

People are natural storytellers. By sharing their stories people strengthen old ties and build new relationships; communities and culture are held together. Today, technology and culture are increasingly intertwined. Participatory Web 2.0 technologies opened up new platforms for creating and disseminating our stories and people from all strata are experimenting with these social technologies.

Who are these storytellers?

We are hearing from the new storytellers who are creating their stories by mixing scenes from our culture, sounds from our daily lives, and words from our past. These virtual storytellers are turning out content that engages us and challenges us to rethink how we receive and understand information. These are the storytellers writing in the literacy of the 21st century. Stories are being told in blogs, via twitter, on flickr and YouTube, through Delicious, and Facebook. 21st century storytellers are using multimedia technologies to create and share their work.

Multi User Virtual Environments

Never stagnant, however, storytellers are driving the next wave of the participatory Web and we are seeing the development of new platforms for creating and sharing our stories. How will our stories look in the 3-D realm? The adventurous among us are exploring what it means to be part of a virtual community. Second Life, an online virtual world launched in 2003 by Linden

Labs¹, provides a unique opportunity to explore issues and opportunities presented by these multi user virtual environments (MUVEs).



Second Life (SL) is unique among virtual world environments in that it is based on proprietary software, developed by Linden Labs, but the virtual world content is solely the creation of the residents, as people participating in SL are called. Residents who create content for SL retain the property rights to their creations which fosters more creative development by the user community. SL operates without set goals or definitions of participation; there is no quest, no required levels to acquire, and no winners or losers. SL communities develop as a direct result of the creative content and engagement of the residents. Residents contribute to the development of their SL communities on a variety of levels from simply observing to participating in activities and events to purchasing SL land and creating an interactive 3-D presence.

¹ See the Second Life Website for more information: <http://secondlife.com/>

Learning in a Virtual Environment

One group actively involved in developing a SL presence is librarians and educators. Though they may have a slightly different focus, both librarians and educators are concerned with what constitutes information, how people access it, and how they then use it. These information professionals are using SL as a platform to rethink traditional paradigms of teaching and learning while they investigate the intersection between technology and culture. Information professionals immersed in SL find themselves “at a unique point in time to explore the development of virtual worlds and the potential they hold for libraries and education.”²

The 3D Information Environment

What are the new approaches to creating and sharing information made possible by interactive, content driven, immersive technologies? How do they affect teaching and learning? Vis à vis SL, the immersive environment means that learning is no longer one dimensional. With the advent of the participatory Web and the technologies that support content creation, learners are afforded the means to experience materials one level deeper than with flat text. The virtual environment adds another layer to learning where learners not only push content out and manipulate it, but they are surrounded by the material with which they are interacting. They are immersed in

² Stephen Abram, “Forward,” in *Virtual Worlds Real Libraries: Librarians and Educators in Second Life and Other Multi-User Virtual Environments*, ed. Lori Bell and Rhonda B. Trueman (Medford, New Jersey: Information Today, Inc., 2008), xiii.

content. According to Tom Peters in *Librar-Things Encounter the MUVE*, “Second Life and other MUVES offer a glimpse of an information environment that is not primarily object oriented [as in a print medium]. The information—its creation, transfer, and use—can be woven into the entire virtual environment.”³ Librarians and educators writing about their SL experiences are reporting their audiences (students, and patrons) are responding with enthusiasm to the immersive environment inherent in SL.

Collaboration and Professional Development

Librarians and educators are also showing excitement about their own learning and professional development occurring within SL. The literature is replete with examples and anecdotes about SL as a platform for creativity, collaboration, exploration, and discovery.



³ Tom Peters, “Librar-Things Encounter the MUVE,” in *Virtual Worlds Real Libraries: Librarians and Educators in Second Life and Other Multi-User Virtual Environments*, ed. Lori Bell and Rhonda B. Trueman (Medford, New Jersey: Information Today, Inc., 2008), 10.

Because SL is an interactive, immersive environment, it is virtually impossible to understand an inworld experience without actually participating.⁴ Much of the current literature on SL and other MUVES, therefore, attempts to describe a foreign land to people who have vaguely heard about it or who may be thinking of traveling there and are curious about what opportunities and challenges would be in store with a journey into SL.



