). Barthes uses his *studium* to identify such images, but it creates no delight or depth of feeling for them. However, if such delight or depth of feeling were to exist, then the *studium* must precede it. Once again, we find, in this respect, that *studium*, as investment of the spectator, is one of the conditions required for something to be revealed, along with the relation of the Operator to the image content via the stenope, and the reciprocated relation with the Spectator via the production and exhibition of the image-object. It is no coincidence, thinking back to the diagrammatical representation of the pedagogical triangle introduced

in chapter three, that this description of conditions required for viewing an image is similar to the pedagogical conditions in place before education happens save for any speculation on intention. If pedagogical reduction is an image as I say, then it is sensible to deduce that the framework in which it exists – the pedagogical triangle – will present a more nuanced version of that of the overarching framework of image, operator, and spectator (to use Barthes' language):
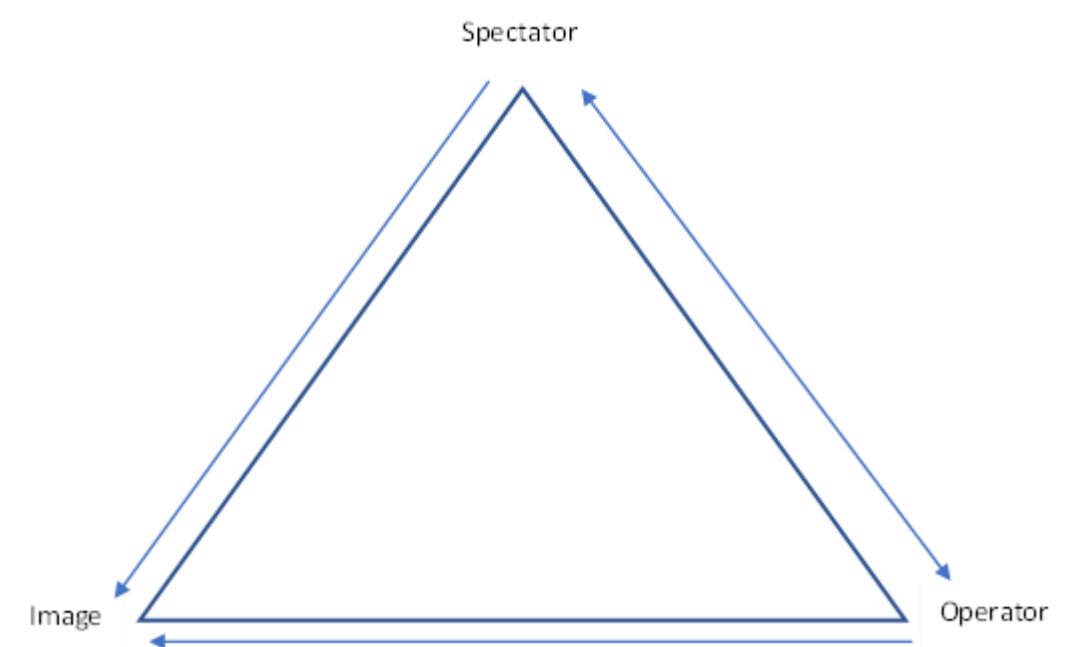
Figure 5 The Image Triangle (Author's Creation)

A question now arises – if a student is as endowed (or not) with the investment of *studium* as the spectator, and *studium* can be described as a condition for allowing something to be *seen*, what of those students who begin with a wilful dislike of a subject and choose to ignore it? Does this mean that their *studium* remains inert and thus they can never be shown anything? In fact, Barthes tells us that *studium* finds its domain in both liking and not liking. That the student expresses a distaste for a subject is an indicator that they have employed their vague interest enough to know that they can say that they do not like it. However, this is not necessarily the end of the story, given that liking and not liking are, as Barthes says, matters of "inconsequential taste" (27); that is, they are not significant enough that they cannot change. Indeed, inconsequential as they are, the educator may not even intend to change them. Either liking or disliking presents an opportunity for the

educator to cultivate a point of interest in a subject by manipulating and engineering what the student likes/dislikes about it. An example, which I draw from my own practice, would be the student who claimed to dislike English Literature until they were shown a poem (and supported to analyse it carefully) which they found that they could relate to closely. It was the student's dislike in this case which encouraged the educator to carefully consider the chosen texts to study. The shift from dislike to like here was not a change in the student's *studium* – the faculty remains the same whether the student likes or dislikes something – it was that something was revealed to, and in, the student. This revealing is what Barthes names *punctum*.

Barthes explains that *punctum* (in a photograph) "is that accident which pricks me (but also bruises me, is poignant to me)." (27). It is that which lies beyond the photographer's intended subject and what arises a depth of feeling beyond the beige quality of the *studium*. Barthes suggests that it is not he who seeks out the curiosities which give rise to *punctum*, but he is also clear that this is because he is investing his consciousness in the *studium*. This suggests *punctum* to be a passive phenomenon. Yet, as with *studium* he confuses the reader again when he also describes the reading of the *punctum* as active. He describes the relation between the two as not connected by rule – since *studium* can exist without *punctum* (although not vice versa) – but co-present. This, of course, does imply a causal relation if one element's contingent existence (*punctum*) requires the presence of the other element (*studium*). Indeed, if *punctum* cannot exist without first the presence of *studium*, and this active state in the spectator is a prerequisite to *seeing*, the implication that Barthes makes of it requiring an active, rather than passive, reading is accurate. For it to have an effect, it requires the spectator to be actively prepared to see. To reiterate: *studium* is the faculty employed in general looking with an almost apathetic, "polite" as Barthes puts it, manner. *Punctum* is something which may or may not be revealed by this general looking, may or may not correspond with what the operator intends to show, and is almost certainly dependant on the individual who is looking. Still, this relates to Barthes' investigation on photography. Before relating it back to a perspective on education, it is necessary to consider how Barthes describes *punctum* in terms of his experience.

Prepared as he is to see, in *studium*, but with no expectation that he will see anything, Barthes describes being attracted to a detail which exposes him to the feeling that he is seeing a new photograph – one which now has more value to him as his interest has been

piqued. It is this attraction to a small detail within the space of the unary photograph (that is, the bland, undisturbed landscapes and portraits which exist without deviation from their typified genres) which is the *punctum* – it punctuates and disturbs the tranquil banality of the *studium* and lies latent until it does so. The *punctum*, as the etymology suggests, is the "sting, speck, cut, little hole" (27) which occurs when this attractive detail leaps out of the photograph "like an arrow, and pierces me" (26). No longer is the photograph an unremarkable subject of his vague interest, it has provoked in him a "satori" (49) – what Barthes tells us that Zen Buddhists characterise as a moment of sudden enlightenment. What words like cut, speck, and little hole also suggest is that the *punctum* creates a point of entry for the image to enter and animate itself in the spectator, while the detail from which the *punctum* arises serves itself as an entry point for Barthes to enter the image. As he says: "*punctum*…is an addition: it is what I add to the photograph and *what is nonetheless already there*." (55, original emphasis). He is adding himself and his interpretation to the photograph, while it has already opened something in him.

In my discussion in the previous chapter, I described the pedagogical reduction as a creating an entry point for a student into a subject. Of course, given its status as an image, and given that I have already said that Barthes' concepts can be applied to all images including and beyond photography, then pedagogical reduction must be considered to be as conducive to *studium* and *punctum* as any other image. Now, if pedagogical reduction creates the entry point, it might be suggested that the pedagogical reduction represents the *punctum* of the content in pedagogy. However, logically this cannot be case, as it is an image in itself – bear in mind, Barthes tells us that it is a detail in the image and not the image itself from which *punctum* arises. What the pedagogical reduction becomes is an opportunity for *punctum* to arise, from the investment of the student's *studium*. If the student makes the idle gesture of showing up at a particular educational space (a school, perhaps) at a particular time, of letting their eyes fall over the various, pedagogically reduced content they are shown (a textbook, maybe) then conditions now become conducive – but not inevitable – for some small detail to arrest them and invite them to go further into what they are being shown, to broaden their experience with this thing. After all, Barthes tell us that what comes after *punctum* is expansion.

To illustrate this point further still, and to conclude this comparison (or, in fact, assimilation) of image and pedagogical reduction, I wish to introduce a case which I will use to justify *studium* and *punctum* as relevant to the notion of pedagogical reduction.

4.6 Flatland (Abbott, 1992): A Case Study in *Studium* and *Punctum*

When choosing an image as a case study in this context, there were several things of which I had to be sure. The first was that what was to be exemplified was indeed an image. Flatland is a text – cited often as an allegorical text, although we will come to this later – which also makes use of diagrams to illustrate the world of its two-dimensional characters. Thus, it is an image by the criteria of my definition of image, and it is an image where text and picture appear together. Second, I had to ensure that the image had an educational intention, such is the requirement for it to be considered a pedagogical reduction and not an image provided by the creator to entertain, for example. Flatland also meets this requirement, given that it was authored by an educator inspired by his young wards, with its intention to instruct (Hoffmann, 1992). The question of what he intended to instruct is ambiguous, of course, given that the book is conceived dually as an introduction to understanding Euclidean space, and a scathing, satirical poke at Victorian society.

Finally, as I will be discussing the notions of *studium* and *punctum*, it had to be an image which had encouraged both the investment of my culturally cultivated *studium*, and the highly personal experience of *punctum*. As a result, what I will come to describe will, in detail, be unique to me but, in general, is something that may be relatable to many; in the way that I could relate in a general sense to Barthes' particular descriptions of his experiences looking at images, specifically photographs.

For those who have never encountered the book, allow me to give a brief overview. Abbott, writing in the late 19th century under the guise of a Flatland inhabitant, describes a world populated by sentient, conscious two-dimensional shapes. The manner in which it presents itself is reminiscent to me of More's Utopia (2015, originally 16th century) in both style and in the comprehensive description he offers. He outlines how they live, what the people look like, how they manage to see each other in a world that is completely flat etc. However, further than just a description of the world's aesthetics and mechanics, he goes on to talk

about its social structures and strata: shapes with more sides sit higher in the class structures, such that circles are the most respected shapes of all. Women are but straight lines and, since they cannot easily be seen, they must periodically cry out to inform others of their presence (known as a "peace cry"), and constantly wiggle their rear ends. Irregular figures, which are those with unequal sides, are applied labels such as criminal and morally inept which serve to become self-fulfilling prophecies (except, of course, in states where it is recommended that irregular figures are destroyed at birth). After the pseudonymous A. Square gives his account of Flatland's society, he goes on to recount how he discovered that there were dimensions beyond the two to be found in his world. Indeed, his preaching of divine visits from inhabitants of other dimensions, and tales of excursions to such dimensions, land him a spell in prison, reminiscent of the fate of Swift's (2015) Lemuel Gulliver when he recounts similar, seemingly fantastical stories. It is here the story ends, with A. Square simultaneously lamenting his fate, yet assured in his conviction that there exists more than two dimensions.

It is the allegorical element of the book, the subtextual satirical underbelly, which merits this work often being described as science fiction according to Hipolito (1974). It exposes something of the present through the lens of a distant time, space or, in this case, dimension. As readers, we cannot really be sure that it was ever intended as such. I would suggest, given that it was written in the 19th century by a gentleman of the time that he was mostly describing the society in which he lived (and in doing so, he cannot avoid taking a critical stance against those elements of his society of which he does not like). Certainly, when viewed through contemporary eyes, this work might be interpreted as a critique given that readers of our time (and in the 20th century, such as Hipolito) are more likely to take exception to the lowly ascribed status of females, or the gratuitous infanticide of newborn irregulars. All that we can say for sure is that Abbott's intention with this work was to instruct on the fundamentals of Euclidean space. That he based it on a society relatable to his students, and that his work continues to be studied as anything beyond a mathematical "Romance", is quite possibly an instance of pedagogical genius, or endurance.

In terms of *studium* and *punctum*, however, it was the book's arguable status as a science fiction classic which inspired me to first pick it up. I have, in Barthes' words, a "general… commitment" to browsing and perusing books of all types, but I like science fiction. It is an

inconsequential liking of the type I have described via Barthes above; I certainly do not come to feel anything more than a brief amusement for many of the science fiction works I consume. I like it, so I browse. I browse because I am looking for something - a detail that will reach out to pierce me and simultaneously let me in. Years of experience have taught me that this is most likely to happen when I am reading science fiction more so than any other literary genre (although I do, of course, like many different genres and dislike many more). Thus, it was *studium* that saw me leafing through this book in the first instance.

Although I write this from my own perspective, I have little difficulty imagining some of Abbott's students, for whom the book was written, investing less motivation than I when journeying through it in the course of their own studies. If I pick it up because I like science fiction in general and hope to find something in it, they might not necessarily have had the choice to read it. Their feelings toward it could be like, dislike or completely neutral. Again, these are inconsequential matters of taste which, due to their shallow nature, can be changed. If, indeed, they picked it up and read it only because they were told to do so; if they felt little more than indifference from beginning to end, they still opened up the potential for finding. The investment of *studium* here is different from how I described it in myself, but the faculty to make that investment remains the same: it rests in the picking up, opening up and casual reading of the book.

What happens next is very much determined by the presence of *studium*. At this point, it becomes impossible for me to speculate on whether anyone else who has read this book has come to experience any *punctum*. I can say, however, that I did, and its effect was very much as Barthes described it in himself. It perhaps did not match Abbott's intention in the sense that I did not receive any great revelation about the ways in which shapes are defined in two-dimensional space. The *punctum*, the arresting detail, for me came in A Square's odyssey between worlds and, when his spherical guide returns him to Flatland, they crash a revelatory meeting among the higher caste shapes during which it is discovered that these shapes are aware of the other dimensions, but that this can never be communicated to the general populace. In the manner that Barthes' describes, I cannot say why this grabbed me. If I had to speculate, I would perhaps suggest that I related to a society in which the most powerful seek to preserve a particular worldview given that the contemporary society in which I live could also cynically be accused of the same. It may also have been that this part of the story describes an instance of education: the sphere takes A

Square to this place to show him another perspective on the world that he knew. The idea of the potential for a kind of enlightenment which would result in Square's transformation from upstanding gentleman and lawyer to agitator and rebel is somewhat exciting. Perhaps it is his potential that I hope to see in myself which inspired this instance of *punctum*.

Nevertheless, it was at this point I could safely say that I no longer liked this book; I loved it. This small detail had reached out to me, and I was able to enter its world – as I write now, I can imagine the unidimensional space endowed with the multilateral complications of genteel, Victorian society and I can vividly picture the conscious shapes navigating this world which they believe to be the only one. Perhaps this is exactly how Abbott had hoped his work would be received; perhaps it is not.

§

The above musing on a pedagogical reduction as I received it has come to reinforce some points I have made throughout this chapter, and in previous ones. First, it has shown that images might not be interpreted in the way that the creator intends. Abbott had an intention for his work, and I am unsure that my interpretation of it would fit what Abbott wanted to achieve with it. This, in turn, relates back to Biesta's inherent risk in education (see chapter three). As a pedagogical reduction (and an image), Flatland has an educational intention but I, as a reader and potential student, may not have improved my relation or my knowledge of Euclidean space as much as Abbott would have wanted; although my vivid imaginings of conscious, autonomous 2D shapes does rely a little on an understanding of the mechanics of the geometry. Perhaps in this sense, the subtle pedagogical approach of Flatland wins out.

Second, I have exhibited the relationship between the pedagogical reduction and Barthes' notions of *studium* and *punctum*. In a world of images, it is justifiable to say that we are all endowed with the ability to invest our *studium*, but that the *punctum* – that arresting detail which draws us into the image – does not exist the same for everyone. However, I may suggest that it is the *punctum* in the pedagogical reduction which determines when education happens. Barthes describes the *punctum* as something unnameable and indescribable. We may be able to identify what detail invoked the *punctum* within us; but

we cannot say why. Any attempt I have made to do so above remain speculative. Similarly, we might be able to point to the detail in the content in which it started to generate interest/make sense such that we might say we learned it, or that we had become educated in it, but we cannot describe why this particular point was a moment of edification – a lightbulb moment, if you will. Consider this following quote from a sociology graduate who has been asked to describe the relationship between individuals, groups, and religious traditions:

> a 'lightbulb' moment' ... it was in that moment that I realised that I was at once the same as everyone else in the world and yet I was different and still me. It is without exaggeration one of the most powerful experiences I have had in education.
>
> (cited in Everington, 2013, 98)

He can tell us that he can now realise something that he did not realise before – the metaphor of the lightbulb is fitting in this case. He can tell us the realisation that he came to, and the detail that sparked it. He can even tell us that it was a powerful experience. What he does not say is why it happened. This, to me, is *punctum*.

This in turn helps me to reiterate my final, and most vital, point made in this chapter. Not only can be we be justified to consider pedagogical reduction an image by virtue of the manner in which they are constructed bearing many similarities, they also share in the investment of *studium* and the potential for *punctum* so described by Barthes and delineated further by the examples I have given above. This serves as a reminder that not all images are pedagogical reductions, but all pedagogical reductions are images, with the separating criterion being intention. Every image does not share a pedagogical intention, although every image does intend to show something to its audience. Images created with no discernible intention, or to serve an alternative intention (such as entertainment) can indeed become pedagogical reductions in the hands of the educator as their intention is a transitive property transferred onto whichever content they choose to represent.

For now, my discussion on pedagogical reduction and image will be set aside. In the next chapter, I will investigate the concept of propaganda and make a systematic definition of this, before returning with it to pedagogical reduction and image in the concluding chapter to discern whether propaganda can indeed be considered pedagogical.

Chapter 5. Propaganda

Propaganda is a concept that finds itself in difficult terrain. Like image, like education, it is often subject to definitions bound up with normative judgements. In order to present it as a concept comparable to image and pedagogy, this chapter will focus on making a definition of propaganda. The problems with making a systematic definition are identified by both Ellul (1973), and Tutui (2017), and will be described in detail in the next section. It may be discovered that such a definition cannot be entirely separated from these judgements. In my attempt, I will refer to Ellul's thesis *Propaganda: The Formation of Men's Attitudes*, referring to wider reading, to interrogate the definition Ellul gives. Some examples of propaganda will appear throughout in order to illustrate some of the techniques and ideas that I will present.

5.1 What is propaganda?

As mentioned in the introduction, to make a systematic definition of propaganda is to encounter several problems. According to Ellul, the difficulties arise firstly from an overall pejorative conception of propaganda. He suggests that in order to investigate it properly, one should set aside normative or ethical judgements. However, as I have already suggested, an investigation may indeed discover that propaganda can only exist in this pejorative lens; to attempt to view it neutrally may in fact cancel it from view altogether. That being said, if this finding is to be a possibility, it is likely to come only after an investigation which, if it is to be done without anything other than the unavoidable bias which accompanies being human, cannot be conducted with the extant belief that propaganda is something bad: "Perhaps an objective investigation will lead us back to [ethical judgements], but only later, and with full cognizance of the facts." (Ellul, 1973, x). Therefore, following Ellul's recommendation, I will question my preconceptions of propaganda before I begin, and as I go. Rather than submitting fully to the idea that there can be such thing as a completely objective investigation, I will accept that my preconceptions cannot be fully cast aside but I retain the ability to question them as I interrogate the concept of propaganda more thoroughly.

Before the era of social media, I was only ever exposed to materials explicitly labelled propaganda when studying wartime communications, specifically from the Second World War. Depictions of grotesque caricatures of enemy soldiers were presented alongside heroic depictions of so-called ordinary people or illustrious leaders on the good side (on our side) accompanied by emboldened, often emotive, textual messages:

Figure 7 Maneater (UK Ministry of Information, 1941) © IWM Art.IWM PST 0176.

