

(45)(Mad. Libs. Multiple. Choice.)
Power Point Explains It All:
or How I found Truth whilst Looking at A Secondary Source
[artist statement]

Amy Burt
Georgia College



Pearce and Cronen’s LUUUUT model haunts me. It states that there are seven types of stories: “lived stories (what we did or are doing), unknown stories (missing information) untold stories (what we choose not to say), unheard stories (what we say that isn’t heard or known), untellable stories (forbidden or painful to say), story telling (the manner in which we communicate), and stories told (what we say we are doing)” (Griffin, p. 69).

One day while looking at a slide that explained Pearce and Cronen’s LUUUUT model, I knew in my heart that the unheard stories, the untold stories, the untellable stories were those lacunae in my memory, in the life stories of most people I know, that the model put into stark relief the gaps between shadow and light, the known and the unknown, the expressed and the unexpressed. I looked out at my class and saw the dawning weight of their own stories unheard, untold, untellable. That weight was a palpable presence in the classroom.

How do we move past the past? By implicating it, and by reminding ourselves and others of our truth(s). “What truth did you keep unvoiced?” a friend asked me, after I’d had thyroid cancer. I knew immediately what truths I’d kept silent, and I knew in my bones that telling the truth would have destroyed my world. That was the truth that 2-year-old me knew. That was the truth that the world was built around, a culture of silence and violence and secrets. I created realities based on other seeming truths as I grew older, and at some point, I realized that not honoring my truths would kill me, and I try to extend that to the truths of others: I want to honor your truth. I want to see and hear you. *I may not know how.*

Stating my truths as an artist, as an activist means honoring the impulse of truth, and when (45) was elected, I was gobsmacked by the number of people who I love who had voted for him. I’ve tried to get my head around it, to varying degrees of success. Here’s where I get trapped: the women I know who voted for were or are survivors of abuse at the hands of people a lot like Trump. I play around with understanding the motives of others (which is why I enjoy reading and talking about theory), and yet I want others to act as I would have them act, in a way that seems rational. They may want to act differently. *They may not know how.*

Communication is the highest form of love, says one of my dear friends. Remixing

Amy Burt is an associate professor of rhetoric at Georgia College. Her research interests involve the intersections of community-based performance, narrative, faith, and identity.

amy.burt@gcsu.edu

feminisms means being present to the spaces in which those untellable stories live, to honor what can't be said, and to strive to be fully present to the untellable stories.

References

Griffin, C. L. (2014). *A First Look at Communication Theory: Conversations with Communication Theorists*. (9th edition). New York: McGraw-Hill.