Alliance Virtual Library

Alliance Virtual Library (Info Island 111, 105, 33) is widely recognized as the premier library system active in SL. Through the leadership of several independently acting real life librarians, what started as one library in a rented building is now part of the Info Archipelago which includes library and educational islands and is home to a wide variety of libraries, real life educational institutions, nonprofit agencies, and associations. The Archipelago as of 2008

⁴ People who are active in SL refer to being 'inworld.' Auberger refers to the world outside of SL as 'outworld.'

was made up of 43 islands.⁵ Librarians are engaged in planning and hosting events like book talks, volunteer training, informational workshops, and literary themed socials. The libraries are anchor institutions in the community providing residents with informational resources and links to other community events and resources. Reference librarians field questions about what's going on in the area, where and when a support group is meeting, and the latest community gossip. Professors are holding class lectures, hands on workshops, and discussion groups. Professionals collaborate with colleagues, make new contacts to support their ideas, address their concerns, and evaluate their projects.

The Virtual Community

It is possible to observe or participate in any one of these activities by logging on to the SL website and creating a free account. But, why would someone bother to do so? Aren't similar activities in place in the real world, unmediated by computer software?

"Once we think of Cyberspace [virtual worlds] as a place where people do things, we can start to study what it is they do and why, in their terms, they do it."⁶

⁵ Lori Bell and Rhonda B. Truman, "Introduction," in *Virtual Worlds Real Libraries: Librarians and Educators in Second Life and Other Multi-User Virtual Environments*, ed. Lori Bell and Rhonda B. Truman (Medford, New Jersey: Information Today, Inc., 2008), xvii.

⁶ Christine Hine, *Virtual Ethnography*, (London: Sage, 2000), 21, in Margaret Ostrander, *Talking, Looking, Flying, Searching: Information Seeking Behaviour in Second Life*, Library Hi Tech, 2008, 26(12), 512-524.

AVL provides an example of not only what librarians are doing in SL; it exemplifies the possibilities for collaboration and professional development within a virtual environment.



Aubergine Serpente, born into SL in the fall of 2008, is a budding librarian interested in understanding participatory technology's impact on information; what new modes of delivery and access develop because of technology and how do these changes impact our culture. Through reading current literature on virtual worlds, discovering AVL and talking to and observing AVL librarians at work, Aubergine concluded:

- information professionals like librarians and educators are by nature concerned with providing their constituencies with access to accurate, timely, and useful information resources;
- they are highly adept at understanding the makeup of their communities;
- they seek the most effective means for providing access and strive to meet the informational needs of their patrons.

Doing these things requires the ability to think innovatively and be able to adapt to the changing landscape of the community and information resources. These skills are reflected in librarians as they work within their respective communities. As a librarian new to the profession, Aubergine is poised to explore and take advantage of new learning environments where she can put her skills into practice. Aubergine has taken part in several workshops and discussion groups, interviewed reference librarians and educators, and is in the process of training as a reference librarian at AVL. Naturally curious, Aubergine hopes to be able to identify what is unique about virtual environment learning and how it compliments outworld learning. Because the topic is potentially extremely broad, she has chosen to focus on the professional relationships built through collaborating in the immersive environment of SL. To highlight her discoveries, Aubergine will use examples of actual experiences. Aubergine will act as liaison between the 3-D world, or metaverse and the parallel universe her real world counterparts inhabit.

In order to appreciate SL as a learning platform it is necessary to develop a willing suspension of disbelief.⁷

⁷ This phrase seems to be used commonly, but here it originates in Kathryn Greenhill, *Do We Remove all the Walls? Second Life Librarianship*. The Australian Library Journal, 2008, 377-393, p389.



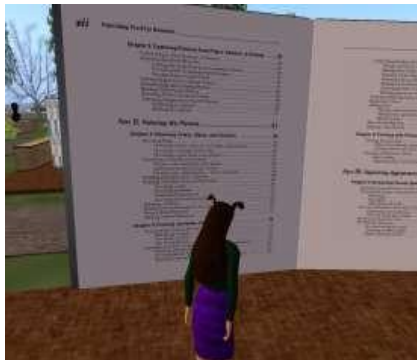
Entering unfamiliar, virtual territory, there is a little bit of discomfort and unease in acknowledging that real people are doing real things in a virtual world. Just as librarians hope their patrons will grow intellectually by being exposed to a variety of materials, so should they recognize a potential opportunity for personal growth for themselves and embrace it with a willingness to be exposed to challenges. Aubergine was faced with significant challenges as she learned to physically navigate in SL and also learn the nuances of communication based primarily on text chat. It is difficult initially to communicate without the benefit of body language and facial cues. With time, however, it is apparent that the SL chat has devices like 2-D chat speak to help convey emotion on an otherwise flat plane. Advanced residents have programmed gestures and poses that add contextual messages during a conversation. As with learning a foreign language, communicating in SL is a challenge that can be addressed with determination and a willingness to laugh at misunderstandings. In SL mispronunciation is in the form of typos; an area in which Aubergine has quite a lot of experience *is