Figure 7 We Can Do It! (J Howard Miller c.1942) for the Westinghouse Electric & Manufacturing Company, © National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution. Available: https://americanhistory.si.edu/collections/search/object/nmah_538122

In this sense, propaganda had a clear aim to denigrate the enemy and promote those people doing what they perceived to be good. It was unclear that this was necessarily pejorative in all cases. It certainly did not portray the people and groups on our side – which was only ever presented as the right side - in anything less than a generous light. Nowadays, it is rare to browse Twitter without someone openly declaring an image, or an opinion, or a piece of information (presented as fact, although which may not be factual in the strictest sense) as propaganda. It is not generally a word used to describe the content that people enjoy or find agreeable. Indeed, in its common, contemporary use, propaganda does seem to connote the almost exclusively pejorative.

However, I can understand that this represents a narrow viewpoint and how Ellul's recommendation came to be made. Beginning from here offers no chance of clarity; the

concept remains ever clouded by a judgemental fog. Bearing in mind that propaganda, as a quasi-neutral term in the 17th century for material used to disseminate information[15], did not come to be viewed in a negative light until the first half of the 20th century (Tutui, 2017), we might be bound to wonder how it has evolved in this way. The explanation offered by Tutui, via historic speculations of other authors, is that this turn occurred sometime around the First World War. Although he gives no reason for such a turn, he implies that it is likely that the use of propaganda in war which encouraged what Ellul described as a widespread conviction that it was being used to spread lies, and thus became discordant with a subjective, and common, moral sentiment that lying is wrong. This residue of a past time, according to Ellul, must be rejected as modern propagandists make use of facts and statistics often; eventually to the extent that propaganda and information cannot be separated (indeed, much as the case would have been in the 17th century). These facts and statistics are almost certainly manipulated because, as Ellul points out, the average man would not be able to digest a deluge of facts and statistics with no context. Therefore, a context is offered, and facts and statistics pruned to show only those which are thought to be the most vital to the consumer. If such manipulation can be considered to be a lie, then indeed the pejorative view of propaganda can be justified. What it also means is that everything that communicates manipulated information – which is, indeed, anything that communicates information - can be called propaganda. Ellul identifies this as problematic since too wide a definition risks losing the integrity of the concept to the point that "some authors…abandon altogether the task of defining propaganda, some…provide definitions that are so wide that are practically useless, and others…offer definitions that are too narrow and restrictive" (Tutui, 2017, 113).

Ellul is clear in his misgivings of previous definitions of propaganda, but in terms of his own thesis, he presents it with a great deal of confidence. He offers what he calls a partial definition of propaganda in the early pages of his book, with the remainder of his work seemingly explaining it. At no point does he offer anything described as an exhaustive definition, and in doing so could ironically be accused of the same shortcomings he identifies in other authors. Nevertheless, to begin with a partial definition may, in fact, prove useful in this case. I intend to investigate his definition and carry it towards its logical

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[15] Of course, it was not really neutral given that the information disseminated was pro Catholicism.

end which should, if Ellul has followed his own recommendations, provide us with a complete definition that is neither too wide nor too narrow. Therefore, I begin with this:

> Propaganda is a set of methods employed by an organized group that wants to bring about the active or passive participation in its actions of a mass of individuals, psychologically unified through psychological manipulations and incorporated in an organization.
>
> (Ellul, 1973, 61)

There is much to unpack within this so-called partial definition. Firstly, I will consider the intention that Ellul recognises: the idea of the "organized group that wants to bring about the active or passive participation…of a mass of individuals". Within this, it will be necessary to also consider what is meant by participation and the potential difference between active and passive participation. Then, I will examine the notion of psychological unification via psychological manipulation, which in turn will involve a discussion on the relationships between the individual, the mass, and the organisation(s). Finally, I will consider the "set of methods" such an organized group might employ. While the methods constitute the backbone of Ellul's definition and it may seem logical to consider these first, it is my view that one cannot effectively identify the methods to be considered as propaganda without first ensuring that they are employed with the express intention Ellul identifies. Thus, I begin by looking at the organized group and its goals.

5.1.1 "An organized group that wants to bring about the active or passive participation in its actions of a mass of individuals"

What can be initially questioned from this quotation is why propaganda is employed by "organized groups" specifically, and why its target is a "mass of individuals" [16]and not merely groups of people.

Ellul is clear on the second point. If only one person at a time was to be influenced by propaganda it would be ineffective as it would take too long. Thus, it must aim itself towards more than one person at a time. However, it cannot also only aim itself towards a crowd, he says, as the logistics required to form a crowd are similarly ineffective – when the individual leaves the crowd, the propaganda would become useless. Therefore, it looks to reach "individuals enclosed in the mass and as participants in that mass, yet it also aims at a crowd but only as a body composed of individuals." (6). The optimum societal conditions for propaganda to foster are those which place primacy on the individual, and where such individuals form themselves into masses. Ellul describes the natural home for propaganda as a society of population density and urban concentration, of mass media and mass transportation, and perhaps - I speculate now since Ellul wrote decades before the birth of the world wide web - he might also suggest the ability to gather as a body of individuals in a virtual space on massive platforms such as Facebook, Twitter and Youtube. From Ellul's description, our contemporary era seems to have laid down the conditions for dissemination of propaganda rather astutely.

Pomerantsev (2019)[17] reinforces this idea, perhaps inadvertently, in his investigation into 21st century political activism. Via interviews with the (somewhat renegade) leaders of political groups – for example, Sjrda Popovic of Otpor! who played a large part in the toppling of Serbian dictator Slobodan Milosevic – he shows that the groups' efforts only grew when they targeted a mass of individuals rather than one individual or a unified crowd. It is difficult to determine whether Pomerantsev believes the work of Popovic to be propaganda; his definition of the concept remains unclear. The only clue he gives is in stating that his book is not propaganda. From this we can either deduce that everything contained within the book is also not propaganda, or that propaganda is everything but his

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[16] The dissolving of individuals into a mass can be considered analogous to the dissolving of the individual student into the student body in some educational institutions. See chapter three.

[17] An interesting note to mention on Pomerantsev's work is that while he describes it, quite assuredly, as Not Propaganda (underlined emphasis retained here), he never really deigns to define propaganda anywhere in his book. Thus, the reader is forced to accept that the events and situations he describes could all potentially be (acts of) propaganda. This includes the novels and poetry of his father, the distribution of which saw his family exiled from the Soviet Union in the 1970s.

book (or other books like it). Given, however, that Pomerantsev's investigations seem to support Ellul's thesis – and he refers explicitly to it in places – it is my view that his attempts constitute a method of pointing out examples of propaganda (and propagandists). Pomerantsev tells us that Popovic's efforts were supported by the acquisition of a mass media outlet (a radio station) which allowed them to reach more individuals and encircle them in the mass of people against the political regime at the time. Mass media is imperative in Ellul's model for the dissemination of propaganda and for the encircling of individuals into a mass. The potential to reach individuals in their homes, cars, offices with the same material would see individuals related by their consumption of it.

However, we can question whether individuals consuming the same material, when this material is intended to bring about certain behaviours in individuals, will necessarily be affected in the same way by its intentions. It can be deduced from the idea of *individuals* that responses could be as varied as the number of individuals involved. In a mass, this could be thousands, millions or more. The propagandist, suggests Ellul, can be relatively sure about their success given that the pre-requisite sociological conditions for propaganda – mass media, mass transportation, population density, urban concentration - are woven so deeply into the fabric of modern society. The case is as such that even those people who claim to critique the concept are, in fact, complicit in it if they make any attempt to conform to a normal way of living: owning a television set or consuming any kind of media makes one complicit in the dissemination of propaganda, as does subscribing to a way of life that is, overall, considered desirable by society at large. I will not speculate on what a society considers to be a desirable way of life since this is, of course, different across societies depending on time and location. Ellul's idea here is that we are prepared for being propagandised from our earliest years; that the processes of socialisation, enculturation and, he says, education, all work towards making the population receptive to propaganda. We are told what is good – both morally and in a hedonistic sense – and that this should be our goal if we wish to live well.

What is described above is what Ellul calls sociological propaganda. It is everything that makes us feel like part of society and encourages conformity. Without straying too much into the methods used by propaganda, as I will come to deal with this later, it relates a lot to media consumption, advertising, and the education system. Indeed, Ellul suggests that while propaganda must aim at an average population, he also says that the most intelligent

among us are more susceptible to sociological (or integration) propaganda because they are more likely to have gone through the education system to a higher degree; an education system which in itself is a tool of integration propaganda. Common sense might suggest that those more intelligent, arguably with more ability to identify and critique macro societal structures, might be able to see through the propaganda techniques used in sociological propaganda. None of this matters, according to Ellul. If they continue to subscribe to the way of life which encourages conformity to the social norms of the wider society and of their role in it, they are still susceptible to sociological propaganda.

A question arises now, however, as to why Ellul does not believe this idea to be too wide for his definition? If everything we are exposed to from a young age sets the stage for propaganda to prosper, this surreptitiously becomes a tool or technique – it must be considered an element of propaganda itself. We know that Ellul finds the idea of defining everything as propaganda to be problematic, yet he seems to fall into his own trap here. By his own idea that propaganda "wants to bring about the active or passive participation…of a mass of individuals", sociological propaganda appropriately fits the idea of encouraging passive participation; and if sociological propaganda is so deeply entrenched in the way that we live our lives that we cannot separate ourselves from it, it becomes difficult, and uncomfortable, to consider confronting that it is only representative of one perspective on the world. At this point, it is pertinent to reject the idea that there can be such a thing as too wide a definition of propaganda if whole societies are founded on it as are, indeed, the lives of the individuals who constitute such societies.

Passive participation is the acceptance of a way of life that is communicated to us by the "organized groups" disseminating propaganda that this is the good or best way of life. Advertisers do not directly tell us that we *must* buy their products, but we imagine, with help from their advertising techniques, that buying their products will contribute to a good or desirable life: consumption being the primary value in life, according to the advertisers (Lasch, 1979 cited in Belk and Pollay, 1985). Of course, we can question whether advertising is the same as propaganda. Edward Bernays, nephew of Sigmund Freud and US advertising magnate, certainly thought so (Lampard, 2002). Bernays considered propaganda to be mass persuasion during war time, and public relations (advertising) as mass persuasion during peace time. Even without what appears to be as facile an interpretation as Bernays', we could infer from Ellul's description of sociological propaganda that it works to inculcate a

mass of individuals into a particular way of life. Sociological propaganda advertises a desirable way of life and encourages one to pursue it: it does not ask for the mass of individuals to act, but it creates the conditions required to justify and perform required actions, when the "organized groups" call for it.

Action is encouraged and advocated by the analogous axis to sociological propaganda: political propaganda. It is from here that calls to action are made by means of agitating the masses to be fearful enough of the situation but ready to bear heavy ordeals to see it through. Ellul describes this as the most identifiable propaganda as it employs explicit methods and techniques to change the behaviour of the mass of individuals. When people refer to propaganda in common parlance, they are likely referring to this; the examples of propaganda posters I gave above are examples of political/agitation propaganda as Ellul describes. While sociological/integration propaganda is a slow burning constant, forever in the background of our social and cultural lives, political/agitation propaganda is acutely focussed on perceived threats to the ideologies of the mass which requires them to act in a unified and meticulous manner. My examples from the Second World War are astute in this case, with propaganda encouraging the mass that the danger posed is greater than their requested sacrifice, although we should be careful to note that the given examples were produced with one particular perspective (UK and US) in mind. It is likely that if we were to examine media from the German or Japanese viewpoints, we would also find them asking their public to act with fervour against their perceived enemies. Other more contemporary examples include media which asks the public to act against the Covid-19 virus. The public was both being asked to bear heavy ordeals in terms of a restriction in certain freedoms, while a sense of *community spirit* and *we're all in this together* was being cultivated via Public Health advertisements, regular clapping displays in appreciation of frontline workers, and ubiquitous signage reminding us of the measures in place to keep ourselves and others safe. This is perhaps not commonly considered or described as propaganda (except, perhaps, by those militantly opposed to the public health restrictions), yet it is very fitting of the political propaganda described by Ellul.

From the above, it can be noted then that the intention of the organized group towards the mass rests on a few conditions: first, the mass must be composed of individuals who identify both as an individual and as a conforming member of the mass. These individuals must conform to the dominant way of life into which we are socialised and encouraged by

the sociological propaganda we are subject to from our earliest years. There is no obvious escape from this sociological propaganda, and while it may be possible to critique it, the cultural permanence of this phenomenon results in what can only be described as a hollow backlash. For example, to speak out against the bias of TV news while still consuming TV news serves little purpose except to expose oneself as a hypocrite, or to show that sociological propaganda has a subtle yet overwhelming prevalence in our way of life. It is this background influence that sets the stage for political propaganda to flourish – calls to act (or not to act) come to the foreground and find a prepared and receptive audience. Even Sjrda Popovic, and others of a so-called revolutionary disposition, use the stage of sociological propaganda as the soapbox to call on others to act: consider Popovic's use of mass media and infiltration, in the first instance, of the higher education system – a vital component of sociological propaganda, according to Ellul - to gather supporters (Pomerantsev, 2017). What remains to be questioned from the first part of Ellul's definition is why he considers propaganda to be the realm of organized groups?

The only reason that Ellul gives for propaganda being created and disseminated by organized groups is that it is only groups who can affect other groups – in fact, it is only *superior* groups that can affect other groups. Quite what characterises a superior group in his view is not entirely clear. He alludes to the power of influence, which in turn seems to stem from their very status as a group resulting in a barren tautology. Furthermore, the phenomenon of minority influence (Moscovici, Lage and Naffrechoux, 1969), which determines that individuals can influence a majority, may call into question whether a group can be superior by pure virtue of group status, or size: I call to mind a specific example such as the somewhat influential Q of the QAnon political movement in the US who is believed to be a lone propagandist according to Rahn and Patterson (2021). Of course, the existence of Q requires the building of a group around him/her to propagate the spreading of the so-called information being created. Nevertheless, if Q is indeed a lone propagandist, then he/she began their movement outwith an organised group and continues to feed the group while remaining completely anonymous.

Besides these two assertions by Ellul – first, in his definition that propaganda is employed by organised groups, and that only superior groups can affect other groups – there is little in his overall argument to suggest that the formation of an organised group is a pre-requisite for propaganda to be created and spread. Certainly, we could consider

sociological propaganda is facilitated by groups such as a government that wishes to permeate a way of thinking and living among the populace that they view as desirable. Although the reader might be tempted to loudly interject depending on their feeling about the political situation in their own country, there is no denying that governments are organised into a series of offices to deal with the matters viewed as vital by them and, in many cases, important to their constituents. Whether or not they are effective as a result of adhering (or not) to the rules of such organisation is a different question entirely, and not within the remit of this research. I can say, however, that I surmise that it is the organisation of such groups that Ellul refers to when he describes superiority. He speaks of how ineffectual propaganda is among small, organically formed groups – he gives no examples of such groups except to say that these groups started breaking up at the end of the 19th century, which can be associated with the tail end of the Industrial Revolution in Ellul's homeland of France (Henderson, 2006), reflecting a more or less similar situation in Britain. The resulting separation of individuals from small communities to join large urban populations located near, or in, centres of industry fits the description Ellul gives of the creation of a mass of individuals. He tells us that as individuals began to separate from their small, organically formed groups, propaganda also began to emerge in Western Europe. Thus, as masses of individuals were created, organised groups were also being formed simultaneously, in parallel. That they could harness their ability to organise and use this to manipulate other individuals in the mass to join their group is, I believe, what Ellul considers the superiority required to enact propaganda.

I remain not entirely convinced by Ellul's argument in this case. Superiority as organisation denies the possibility that organised groups can, at times, be suffocated by their self-imposed bureaucratic regulations. Over-organisation can present a problem, particularly when a group is working towards something that is potentially time-critical (such as a campaign of agitation propaganda). Yet, it is difficult to consider how the dissemination of propaganda can happen without some kind of organisation. As Pomerantsev (2019) describes the experience of his parents in the Soviet Union in the 1960s and 70s, he talks about a circle of people "who said what they wanted without whispering, without the passive voice, sharing banned texts that were printed on cheap paper, glued to pieces of card and then packed into shoeboxes." (49) This group of rebels – indeed a faction of a larger group – were able to organise their efforts to the extent that they created a network to broadcast material in a covert manner. For all of the connotations of rebellion one might

hold as anarchic and irrationally impassioned, certainly in this case they showed themselves to be as meticulously organised as the government organisations they stood against: Pomerantsev also tells a story of lax KGB agents taking his father, a prisoner, to the beach and allowing a local painter to take their portrait despite it being against KGB rules to have agents' images reproduced while they were on duty. These agents were resting on their laurels, complacent in the authority of their organisation. If organisation is superiority, then it is only so when the fallibility (or hubris) of humans can be discounted.

Thus, it remains fair to say that groups (and individuals, as the case may be) disseminating propaganda do benefit from some kind of organisation. However, we cannot say that it is this that makes the group any more or less superior than an unorganised group, since the small organically formed groups that Ellul describes have no need for, and remain unaffected by, propaganda. Neither can we say that it is the size of the group that assumes superiority. Once again, in a disappointing tautology, I suspect that the superiority to which Ellul refers can only be discerned after a group employs the techniques which affect other groups. The groups are not superior from the outset, but only after they have exacted a false sense of superiority in an attempt to manipulate others. Applying this to the example of minority influence would see the possibility of an individual who has influenced a group becoming superior to that group. Therefore, I suggest the idea that propaganda is a set of methods employed only by groups negates the possibility of the lone propagandist, a phenomenon which is exemplified in the digital age by the work of Q, and those keyboard artists creating memes, what Neiubuurt (2021) describes as comparable with propaganda leaflets of the past. To include the potential of the individual in the creation, and spreading of, propaganda without an organised group behind them is to bring the concept of propaganda squarely into the 21st century. Of course, I am referring to their potential to create agitation propaganda given that they have little influence over the sociological propaganda which is required to be in place before political propaganda can be put into effect.

Therefore, I can end this section by remodelling this part of Ellul's definition to a set of methods employed by:

Anyone *who wants to bring about the active or passive participation in their actions of a mass of individuals.*

This removes the onus on groups as the only arbiters of propaganda and updates Ellul's definition to be more reflective of the potential of the individual to create and spread propaganda without the backing of an organisation, opened up by the increasingly augmented functionalities of digital technology and communication. It also means that the intention to bring about participation need not rest only with groups. While the lone propagandist may seek to create a group through the use of propaganda, the intention to do so indeed does not begin from a group. However, in training this propaganda on a "mass of individuals", it could be said that the involvement of a group is vital in any case. In the next section, I will consider the mass of individuals and their psychological unification and manipulation mentioned in Ellul's definition.

5.1.2 "A mass of individuals, psychologically unified through psychological manipulations and incorporated in an organization."

In the preceding section, I introduced the mass of individuals as intrinsically separated from the smaller, organically formed communities which, deducing from Ellul's description, existed pre-Industrial revolution, and further separated from each other via the means of modern living. To then present them as potentially now unified, or to hold the potential for unification, presents something of a problem in Ellul's definition. If, as he says, propaganda relies on the separation of the individual from a group (or a community, or even a crowd), then the resulting psychological unification via manipulation (via propaganda, indeed) turns this idea into a paradox. To investigate further, let us consider what Ellul actually means by psychological unification (via psychological manipulations).

First of all, let it be taken as read that when Ellul speaks of psychological manipulations, he is referring again to the methods that are used in propaganda. Since I will be setting these methods and techniques out in the following section, it is not necessary to consider fully what the psychological manipulations are at this point. Thus, for the time being, we can assume that Ellul considers propaganda to equate to psychological manipulation. It is important to set aside the connotations of *manipulations* as some kind of malevolent, maybe covert, influence here. Given that there could be an argument for education as a

psychological manipulation (see Jackson's quote in chapter three which describes *education as an enduring change in a person's psychological wellbeing*), and that we are popularly reluctant to consider education as anything but an overall good, then it would seem that any interpretation of psychological manipulations as bad only when applied to propaganda is an exposition of the difficulty of viewing propaganda as anything other than pejorative (as Ellul has already identified).

