

Exploration 01 - Gifting

Welcome to Exploratory Making. As a little warm-up exercise, we're asking you to please bring something to our first class.

In Chapter 1 of bell hooks' *Teaching to Transgress* (which we encourage you to read before completing this assignment), she writes:

Early on, it was Freire's insistence that education could be the practice of freedom that encouraged me to create strategies for what he called "conscientization" in the classroom. Translating that term to critical awareness and engagement, I entered the classrooms with the conviction that it was crucial for me and every other student to be an active participant, not a passive consumer... Freire's work affirmed that education can only be liberatory when everyone claims knowledge as a field in which we all labor.

In Exploratory Making, we hope to cultivate an environment of active participation and collectively engage in education as a practice of freedom. In Exploration 01, our goal is to see one another as holders of knowledge.

Your assignment is to come to our first class with a gift.

What is this gift?

This gift is something that you are interested in, or maybe even an expert in. It may be a question that keeps you up at night with excitement and ease. Or maybe it's a tool that you've spent some time learning and want to continue digging into. **Your gift is a seed of passion** that could root and grow in many directions.

If this starts to feel stressful, take a beat and a deep breath. This is about sharing something that is reflective of you but does not have to be all of you. It can be a quick look into your curiosities, research interests, projects you're proud of, or things you want to explore further. This could be something like a YouTube video of an arctic explorer finding Cheetos, a photo of a street sign you read when you go grocery shopping, your undergrad thesis topic, or even a line of a poem that you love.

Whatever it is, **it should be something that you feel uniquely connected to and would be ready to share your curiosities around.**

This gift exists. **Your goal is to present it in a way that it can travel to another person.**

Deliverable

Nothing needs to be submitted prior to the first class. Please write your answers to the following questions, and be prepared to share in class:

- What's your gift in five words or less?
- What is your relationship to this gift?
- What are two questions you have about this gift?
- If you were to explore more about this gift, where would you go? [Please share 1-3 articles, podcasts, artworks, etc. that would expand what you're thinking about.]