smiling* lol.⁸ Aubergine's challenges are also physical, in that she still has trouble walking straight down a sidewalk or moving around an object comfortably. Some of her challenges are emotional as in feeling unease entering a new situation or coming across a group of people engaged in an activity or conversation and not knowing how to be included or if she is welcome to join in. With time and practice, she is overcoming some of the difficulties present in SL. AVL librarians have been welcoming and supportive. They are also understanding of her mistakes. It is not uncommon to hear someone say, "We were all new here once too." Being faced with challenges in a supportive environment makes it easier to learn from one's own mistakes and to recognize each new experience as an opportunity rather than a threat. For a librarian, Aubergine understands that, "Learning something unfamiliar can help you understand your own learning and teaching styles. It may also make you more aware of the learning styles of others."⁹ Such an understanding is universally valuable and one Aubergine can take with her no matter in what environment she is. Turning her challenges into opportunities and being able to find humor in her awkward mistakes, Aubergine is developing a sense of playful interaction with the learning environment: physically, intellectually, and socially.

⁸ Enclosing a word or phrase between * * as in *is explaining* implies that the person is doing the contained phrase. lol is a common chat phrase meaning 'laugh out loud.'

⁹Diane Murley, *What Second Life Taught Me about Learning*. Law Library Journal, 2008,100(4), 287-792. p792.

Playing, learning, and the Immersive Environment



The playful interaction between resources and environment is one quality of SL that should be emphasized as unique. Unlike other virtual environments, SL does not dictate rules of engagement and residents determine what they would like to participate in and how they would like to do it. At the same time, there is no built in competition or quest so interactions between residents are most likely positive and one of mutual interest and curiosity. Aubergine, though shy, regularly asks the librarians (and other residents) to recommend areas that they feel best showcase the immersive qualities of SL exhibits and sims.¹⁰ In order to understand the value of SL for librarians, Aubergine has visited a number of sims, taken notes, and observed how residents react to the spaces and displays. Through her early explorations and recent conversations, Aubergine has developed a working list of what constitutes a successful immersive environment. It includes:

- visually engaging features
- a combination the virtual and RL

¹⁰ A sim, or simulator refers to an SL island, or region. AVL and all its exhibits and displays is an example of a sim.

- multiple ways to interact with the material
- the use of metaphor to emphasize a message
- a place for reflection within the area
- a place for social interaction
- a balance between active and passive features
- avenues for feedback

There are sims throughout SL that are rich examples of Aubergine's list. Many examples are not on Info Archipelago, but are spread out across SL. Such diversity and creativity underscores the unique blank slate of SL where residents are free to form communities of like interests and create areas, provide resources, develop mores of behavior, and otherwise engage in the rich environments filled with opportunities to interact. Aubergine, because of her interest in librarianship and technology, focused her explorations of the immersive learning environments associated with AVL and the AVL librarians who also act independently based on their individual interests.

The "unique blend of interactions with people and a surrounding information environment is a powerful means of information discovery and an area where virtual worlds depart from other online tools."¹¹

¹¹ Margaret Ostrander, *Talking, Looking, Flying, Searching: Information Seeking Behaviour in Second Life*, Library Hi Tech, 2008, 26(12), 517.

The Stonewall Example

Stonewall Learning Center (SLC), (Info Island 32, 138, 33), exemplifies an immersive exhibit housed within an educational/information oriented sim. It is dedicated to sharing resources and information regarding issues important to the LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, transgendered, queer) community in SL. Not necessarily intuitive to the newcomer to SL, exhibits in SL are not affected by weather nor are structures bound by architectural constraints required outworld. Designers are able to have open air rooms or buildings without walls, for example. SLC is clearly its own area but its walls are only knee high, making entering the set-aside area easy for a passerby. Rather than hang displays from actual walls, large posters are suspended around the perimeter giving the sense of an enclosure at the same time as a feeling of openness. The posters resemble political posters with a slogan and design, but they are scripted with SL programming to deliver a note card when touched.¹² In addition to the posters, there is an obelisk in the center of a second 'room' that is covered with authentic news clips and images from the 1969 Stonewall Riots.¹³ When the

¹² Note cards are used to provide a resident with information. In the case of SLC, when the computer mouse is hovered over a poster it is programmed to explain that by right clicking on the poster, a resident can select 'touch' from a menu that opens up. Touch delivers another menu, a card of information describing the display, and/or a link to a website outworld. Note cards are a common method of giving and receiving information in an SL. Residents will often share note cards with one another as well.