In terms of an attempt at describing the psychological state of man, Ellul offers two situations: the objective situation and the subjective situation. These are both presented under the umbrella assertion that the individual needs propaganda – its overall goal is to address the unconscious needs of the individual. The objective situation, according to Ellul, is that propaganda offers justification to people who want to participate yet cannot; it is in the State's interest to maintain a situation where people are inert until such time as they are required to act. Furthermore, propaganda offers people a psychological aid to support them in a life in which they are asked to make sacrifices (such as taxation) and to navigate the living conditions of modern life for which people are naturally ill equipped. Propaganda doubly appeals to the need of people to be reassured as it both explains why things are as they are and offers solutions for problems which seem otherwise insoluble.

This element of reassurance is echoed when Ellul describes the subjective situation. He speaks of the anxiety of people which is somewhat assuaged by propaganda which acts as a support for their rationalisations and justifications – it tells them that they are right and shows other people that they are right too. It offers an explanation of the world that a person may only otherwise get from religion. Beyond this, propaganda plays into a person's need to feel important, and, furthermore, it helps them to overcome their feelings of inherent loneliness and invites them to feel like part of a collective.

There is seemingly no real distinction between the objective situation and the subjective one. I suspect that he means to describe how propaganda uses psychology to view people as objects, whereas the subjective situation refers to the propagandee's ability to act on propaganda with relative agency. However, the use of generalising psychological speculations gives the impression that the person is being described in both cases objectively; since propaganda is determining their behaviour, notions such as agency become at best diluted, at worst negated entirely.

Making such assumptions, Ellul presupposes the loneliness of people and their need to be part of a collective. This feeds into a view of the human as a social animal which is popularly held although not necessarily accurate (Storr, 1988). Ellul needs to hold this view, however, as his definition of propaganda is really dependant on the notion of a separation. The person who is adequately supported by others would have no need to find justifications in propaganda. He further requires that this loneliness can be manipulated by propagandists to unify the mass of separated individuals, in turn all but guaranteeing the (in)action they wish to bring about. I remain sceptical of taking this position entirely for granted. If we follow his argument, small, organically formed groups are supposedly the antithesis of propaganda, yet many, if not most, of us spend our childhoods and adulthoods in such groups surrounded by people that we would usually describe as family. If, as he says, sociological propaganda begins to set the stage for our receptivity of propaganda when we are still in the bosom of the family, then it should not affect us since we are neither separate from our group, nor can we say in turn that we are subject to the natural state of human loneliness, which depends on our separation from others.

Of course, it is possible to argue from a structural-functionalist viewpoint – and from Ellul's concept of sociological propaganda – that the Family is no longer a small, organically formed group. It becomes an institution itself: it may potentially be described as an organised group. The stage setting function of sociological propaganda intends to portray to us what a desirable family is. In this respect, we are encouraged to manufacture our families as a reflection of the notion of an ideal family. For example, the nuclear family was touted as the ideal in the 1950s and 1960s; the white-collar worker dad, stay at home mother and two or three children being the motif of pop culture representations of families at that time. As Brooks (2020) describes:

> During this period, a certain family ideal became engraved in our minds: a
> married couple with 2.5 kids. When we think of the American family, many
> of us still revert to this ideal. When we have debates about how to
> strengthen the family, we are thinking of the two-parent nuclear family,
> with one or two kids, probably living in some detached family home on
> some suburban street. We take it as the norm, even though this wasn't the

way most humans lived during the tens of thousands of years before 1950,

and it isn't the way most humans have lived during the 55 years since 1965.

(para. 21)

The idea that the perfect nuclear family persists even now as it is breaking down and families become more reflective of non-traditional ideals, Brooks suggests, is indicative of the power of sociological propaganda to permeate in an individual's psyche over time through the family's power – obligation, even - to socialise the future generations into a particular way of life (Kingsbury and Scanzoni, 1993), which in turn is a result of an overall cultural influence. To follow this line of reasoning is to admit that even if families are small, and organically formed, they are still a product and a tool of propaganda, nonetheless. Ellul makes this point when he suggests that, in modern times, there can be no such thing as a group which cannot be somehow affected by propaganda (the specific example he gives is of Trade Unions).

Perhaps the resulting discomfort I am left with after Ellul's argument is, in itself, a product of my own socialisation/education. I will readily admit that I must be, at least in part, a product of the context of my upbringing, the people with whom I spend my time and the media that I consume. I am less comfortable with the admission that all of this is but a primer, the stage setting sociological propaganda preparing me for calls to (in)action as the case may be. As I reflect on this, I can speculate that this is linked to my preconceived view of propaganda as something bad, and so I am obliged to set such discomfort aside as much as possible, lest this obscure my investigation. However, I can also recall consistent messages throughout my life – from books that I read, movies that I watch and people that I admire – that it is an undesirable thing to be anything less than unique (within, of course, the acceptable societal limits of uniqueness). Disappointingly, I suspect that I am not so much galvanised against sociological propaganda as I would like to think I am. As the reader may be able to deduce, I instinctively consider this realisation to be something undesirable, yet in truth, again, I suspect this is the result of the projection of my own preconceptions onto propaganda. Further evidence indeed that Ellul's call for objectivity proves itself to be somewhat difficult to achieve.

Another curious point I find in this part of Ellul's definition is the idea that psychological unification comes as the result of manipulation. Yet, it would seem that the mass of individuals is already psychologically unified as a prerequisite to propaganda being employed. Individuals are linked by their underlying loneliness, and an underlying desire for reassurance that they are living the right way. Thus, psychological manipulation is not required to unify them, since they begin already unified in their psychological disposition from the outset. Furthermore, we can say that, in Ellul's view, propaganda is not sincerely aiming to support the individual to overcome the feeling of loneliness per se, since it is very much reliant on the individual feeling separated. It only wishes to cultivate a feeling, or an illusion, that they are integrated into a group. To allow the individual to achieve real integration, insofar as the individual would then seek out the reassurances and support of the group into which they have joined, would be an act of self-sabotage for the propagandist.

Since they are then psychologically unified from the outset, paradoxically through their feelings of separation and loneliness, it seems that psychological manipulations are used to create only an illusion of integration to a group, and to reassure the individual of this illusory integration. The cultivation of such a superficial perception of integration, while simultaneously aiming at maintaining the psychological status quo, at the very least veers closer to any ideas of malevolence that I, and Ellul, have been keen to set aside. Besides which, there remains the eternal problem of whether there can be such a thing as psychological unification in any case. We can never be sure that two people ever think the same; we can never be sure that two people subjected to the same psychological manipulations will react to them in the same way, which, incidentally, very much echoes the uncertainty of the educational endeavour. It is important to note this in any remodelling of Ellul's definition: the individuals are not necessarily unified by the psychological manipulations – they are only given the impression that they could be. For the propagandist's purpose, it need only be a feeling. As McMillan (1976, cited in McMillan and Chavis, 1986) suggests: "Sense of community is a *feeling* that members have of belonging, a *feeling* that members matter to one another and to the group, and a shared *faith* that members' needs will be met through their commitment to be together." (9, emphasis added) As can be inferred from this quote, just as a sense of community, in all of its uncertainty, does not make a community, so too does a sense of unification not make a unification.

The psychological unification which exists as only a perception can be considered an imagined community, so described by Anderson (2006). While he refers largely to the imagined communities of nations, the description he gives of a community in which members "will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the mind of each lives the image of their communion" (6) adequately describes the situation I have outlined above. Anderson's work details what Ellul would probably describe as psychological manipulation, or the set of methods which constitute propaganda. He infers that imagined communities (of nations) are built on ideas of shared cultural roots, tools of maps and museums, and also "systematic historiographical campaign[s]" (201) carried out in the school system to support students to remember (and forget) details of past conflicts. All of these, to me, correlate strongly with the concept of sociological propaganda, which prepares citizens, in turn, to accept themselves as part of this imagined community of nation.

Of course, nation would be but one example of an imagined community. While Anderson focusses on this, and mentions no others, it can be speculated that imagined communities can be created using other psychological manipulations. Is not every community an imagined community in some respect? Even the ideal Gemeinschaft communities – resembling the small villages and towns of a bygone era – are built on shared cultural norms and values which are necessarily reinforced in order for social relations to be maintained (Bradshaw, 2008). As part of a larger entity – such as nation – the cultural norms and values in these communities are reinforced using the same sociological propaganda to be found in the wider Gessellschaft community (society). Yet, I suspect that Ellul would consider the Gemeinschaft communities to be close to those organically formed small groups in which propaganda has less (if any) effect. The distinction between an imagined and a real community lies, I think, in the ability to form actual social relations, rather than a mere feeling that one is bonded to others such as in Anderson's description above. Thus, I agree with Ellul that our current mode of living – urbanised, separate, individualist, technological – creates the perfect environment for the prevalence of the imagined community over the real.

All of which brings me to the final part of Ellul's quote that heads this section: the incorporation of a mass of individuals into an organisation. As I have mentioned previously, the idea of the organised group behind propaganda is, certainly nowadays, a somewhat

outdated notion. However, this is not to say that the individuals targeted and affected by propaganda are not encouraged to incorporate themselves into an organisation. That organisation could be considered society itself in the case of sociological propaganda; or it could be a political group or affiliation in the case of agitation propaganda which encourages the individual to act. Certainly, it is more effective for agitation propaganda to organise its [potential] activists into groups to promote the most efficient action. However, in terms of sociological propaganda, it need only reinforce the *perception* of belonging to a group, community or, indeed, an organisation – it is neither necessary, nor desired, that the individual actually be part of one (as this would negate the need for propaganda itself). Thus, the idea that propaganda necessarily dispenses individuals into organised groups can be dismissed. Furthermore, if it is possible that an individual propagandist can exist who is not working for, or with, an organisation, then it is also possible that such propagandists have little interest in forming or making an organisation themselves; however, the creation of an imagined community still seems like a possible goal for the individual propagandist. Considering the elusive Q from the QAnon movement, what could they hope to achieve from their writing if it only targets one individual?

Therefore, given what I have discussed above, I can remodel this part of Ellul's definition to read as follows:

A mass of individuals who perceive themselves to be part of an imagined community

I have dismissed the idea that propaganda intends on making psychological unifications, given that according to Ellul it actually requires some kind of psychological unification from the outset. I agree that psychological manipulations are taking place but that these are tied into the methods used in propaganda, which I come to investigate next.

5.1.3 "Propaganda is a set of methods"

I have now investigated Ellul's definition and reworked it such that it can now be understood as to be employed by "anyone who wants to bring about the active or passive

participation in their actions of a mass of individuals who perceive themselves to be part of an imagined community." I have said above that the set of methods and the psychological manipulations are one and the same, which is why I have omitted them from this revised definition until I have looked more closely at the particular set of methods used by propagandists.

<ol type="i">
Vertical and Horizontal; Rational and Irrational

Before looking at the methods of propaganda more broadly, I will identify those which are delineated by Ellul in his thesis. He does not go far into particular examples or details but mentions that propaganda can be either vertical or horizontal. In vertical propaganda, the leader creates and disseminates propaganda which makes mass communication imperative for this purpose. Newspaper, radio, and television are all mentioned by Ellul; of course, there are many more mass communication options available to us since the publication of his work. With horizontal propaganda, the main proponent is the education system. As propaganda is passed on among people, word of mouth, the education system becomes important in its potential to manipulate people to believe and think the same things (he gives the example of Mao's regime in which there was only one method of education and one manner of content). Social media may find its place here too as people share propaganda on a horizontal level, yet it offers disparate voices to the sole voice offered by the regime of Mao. Of course, as I have already pointed out in an earlier chapter, the guaranteed success of education, including the education system, in making people believe or think anything cannot be assured. Thus, we can only really speak of attempted manipulation here.

Ellul also speaks of the differences between rational and irrational propaganda. Irrational propaganda invokes the potential for an emotional, visceral response from the propagandee and it refers to the fundamental beliefs of people to do so. Such beliefs are what Ellul describes as myths. In this he echoes the feelings of Sorel (1908) who tells us:

> Un mythe ne saurait être refuté puisqu'il est, au fond, identique aux convictions d'un groupe

(A myth could never be refuted since it is, in essence, identical to the

beliefs of a group)

(xxxvi, author's translation)

In this case, a myth is not as it might be popularly understood as:

specific accounts of gods or superhuman beings involved in extraordinary

events or circumstances in a time that is unspecified but which is

understood as existing apart from ordinary human experience.

(Buxton, Bolle and Smith, 2020, para. 1)

A myth, as Sorel describes it, is akin to a *tableau enchanteur* – a charming picture. Indeed, we might consider stories about gods and superhuman beings to amount to a charming picture, but the connotation of charming which is offered by Sorel here is in no sense stricken with the twee undertones one might invoke when talking about a *charming* village, or a *charming* person. What I interpret Sorel means to get across with the idea of charming is that the myths represented in pictures are bewitching – they cast a spell on those who look at them. Myths are strongly mixed with utopian ideals, Sorel adds derisorily (it is safe to suggest that he does not subscribe to such utopian ideals himself), because they have been formed and propagated by a society which is not interested in history but in *la petite science* [18]– a concept which Sorel himself does not pin down, but from context it can be deduced that this is something he does not consider to be (as) important. The strong influence of the myth over people sees us tread the logical path of defending the myth at the expense of everything else: *"C'est l'ensemble du mythe qui importe seul"* (Keeping the myth together is all that is important – author's translation) (94, original emphasis).

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[18] This term does not seem to be popularly used in modern French; however, it has reappeared in popular culture recently. The Netflix show "Shadow and Bone" describes the fantastical powers of the protagonists as "la petite science" – they are reluctant to describe it as fully magical as this would imply that there is no explanation for their power, yet they are also reluctant to categorise it as "full" science. https://www.sird.eu/2021/04/26/ombre-et-os-petite-science-contre-les-pouvoirs-de-merzost-expliques/ Sorel does take a somewhat science sceptical approach in his writing. I suspect that he is making an ironic stab at the natural sciences and their influence with this phrase.

As such, it is not so vital that the ends in actuality match the ends offered by the myth. The French Revolution, as is one of the examples of a utopian myth offered by Sorel, in reality did not bear similarity to the pictures of the revolution which were offered up by the movement's most enthusiastic followers and subsequently drew in many more. The power of the myth lies in its potential to invoke particular feelings in those individuals who retain it as the foundation of their present or future actions. Thus, the concept of myth as "une organisation d'images capable d'évoquer instinctivement… les sentiments" (a collection[19] of images capable of instinctively evoking feeling – author's translation, 95) fits with Ellul's description of irrational propaganda as that which provokes an emotional response. The myth can be considered a method, then of irrational propaganda (and Sorel, too, does suggest that the myth should be considered as such).

Sorel refers mainly to the myth of *la grève générale* (the general strike). Ellul, on the other hand, talks of the two fundamental myths of Science and History upon which all other myths – Work, Happiness, Nation, Youth and Hero - are based. These myths are supported by certain sociological presuppositions: that man's aim in life is happiness; that man is naturally good; that History develops in endless progress; and that everything is matter. Propaganda must build on these presuppositions, and myths, otherwise people would give it no credence. As Ellul points out, no person will accept propaganda which "presents man's future as one dominated by austerity and contemplation" (40) because they are inclined towards servicing the myth of their own happiness. He agrees with Sorel in that the myth holds power over the emotions of people. It can provoke visceral reactions in the emotions of people, and so societies cling to their myths with, in Ellul's view, an almost religious voracity.

The employment of the myth as a strongly influential image can thus be considered a method of (irrational) propaganda. What it offers is a means of reinforcing the worldview of a dominant culture (Ellul, 40). I might suggest further myths in existence: Society or Culture as another fundamental myth, with Justice and Education perhaps born from these. The myths of Society and Culture offer the strong image of successful collective living, while the enchanting picture of Justice (and nowadays Social Justice) is something that we cling to

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[19] The direct translation of "an organisation of images" does not fit here as well as collection. This has implications for Ellul's work in its original language also as the translation of "organised groups" and "organisation" in his definition of propaganda could possibly have been translated as collections/collective.

and will defend in the interests of a notion of fairness which eludes many. Education (I refer to the system here, rather than the notion I presented in a previous chapter) services the larger myth of Culture and is strongly related to the myth of Work. The myth of Education, and the hope that it offers, is one which is lovingly recreated throughout popular culture and is etched into the minds of young students everywhere from their first day at primary school. Furthermore, it is in the education system that those other myths are propagated. The education system is, in Ellul's view, a kind of pre-propaganda.

If irrational propaganda makes use of images in the form of myths to provoke feeling, rational propaganda is more inclined to exploit information. Ellul observed in his time that facts and statistics were becoming more present in propaganda. With what appears to be objective facts and figures presented to them, the propagandee is free to make up their own mind about what they are seeing. However, this becomes a problem – he says – because the average person would find it so difficult to digest an influx of information that they would still reduce it to an impression or an idea. Data inevitably requires context before it can be interpreted. Of course, this is not to mention that the propagandist can reveal, or conceal, aspects of certain facts to show their position to be favourable, and any alternative ones to be less so (also known as *card stacking*).

The idea of what constitutes a fact is something upon which Ellul does not elaborate. Clearly, he takes for granted that his readership will know instinctively the difference between a fact and a fiction, yet in our modern age it is often difficult to distinguish. Highlighting the public thirst for factual integrity, Pomerantsev describes a visit to a symposium of "Fact-checkers" – those people who dedicate their time to somehow validating what has been printed, posted, or broadcast as the truth. The irony of this is that while we *prima facie* seem to hold a preoccupation with facts, we simultaneously appear uninterested in facts:

> if the need for facts is predicated on a vision of a concrete future that you
> are trying to achieve, then when that future disappears, what is the point
> of facts? Why would you want them if they tell you that your children will
> be poorer than you? That all versions of the future are unpromising?

> (Pomerantsev, 2019, 166)

This suggests that people are more prepared to accept facts so long as those facts agree somehow with the myths to which society tends to cling. If the myths in irrational propaganda were intended to provoke a strength of feeling in the march towards a utopian future, the myths when employed in rational propaganda root us in the return to an imagined sense of custom and tradition, since perceived to be lost, which is no less utopian. In both cases, they rely heavily on the nostalgia of the people. As Boym (2015) puts it: "nostalgia… is not always retrospective, it can be prospective as well" (para. 5).

This is, by no means, a truly modern phenomenon. William Randolph Hearst, in an attempt to orchestrate a war between the US and Spain (via Cuba) made up the story of a war inspired by some fake illustrations. The Maine explosion in 1898 was presented in the news as having been caused by the Spanish despite there being no proof that this was the case (Sweasey, 2020). Besides being an obvious attempt to service the myth of Nation (the resulting war heralded the rise of the US as a global superpower) and my proposed myth of Justice (the Americans were looking to avenge the victims of the explosion), it also was an example of what Boorstin (1992) describes as a pseudo-event; a happening which holds the following characteristics:

1. It is planned by someone (never spontaneous)
2. It is primarily planted so that it will be reported on, or reproduced, by others
3. It has an ambiguous relation to the underlying reality of the situation
4. It is intended to be a self-fulfilling prophecy (for example if we say someone is a celebrity, this makes them a celebrity)

Boorstin describes a situation in which news is also created as a pseudo-event which seems to infer that the reporting on a pseudo-event as described at point 2 of Boorstin's rubric, becomes a pseudo-event in itself and so on, *ad infinitum*.

