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# Transgenre Theses & Dissertations

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# Transgenre Theses & Dissertations

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Our understanding of alternate  
scholarship

If a picture paints a thousand words, how do you interpret it?

# Kristin LaFollette-Samson

- Emerging author in this field
- Intertwined images and text
- Taught undergrad class in subject

# Examples of Transgenre Compositions



## CHAPTER 5: SYNTHESIS (A COLLECTION OF PHOTOGRAPHS AND WORDS)

"Art, at its best, has the potential to be both immediate and lasting."  
 -Patricia Leavy, *Handbook of Arts-Based Research*

This chapter is designed for the reader to analyze/perceive images as text, and relevant discussions outlining this appear on each page as footnotes. All of the images in this chapter are my own work.

### Part 1: Two Modes at Once<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> Before I begin with an introduction to this chapter, I invite you to read Chapter 5 as a transgenre composition with both elements of image (photography) and text. (My previous chapters did incorporate artistic elements through the inclusion of the collages, but the images and text are much more tightly linked in this chapter). In Helms' *Rhizcomics*, he quotes the following from Robert Harvey's 1994 book, *The Art of the Funnies: An Aesthetic History*: "The thing that comics do that no other graphic art does is to weave word and picture together to achieve a narrative purpose. Comics are a blend of word and picture—not a simple coupling of the verbal and the visual, but a blend, a true mixture." Helms goes on to add that "comics work in two modes at once. We read the words and see the pictures, but competent comics readers also read the images and see the words. Good comics create a text in which words and images are woven tightly together." Similar to comics, transgenre compositions are also a form of "graphic art" or "graphic narrative." Words and images are tightly blended together, and to "read" these texts, one must consider two modes at the same time. Readers/viewers see the images and words simultaneously, the two elements inseparable and necessary for the narrative to be fully experienced and understood.

## Part 3: The Heuristic

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- Read/view the individual aspects of the transgenre composition several times. Try “reading” the composition from left to right, right to left, top to bottom, and bottom to top. How did your understanding/perception of the composition change/evolve/expand when reading/viewing the composition from all directions?
- carefully consider the individual aspects of the composition, then think about the ways those individual aspects work together to create the whole. Why did the author/artist choose that particular layout or those specific colors, images, and/or words? The images and words necessarily work together and can’t be seen as separate entities.

## Part 5: Transgenre Composing Through Photography

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- While one student may choose to create collage work, another may come in with experience as a sketch artist, a photographer, or a painter; **transgenre composing brings together image and text in many forms**, yet consistently works toward creating more rhetorically-aware composers who consistently consider who they are composing for/to.
- The images and text are not separate – they work together to create an altogether new composing/reading/viewing experience that is long-lasting.

## Part 7: Arts-Based and Queer Methodologies

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- I created a project that is a tangible representation of what intersecting art and writing can look like. Because art is such a central part of this project, it didn't seem fair to the project or my audience to not embrace transgenre composing for the dissertation itself. **The project itself queers the traditional dissertation genre by shifting expectations of what a dissertation should look like.**
- engaging composing tools beyond the alphabetic

# Final Thoughts

- Should we title these as figures?
- How do you feel about this format?

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