¹³ For more information about the Stonewall riots see Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

images are touched a series of note cards describe the history and repercussions of the Stonewall Riots. Aubergine can walk around the obelisk while reading the note cards, looking at the images and actual news clips. The combination of the setting, visual images, and ability to interact with them heightens her awareness of the issues and makes her more receptive to absorbing the information. Aubergine has spent quite a lot of time in SLC reading through the information and one aspect she has come to appreciate there is the calming surroundings and the places to relax while contemplating the information and the messages the authors of SLC are hoping to convey. The interplay between actual images, resources for more information, links to groups active with LGBTQ issues, and time to interact and reflect highlights the unique strengths of an immersive learning environment. Immersion into the environment makes learning more immediate and more intense so that the outcomes not only happen quickly, but they are more permanently part of the experience and signal more authentic learning than is possible in a flat learning experience.



http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stonewall_riots which is one of the links provided by a poster and its note card at the entrance to SLC.

An Immersive Environment in Progress

Aubergine was privileged to be led on a private tour through a section of a sim not yet open to the public but hosted by the Federation of American Scientists (FAS) called ‘The Race Project.’ Rocksie Slade, the designer and primary builder, offered to share some of her builds that highlight the interactive and immersive qualities in SL. She chose one in progress to also walk through some of the details involved with designing and implementing an extensive project.¹⁴ The parcel takes up one half of a full sized island so it measures 32,000 square meters.¹⁵ The project is based on Marc Aronson’s book, [*Race: a History beyond Black and White*](#), and documents the development of prejudice and race relations from prehistoric times through to the present. One center piece of the project is a maze Rocksie created to evoke an emotional response in reaction to the frustrations and unease that develop while trying to navigate the physical pathways of the maze. These emotions are meant to mirror the feeling people have when they have experienced prejudice. It is designed following a typical

¹⁴ Please see Appendix A for the text of the tour: note it is provided in raw form to give the reader an understanding of the type of dialog that regularly occurs in SL. Aubergine’s contacts’ names appear in the chat when they are online and these have been deleted from the dialog to protect their privacy. A few personal statements were also removed.

¹⁵ As explained by Rocksie to Aubergine: SL mainland is governed by Linden Labs and is effectively the Lab’s connected servers. Residents rent or buy a section of the mainland in either, private full islands, Homestead Islands, or parcels. A full island is measured in SL square meters at 64,000 sqm.

maze with dead ends and false starts. There are a number of balls with words like, religion and skin color, written on them that represent obstacles—to getting through the maze and obstacles that influence someone’s perception of an individual. Rocksie’s goal throughout the project is to mix metaphor with action in order to immerse the visitors in the concepts and challenges regarding prejudice and race relations. As they walk through the sim, visitors will continually be challenged to evaluate their own perceptions and emotions. After leaving the maze, visitors enter an area surrounded by high walls with words written on stones (e.g. hope, freedom, peace, and justice) to represent what prejudice can do to a community and the larger society. To exit this area, there is a teleport circle (something commonly used in SL to leave one area and enter another) marked ‘Love’; “because love can lift us out.”¹⁶ Throughout the sim, there will be displays where visitors can click on items to receive links for more information as well as other interactive exhibits that mix action with metaphor.

Part of the purpose of the sim is to provide educators with a place to take their students where, as a class, they can explore issues surrounding prejudice in society. Rocksie is melding the work of Jane Elliot and her [*“Blue eyes/Brown Eyes”*](#) exercise. Participants will be able to ‘buy’ blue or brown eyes and ‘wear’ them to work through the exercise in a model classroom in the 1960’s. In the exhibit’s classroom there are links to Jane Elliot’s official website that

¹⁶ As explained by Rocksie to Aubergine, although because of the success of the metaphor, Aubergine knew the message before it was explained.

provides resources and explains the project. Teachers and students will experience what it is like to be a minority. It is another avenue Rocksie has developed to invoke emotion and spark discussion. At the end of the sim, there is a room devoted to further discussion and reflection so visitors have a chance to process what they have just experienced. This area is open and designed with comfortable, tiered seating with a fountain in the middle. It portrays a sense of calm and peace, conducive to contemplating and sharing reactions to the experience visitors had walking through the sim. The intent of the project is to provide an experience that challenges visitors to reflect on their understanding and ideas about prejudice. The informational resources distributed in the various sections of the sim reinforce the real learning that the immersion in the metaphors initiate. “The Race Project” combines all of the components of a successful SL immersive environment identified by Aubergine during her tours of SL. From the perspective of a developer, an important component is the avenue for feedback. Rocksie is hoping visitors, including educators, will share their experiences with her so that she will understand how people interact with and learn from her design. She will be able to apply what she learns as she continues to develop SL sims.