It seems to me that both irrational and rational propaganda work to service particular myths that populations hold on to in order to bolster imagined communities. There is little distinction between them, except that one is supposed to target the emotions of a person while the other is supposed to appeal to reason. Yet, both present manipulated pictures of a world that the propagandist wants us to accept. The bewitching pictures of the myth want their audience to embrace what they are being shown with rousing commitment, but,

unless we are suggesting that these people completely lose their faculty for reason somehow upon confrontation with these myths, we must accept that it is possible that such irrational propaganda can be as susceptible to reason as rational propaganda; that is, it still must be interpreted and the choice must still be made whether to act upon it or not. The image of the world being offered by the irrational propagandist can still be rejected. The same is true of rational propaganda. As we have seen, the inevitable manipulation of so-called "objective facts" means that the propagandee is only ever offered one view of the world. Insofar as this view, via facts and information, can both support and reject the strongly held myths of a society then it is possible for an emotional reaction to occur as well as a rational one.

ii.　　　　Covert (Black), Overt (White) and the Grey area

It is here that the potential for preconceptions of propaganda as malevolent once again rears its head. Since I have argued that there is no such thing as entirely rational, or entirely irrational, propaganda, the idea that these methods are then used in open and hidden ways may sound repulsive to some. Like the distinction between rational and irrational propaganda, I find myself drawn to the pseudo-distinction that Ellul makes between these two. If it can be argued that there is, in fact, no such as thing as fully covert or fully overt propaganda, then the underhanded connotations these words bring can be negated. I contend that this is the case.

> covert propaganda…tends to hide its aims, identity, significance, and
> source. The people are not aware that someone is trying to influence them,
> and do not feel that they are being pushed in a certain direction.

> (Ellul, 1973, 15)

From this, it is unclear whether the criteria for covert propaganda must be that all aims, identity, significance and source are kept hidden, or whether the hiding of only one of these can be considered black propaganda. That being said, if by the hiding of identity or the

source the propaganda become unattributable to a particular group or organisation, then this would make it grey propaganda as per Cormac's (2019) definition.

On the other hand, Ellul's definition of overt propaganda is as follows:

> Is open and aboveboard…one admits that propaganda is being made; its source is known; its aims and intentions are identified. The public knows that an attempt is being made to influence it.

> (1973, 15)

Again, if the source of white propaganda is hidden, or if its aims and intentions are not fully identified, then this would make it grey propaganda as it becomes unattributable once more.

The categorisations of black, white, and grey propaganda are well known and used widely by those engaged in the field of political intelligence (see Cormac, 2019, who reproduced files from the Information Research Department (IRD), created in 1948 as a counter to Soviet propaganda). Ellul refers only to black and white propaganda but, of course, they were being used for some years previous to his writing his thesis. Both the ideas of black and white propaganda as Ellul sets them out are questionable.

Scott (2010) rightly suggests that, by definition, covert action (including propaganda) can only be deemed to be successful if no-one knows that it has ever been conducted. However, if no-one knows that it has ever been conducted, then the concept of covert propaganda becomes entirely theoretical at best. We can only deduce that it must exist as the converse to overt propaganda, but we could never identify it unless it was pointed out explicitly to us (thereby turning it from covert to overt in any case). A possible other measure of success, according to Scott, is that while knowledge of the propaganda can leak out, the identity of the propagandists remains secret. This does not appear to be apparently successful since as soon as this knowledge is revealed, it can no longer be considered covert – it could now, however, be described as grey propaganda as it is unattributable to any source (Cormac, 2019).

Unlike covert propaganda which ceases to exist as soon as it is identified, overt propaganda sets out to be openly disseminated. The public know who made it, and what it was made

for, and what they are expected to do as a result of it. An example of this might be public health propaganda.

Figure 8 UK Government Covid Poster (NHS, Public Health England, UK Government, 2020.)

The above poster can be considered an example of public health propaganda because it does employ a set of methods to bring about the active participation of a mass of individuals who are psychologically manipulated to perceive themselves to be part of an imagined community (note how the text invokes a spirit of looking out for each other, while simultaneously addressing an entire nation of people who will never meet). This matches Ellul's definition of overt propaganda because, as we can see, this poster/picture is openly attributed to the UK Government and the NHS. We can see its aims and intentions are also openly displayed. It tells us that "We must keep on protecting each other" by washing our hands, covering our faces, and leaving enough space between ourselves and others. This is bolstered by a further message that if we stay alert and control the virus, then we will subsequently save lives.

The members of the public who view this poster will be aware that an attempt is being made to influence their behaviour. The instructions given are explicit and unequivocal, and the choice to follow them lands squarely in one's ability to make rational decisions.

Or does it? The choices made in the composition of this image display a troubling ambiguity. The emotive language which tells us "We must…", "protect" … and that doing so could "save lives" feeds the myths of Hero and Happiness. Words like protection and save invoke connotations that the population can become ordinary heroes by following the advice. At the time that this poster was in use, the UK was in its strictest lockdown. Understandably, the public were beginning to feel the strain of restrictions. By feeding the myth of the Hero, propaganda such as this also fed the myth of Happiness. While the restrictions might have been a difficult pill to swallow, the mass of individuals could at least assuage themselves with the idea that they were all everyday heroes by complying with the rules. The irrational component of this propaganda – the emotive language used to target the sentiments of the viewer – also supported the somewhat covert manipulation employed by the propagandists here. The interplay of overt and covert elements makes this also an example of grey propaganda.

It seems to me that covert and overt methods are not mutually exclusive. No propaganda can ever really be disseminated entirely covertly, nor entirely overtly. Ellul makes the point that "the combination of covert propaganda and overt propaganda is increasingly conducted so that white propaganda actually becomes a cover and mask for black propaganda" (16). While I concede that this could indeed be the case, it is also my view that there probably is not any such thing as white or black propaganda – both cases must always be tinged with some grey.

iii.   *The Basic Seven Techniques*

In the above sections, I have taken Ellul's very broad ideas about the methods used in the organisation of propaganda – vertical and horizontal; rational and irrational; covert and overt – and dispelled the seeming dichotomy that he presents. In his thesis, Ellul strays little further into the particular techniques employed in the psychological manipulations of propaganda and so it is here that I will describe some of the particular, psychological techniques employed by propagandists. It is important to note that these techniques are used in the presentation of particular objects of propaganda: to quote Lasswell, "the strategy of propaganda…involves the presentation of an object in a culture in such a manner that certain cultural attitudes will be organized toward it" (1927, 629). Lasswell

further tells us that forms of propaganda objects may be spoken, written, pictorial or musical – in short, propaganda objects can certainly be characterised as images in the way that I have defined them in a previous chapter.

In my discussion on the public health poster above, I have alluded to the idea that the presentation of an object (i.e., a poster) is carefully considered to encourage people to form attitudes which are shaped by some mixture of rationality and irrationality. I will give a name to such techniques here based on the identified "Basic Seven" (Fleming, 1995; Lee and Lee, 1995) which were initially loosely conceptualised by a priest named Richard Hooker in the 16th century (Schettler, 1950). This is neatly appropriate, and perhaps surprising, given that the birth of propaganda is often attributed to the following century. The basic seven techniques are: Name Calling, Glittering Generalities, Transfer, Testimonial, Plain Folks, Card Stacking and Bandwagon. I will give a brief description of each technique with an example.

Name Calling

As the title suggests, this refers to the idea that the propagandist applies a pejorative label to that which they consider undesirable so that it might be rejected and condemned without examining the evidence.

Glittering Generalities

Indeed, this is the converse of name calling, in that an idea or an object is associated with a virtuous label in order to make the audience accept or approve of it without examining the evidence.

Figure 10 HOPE (Barack Obama) (Fairey, 2008 based on a photo taken by Mannie Garcia for Associated Press)
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Barack_Obama_Hope_poster.jpg

Figure 10 SNOB (Barack Obama) (Malkin, n.d.)

In the above examples, you can see a picture of the same person (Barack Obama) with different words attached. Figure 9 is an example of glittering generalities in that the picture is attached to the word *Hope* – a word of optimistic virtue which encourages the audience that this person can promote the myth of Happiness in their imagined community. Figure 10, on the other hand, is name-calling intended to alienate the working-class electorate – and also, perhaps especially, the working class, African American community. While it may not be explicitly relevant to the propaganda techniques I am discussing, the use of colour here is also significant and can be used to exemplify how covert techniques are used alongside a fairly obvious approach. Figure 9 prominently uses the colours of the US flag to show that the hope Obama embodies is a hope for the imagined community of the USA (thus feeding the myth of Nation). In Figure 10, the colours remain in somewhat muted tones. It is as if the creator is attempting to show Obama's darker side.

Transfer

This occurs when the authority or prestige of some revered/respected idea or institution is carried over to something else in order to give it gravitas. This can be true of when the

propagandist wishes to use the authority of an institution to promote an idea, or it may be used to encourage the public to reject something.

A very famous example of transfer is the image of Lord Kitchener imploring YOU to join the UK army in World War I. With a relatively successful military career and, subsequently, as the war minister in the first part of WWI, Lord Kitchener became a symbol of the British nation's will to victory (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2021). Kitchener's drive for victory, and the illustriousness of his previous successes, is transferred onto the request for future soldiers. Further to this, his untimely death in service in 1916 played into the myth of Hero. Lord Kitchener, as he went down with the ship on which he was travelling at the time, could be painted as the archetypal British officer, full of (imagined) stoic British determination – the irrepressible stiff upper lip. No surprise, then, that the iconic image of Kitchener asking the public to join the war effort continued to be used after his death and remains instantly recognisable even today.

Figure 11 Your Country Needs YOU! World War I recruitment poster derived from advertisement in London Opinion, Vol. XLII No.546, 5 September 1914' (Alfred Leete, 1914)

Testimonial

This occurs when a public figure is called upon to offer a positive review on an idea or a product, or even a person. If the public figure is widely liked and respected, then their testimonial will be used to encourage public opinion towards the particular

idea/product/person. If they are not well liked, then it will be used for the opposite purpose.

Testimonials are common in advertising. Often a celebrity or other public figure will be called upon to endorse a particular product/service. It is enough to ask a sports person to wear a particular brand of trainers for this to act as a testimonial, for example. The idea is that if those who are famous and successful will use the product, perhaps the ordinary person who uses the same product will also be successful. In some ways, this is similar to transfer as the characteristics of the person giving the testimonial are transferred onto the product (and reflected onto the consumer).

Plain Folks

Where an object is presented as good merely because it represents the ordinary people of the world – the *plain folks*. This appears to run counter to the idea of the Testimonial, or the Transfer techniques which rely on the people involved having some kind of special characteristic (fame, talent, beauty). In the case of the Plain Folks, people who would be otherwise considered special in the other techniques are presented just as ordinary joes.

Figure 12 I'm Proud of You Folks Too! (Jon Whitcomb, 1944). Source: Hennepin County Library.

In this example, from the Second World War, the sailor plays down his contribution to the war effort and puts it on a par with the working man and woman in the picture. It is an attempt to communicate to the ordinary citizens that their contribution is important (perhaps special) too.

Card Stacking

As I alluded to in an earlier point, card stacking refers to the way in which information is selected, revealed/concealed, and represented to the audience in order to give the best (or worst) possible case for ideas etc.

Again, card stacking is popularly used in advertising. Food photography is a key proponent of card stacking, in which the image on the menu looks appealing and not at all like the food that you receive. Political spin could also be considered a close relative of card stacking, if not one and the same. Examples from this sphere are plentiful, so I will give a recent, fairly accessible one. In a recent interview (Sky News, 2022), the UK Chancellor of the Exchequer at the time, Rishi Sunak, was asked about 500,000 children at threat of being pushed into absolute poverty by an exponential rise in the cost of living. In response, the Chancellor gave an example of 1.3 million people (including 300,000 children) having been brought out of poverty over the last 10 years. At first hearing, this sounds like a good record and the Chancellor has stacked his cards in such a way that it sounds like his party has done a very good job. However, considering the numbers a little more closely, it is also the case that there will be 200,000 *more* children in poverty imminently as the cost of living continues to rise. Yet, the interviewer does not seem to pick up on this point or question him further about it. Ellul might recognise this as the exploitation of rational propaganda, where numbers and facts are used to obfuscate.

Bandwagon

The propagandist here attempts to encourage everyone to follow the crowd by suggesting that everyone in our group/community are on board with what they are suggesting and, therefore, we should be too. The bandwagon technique seems to play on the idea of

perceived unification and what Ellul identifies as a human need for becoming part of an imagined community.

Figure 13 McDonald's sign in Harlem (Smith, 2008)

In the McDonald's example, the number of customers served is displayed prominently on their sign. 99 billion customers served represents the entire population of the world having been served approximately 14 times. The prospective customer can be swayed by the company's popularity – if everyone else is going, perhaps I should go? A reaction to an unmet need for unification is a fear of missing out (also known as FOMO). McDonald's cultivates a FOMO in potential customers with this advertisement. Further to this, it gives the impression that customers can place their trust in a company to which people are clearly returning.

These particular techniques relate to Ellul's set of methods, or psychological manipulations, for propaganda. Furthermore, they also embody Lasswell's indication that propaganda is, in fact, "the management of collective attitudes by the manipulation of significant symbols." (1927, 627). Lasswell's definition here brings its own questions, of course. Firstly, what is a symbol? Given that the idea of manipulation of symbols comes from Lasswell's definition of

propaganda, it is pertinent to consider Lasswell's definition of a symbol in this instance. He tells us that "A symbol is whatever has meaning or significance in any sense." (Lasswell and Kaplan, 2017, 10). Despite his elaboration that linguistic symbols (i.e., words) are the most important, and that non-linguistic symbols (such as flags, insignia, monuments) are important mainly in the political sphere, still a definition is no clearer. If we closely take Lasswell's definition of symbol and place it into my burgeoning definition of propaganda it would then become: "Propaganda is the manipulation of whatever has meaning or significance…" This could potentially relate to everything in the world which in turn makes everything in the world propaganda. A more detailed definition of symbol is given by Burks (1949, inspired by Charles S Peirce): a symbol is a sign which "represents its object to its interpretant… by being associated with its object by a conventional rule used by the interpretant" (674). The example Burks gives is of the word *red* – he says that this is a symbol because it stands for the quality red to whoever reads it, and they come to interpret it via the conventional linguistic rule of English that establishes the meaning of the word.

Therefore, we can take a symbol as something that stands for something else, and that can be interpreted using a conventional rule. The symbols of propaganda, in my definition, must always be referring to the myths that hold together the mass of individuals congregated into their imagined communities. This might suggest that the conventional rule that can be used to interpret such symbols is itself reliant on culture – which, in my view, could in itself be viewed as a myth. Symbols interpreted via myths in order to reinforce myths sounds rather disappointing to me with its seemingly unbreakable circular structure. More positively, it can be reflected on as a rather neat way of understanding the underlying impact of myth on the ways that we view the world.

Since Ellul was influenced in part by Lasswell, it can be considered that his definition contains elements of Lasswell's upon which he has reflected carefully; thus, it is not my intention to deconstruct and examine Lasswell's definition here. However, all of the techniques I have discussed above, from the particularities of the Basic Seven to Ellul's broader methods, are engaged in the manipulation of symbols to invoke active/passive participation in the mass of individuals. Symbols can be chosen, edited, and represented in such ways to encourage the response that the propagandist wants. I suggest that the symbols manipulated by propaganda correspond to the myths – *les tableaux enchanteurs* – which hold together our imagined communities. Even McDonald's with their simple

marketing strategy plays into the myth of Happiness – if you follow the crowd then you will no longer be struck by FOMO, or loneliness. Rather than a set of separate methods, then, propaganda becomes rooted in only one method: the manipulation of symbols corresponding to, and interpreted via, myths.

5.2 A Definition of Propaganda

Given all that I have discussed in the preceding sections, it is now possible for me to construct a definition of propaganda. As a reminder, Ellul's original definition was as follows:

> Propaganda is a set of methods employed by an organized group that wants to bring about the active or passive participation in its actions of a mass of individuals, psychologically unified through psychological manipulations and incorporated in an organization.
>
> (Ellul, 1973, 61)

As above, I say that propaganda is not a set of methods, but one method which can, indeed, employ the different strategies I have mentioned with regards to the Basic Seven. Ellul's psychological manipulations can be considered part of this method. I also have suggested that propaganda need not be executed by an organised group, citing the example of the lone propagandist. Further, I have replaced the idea of psychological unification with perceived inclusion into an imagined community. As such, the definition of propaganda that I will use is:

Propaganda is the manipulation of symbols corresponding to, and interpreted via, myths (deeply held beliefs) employed by anyone who wants to bring about the active or passive participation in its actions of a mass of individuals who perceive themselves to be part of an imagined community.

This leaves a question posed at the outset of this chapter unanswered: how entwined is propaganda with its pejorative value? Can we only call something propaganda when we believe it to be something intrinsically malevolent or underhand?

As I suggested in my discussion on propaganda methods, propaganda always hides something and always aims at a person's irrationality. In this sense, it is tempting to think of it as something dangerously influential. On the other hand, I also suggested that propaganda cannot ever be completely hidden, and that a person does not completely lose their faculty for reason when faced with an object of propaganda and this therefore places it alongside the other concepts discussed in this thesis; both image and pedagogical reduction are employed to hide and show, and image certainly can appeal to both emotion and reason. If propaganda is inherently malevolent by virtue of its propensity to conceal some things and appeal to irrationality then we have to apply this same consideration to image definitely, and pedagogical reduction at least in part.

Thus, we should consider the view of propaganda as something inherently bad as a popular conception, but one which does not hold up conceptually after some scrutiny. Only after investigating particular instances and examining the motives and intentions of the propagandist, as well as the nature of the active/passive participation they hope to bring about in the mass of individuals, could we possibly begin to consider attaching value judgements to each of these individual instances. For example, considering the intention of the Covid-19 propaganda poster shown above is to save lives and reduce pressure on the National Health Service, it is unlikely that we would describe this as something bad or undesirable. On the other hand, it also would not be popularly described as propaganda, and the people who do describe it as such believe it to have ulterior motives. The definition of propaganda I have given can be interpreted as neutral since, paradoxically, it can be applied to material which popularly would not be described at propaganda, i.e., public health advertising – and, indeed, any advertising. It can be applied to many aspects of popular culture: consider the comic book which uses the symbol of the superhero and the good vs. evil trope to feed the myth of Hero – such instances ask their readers to passively accept one worldview (that of the hero) as good and the other as evil, and that these are in a constant struggle. Similar manipulations can be found in movies, music, literature, theatre

and beyond. Indeed, even the manner in which we dress is the manipulation of a symbol which feeds a myth (my proposed fundamental myth of Culture).

In the next chapter, I will take this definition, together with the definitions I have made of image and pedagogical reduction, in order to compare them and offer an answer to the overall question as to whether propaganda can be considered pedagogical.

Chapter 6. Can we consider propaganda to be pedagogical?

In the preceding chapters, I have set out to delineate the concepts of image, pedagogical reduction, and propaganda. Furthermore, I have linked pedagogical reduction and image, in part using Barthes' concepts of *studium* and *punctum*, to show that while not every image can be considered a pedagogical reduction, every pedagogical reduction can be considered an image. In this chapter, I intend on answering the question of whether propaganda could be considered a pedagogical reduction, and thus pedagogical; however, before I do this it is necessary to connect the concept of propaganda with image. While I may have used images in the previous chapter to illustrate some points – and while Lasswell (1927) pointed out that propaganda inevitably consists of image-objects – this only infers image (object) as a tool of propaganda. Much as I did with pedagogical reduction, I will show how propaganda is an image. To do this, I will journey along the same route I took when looking at image and pedagogical reduction - primarily asking whether propaganda reduces/is a reduction in the same fashion as image.

6.1 Propagandistic Reducing

To make a comparison of the reduction that is made in image creation, and the reduction that is made in propaganda creation, it is pertinent to look again at the methods of selection, simplification and re-presentation which run common in image creation (and, thus, pedagogical reduction).

6.1.1 Selection

The image creator selects what is to be shown in their image at the expense of anything else which could have been included, in order to fashion the snapshot view of their imagination which characterises the image. It can be assumed that whatever the image creator chooses in their selection is something that they consider to be valuable. Due to the diversity of intentions in image creation, it is not necessary that the image creator always has the audience in mind when selection is taking place.

Propaganda, on the other hand, is different because it falls into two distinct categories: sociological and political. In sociological propaganda, the people become transmitters of propaganda in their own right in their everyday actions and choices. There is no intention in this case because they are subject to sociological propaganda by virtue of their passive consumption – that is, they pass through the processes of socialisation and the statutory education system and they accept that the worldview they are sold as desirable is, in fact, desirable. Even any dissenting voices agree, in some sense, that this is a desirable worldview as long as they participate in it, willingly or not. No one, therefore, creates sociological propaganda because it is so integrated into culture (and synthesised with the myth of Culture) that it requires nothing more than horizontal propagation by everyone participating in said culture.

However, there must still be a reduction used in sociological propaganda otherwise there could be no such thing as a common culture: there would exist as many cultures as individuals on the planet and each of them would hold validity, thus negating the idea of culture completely. Sociological propaganda still requires that we, as citizens of a particular culture, continue to promote that which we hold as good and valuable while obscuring (or at least decrying) that which we hold as bad and undesirable. It is not illogical to suggest that we use selection in sociological propaganda to retain the myths which are most charming to us which can potentially change by generation.

The intention of political propaganda, on the other hand, is obvious. It is created by someone (or some group) and disseminated among the mass of individuals to encourage participation. Political propaganda is that which leaps from the springboard of sociological propaganda – recall that sociological propaganda acts as a primer for any potential success of the political. Already, it is affected by the selection of which myths to hold on to and

which to discard, but another selection then comes to take place: which symbols should be manipulated in order to provoke a need for participation in the propagandee, which symbols and manipulations would lend themselves to the greatest chance of success, and which should be discarded?

It would appear that propaganda, then, goes through a two-fold selection: a selection of the myths to be retained, and a selection of the symbols to be manipulated in order to feed them. However, it is indeed just two parts of the same process, like in image creation. In the first instance, the image creator has an idea in their imagination of what they intend to create; in the second, the image creator has to choose how they will come to present their image to others (what media, what materials etc.).

6.1.2 Simplification

Simplification of an image, as I have mentioned in a previous chapter, concerns the removal of that particular snapshot of the creator's imagination from its particular context (bound up as it is in space, in time, in thoughts…). The removal of the image from this also incurs a protection for the image's audience: they can safely receive the image in their own contextual bubbles and interpret it in their unique way. Any pressure or expectation that an image can be received in the "right" way relies on antiquated, elitist notions of taste which, as we have seen with Barthes, are entirely inconsequential.

To consider simplification in propaganda is more difficult. First, it would be remiss to avoid the idea of the myth – by virtue of its status as *tableau enchanteur* – as an image in its own right. In this sense, we can make a direct analogy between the manipulation of symbols to relate to the myth, and the manipulation the image creator makes of symbols to project the object of their imagination. It could also be argued that the image creator, unconsciously perhaps given their situation in culture, might also be relating to a myth in their work; however, this is not the same as suggesting that all image objects must necessarily relate to a myth.

A distinction that could be made between image and propaganda is that both political and sociological propaganda indeed must be bound up in some context, whereas image can be considered a removal from it. Propaganda relies on the backdrop of culture, society, and

the permeation of ideological views on the constitution of a desirable way of life. Seemingly, propaganda cannot be removed from its unique location in space, time, and culture; yet, given that it permeates throughout space, time, and culture – certainly this is the case for sociological propaganda - there is perhaps no need to suspend it at all. I paraphrase from Susan Sontag (1973) here when I suggest that the permeation of propaganda is analogous to the relentless melt of time (or as Borges (2000) puts it, more accurately in my view, the disintegration of time). Anything that can be taken from it only attests to its apparently irrepressible continuation and that one moment could potentially be every moment, while one object of propaganda could potentially be all propaganda. In short, propaganda is simultaneously bound to context whilst remaining inherently dynamic across contexts. The same can be said about the image: while it is removed from the image creator's imagination, it remains a product of the image creator's imagination at a particular time in space, but it can cast these off in order to be viewed across many times and spaces.

Aside from sharing the timeless, spaceless quality of image, propaganda does act to remove something. It wants to promote one way of living/acting (depending on whether it is sociological propaganda or political propaganda) as the best way, or the right way. Therefore, it has to remove any indication that, initially, there are other ways of living well/worldviews and that these could be valid and, therefore in selecting the myths to retain to support their promotions, and the symbols they intend to use to further feed the myths, they surreptitiously are removing the symbols and myths that they believe to have less or no value. Does this amount to a reduction in complexity which is a fundamental characteristic of simplification in (some) images? Having the propagandists put one particular worldview in emphasis certainly makes simpler the normative judgements we come to make throughout our lives since we are given such a foundation in our earliest years (thanks to the ubiquity of sociological propaganda). Whether this can further lead to the reaction of complexifying (the gradual reintroduction of complexity) is something that can be further questioned since it seems unlikely that the propagandist would ever wish to reintroduce the possibility of other worldviews to their potential detriment.

Arguably, this idea of simplification and whether or not the simplification in propaganda lends itself to the possibility of the reintroduction of complexity relates to the protective element of simplification in propaganda (that I have also identified for images). Ellul set out

the subjective need for propaganda according to the individual. The individual needs the justifications for action/inaction offered to him by propaganda. To know that they are supported by the constituents of their imagined community through these justifications then allows for the individual to act (or not). Returning to paraphrase Kierkegaard's chiasmus once more: the propagandist gives the individual the occasion to act; the individual gives the propagandist the occasion to call for action. As each individual finds themselves justified in their thoughts and actions by propaganda, a kind of echo chamber is built in which the same ideas reverberate among all individuals (although this does not necessarily mean that they will be accepted the same way by each individual). The echo chamber comes to validate the views of the individual, allowing them to practise and express their view of the world without concerning themselves with any dissenting opinions from beyond.

Nevertheless, even if there is less room for re-complexification in propaganda than in other images, simplification is still employed to bring a way of living, or an interpretation of the world, into view which is presented as "good" without requiring any of the difficulties of deciding and critiquing for oneself. Predicting, as I am, protests about how this now begins to sound malevolent I urge the reader to ask themselves whether they would consider another image which essentially does the same thing – for the purposes of my argument I refer to my example in a previous chapter of the biology textbook – to also be malevolent/propaganda? The biology textbook presents (or represents) all that the author(s) considers to be important in the field of biology, pertinent to the predicted level of the reader and perhaps somewhat driven by historical convention. The reader is not asked to question what the author has written – they are asked to engage with it as a "truth", in the sense that what has been written about Biology is, indeed, a series of objective facts about Biology that need not be questioned or considered by the reader any further (since it is expected that the reader is engaging with the reduced pedagogical image of Biology rather than the presentation of Biology in wider academic/economic spheres). The biology textbook presents itself as objectively presenting the field, but is, in fact, only one way of looking at Biology.

And the author, as image creator and like the propagandist, manipulates symbols in order to feed the myth (in this case the fundamental myth of Science; also, possibly my proposed myth of Education). Each word is a symbol; the book form is a symbol (of the myth of

Education), the manner in which information is presented in a biology textbook – microphotographs, diagrams, tables etc. – is also symbolic (of the myth of Science). Symbols are referents to myths, but they are not necessarily reductions of them. Indeed, they can represent a level of complexity for those people not so initiated into the series of conventional rules required to decipher the symbols in the first place.

6.1.3 Representation

It is as true for propaganda as it is for image that this final step in the reducing process is where the results of the selection/simplification are offered up to the propagandee/image viewer. Although we like to consider propaganda to be somehow more influential than any other image, indeed it can only ever be an offering up of something from the propagandist to the propagandee – even if that offering up provokes a visceral, emotional reaction (as may be the overriding intention of irrational propaganda), the propagandee still retains at least some of their reasonable faculty to choose whether or not they are going to engage with what they are offered.

A particular question concerning the representation of propaganda, and its reception by the propagandee is posed eloquently by Barthes[20] : "How does he [the propagandee] receive this particular myth today? If he receives it in an innocent fashion, what is the point of proposing it to him?" (2009, 152, emphasis in original). More so than the creators of some images – who may not be inclined towards the reception of their audience to their work when they create it – the creators of propaganda cannot escape the intention of their proposal to the propagandee: What is the point if the propagandee does not receive the myth the way in which the propagandist wants it to be received?

Of course, when objects are created and projected towards the minds of others, it is impossible to make guarantees about how they will be received. What the propagandist can do, however, is to make certain reasonable assurances that targeted audiences might receive it in the right way by the manner in which they manipulate symbols in reference to the dominant myth. Immediately, this draws a distinction between propagandistic representations and those of images in general: propaganda is necessarily reliant on a

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[20] Barthes in fact never refers to propaganda, but he does speak about myth (in a similar way to Sorel and Ellul). Given my definition in the previous chapter, it can be taken as read that reference to myth is, at the same time, reference to propaganda, since all propaganda uses symbols referent to myths.

particular interpretation which, according to Barthes (2009), insists that the intention of the myth be neither too obscure to be effective, nor too clear to be believed. Images in general, on the other hand, do not require the presence of any intention – although they may have them, such as in the case of pedagogical reductions - thus they are not reliant on any one interpretation.

On the other hand, the non-propagandistic image creator can also make the same reasonable assurances that their audiences receive their projections in the right way by, again, manipulating symbols that correspond to the idea they wish to project. It would appear that this is a semiological necessity in any instance of communication. I suspect the efforts taken to encourage the right interpretations correlate with the degree of intention behind what the image creator is communicating, how much importance they give to what is being said, and how much they trust their audience to employ their interpretative faculties in the desirable way. If propaganda is reliant on particular interpretations, then what is offered up by representation must take enough precautions to ward itself against improper interpretations.

I might suggest that the offering up of propagandistic representations invokes different nuances of the offering up of images in general. Consider this analogy: if my friend finds herself in financial difficulty, and I offer her some money with which she can do whatever she likes, this is like the offering up of an image in general. Once the money is with my friend, I accept that it no longer belongs to me and what she does with the money is none of my business – as would be the case if I painted a picture and hung it in a gallery for public viewing. I cannot control what the viewers will make of what is presented to them. I have, of course taken steps to point out particular things in certain ways (via the medium I have chosen, and the way that the painting is lit etc.), just as I have given my friend the money she needs via a particular medium (cash denominations or via a bank transfer) on a certain day. While this may influence how the viewer receives the painting/how my friend receives the money, it is not conducive to controlling how they go on to make an interpretation/spend the money.

However, if I offer my friend some money and further impose restrictions on how she can and cannot spend it, and I take care to warn her of what may happen if she does not follow my instructions, this is like the offering up of propaganda. Still, once the money is with her, she can either follow my rules or remain free to ignore my restrictions and spend as she

wishes. However, depending on how dire my warnings are, she may feel more reticent to spend at will. In both scenarios, I offered up the same thing but in the second, I took many more steps to encourage the outcome that is desirable to me (in the propagandist's case, the desirable outcome for them would be the right interpretation).

While all images are offered up to their audience, then, I suggest that this does not necessarily mean that this is always done with a view to free interpretation and that there are levels of nuance implied by the idea of offering up. The same is true of pedagogical reduction, by virtue of its status as an image. The offering up in pedagogical reduction sits somewhere between that of general images, and that of propaganda: steps can be taken to encourage a particular desirable outcome, but the astute educator can accept that when they offer up something to students that it is then theirs to do with as they wish. It can perhaps be cynically suggested that pedagogical reduction as it is employed in many education systems (certainly in Scotland) resembles the tightly controlled offering up of propaganda in the way that it crafts learning outcomes and assessments for students which promote one way of interpreting content over all others. This kind of control, of course, still does not come with any guarantees that students will interpret content in the exact way that they are being pushed towards.

6.2 A Propagandistic Reduction

As shown, propaganda does go through the process of reducing (selection, simplification, and representation). This infers that the result of such a process – i.e., an object of propaganda – can also be thought of as a propagandistic reduction.

In the previous chapter, I gave some examples of what could constitute propagandistic reductions: the Covid-19 poster created by the NHS; the posters used in wartime communications between the Ministry of Defence and the general public; the memes which were altered slightly to both promote and denigrate a prominent political figure. All of these can, of course, be described also as image-objects, but this does not necessarily equate to a conclusion that all propaganda is image. In order to do this, we must continue to investigate whether propaganda holds the same features as an image.

It is clear: propagandistic reductions are employed by propagandists to encourage active/passive participation, while simultaneously justifying that participation by referring to the myths which bind together our imagined communities. In this sense, individuals are offered a route away from their responsibilities as wholly subjective agents in the world – a role which one might suggest could be rather lonely – into the metaphorical open arms of the mass. This, as Ellul argues, is why the individual needs propaganda; and propaganda needs a mass of individuals because it cannot be effective if it targets only one person.

This is not to suggest that the propagandist wants the individual to shift from subject to object. Although it is tempting to think of the most extreme examples (such as Edward Bernays or his admirer and counterpart, Joseph Goebbels) as manipulating individuals in the way that one might manipulate a chess piece, this is illogical when considering a definition of propaganda as encouraging participation. While participation is a notably difficult concept to define (Eyssen, Steultjens, Dekker and Terwee, 2011), and I observe that it changes across different fields and disciplines, the connotations of the word suggest that the participant has employed some of their own faculty in deciding to participate or not. Narayan (1995) defines participation in the context of their study as "a voluntary process by which people… influence or control the decisions that affect them. The essence of participation is exercising voice and choice." (para. 2). What Narayan is outlining is an idea of political participation: at least some of which is apparently the domain of the propagandist. The idea of volunteering, and of exercising one's voice and choice, however, alludes strongly to the individual retaining some kind of agency. That being said, if the voice, choice, and voluntary aspect of participation are illusory and are, perhaps, influenced by how the individual receives sociological propaganda then, indeed, one might be justified in describing the individual as a manipulated object. Furthermore, the picture of the propagandist bringing about participation among these people in a way that is desirable to them might leave the observer wondering whether the individuals have not been used in the way that one might use an object as a means to a desirable end.

These contrasting viewpoints run somewhat parallel to a free will/determinism debate and, like the compatibilists who sit somewhere in the middle of those well-worn arguments, I will argue for a middle way for propaganda – that is that propaganda is as much an (inter)subject-oriented process as image (and pedagogical reduction).

Recall that (inter)subjected oriented processes are any processes in which (at least) two subjects are in interaction. In image creation the creator/viewer are the subjects, in education/pedagogical reduction it is the educator/student. In propaganda, the propagandist and the propagandee are the interacting subjects. I reject that the propagandee can be entirely objectified: what use to the propagandist is a person entirely at their whim, except to make them redundant? If the propagandee was completely under the control of the propagandist in a similar way as a robot might be fully submissive to the will of its programmer, then there would be little need for the creation of propaganda. It seems to me that for propaganda to be effective, some of the individual's subject-ness must be retained, if only to give them the impression that they are, outside of any sphere of influence, making their own choices and are acting in their own free will. As I previously described, all propaganda must appeal to both the rational and irrational faculties of the individual – if there was such a thing as an object of propaganda which could effectively, and infallibly, work towards manipulating an individual by appealing purely to their irrationality then the propagandist would never need to create another object of propaganda again.

Thus, the propagandee can never really be objectified, regardless of how much the propagandist might erroneously wish it so. The propagandist too must be considered in their subject-ness, and this is perhaps easier to imagine than when considering their audiences. The propagandist always chooses to offer up the objects of their creation to their audience whether they believe in what they are asking the public to participate in or, as Ellul suggests is universally the case, they do not believe in it at all.

This is not to mention that the offering up of propaganda, while it endeavours to bring about participation as effectively as possible by tightly controlling possible interpretation, still cannot guarantee that the right interpretations of such objects will be made. The reason for this lies in the potential for each individual in the mass to draw on simultaneously their cultural background, their individual disposition and the unique backdrop of their previous experiences when looking at an object of propaganda; the propagandist, too, is drawing on all of these when they come to create objects of propaganda. The very idea of propaganda – created by the human subject, the propagandist - aiming at both the individual and the mass evokes connotations of

intersubjectivity. The creation and reception of propaganda is an (inter)subject-oriented process.

Returning to the question of sociological propaganda, however, and its influence, we can relate this to other concepts already introduced in terms of image and pedagogical reduction: that is Barthes' *studium* and *punctum*. Sociological propaganda is that which we can relate to the *studium* – I would go as far to say that *studium* is, in fact, a result of sociological propaganda. The general means by which we are encultured into looking, even in the resigned way that Barthes describes (see chapter four), might come from the propaganda that is inherent in socialisation and education systems. All images are met with the viewer's *studium*, and this enculturation has an influence over the way that the viewer receives the image. Furthermore, just as sociological propaganda acts as a springboard for political propaganda (and, therefore, must be present for it to be effective), so too must *studium* be present for *punctum* to be activated. Political propaganda aims to agitate – and in piercing the viewer, so does punctum wish to agitate them. It is then not logical to suggest that only propaganda manipulates its viewer – viewers of all images have been socialised (or educated as Barthes puts it) to look at and receive images in particular ways, such is *studium*.

In referring to *punctum* especially, we are once again alluding to the individual interpretation of an image (or propaganda) that a viewer can make. *Punctum* is an especially individual notion; no two people will necessarily find the same *punctum* in the same image. Second, Barthes tells us that *punctum* is never that which is placed in the image deliberately – it is always some trivial detail which may go unnoticed by the majority of viewers. Thus, the tight control that the propagandist takes over their image to ensure the right interpretation is almost negated by the power of *punctum* to arrest the viewer in ways that cannot always be predicted. Perhaps, in propaganda, it is more important that the propagandist works towards encouraging the investment of the viewer's *studium* first and foremost, and the best they can hope for is that the viewer finds a *punctum* in their objects of propaganda that overrides their rational, if passionless, appreciation in a way that approximately fits their intention to bring about participation. It is an interesting thought that propaganda is less so an endeavour in control and manipulation, and more so a hopeful aiming at something as uncertain as human thought and behaviour.

This confirmation that propaganda can indeed be considered an (inter)subject-oriented process, and that the concepts of *studium* and *punctum* can also be applied, then leads me to the conclusion that:

Propagandistic reductions (and therefore propaganda itself) are images; but not all images are propaganda

Like pedagogical reduction, the reason that not all images can be propaganda lies in a difference in intention. Just as not every image creator begins with the intention to educate, neither do they begin with the intention to call for participation. However, certainly some images are created with the intention to bring about the active or passive participation of its viewers. It may now be argued that in my definition of image, I have outlined that to be seen an image must be actively engaged with the viewer's imagination – the image itself calls for active participation from the viewer. How can it be the case that propaganda – as an image – can invite passive participation?

Of course, propaganda is also always inviting active participation from its audience: active participation and engagement with the object of propaganda itself. Recall that propaganda wants the individual in the mass to do, or not do, something. The act of doing, or not-doing, cannot occur until the individual has engaged with the object of propaganda and decided (or felt driven to an extent) to participate or not participate as they see fit.

Now that I have shown propaganda and pedagogical reduction to be subcategories of image, this can now be identified as a horizontal similarity between the two concepts: pedagogical reduction and propaganda might be siblings to the parent concept of image. It cannot be taken for granted that this means that they are identical. In the next section, I will begin to look at the similarities and differences between pedagogical reduction and propaganda.

6.3 Pedagogical Reductions and Propagandistic Reductions: Investigating the similarities and differences

Initially, in order to start thinking about the similarities and differences between these two concepts, it would be logical to look again at the definitions.

As a reminder:

Pedagogical reduction is a process (or the end result of such a process) of selection, simplification, and re-presentation of contents of the educator's world which intends, with loving care, to offer the student the opportunity to change their relation to content. The content which has been pedagogically reduced exists in a pedagogical reality – it is not the same content as it exists in the real world. This adds a shielding element to allow the student the safety to access and explore the content's "entry point".