Collaboration, Creativity, Innovation

“The Race Project,” Stonewall Learning Center, the libraries and sims of AVL, and a myriad of other SL projects not only bring to light the creative potential for immersive learning environments, they also underscore

the collaborative efforts of the SL developers responsible for the inworld content. According to Bell, Peters, and Pope, in their discussion about the launch of AVL, it “unleashed a tremendous amount of creative professional energy across librarianship worldwide.”¹⁷ In general, participating professionally in SL stimulates creativity and innovation. It provides an opportunity for looking at old problems through new lenses. Professionally, it is a supportive environment full of opportunities for networking and collaboration; the networking potential in SL should not be underestimated. According to John Waters in *A Second Life for Educators*, SL has a “fundamental predisposition to collaborate.”¹⁸ Creative librarians and educators seem to mirror that in their classrooms and libraries as well as in relationships with their colleagues. The professional energy is apparent in the literature about SL librarianship and in the conversations Aubergine had with librarians currently working with AVL and educators working for RL universities. Aubergine heard excitement and energy that is both refreshing and contagious. In that sense SL is like a continual workshop or professional retreat. The people Aubergine has met, all refer to the support for ideas and projects they receive from their colleagues in SL. All have a number of projects in varying phases. And, several are actively engaged in research related to their SL experiences.

¹⁷ Lori Bell, Tom Peters, and Kitty Pope. *Get a (Second) Life! Prospecting for gold in a 3-D world*, Computer Library, 2008, 27(1), 14.

¹⁸ John Waters. *A Second Life for Educators*, The Journal, 2009, 36(1).

Their SL activities will have direct effect on their professions, if they have not already.

Developing a Support Network

Aubergine has experienced the collaborative environment inherent in the library and educational communities directly. Still relatively inexperienced, she has all the common frustrations to new residents in SL. Between technological glitches and lack of navigational skill as well as a limited understanding of all the intricacies involved with communicating in SL, Aubergine is often in need of a mentor or otherwise support network. During her earliest forays in SL, Aubergine experimented with creating simple objects. She was fortunate to be referred to a librarian at AVL who regularly builds exhibits and was willing to give a private building lesson. The tutorial, however, went beyond the basics and the librarian shared several animation scripts that are commonly used to develop object with which residents can interact as well as scripts for note cards and adding URLs to an object. During the first tutorial, Aubergine learned much of the content residents develop they also readily share with others by licensing their creations to be shared, modified, and re-given at the will of the recipient. The creator can set permissions on her creation to determine how it can be used much like the outworld Creative Commons approach to sharing intellectual property and promoting creative innovation.¹⁹ Aubergine observed a workshop hosted by the International

Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) for educators learning how to incorporate Web 2.0 technologies in their classrooms, and a meeting of the Innovation Group of AVL deciding how to develop a sim given by an independent builder. In both instances, she witnessed the excitement and creative energy fostered by individual people working toward a common goal. The discussions included controversy and challenges that also occur in outworld negotiations. And, certainly, there are professional interest groups with as much enthusiasm for the project at hand outword as inworld. What distinguishes the SL experience is the interplay between task-oriented activity, technology, creativity, serendipitous discovery, and spontaneous fun. People working together in SL are immersed in the interactive environment in the same way that learners are so that professional development takes on the air of multi-layered, tactile learning.

Building Community

The collaboration that is facilitated by SL creates a strong sense of community. The communities seem to be focused on common interests and are built through undertaking projects that emerge from those interests. Communities are also facilitated by the groups which anyone can join and, as expected, bring together people with similar interests. The small sample of communities Aubergine has begun to be a part of and explore have a professional interest focus although at the same time, it is obvious that friendships have developed. Much the same way RL friendships grow as people work together and share ideas. An unintended

¹⁹ For more information about Creative Commons and their licensing structure see: <http://creativecommons.org/about/licenses/>

consequence of SL may be the development of communities of professionals brought together in some cases intentionally and in others by serendipity. SL allows for a much broader reach than a typical RL professional group so that the community developing would be able to have members who might not otherwise meet.