And

Propaganda is the manipulation of symbols corresponding to, and interpreted via, myths (deeply held beliefs) employed by anyone who wants to bring about the active or passive participation in its actions of a mass of individuals who perceive themselves to be part of an imagined community.

It is not immediately obvious that there are similarities in either of these definitions. However, to introduce what I intend to discuss in this section: it can be said, by virtue of its status as subcategory of image, that the manipulation of symbols in propaganda is a similar process to that of image making – and thus, that of pedagogical reduction. We can also see from these definitions that there are at least two subjects in interaction in both cases, again this is a similarity brought about by their inclusion under the subcategory of image. These, and other image-based similarities, will be discussed first of all.

Furthermore, I will discuss the similarity/dissimilarity in the intention to change in pedagogical reduction and propaganda; both want to bring about a change in the status quo – the question of difference arises as to whom the educator/propagandist intends to benefit from such a change.

Next, I will address how pedagogical reduction and propaganda create different realities: educational/pedagogical reality and the propagandistic reality (containing the imagined community) and any similarities/differences that can be found in these concepts. This includes whether propaganda contains, or not, the shielding element of pedagogical reduction.

The use of myths must also be considered in pedagogical reduction. Propaganda fundamentally uses myths, but could the same also be said in education – are we building pedagogical reductions based on myths?

Next, I will look at the very particular idea of loving care that I introduced with regards to pedagogy. Could this have any place in propagandistic reductions?

Finally, I intend to discuss participation. The propagandist wants some kind of participation from their audience, and I am inclined to suggest that the educator would also like to see some kind of participation from their students. Is there any kind of difference between the participation either party would like from their audience/student?

After this, I should be able to offer a conclusion on whether propaganda bears enough of a similarity with pedagogical reduction that we can say propaganda is also pedagogical. By extension, I should also be able to suggest why it is that they are not commonly associated conceptually.

6.3.1 Image Based Similarities/Differences and Intentions

It is possible to say that already, by virtue of their inclusion under the umbrella concept of image, pedagogical reductions and propagandistic reductions share the general characteristics of an image. That is:

1. Each has an intention to show something to an audience and uses selection, simplification, and representation to do so

2. Each relies on the interplay between the image and the imagination of the viewer (student/audience)

3. Each offers up a view into the imagination of the image creator (educator/propagandist) which, in turn, could be considered a worldview

4. Each aim that the student/audience will introject the image to meet the original intention

As is shown, intentions are bound up in the concept of image, and so these will be discussed further on in this section. In the meantime, taking each of these points in turn by way of a recap, it can first of all be said that pedagogical reductions and propagandistic reductions both intend to show their audience something. Pedagogical reduction wants to show their audience something about the world – the educational content – in order to change their relation to it. I would suggest that propagandistic reductions also want to show their audience something about the world – symbols which serve as referents or reminders of the myths that bind us – in order to encourage the participation that preserves them. A fuller discussion on the differences between these secondary intentions will take place further on in this section. Nevertheless, the original intention to show remains whatever the secondary intention may be.

In turn, and as discussed at length in the preceding sections of this and previous chapters, both propagandistic and pedagogical reductions use the same process of image – that is selection, simplification, and representation – to create something to offer up to their audiences.

Secondly, given that they are both sub-types of the concept of image, pedagogical and propagandistic reductions must also rely on the interplay between themselves (as image-objects) and the imagination of their respective audiences. I have dispelled any idea that propaganda works entirely subliminally or appealing entirely to the irrational. In that sense, imagination must be employed as the active, vitalising force of the image as I have defined it. For pedagogical reductions, this is a simpler consideration – it is less expected that pedagogy would use subliminal messaging or appeal to the irrational. I expect, however, there are cases when the student's emotions are likely to be given recourse, such as in psychological education, for example.

A further reason for the employment of the imagination is that what the audience is given via these reductions is a view into the imagination of the image creator which, therefore, correlates with the characteristic of image/propaganda/pedagogical reduction as an (inter)subject-oriented process. With both propaganda and pedagogical reduction, more so than other images, the audience are being offered one way of viewing the world (the way of the educator/propagandist); a potential further similarity is that it may not always be obvious to the student/propagandee that this is, in fact, only one way of viewing the world.

The final similarity between these two processes is that both aim for the student/propagandee to introject the image to meet the image's original intentions (the primary intention to show something and any secondary intentions to change or participate). That is to say, the student/propagandee has to let the image in (and enter the image themselves) before it can have an effect on whatever the creator wanted it to affect. However, this openness to the individuality of *punctum*, along with the subjectivity of the imagination, proves that propaganda/pedagogical reductions are both endeavours without guaranteed outcomes: in spite of any reasonable assurances made by the propagandist/educator, and I have suggested that both of these exert attempts at control, which is arguably greater in propaganda, who knows how the audience will receive what the creator is trying to show?

Thus, with these four characteristics, the family resemblance between these two concepts – as sub types of image – can be identified. However, the similarities do not end here. While not necessarily the case for all images, both pedagogical and propagandistic reductions can be said to be driving towards desired ends. This relates both to an idea of hopefulness – given that the nature of both processes is unpredictable – and, perhaps, utopianism (on the part of the educator/propagandist at least). In both cases, the educator and the propagandist are striving for a situation that is an improvement on the status quo. The educator wants the student(s) relation to something to change in a way that they think is better. In the sense that they are passing on content of value (to them) in the hope that it will persist via others, they are impressing an ideal upon the future. The propagandist also wants things to change in a way that they think is better. As mentioned above, they want individuals to be drawn into participation in a way that they believe will benefit the propagandist and their agents – and perhaps, but not necessarily, also benefit the individual and society at large. By reminding the individual, via referents to myths, as to their place in the imagined community, and by communicating what must be done to preserve such a community, they are also impressing an ideal upon the future. In either case, whether this impression will take or not remains, once again, a question of hope.

All of this denotes a broad similarity between the sub types. At first glance, an assumption might be made that, by virtue of what I have discussed, propagandistic and pedagogical reductions are similar enough to be the same and thus drawing the conclusion that

propaganda is pedagogical (and potentially vice versa). However, it is incumbent upon me now to investigate in a much deeper sense before any conclusion can reasonably be drawn.

Interestingly, as we have seen in discussing the similarities between these two, some differences have also inadvertently shown themselves. Some of these distinctions arise from particularities which, in turn, arise from the general similarities. It is important to consider whether it is justified to consider something a difference when it is, as I have described it, a particularity arising from more general similarities: if propagandistic reductions and pedagogical reductions are similar enough to be the same, then perhaps it sullies the concepts to then pick out particular instances where they are not the same. I suggest that this is not so, because in the case where I am comparing two distinct concepts, these particularities may be the very things that separate them in spite of their identified and different definitions already set out. I can only identify the difference between the very similar concepts of *car* and *van* purely from the differences arising from their general similarities.

As the issue of a difference in intention is a weighty one, I would like to first of all like to further consider the desired ends (as mentioned above) that pedagogical and propagandistic reductions are driving towards given that this is a function of intention, and upon whom the intentions towards these desired ends are trained. I have already considered that both the educator and the propagandist are aiming at an improvement on the status quo by impressing an ideal upon an imagined possible future. Recalling my discussion on education in chapter two, the educational intention, as I have noted, can be directed towards one individual or it may be directed towards an entire student body or, an entire generation of students in the case of some statutory education systems. While I suggest it is a folly to assume that intending a change in one individual student can, in turn, influence wider society as Jackson suggested in the definition that I referred to in chapter two, this is not to say that an educator does not begin with this intention. Certainly, in large, formal systems in which curricula is politically, perhaps also socially, determined, there is the sense that the intention is to condition students towards an end of personal flourishing –*Successful Learners* and *Confident Individuals* with regards to the Scottish system – in order that they can perform certain roles and functions in society - to become *Responsible Citizens* and *Respected Contributors*. Indeed, any idea of personal flourishing cannot be extricated from the sociocultural norms for that context, and neither can

conceptualisations of social roles; thus, they can never really be separated. The educational intention, then, can either be to change the individual, or to change society, or both at varying degrees (to change society by changing the individual and vice versa).

The propagandistic reduction, on the other hand, must always be intended for a mass of individuals – as I have defined it, via Ellul, propaganda can never be aimed at only one person as this would render it entirely ineffective. However, it has to be created such that it speaks to the individual and the mass simultaneously. In many ways, this is reflected in the idea of a mass, formal schooling which intends towards individual flourishing as well as maintaining a social order, of sorts.

In education at least, the change that is being sought must be an improvement, if not necessarily from the student's perspective, who may be indifferent or resistant of any changes being sought, then at least from that of the educator (or from the state/society for whom the educator acts as agent). When asking whether propaganda must also seek to make an improvement, it is necessary to delineate what exactly is meant by improvement here as we intend on using it across concepts. Since the educator/propagandist is making the judgement as to what constitutes an improvement then it is likely to be different in every instance. I would suggest that the idea of an improvement in education/propaganda as a change in the status quo which is perceived to benefit at least one actor in the process (educator/propagandist, propagandee/student, the State, or society at large). Therefore, propaganda does seek to make an improvement in its intention towards the propagandee. A distinction that I can make, however, is that the educator intends to make an improvement specifically in the student's relation to something; the propagandist may not share this specific intention as they may be considering an improvement in participation, and thus an improvement across society, for which the improvement in the propagandee's relation with the myths they are presenting (if there is any such improvement) is but a step along the way.

Just as it might be said that an intention to change, or improve, the manner and level of participation in something can be dissolved in an intention to change one's relation to that thing, so too might it be said that propaganda as intending to influence a mass of individuals might also be dissolved into an overall educational intention which can affect a range of people from individuals to entire generations of a population. In this sense, it seems that it is less so the case that propaganda and education/pedagogy are entirely

discrete concepts, but that propaganda finds itself enclosed within education. Of course, it is premature to make any definitive conclusions at this stage as the investigation continues onward.

Another of the particularities that I touched upon in the above section is the distinction between the secondary intentions of pedagogical reductions and propagandistic reductions. It is pertinent to consider the differences between these, if any.

I say that both of these must have the primary intention to show something (of the world – or more accurately of the creator's perspective on the world) to their audience. In pedagogical reduction, this is done with the intention of changing the student's relation to whatever it is they are shown. In propagandistic reductions, the intention is to incite participation via rational and irrational means (by referring to strong beliefs – myths). In this respect, perhaps can we say that propagandistic reductions are also looking to change the audience's relation with what they are being shown – from apathy to interest, to participation, or vice versa when the goal is to reduce the level of participation. It might be said that in order to invoke emotions in them, the audience must already have some kind of a relation with the myth such that it can be recalled when the propagandist needs people to act (or not). Depending on one's definition of change, it might be more accurate to say, therefore, that the propagandist wants to ignite, rather than change, the audience's relation with the myth to which they are referring. It could still be a change in relation to remind a person of that patriotic myth of Nation during international sports events which generally lies dormant in their day to day lives. It is not illogical to suggest that in order to change an individual's level of participation in something that their relation to it must also be changed – the propagandist might want them to feel anger at something they previously saw as benign, for example. The very particular change sought by the propagandist as an increase/decrease in participation could be considered as dissolved under the educational intention, in the way that propaganda and pedagogical reduction can be dissolved under the umbrella concept of image.

The idea of the propagandee interacting with the material which plays on their already held strong beliefs in order to bring them to the point of participation feels somewhat reminiscent of the maieutic method of education which does something similar. If the maieutic method brings the learner to the point of understanding, or giving birth (Leigh, 2007), this suggests that the potential for understanding has been latent in the student all

along (anamnesis). Insofar as maieutic is understood as a dialogic means of "encouraging or forcing the learner to draw inferences for herself" (Leigh, 2007, 314) and the image-objects offered by pedagogical and propagandistic reductions rely on process which employ the dialectic means of two subjects in interaction, we might be able to consider both of these as potentially using maieutics: among others, Longo (2020) describes how the poet Dolci identified poetry (which is an image type) as a form of maieutics characterising it as "as a dialectic method of inquiry, a process of collective exploration that takes as a point of departure the experience and the intuition of individuals." (63). Incidentally, there are those who are sceptical of this approach: BF Skinner (1971) – the noted, yet sometimes controversial, behavioural psychologist – suggests that its theory is weak, and its benefits are greatly exaggerated. Furthermore, he suggests that it is not an effective means of changing behaviour which is, of course, the intention of a propagandist (although not necessarily that of the educator).

Moreover, although we know that Plato (via Socrates) endorsed maieutics as a pedagogical method, and that it is still widely used today, this is not to say that every pedagogical method is maieutic, in which case nor can every pedagogical reduction be employed for use by this method. Therefore, this rather tangential consideration of a further potential similarity between pedagogical and propagandistic reductions can only be set aside. The question remains, however: can it be concluded that the change of relation aimed for in the student bears any similarity to what the propagandist aims for from their audience?

Remaining briefly with Skinner (1971), he suggests that what is, in fact, happening when a change occurs (in a person's mind, in a person's relations with other things) is an increase or decrease in the probability of action. He relates this to education in his attempt to critique the formation of the autonomous man (since, as he says, such a thing is illusory). This again, on the surface, appears to link education with propaganda. Propaganda calls for action (and inaction as a function of action), and propagandistic reductions are used to encourage such (in)action. If Skinner is to be believed, then pedagogical reductions – as a means of encouraging a change in a student - are also used to increase or decrease the probability of actions depending on what the desirable result of the educational process is deemed to be.

Of course, behaviourism is itself a reductionist viewpoint – and of this characteristic, my readings of behaviourists such as Skinner give me the impression that it is somewhat worn

as a badge of honour. Behaviourism assumes that, in terms of human psychology, nothing except behaviour is of significance, since this is the only thing that can be measured (Tomic, 1993). Being as it is a discipline based on positivism and objectivism (Boghossian, 2006) then, with regards to my views of pedagogical and propagandistic reductions as necessarily (inter)subject oriented then it is logical for me to discard the idea of changes brought about in students/propagandees purely as an increase/decrease in the probability of actions. While propagandists indeed aim for their audience to behave – or not – in a particular way, this is necessarily preceded by sociological propaganda which calls largely for them to think a certain way. If thought precedes action, certainly in this case, then behaviourism can only tell part of the story (as Tomic suggests). Furthermore, while in some cases the change an educator encourages in their student may involve a change in behaviour, it may not necessarily so - besides which the astute educator will realise that this change might never happen or occur differently in each individual student.

Insofar as changes made can be as variable as each individual student/each individual who is confronted with a propagandistic reduction, perhaps the original question is moot. The change aimed for by the educator and the change aimed for by the propagandist are both similar – since they are both changes – and any actual changes made (bearing in mind that these are not easily measurable) are as different as the individuals upon whom the intentions are trained. Again, this is a particular distinction which arises from the general similarity. Furthermore, each and every similarity falls prey to the same particular difference – the difference between the individuals who are interacting with the pedagogical or propagandistic reductions. Therefore, we would be able to find differences in the imaginative interplays, and differences in the dissemination of worldviews just by saying that they are contingent on individual interpretations. This is devoid of the depth that is required to investigate the concepts fully, yet it is about as deep as I can go without seeking out and examining every individual instance of pedagogical and propagandistic reduction. As such, the general, conceptual similarities that these share in terms of both being images, and sharing the intention to show, can be broadly accepted as can the contingent differences – to show what and to whom?

To conclude this section, a brief recapitulation: pedagogical and propagandistic reductions share the characteristics of image by virtue of being child concepts of image. It can be agreed that both propaganda and pedagogical reduction are aiming at making a change in

their audience in order to improve (as they understand it) the status quo: propaganda aims to change the behaviour of the propagandee but only insofar as the improvement is farther reaching, while pedagogical reduction does primarily intend to improve the individual student but acknowledges in some cases that this improvement could reach far beyond the student. Although this investigation is in its premature stages, there are indications that the concept of propaganda is soluble in the concept of pedagogical reduction (the idea of intending to change the level of participation of the mass in order to improve society could be considered an instance of education and not necessarily analogous to it).

6.3.2 Creating Realities

In chapter two I mentioned, via paraphrasing Mollenhauer (2013), that the pedagogical reduction creates a pedagogical reality in that it is a representation (or "facsimile") of the world that is *better*. I speculated that what was better about such a reality is its protective element: it offers the opportunity for free pedagogical rehearsal (as Mollenhauer puts it) without recourse to the high stakes' world beyond the pedagogical walled garden. Therefore, the question(s) this section hopes to address: does propagandistic reduction create a propagandistic reality in a similar way to pedagogical reduction, and, if so, does this reality bear any resemblance to the pedagogical reality?

Considering the first part of this question: is a propagandistic reality created by virtue of the reduction in the way that a pedagogical reality is created? Let us take a closer revisit at how the pedagogical reality is created as I described it in chapter two. As I have already said, it is protective of the student. This protection comes from the building of a barrier, as Mollenhauer puts it, between the world of the adult and the pedagogical reality. Furthermore, there is an element of filtration, the connotations of such a word invoking ideas of purity and impurity. That is to say, the pedagogical reality retains what is thought to be good (or useful, or conducive to nurturing/nutrition) and keeps out what is considered to be not good (or unnecessary, or harmful). The pedagogical reality is constructed by completing the process of selection, simplification, and representation but it must foster an educational intention, else its description as pedagogical is inaccurate.

We are, therefore, left with four prominent characteristics of pedagogical reality:

1. It is protective

2. It creates a barrier between the student and the outside world

3. It filters content to retain and discard what is good/bad

4. It is the result of a process of selection, simplification and representation which is done with an educational intention in mind.

Of course, as we use this as a lens to look at any potential reality created by propagandistic reduction, it would not be accurate to describe propaganda as having an educational intention. Therefore, when I come to interrogate this point, I will consider propagandistic reduction to have a corresponding intention in mind. Similarly, the reference to student will be replaced by a reference to either the audience or the propagandee.

Beginning from point one, do propagandistic reductions exhibit the criteria of protection? I have touched on this briefly earlier on in this chapter when I said that propaganda gives individuals the justifications they need to feel confident in their choices, whether or not those choices can be thought to have been unduly influenced by the objects of propaganda themselves. In this sense, the individual is offered the protective sphere of comfort knowing that they are part of the imagined community that shares in their opinions and bolsters their actions.

What the protection of the pedagogical reality offers a freedom to rehearse without substantive recourse to the real world beyond it. In the other case, while the propagandee languishes in the certainty that they are right, and that other people think they are right, the participation that the propagandist seeks from the individual is intended to be influential beyond the individual and the imagined community. However, there are parallels still to be drawn here. The student can execute pedagogical rehearsal in the safety of the pedagogical walled garden but, once again certainly in formal educational contexts, the expectation is that the student will transfer their newly acquired knowledge, skills, or appreciation for content to the world outside. In every instance of education, of course, this is not necessarily the case. Similarly, the propagandee can test the validity of their opinions and actions in the safety of their imagined community with a reasonably safe assurance that the other members of the community will think and do the same. The expectation of the propagandist is that the propagandee will take their opinions, justified, and propagated in the echo chambers of the imagined communities and founded by objects of propaganda,

to the world at large and act upon them. This is a necessary function of protection in propaganda – it exists to support the individuals to think and act in ways within their imagined communities that they will transfer beyond. In propaganda, transfer is necessary while protection is contingent, i.e., it is in place only to support such transfer. In education, it is the transfer beyond that is contingent, but protection remains necessary in every pedagogical instance, regardless of whether any transfer happens or not.

In creating the pedagogical reality, and indeed to cultivate the protective reality, to address characteristic two in the above list, a barrier is placed between the student and outside world. Of course, the connotations of barrier can be interpreted both negatively and positively. If a barrier is in place to indiscriminately keep everything out, except the narrow interests of the educator (or student as the case may be) this may not be the kind of barrier that we would consider conducive to a holistic education. Some may argue that the idea of a barrier in education in any case is prohibitive; yet, in the process of selection, pedagogical reductions must place a barrier between that which is revealed and that which is concealed. This is a discriminate barrier, which I argue can be perceived more positively (provided it is acknowledged that it is employed with prejudice). The discriminate barrier realises that it only has limited powers to keep some things out – things that may, over time, be allowed in. The requisite criteria for passing the discriminate barrier is more open than that of the indiscriminate one; it is less strictly policed – one may suggest that the educator acts more as defender than enforcer – and it is built with the intention that it could, at any time, be knocked down.

In propaganda, though, much more control is exerted by the propagandist – and only the propagandist – in maintaining the security of the barrier. Indeed, it can be suggested that the barrier created by propagandistic reductions are indiscriminate barriers as all that the propagandist wishes to reveal is all that serves their narrow interest (and those of any associated groups). The change in the relation (to the myth) that they hope to invoke cannot be well served by widening the worldview they intend to communicate. This is reminiscent of the idea of variable levels of control in the attempts of image creators to ensure the right interpretation of their work: propagandists take a great deal of control while educators might take less. The propagandist in this sense is very much an enforcer.

Moving on to point three, regarding the filtering of content. It is in selection once more, and in simplification, that the educator filters out what they want and what they do not

want to represent to their student. As well as protecting the student from the pressures of the outside world, the barrier also supports the educator's ability to curate the content they think is important. Filtering, curation – both of these are related to the idea of culling that I presented via Sartre in chapter three. Not only do those engaged in these actions make a judgement about what is worth keeping and what can be discarded, but in doing so, they change the thing being filtered, curated, or culled. When water is filtered, some of the superfluous elements are removed to make the water purer. The curation of works of art contains an element of organisation – they are moved and hung and lit in ways that may be different from the intentions of the originator of the work (who may not have had any intentions at all). Culling, of course, removes the chosen thing from its original context to be represented elsewhere, keeping with the example of culling flowers offered in chapter three.

The filtration of content in pedagogical reduction is imperative, even more so in propagandistic reduction. This is a reiteration of the idea presented above in that the propagandist must retain as much control as possible over what is being presented to their audience, thus filtration of content could result in representations with the least room for ambiguous interpretation, allowing of course for the potentially individual interpretations of the audience.

Furthermore, the changing/re-organising/removing of content is as applicable to propagandistic reductions as they are objects purposely manipulated. The same manipulation happens to the content in pedagogical reduction, but it is less considered that this manipulation takes place with the explicit intention of manipulating others – even if it could be extrapolated that working on an intention to change a person's relation to content might be considered manipulative. In propaganda, manipulation is openly referred to in my definition; in pedagogical reduction it is not. Again, this could be because of the varying levels of control over content so adopted by the educator/propagandist in which a threshold is crossed by the propagandist from encouraging to manipulative. It may also be that it lies in the distinction between who or what decides what is good and bad – what is to be filtered and what is to be kept – although in both pedagogical and propagandistic reductions this could be the same agent: the State. If it were the case that characterisations of reduction as pedagogical/propagandistic could be determined by who carries out the selection of content, then it could also be said that anything carried out by the State should

fall into one camp or the other. Yet, there exists such a thing as a statutory curriculum followed in state schools which would be considered pedagogical, whereas overtly political images – a party political broadcast, for instance – by the incumbent government would most likely verge on the propagandistic. This suggests that it is something about the content, rather than the source, that makes something either pedagogical or propaganda. I reiterate, it lies in the extant control that the educator/propagandist exerts over the selection, simplification and representation of content that makes the difference, leading us neatly to the final point in the above list.

The process of selection, simplification and representation has been described already in this thesis with regards to pedagogical reduction and propagandistic reduction. The points above certainly allude to selection and simplification in both instances. If we can consider both of these to be dimensions in pedagogical and propagandistic realities, then it can be thought representation may symbolise the third dimension – a tangible solid of these realities where selection and simplification remain out of the grasp of the intended audience. The facsimile of the *better* world – what both the educator and the propagandist intend to represent - can only come into existence through representation since this is the point at which it is offered up to the audience.

I conclude that, given it goes through the process of selection, simplification, and representation – and that it forms a protective barrier around its audience, to support rehearsal (of knowledge, of skill, of opinion) and, in turn, aids in filtering content - that propagandistic reduction does build a propagandistic reality. It would appear that they are also built for the same purpose: to allow a safe space for the audience/students to step into a representation of a world to support a change in relation to that worldview, whether this is to service an educational intention, or to promote a change in the level of participation in the world outside.

6.3.3 Myths

In seeking to promote the change in participation they want to see, the propagandist makes effective use of myths. As described in the previous chapter, myths are those charming pictures (*tableaux enchanteurs*) into which we invest ourselves to build strong beliefs about

our world as it is, and also, I think, an imagined possible world. Some myths set out by Ellul, and some speculated on by myself, include the foundational myths of Science and History which give rise to other myths such as Hero, Work, Happiness, Nation, and Youth (Ellul); and Education, Justice, and Religion (my own speculations). In my definition of propaganda, I set out that the propagandist manipulates the symbols concordant with these myths in order to influence the levels of participation in a mass of individuals (who perceive themselves to be part of an imagined community). My intention now is to investigate whether the educator makes use of myths in any case, and if so, whether their use in pedagogical reductions bears any similarity to their use in propagandistic reductions.

If the idea that education and pedagogy might make use of myths sits uncomfortably with the reader it may be because the idea of myths "connotes an untrue or erroneous belief, a widely held misconception, a misrepresentation of the truth, or something fictitious." (Martimianakis, Tilburt, Michalec & Hafferty, 2019, 17). In their particular field of medical education, Martimianakis et al explain that such a connotation is problematic because in a field which subscribes so overtly to the principles of science, there is little room for such a thing as myth. Yet, Western formal education outside of the medical sphere is not immune to the same ideas: Daza (2013) describes how the same scientism – which she describes as neoliberal scientism - pervades even in US elementary schools. This emphasis on looking for, proving, and communicating what many are keen to hold as objective truths lead to the logical conclusion that we should be suspicious of myths: they are there to be busted. Yet as Williams (2002) describes, this devotion to a truth can further result in a rejection of truth since a critical stance exposes accepted truths to be at times ideological, biased or at least inextricable from a subject – Ellul alludes to this in his discussion on the necessary manipulation of facts for the purposes of mere digestion by the general public. Given that pedagogy (and pedagogical reduction) makes necessary selections, simplifications, and representations of things in the world – in much the same way as the propagandist would choose and/or trim pertinent facts for communication - it would be naïve to then consider that these communicate objective truths either and so any discomfort arising from the idea that education deals in anything other than truth may be misplaced.

From an educational and philosophical viewpoint, Dahlbeck (2020) appears to reject this possibility. In his discussion on illusionism, in which he describes a situation where false beliefs are cultivated and maintained to strengthen social stability, he is outlining a concept

which is close to the idea of myth – but not quite, given that myth can be manipulated to induce chaos (think of Sorel's example of the French Revolution or General Strike from the previous chapter, for example). He considers that such an approach is anti-educational since the maintenance of illusions seems to run against such educational ideas as intellectual and moral flourishing given as they are less susceptible to reason. Alternatively, Dahlbeck suggests that the idea of fictions, which are less about the deliberate maintaining of illusion as it is about creating imaginative placeholders for knowledge where a lacuna exists, is more conducive to an educational ideal. What he eventually describes is education as a balancing act between the irrational illusions – some of which are necessary for social functioning, particularly those illusions of freewill we rely on for moral harmony – and the fictions which offer a route to questioning and toppling the illusions: essentially this is a balance between the irrational and the rational which, as I have described, is characteristic of one's engagement with an object of propaganda. Education and propaganda - pedagogical reductions and propagandistic reductions – share this interplay between the rational and irrational.

In the definition of myth that I have been using throughout this thesis – as strong beliefs held by an (imagined) community which take the form of charming/bewitching pictures of a world - there is nothing to suggest that they are necessarily untrue, erroneous, misconceptions, misrepresentations of truth or fictitious. Of course, there is also nothing to suggest that they cannot be any of these things either. In propaganda, as I have noted, appeals to myth via manipulations of symbols referent to them, can be made by the presentation of facts as much as it can by the presentation of a fiction masquerading as a fact, or even by the presentation of a fiction which makes no claim of veracity. Propaganda can make use of all of these; however, it seems that it is when the second situation in this list – fiction masquerading as fact, which somehow becomes obvious to the viewer – is in play that propaganda is identified, and vilified, even though, considering the pervasive concept of sociological propaganda, the same people have been subjected to propaganda for their entire lives and they have, consequently, consumed it without question. As myth is bound up in the idea of propaganda, any normative judgements we make about myths should be set aside in the way that they were in the discussion of propaganda overall. To reiterate – there is, therefore, no reason that we should be uncomfortable when considering the presence or function of myth in education.

Indeed, Martimianakis et al make this very point (again with regards to medical education). Not only are myths more than a container for falsehood, as they describe it, but they have underpinning social and intellectual functions: they bring people together in meaning making. Or, to rephrase this in the words that I have used, they can reinforce one's participation in an imagined community. For this reason, say the authors, myths are not only desirable, but necessary in (medical) education as more than just erroneous beliefs to be debunked.

So, education can and should make use of myths to promote meaning making. To improve a student's relation to something can include giving meaning to something of which they may be otherwise ignorant or apathetic. However, education does not necessarily have a recourse to an imagined community. In a previous chapter, I have said that education is not necessarily socially determined or socially facilitated, and that education can happen between one individual educator and one individual student – and it is entirely possible that these can be the same person. Thus, if myths are used in education, it cannot (always or necessarily) be with the express aim of perpetuating a level of participation in any imagined community. In Martimianakis et al's example they describe the myths of the "ideal candidate" and the "cut throat" students which indeed do refer back to an imagined community: that of medical students. Where the student is a true autodidact, then they may be engaging with the content for purely individual purposes which will have no bearing on their attitude or interactions with other individuals, or with larger societal structures. If Dahlbeck's conjecture can be accepted, then education, via the interplay of illusion and fiction, offers both the opportunity to participate in, but also suspend oneself, from the imagined community in any case. If it can be said that education/pedagogy does make use of myths – the symbols of which are necessarily manipulated via pedagogical reduction – but that these myths may or may not refer back to participation in the imagined community, this shows again that education as a concept can dissolve instances of propaganda within itself.

There is a further point to be made here, however. In a previous chapter, I identified a myth of Education. This was not one of the myths that Ellul identified in his thesis – and it could potentially come under the umbrella of the myth of Work - but it is a myth which I think is pertinent. To clarify, the myth of Education – as I understand it in the context of my imagined community of Scotland - paints the process of [formal] education (or the end

result of this process) as a route to economic, intellectual, and social mobility. The myth of Education is a seductive notion that can create opportunities and it is, therefore, presented as something very desirable in which to participate. Usually, this is accepted without considering how this portrayed benefit to the individual might further benefit the rest of society, and the legal mandate to participate in the education process as a child is questioned even less. Clearly, this means that pedagogical reductions, pedagogy, and education have the capacity to become self-referents: that is, they manipulate symbols (for example, schools, books, teachers, students) in the service of Education itself. Again, we are confronted with a potential discomfort which arises when educators and propagandists are placed in close proximity. I am not uncomfortable with the idea that educators/educationalists might also be propagandists – if propaganda can be dissolved as an instance of education, and if educators are manipulating symbols in the service of the myth of Education, then this follows a logical route. I have not suggested that the myth of Education is deliberately false, at most it might be misleading in the manner in which it conceals intentions and motivation; but of course, concealing is not inherently wrong, as we have seen in the examination of pedagogical reduction which shows itself to routinely conceal (and reveal).

Education, then, does use myths but, most importantly, it is a myth in itself. Pedagogical reductions are manipulated symbols used to refer to the myth of Education in the first instance (and other myths in the second, such as the myths of Science and History). Thus, it becomes increasingly clear that pedagogical reductions and objects of propaganda have similar functions at heart – and that propaganda can be considered less a sibling concept to pedagogical reduction under image, but rather more its child. The parent/child analogy provides a tenuous link to investigate the next idea – that of loving care.

6.3.4 Loving Care

In chapter three, I set out loving care as a key component of pedagogy. To remind the reader, the loving care to which I refer is not necessarily directed towards the student, but that which can also be directed towards the content. It is conditional on the structural integrity of the pedagogical triangle – that is to say that it can only come into being after the conditions are established that allows such loving care to come into existence. The

educator must care enough about the value of the content being passed on, and/or care enough that the student is valuable enough to receive it such that it is passed on with a loving care for either element (or both).

We may question whether the propagandist also exercises their craft with the same kind of loving care. Indeed, since they may not believe in or even privately endorse the material that they create and disseminate (Ellul, 1973). This would not indicate that they could possess any love and/or care towards that material. Yet, even if this is the case, there is something that drives the propagandist to act. Perhaps, they care about the money that they receive from their agent to create the material. Certainly, if they are driven by economic want or need then this might motivate them to care about what they are producing, if only to do a good job for their agent. If this could be said about propagandists, it could also be said about teachers who may be less enthused about the students/content, but still want to do a good job for monetary gain or recognition.

Furthermore, if a propagandist sees little value in their material beyond what they can personally gain from it, then it is unlikely that they will see any value in the propagandees for whom the material is meant. If anything, creating and disseminating material that they are not invested in could, in fact, suggest that they have a very low opinion of their audience.

Still, the propagandist must care about something otherwise there would be no motivation to continue; and continue well enough that it creates the conditions for them to continue by gaining more clientele, for example. It could be that they wish to see the desired end reached (an increase/decrease in participation) as this might mean some more money and some more recognition. It is possible that, in spite of some of what I said in chapter three, educators also employ their loving care to this same end, insofar as it benefits them or their agents, more so than the student. In this sense, we can again see that this element of propaganda can dissolve itself into pedagogy – some teachers may share the same concept of loving care towards themselves, their agent, and their work as the propagandist, but not every educator will.

Our investigation, though, is not yet complete as we come to look at the final comparison: what about participation?

6.3.5 Participation

The definition of propaganda that I have delineated and used throughout this study situates participation in a place of prominence. The entire intention of the propagandist rests on encouraging active or passive participation in the interests of the propagandist (or the group for whom they act as agent, as the case may be). What this participation looks like is very much dependent on the situation. Considering Ellul's sociological/integration propaganda, passive participation would be a general acceptance of a lifestyle, whether or not that lifestyle is wholly achievable. Active participation would see the individual make steps towards achieving that desirable lifestyle (again, irrespective of whether it is achievable or not) by working, consuming, and striving towards this *good life*. Of Ellul's two broad types of propaganda – sociological and political – this is the most suggestive, in that it only suggests to the audience what is desirable and how they might achieve it, rather than making an explicit call to action. Political propaganda, on the other hand, tells people to act (or not act). The example of the Covid-19 public health information poster as shown in the last chapter is explicit in its instructions to the public as to what they should do in order to preserve public safety (which in turn preserves the myths of Science, and the myth of Hero). Interestingly it tells people what they should do (wear a mask, wash their hands) and what they should not do (be close to others).

The idea that the participation called for by the propagandist echoes that of Navyan (cited above), in which the individual exerts full influence over their choice and voice in the issues which affect them, is somewhat illusory. Propaganda intends to influence, and so it should be recognised that while the propagandee retains some subject-ness (as I have said) – some faculty of reason, some capability to make a choice - there are also appeals to their emotional side which ignites in them the bewitching picture of the myth that they seek to maintain or defend. Thus, participation for the propagandist means the subject giving over at least some of their choice and voice to them.

Given that I have already mentioned that in education, there is no necessary recourse to the world outside of the educational instance, it would seem that the only participation to be spoken about in terms of education would be in the educational instance itself and in this both the educator and student must both be participants. The conditions of pedagogy I have outlined in a previous chapter describe relations between educator and student and

both of them towards content. In pedagogy, the educator's participation is necessary in offering up of the content, but not necessarily beyond. While they cannot guarantee that the student will receive the content in the way that they have intended, the educator may continue to participate in terms of assessing whether a desirable change has been made in the student. This cannot be true of every instance of education, however. I have described the way in which the author of a textbook will offer up their pedagogical reduction to a wide audience, with whom they will have no further contact. It would seem that participation on the part of the educator need not extend much further than to the offering up of content to the student.

Indeed, the propagandist also must have a relation to their audience and one to their content; however, as Ellul says, they need not necessarily believe in what they are asking their audience to do and so their stake in participation can end at the dissemination of their content – just as it can for some educators such as the aforementioned textbook author. The propagandist may wish to retain anonymity and can indeed do so, perhaps behind a pseudonymous character (such as Q of QAnon fame) or behind a faceless institution (such as the ministries of propaganda described by Ellul, or the government backed bots employed to troll and promote on social media as Pomerantsev describes). Of course, there are some propagandists of notable fame – I have already spoken of Goebbels and Bernays – who chose not to remain anonymous or fully remove themselves from the sphere of participation. Both continued to monitor the ever-elusive concept of public opinion[21] in order to strategise their methods with intention to, in turn, direct participation in one way or another.

Similarities between propaganda and pedagogy raise their head once more, in terms of the participation of the educator/propagandist and in that they are both calling for a participation. In terms of the participation of the student/propagandee, I have alluded to this in previous sections of this chapters. It can be said that both the educator/propagandist are offering up content to their respective audiences. Both audiences are invested in [a] myth: the student in the myth of Education (at least); the propagandee in whichever myth the propagandist intends to call to mind. As I have suggested, the propagandee is not entirely bereft of reason when faced with an object of propaganda – they have the fundamental choice to reject it, even if that choice is not immediately obvious to them. In

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[21] Elusive in that it can never really exist, according to Ellul.

turn, since they are invested in the myth of Education, the student is not entirely bereft of irrationality when they are faced with pedagogical content – as they come to participate in all that is considered educational, they are faced with the societal strong belief that this is important. Those students who question the tenets of the myth of Education, for example, students who may observe that school is pointless, are still alluding to the myth in their rebellion while making no choice to reject it out of hand.

Mollenhauer's example of the teenager, mentioned in chapter three of this thesis, who wants to leave school, and the tension this causes between her and her parents, illustrates this point elegantly. In as much as the parents implore their daughter to stay in school because it is the "normal thing to do" (2013, 49), this shows that the myth of Education has reached a level of influence that it pervades the parents' ways of life, as Mollenhauer puts it, which persists even as the daughter challenges their assumptions. As the mother describes her mistake in not continuing in education when she was younger; and the father suggests that what is learnt in school is important whether the daughter realises it or not, we get a picture of Education – and the belief in it – as something that the parents are heavily invested in. Indeed, as Mollenhauer points out, it is unlikely that the daughter will actually leave school based on the strength of her parents' belief (if not her own) in the myth of Education.

If there is a distinction between propaganda and pedagogy, it is between the stake that the educator and the propagandist put in the level of participation reached by their respective audiences, and thus the level of control they place in making reasonable assurances that their content will be received in the right way, as I have described previously in this chapter. Propaganda needs the individual to change their level of participation in order to justify its existence. If a propagandistic reduction cannot reach any level of influence, then it is likely to be pulled. The educational intention behind pedagogy as I have described it, on the other hand, considers that there might be a desirable outcome but that it is a possibility that this desirable outcome might never be reached and so, while education might aim towards this, its existence is not contingent on reaching it. There are, of course, systems and professionals who will make similar attempts at controlling educational outcomes in the way that the propagandist seeks to control its audience. This exemplifies, again, that this distinction is a particularity arising from a general similarity: instances of propaganda can be dissolved in education/pedagogy.