In Virtual Worlds, Real Libraries, J.J. Jacobson has a chapter titled *Virtual Neighborhoods, Real Communities: The Caledon Branch Library and the Branch Library Program*. Jacobson describes the 19th century themed sim, Caledon and in specific the library that is an integral part of it. He asks the question; why have a branch library in a virtual world when "everything, in principle, is four clicks away from everything else?"²⁰ Independently developing an answer to this question is at the heart of understanding what motivates people to become invested in SL and emphasizes the pull participating in a virtual world can have. SL communities develop between individual residents coming together to share ideas and discoveries, questions and issues. These collaborative communities reflect outworld professional communities but like the immersive learning environments in SL, SL professional groups work on a platform whose breadth cannot readily be replicated. It is the combination of synchronous communication, shared experience, and technology that enables

²⁰ J.J. Jacobson. "Virtual Neighborhoods, Real Communities: The Caledon Branch Library and the Branch Library Program." in *Virtual Worlds Real Libraries: Librarians and Educators in Second Life and Other Multi-User Virtual Environments*, ed. Lori Bell and Rhonda B. Trueman (Medford, New Jersey: Information Today, Inc., 2008), 81.

these virtual communities to form and be maintained. As people move between the virtual and the real, lines begin to blur and it is difficult to distinguish between the two. In the same way that people bring their past experiences with them to an unfamiliar setting, would they not bring their SL experiences with them when they leave the virtual world?

"What scope do these new virtual worlds give us to rethink our strategies and roles?"²¹

Though SL was launched in 2003, the literature that focuses on librarianship and education in SL refers to it as still in an experimental phase. As both disciplines grapple with heretofore traditional paradigms and the shifting influences of the Internet and Web 2.0 technologies, forward thinking professional in both groups are experimenting with what it means for the professions to be part of the virtual world. Is this the next iteration of the interactive Web? The advent of virtual worlds and their increasing rise in popularity is analogous to the not too distant past when Web 2.0 was emerging and information professionals were asking themselves and their colleagues just how these new applications would affect their professions and how their constituents expected to receive information.

Standing on the Edge

If information professionals are proactive and take an active role in the development of the virtual worlds, they will have the

²¹ Lyn Parker. *Second Life: The Seventh Face of the Library?* Program: Electronic Library and Information Systems, 2008, 42(3), 233.

opportunity to positively influence their potential as learning platforms. Information professionals have a vested interest in being conversant with new technologies because of the impact they have on how we create, disseminate, and receive information. At the same time, however, not everyone will be able to take advantage or be interested in every new application that emerges. This is where the collaboration and professional development piece comes in;

- Librarians and educators alike need to share their interests and discoveries with enthusiasm;
- They need to be able to articulate the advantages and challenges of the new mediums and applications;
- They need to have representatives of the profession poised at the edge of what is currently possible ready to explore the next phase of the Web in order to be able to explain the opportunities as they develop.



By making information technology personally meaningful and relevant to their community of practice, the professions as a whole will benefit. Will these new environments be a threat, or will we be able to turn the unknown into opportunity?

Appendix A

Tour of “The Race Project” chat dialog:

[18:08] Aubergine Serpente: I'm ready for your tour!
[18:08] Rocksie Slade: it is based off of Marc Aronsons book
[18:08] Rocksie Slade: smiles
[18:08] Aubergine Serpente: I'm reading the poster
[18:08] Rocksie Slade: and shows the history of prejudice in the western hemisphere
[18:08] Rocksie Slade: sorry
[18:08] Rocksie Slade: I'm typing slow tonight
[18:08] Rocksie Slade: :-)

[18:11] Rocksie Slade: I've tried to add symbolism to most everything
[18:11] Rocksie Slade: prehistoric man
[18:11] Rocksie Slade: is where we'll start
[18:12] Rocksie Slade: the signs here..
[18:13] Rocksie Slade: cover the main ideas of the book
[18:13] Aubergine Serpente: so did you do all the text?
[18:13] Rocksie Slade: I'm the designer on this project
[18:14] Rocksie Slade: I work with the Federation of American Scientists on it
[18:14] Rocksie Slade: and TATA the Indian Car Manufacturer
[18:14] Rocksie Slade: and the Allliance Library System
[18:14] Rocksie Slade: and the author

[18:17] Rocksie Slade: I track the project and all the objects I create
[18:17] Rocksie Slade: if I can't make something then a work order goes out
[18:17] Rocksie Slade: TATA see the request..
[18:17] Rocksie Slade: then one of their people makes it for me
[18:17] Aubergine Serpente: so do you design on paper ?
[18:17] Rocksie Slade: it comes back.. is placed and described...
[18:17] Aubergine Serpente: as in archtecture?
[18:18] Rocksie Slade: then the object will go into a database that is available to anyone
[18:18] Rocksie Slade: no
[18:18] Rocksie Slade: I just.. start building
[18:18] Rocksie Slade: for me..
[18:18] Rocksie Slade: its like having a block of marble
[18:18] Rocksie Slade: you don't know whats hidden inside.. until you chip away the marble
[18:19] Rocksie Slade: but the book is my guideline
[18:19] Rocksie Slade: come see
[18:20] Rocksie Slade: this is a sculpture showing how these ideas of prejudice bound together
[18:20] Rocksie Slade: the white is the seeds of these ideas
[18:20] Rocksie Slade: spreading throughout culture
[18:20] Rocksie Slade: and society
[18:23] Aubergine Serpente: where did you get the images?
[18:23] Rocksie Slade: I made them on powerpoint
[18:23] Rocksie Slade: and saved them as jpegs
[18:23] Rocksie Slade: then uploaded them into sl
[18:24] Aubergine Serpente: absoluteuy wonderful :-)
[18:24] Rocksie Slade: thanks