To end this section, I wish to point out another potential distinction. Previously, I suggested that for a relation between the student and educator to be established (and, thus, the foundational condition of pedagogy), the student must recognise the educator as such, and vice versa. In propaganda, however, such a recognition of propagandist and propagandee might prove detrimental to the propagandist's aim, especially if we consider that propaganda has a generally pejorative connotation among the general public. While the propagandist may wish to shield themselves from potential dismissal by their audience with regards to their status, and also to shield their objects of propaganda from similar dismissal, they could potentially present themselves to be recognised as something else. Pomerantsev gives examples of this: news agencies which relinquish any idea of impartiality by promoting one political viewpoint over any other; people who are employed to create and maintain pseudonymous/anonymous social media accounts to promote a viewpoint in an attempt to influence other users; mass media outlets that are set up with the express aim of disseminating information for or against one viewpoint. With this in mind and given the similarities between pedagogical and propagandistic reductions I have given; propagandists could also present themselves as educators. For example, public health education is a means of disseminating propaganda which it could be suggested refers back to some potent myths, certainly in Western society as I observe it.
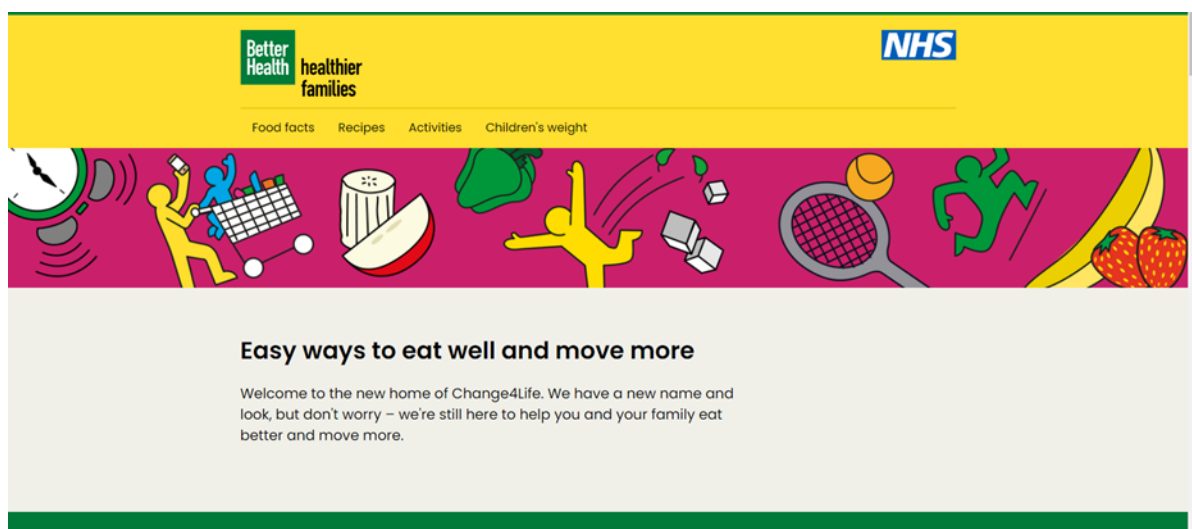

Figure 14 Healthier Families (NHS 2022). © Crown copyright. https://www.nhs.uk/healthier-families/

Figure 14 shows a recent public health campaign which aims at supporting people towards a healthier lifestyle by giving greater consideration to their diet and exercise. This is an example of propaganda as it manipulates symbols (weight, health, food) to refer back to myths (Science – if you are not overweight you are likely to have less health problems; and Happiness – if you have less health problems you will be happier). It presents this in a pedagogical way – the educator (the NHS) wants to improve (using criteria set out by the NHS) the student's relation to their diet and exercise. The audience here relates to and recognises the NHS as an educator rather than a propagandist because this is the way in which the content has been presented to them and the sense of trust generally placed in statutory institutions. Furthermore, since the information being disseminated refers back to myths upon which we place an overall positive value as a society then this is not plainly seen as propaganda which is more often than not identified when its pejorative connotations are invoked.

If it is possible to be influenced by an object of propaganda while not entering into the mutual recognition of propagandist/propagandee, but for the propagandist to be recognised as something else, then is it perhaps possible to be educated without entering into the mutual recognition of educator/student? Can the educator, at least initially, be recognised by the student as something other? I think that this is possible, and it is pertinent to the idea of image creation. There is something didactic, if not pedagogical, in trying to show something to someone as all image creators do. As a viewer/audience member, even an anonymous one, I give the image creator the occasion to show me something; in turn, they give me the occasion to *see* something – to experience *punctum* (whether I do or not is a different matter). I may recognise the image creator as a movie director, comic book artist, author, poet, songwriter etc. before I come to realise that what I have been shown is educational (for me) and, as such, I can then come to recognise the image creator as educator. As I have explained in a previous chapter, via the example of the textbook author, there is no need for the movie director/artist/author etc to relate to me as a student since they cannot be sure that their work will necessarily have an audience in any case; they can only create and exhibit under the assumption that it might.

What the preceding sections have come to show is that it would seem that there are more similarities than differences between pedagogy and propaganda/pedagogical reductions

and propagandistic reductions. Holding all of this in mind, and findings from previous chapters, I am now ready to make a definitive conclusion.

6.4 Propagandistic Reductions are specific types of Pedagogical Reduction

At the beginning of this chapter, I suggested that these reductions are child concepts of image (and thus sibling concepts to each other). However, in the previous section, it has become clearer that propagandistic reductions are very specific types of pedagogical reduction.

Both share very general similarities. As image sub-types, this includes everything that they share under this umbrella: an intention to show something to an audience and uses selection, simplification, and representation to do so; a reliance on the interplay between the image and the imagination of the viewer (student/audience); the offering of a view into the imagination of the image creator (educator/propagandist) which, in turn, could be considered a worldview; and an overall aim that the student/audience will introject the image to meet the original intention. Furthermore, they both build protective realities in which the student/audience can rehearse for participation in the world beyond it. Both pedagogical reduction and propagandistic reductions have recourse to myth (as strong beliefs underpinning [imagined] communities) and manipulate symbols to reinforce such myths. Finally, both pedagogical reductions and propagandistic reductions are used to change the student/audience's relation to something, in doing so the educator/propagandist seeks a level of participation – at the very least they want them to participate in the content, optimistically they might believe that participation in the content will equate to participation in the world outside of the reduction.

When comparing propagandistic reductions with the pedagogical, what I came to find was that these particularities of propaganda arising from the general similarities of the two concepts were not really distinctions, but more characteristics that could be dissolved within the idea of pedagogical reduction. The most notable of these characteristics concerned the idea of control. The propagandist must exert the highest possible level of control over the representation of the propagandistic reduction so that the audience is less at risk of making the wrong interpretation of it. They may still be mindful of the potential

for wrong interpretations to be made, nonetheless. With the pedagogical reduction, levels of control can be nuanced between minimum, or no, levels or as much, if not more, control than that exerted by the propagandist. The astute educator who recognises Biesta's beautiful risk of education as present in its subjectivity will understand that attempts at guaranteeing the reception of content in a particular manner may prove futile. On the other hand, other educators are careful to present the narrowest possible view of their discipline – this is especially true when the students in question are required to sit examinations which depend on responses being right and wrong. In terms of control, then, a propagandistic reduction could be considered a pedagogical reduction created in one of the highest levels of control in pursuit of guaranteeing an outcome.
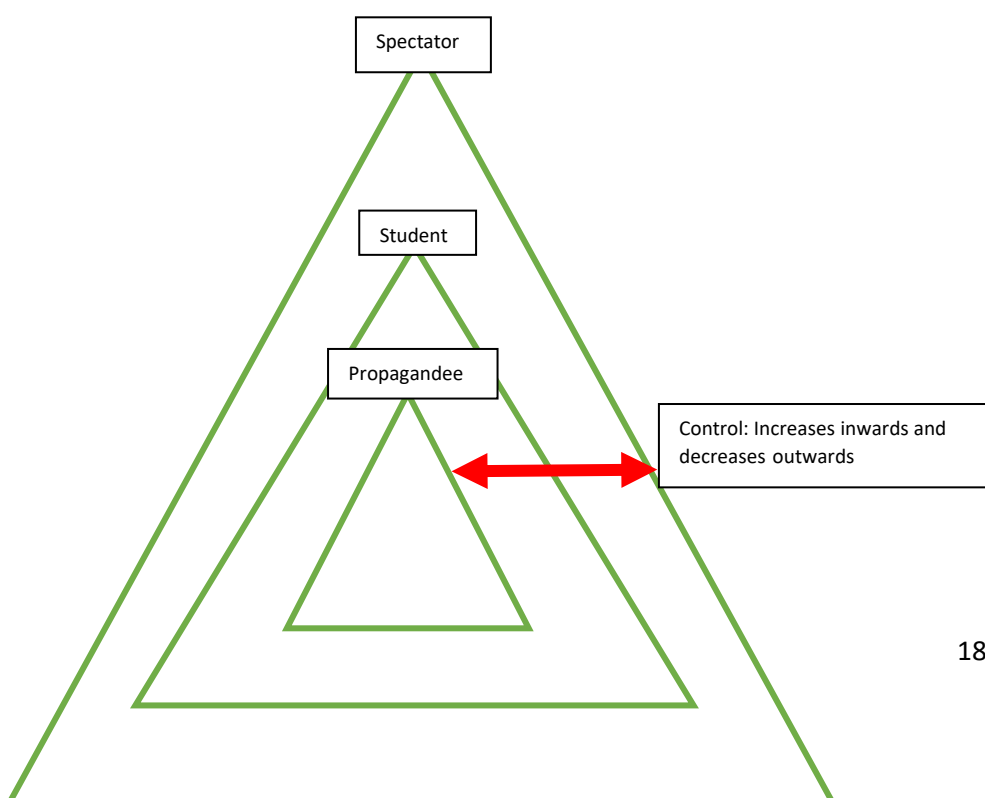
The nuances between levels of control can also be found in the creation of pedagogical and propagandistic realities. The revealing and concealing which takes place thanks to the protective barrier, or filter, of the propagandistic reality also takes place in pedagogical reduction but to a greater variety of degrees. As I have pointed out, while propagandistic reductions rest heavily upon exerting a high level of control over the audience's interpretation, pedagogical reductions can exist with minimum control or a high level of control, depending on the educator, and the educational context (as above). Such control can be employed in the interests of protection – in propaganda this is the protection of one particular worldview which offers vital justification to the individual that he is right. In pedagogical reduction this can be the protection of the student from risk (which can be built in later) but can also be the protection of a worldview passed on – perhaps via Chevallard's *noosphère* - from educator to student; maybe it can both of these at the same time.

Another particularity can be found in the intention of the educator/propagandist. The intention of the propagandist is to incite participation, active or passive, in the interests of the propagandists and/or their corresponding organisations. Therefore, the propagandist intends to change (or renew which, as I have argued above, is a kind of change) their audience's relation to something in order to achieve a level of participation in that to which the propagandistic reduction refers. Participation for them is imperative. This is not so for every educator. In my discussion on education, I mentioned that it would be a folly to assume that the change in the student would apply beyond the educational event; there is no expectation that the student who learns to play piano will get anything more than a

personal appreciation for the instrument, to cite from my example. This is not to say that the change cannot transfer to world outside of the educational event – consider the piano student who goes on to become a concert-giving virtuoso – only that education is not contingent on it. Thus, the student's engagement with the pedagogical reduction need not have any wider impact on the student's participation in the outside world, but it certainly can. Some educators, however, do begin with the intention that a student's change will be transferable to society. Education undertaken with a view to employment, for example, is inciting its students into active participation (in the workforce – thus reinforcing the myth of Work). Like the issue of control, we see that the propagandistic reduction can, again, be seen as a pedagogical reduction but one in which the intention to change the student's relation becomes particular to influencing the student's level of participation.

Moreover, propagandistic reductions are employed to reinforce myths which strengthen their audience's perception of their participation in an imagined community. Pedagogical reductions can also be used for this purpose – it can at least reinforce the myth of Education among an entire student body, or an entire generation – but it need not address a mass of individuals at the same time. It is entirely possible for pedagogy to take place with only one person acting as educator/student.

Taking all of this into account, I conclude that propaganda can be considered pedagogical; propagandistic reductions are very particular instances of pedagogical reductions, and both of these are very specific instances of image. This can be shown in the following diagrammatic illustration:
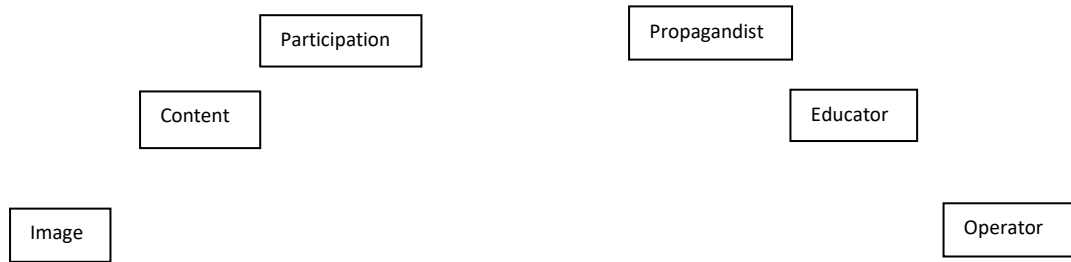
```
        ┌──────────────┐              ┌──────────────┐
        │ Participation│              │ Propagandist │
        └──────────────┘              └──────────────┘
   ┌──────────────┐                        ┌──────────────┐
   │   Content    │                        │   Educator   │
   └──────────────┘                        └──────────────┘

┌──────────────┐                              ┌──────────────┐
│    Image     │                              │   Operator   │
└──────────────┘                              └──────────────┘
```

Figure 15 The nesting relation between image, pedagogy and propaganda (Author's creation)

As can be seen, image can fit both pedagogical reductions (via pedagogy) and propaganda within it. Pedagogical reduction is an image in which more control is taken in an attempt to service the intention towards the desirable outcome. Propaganda is an image AND pedagogical reduction in which a higher level of control is exerted towards the same intention to show someone something, but where the intention to show also requires that availability of diverse interpretation is as limited as possible. The result is a nesting structure which fits each concept within the one above. Within this nest, we could suggest that something like indoctrination, arguably which exerts a greater level of control than propaganda in the pursuit of its intention, could fit again with propaganda.

However, this is not the end of the story as many more questions now arise from such an assertion.

Chapter 7. Propaganda is pedagogical - Concluding discussions and limitations

I can recognise why a conclusion such as the one I have presented here may seem unpalatable to others because it is of course the case that if propagandistic reductions are pedagogical, then some pedagogical reductions must be propaganda. I further anticipate potential accusations of sensationalism for its own sake – let me dispel such a notion immediately. There is a thread running through this investigation in which I have identified my own prejudices towards propaganda as a pejorative term and I have tried to set these aside – so advised by Ellul himself – in order to make a systematic definition of propaganda. Similarly, an observant reader might note that I do not seem to have this same difficulty when discussing education/pedagogy or, indeed, image. It is possible that my prejudices in respect of the two latter concepts sway towards the opposite end of the spectrum, in which I apply seemingly positive descriptions to them: desirable, caring, improvement, illuminating to name a few. Of course, a deeper investigation into any of these might not show them to be as simple as in the way they have been presented here. Nevertheless, it would have been impossible to make the conclusion I have without trying to examine both of these concepts via a lens which is more or less beyond each concept's normative value. This is an element of the hermeneutic method I have adopted throughout this study.

Of course, my prejudices and preconceptions can never be fully cast aside and so I qualify the points of view so offered in this thesis as just that: one person's worldview wrapped up in a context particular to me but inspired by my readings of others. To further this caveat, and the hermeneutic enterprise overall, I note that the majority of literature I have used here is from the West (with a notable contribution from French thinkers/educators from the 19th and 20th centuries) – with the exception of the reflection on the considerations of image by Islamic philosophers. Furthermore, the majority of the writers I have chosen for major contributions are male. Referring back to the methodology I set out at the beginning of this thesis, I made the point that I would choose one text as a starting point for investigating each concept, while I remained open to the serendipitous finding of other texts as I continued along in my investigations. It may be disappointingly the case that what I ended up finding, serendipitously, was lacking in diversity; it might also be considered an indictment on the availability of texts by writers of indigenous populations, or from the

global East, or by those writers who do not identify as male. We might even question whether this in itself is a propagandistic reduction.

All of this considered, I justify the use of this somewhat narrow canon of texts in the same way that I would justify the validity of an image. Each text I encountered was a snapshot view of the world of the author upon which I shone my imagination to create something applicable to me, which is now inextricable from my perspective as a white, Western woman in 21st century Scotland. Those who will read this will attempt to reconcile my writing with this context but will inevitably come to understand it in their own – and so the hermeneutic circle recycles itself *ad nauseum*.

It is not for me to interrogate the understanding of my readers, but I can support them in raising further questions: while propagandistic reductions might be considered specific pedagogical reductions, might they be specific reductions that an individual/group just does not like? Indeed, one must be invested in a myth such that the manipulations of their symbols invoke a feeling of consonance – even in political/agitation propaganda, the agitation only arises because the picture being painted stands against the myth in which the viewer is invested. Dissonance arrives when that charming picture of the myth itself is not (or is no longer) bewitching to its audience. Propaganda is more likely to be noticed as such when the message it disseminates is an uncomfortable one. In a similar vein, does not education sometimes aim at discomfort to unsettle a student's worldview (preparing the ground for them to accept the educator's)? The idea of pedagogies of discomfort (Zembylas & Boler, 2002) suggests that it does. It might also be suggested, by a cynic, that pedagogies of discomfort have something in common with agitation propaganda.

There is also the question of truth, to which I have alluded; but it is a question that could use further investigation in its own right. I have not given a definition of truth in this thesis, so this question is based on a common idea of truth as something that is a priori accurate irrespective of one's personal experience (Schopenhauer, 2014): 1+1=2, Paris is the capital city of France, the grass is green etc. These may be truths that can be termed also as facts. I have shown that both propagandistic reductions and pedagogical reductions use both facts and fictions where necessary in an effort to achieve what they wish to achieve. Given that they are both images, it is also certainly inaccurate to suggest that images are factual. Granted, there is a temptation to think that a photograph or a video "cannot lie" as the old adage suggests; but even these cannot be considered true given that I have presented

images as snapshot views into one person's imagination – this can never be a priori accurate. The propensity of the image (and the pedagogical and propagandistic reductions contained within the concept of image) to reveal and conceal means that all images are dealing with some element of untruth by obscuring anything, even if what they are revealing is factually accurate in itself.

Thus, images lie in a purgatory of truth, to the extent where it can be argued that it is not so important anymore (Sierra, 2019). Ellul considers this when he says that an individual needs the justification from propaganda and from his peers that he is right, more so than he needs proof that he is, indeed, accurate. Ellul's idea, so laid out in the 1970s, is prophetic when considering the ways in which social media has evolved to create echo chambers where algorithms ensure that we mostly see things from other people and organisations who agree with us. It is said that Steve Teisch coined the term post-truth in 1992 in an article called *Government of Lies*, in which he says that we have freely chosen to live in a post-truth world as the potential sacrifice of our comfort and self-esteem – offered by Ellul's idea of justification – in favour of uncomfortable truths is a terrifying choice to make.

Since we seem to be ensconced in this post-truth world, perhaps even more so now than Teisch envisaged in 1992, it would be pertinent for further research to raise questions about the relationship between truth and education (and consequently between truth, propaganda, and education). It is my view that there is some delusion regarding the manner in which truth is related to propaganda and education, partly because truth itself is such a difficult concept to unpack.

The final question that I wish to propose is: if propaganda can be considered pedagogical – and thus educational – what does this mean for related concepts? For example, to build on my suggestion at the end of the last section, can we think of methods of indoctrination as pedagogical? An answer to this question would require a much more thorough delineation of the concept of indoctrination; however, like propaganda, it is certainly a concept that is often pitted as contrary to education – it is generally not something that is seen as desirable. It is my hope that, now I have drawn together propaganda and education in a systematic way that attempts to shed normative value, a similar means of investigation might be applied to a concept such as indoctrination. Any such answers to this, and the above questions, may illuminate our understanding of education in a much broader light.

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