[18:29] Rocksie Slade: this is the maze
[18:29] Rocksie Slade: its designed... to produce feelings
[18:29] Rocksie Slade: I want people to pay attention to their feelings as they go through
[18:29] Rocksie Slade: the reason
[18:30] Rocksie Slade: the frustration, etc. that you feel in the maze
[18:30] Rocksie Slade: is similar to the frustration that you feel when you're experiencing prejudice

[18:30] Rocksie Slade: lets attempt the maze
[18:30] Aubergine Serpente: I like the metphor mixed with the actions
[18:31] Rocksie Slade: nods
[18:31] Aubergine Serpente: ok
[18:31] A+ DOOR & GATE - Double BG0002A: Aubergine is at the door.
[18:31] Rocksie Slade: I'll follow you
[18:31] Rocksie Slade: smiles
[18:31] Aubergine Serpente: I'll follow you *smisles *
[18:31] Rocksie Slade: lolol
[18:31] A+ DOOR & GATE - Double BG0002A: Rocksie is at the door.
[18:31] A+ DOOR & GATE - Double BG0002A: Aubergine is at the door.
[18:31] Rocksie Slade: I know how to get through
[18:31] Rocksie Slade: so I'll follow you
[18:32] Aubergine Serpente: this is going to be a real test of my walking skillles!
[18:32] Rocksie Slade: grin

[18:41] Aubergine Serpente: ok so I am compltety lost
[18:42] Aubergine Serpente: I found a door but it did not lead out!
[18:42] Rocksie Slade: nods
[18:42] Aubergine Serpente: is that part of the metaphor?
[18:42] Rocksie Slade: thats how it feels when you're being "kept down"
[18:42] Rocksie Slade: yes
[18:42] Aubergine Serpente: amazing
[18:42] Aubergine Serpente: it works well...
[18:42] Rocksie Slade: the balls represent obsticles in like
[18:42] Rocksie Slade: life
[18:42] Rocksie Slade: smiles

[18:51] Rocksie Slade: This is the hard part
[18:51] Rocksie Slade: it represents
[18:52] Rocksie Slade: what prejudice can do
[18:52] Rocksie Slade: what is can damage
[18:52] Rocksie Slade: kills hope
[18:52] Rocksie Slade: kills freedom
[18:52] Rocksie Slade: peace
[18:52] Rocksie Slade: justice
[18:53] Aubergine Serpente: *is moved and saddened*
[18:53] Rocksie Slade: nods
[18:53] Aubergine Serpente: well done
[18:53] Rocksie Slade: smiles
[18:54] Rocksie Slade: the teleport is love
[18:54] Aubergine Serpente: what does the 'love' do- i
[18:54] Rocksie Slade: because love can lift us out
[18:54] Aubergine Serpente: was just going to ask that smiles
[18:54] Rocksie Slade: right click on it

[18:54] Rocksie Slade: teleport out
[18:55] Terra Mk.V Teleporter Beam whispers: Teleporting Aubergine Serpente to Greece.
[18:56] Aubergine Serpente: fun
[18:56] Rocksie Slade: :-)

[19:12] Rocksie Slade: This is an exhibit on Jane Elliots work
[19:12] Rocksie Slade: the Brown eye / Blue eye experiments
[19:13] Rocksie Slade: I've set this up so that you could run an experiment wth students remotely
[19:13] Rocksie Slade: you can buy either blue or brown eyes and wear them
[19:14] Rocksie Slade: the materials on the wall are from Jane's website..
[19:14] Rocksie Slade: teachers can use these materials with their classes
[19:15] Aubergine Serpente: will there be links?
[19:15] Rocksie Slade: yes
[19:15] Rocksie Slade: definately
[19:15] Rocksie Slade: :-)
[19:15] Rocksie Slade: she states on her website that all her materials are freely available to people that want to use them.
[19:16] Rocksie Slade: so heres the class
[19:16] Rocksie Slade: you can actually role play the experiment
[19:16] Aubergine Serpente: WOW!
[19:16] Rocksie Slade: this was the first class that experienced the experiment
[19:16] Aubergine Serpente: I hope people wiwill really try it - teachers
[19:16] Rocksie Slade: I'm hoping people will try to do this..
[19:16] Rocksie Slade: smiles
[19:16] Rocksie Slade: lol
[19:17] Aubergine Serpente: smiles too

[19:17] Rocksie Slade: I thought I'd finish up with modern day
[19:18] Rocksie Slade: the poverty and descrimination
[19:18] Rocksie Slade: these will be buildings
[19:18] Rocksie Slade: images of people..
[19:19] Rocksie Slade: hopefully if people can walk the streets..
[19:19] Rocksie Slade: for just a moment
[19:19] Rocksie Slade: it might help their understanding
[19:19] Rocksie Slade: I call this the Garden of Hope
[19:20] Rocksie Slade: a place for groups and individuals to discuss what they're seen
[19:20] Rocksie Slade: think and reflect
[19:20] Aubergine Serpente: ooh that's an important ppart
[19:20] Aubergine Serpente: I was just going to say a place to reflect...
[19:20] Rocksie Slade: :-)
[19:21] Rocksie Slade: and this is the end ..

[19:25] Rocksie Slade: sl has the capability of profoundly changing distance education
[19:25] Rocksie Slade: it just has to be harnessed right
[19:25] Aubergine Serpente: agreed

[19:31] Rocksie Slade: I'm interested in your thoughts on the maze
[19:31] Aubergine Serpente: I really like the maze
[19:31] Aubergine Serpente: in that I am very interested in
[19:32] Aubergine Serpente: how a message can be brought to life
[19:32] Rocksie Slade: nods
[19:32] Aubergine Serpente: by being able to interact with the metaphor

[19:32] Rocksie Slade: my personal research focuses on designing for emotion
[19:32] Aubergine Serpente: I really like that
[19:32] Rocksie Slade: I think people get more out of an exhibit
[19:33] Aubergine Serpente: i am looking at how thechnology is used to change how we deliver information
[19:33] Rocksie Slade: if they can use their imagination and it stirs their feelings
[19:33] Rocksie Slade: exactly
[19:33] Aubergine Serpente: and how we think about what info actually is
[19:33] Rocksie Slade: yes!
[19:33] Aubergine Serpente: and how it can be used to evoke emotion
[19:33] Aubergine Serpente: to deliver a message

[19:35] Rocksie Slade: so I'm trying to help people learn about me through music and feelings rather than text
[19:35] Aubergine Serpente: I talk a lot about remix/mash up
[19:35] Aubergine Serpente: and how we can use it to create emotional responses about a topic
[19:35] Rocksie Slade: yes

[19:37] Rocksie Slade: let me show you one other thing
[19:38] Rocksie Slade: do you see the maze?
[19:38] Aubergine Serpente: the top of the maze?
[19:39] Rocksie Slade: yes
[19:39] Rocksie Slade: its designed so that that when you'reinside
[19:39] Rocksie Slade: you just see a solid ceiling
[19:39] Rocksie Slade: if you're outside
[19:39] Rocksie Slade: you can see all the people in the maze
[19:39] Rocksie Slade: i did that for teachers
[19:39] Rocksie Slade: that want to watch their students
[19:40] Aubergine Serpente: good idea
[19:40] Aubergine Serpente: could be used for discussion later in class
[19:40] Rocksie Slade: yes
[19:40] Rocksie Slade: and if you have a student that can't make their way out
[19:40] Rocksie Slade: you can tp them
[19:40] Aubergine Serpente: could teachers make a movie even to use to talk about?
[19:40] Rocksie Slade: sure
[19:40] Aubergine Serpente: I noticed the panic buttons
[19:40] Rocksie Slade: there is alot of interactivity
[19:40] Rocksie Slade: LOL
[19:41] Aubergine Serpente: wanted to use one at one point!
[19:41] Rocksie Slade: interactivity in the maze and the eye experiment
[19:41] Rocksie Slade: smiles
[19:41] Rocksie Slade: thats how people feel
[19:41] Aubergine Serpente: yes I like the amount of immersion/interaction possible
[19:41] Rocksie Slade: panic.. and wanting to take the fast way out
[19:41] Aubergine Serpente: yep!!
[19:41] Rocksie Slade: that could mean all kinds of things
[19:43] Aubergine Serpente: smiles
[19:44] Rocksie Slade: some people will try to do that
[19:44] Rocksie Slade: see how fast they can get through
[19:44] Rocksie Slade: so people need to be reminded
[19:44] Rocksie Slade: the purpose is to examine feelings
[19:44] Aubergine Serpente: exactly

[19:45] Rocksie Slade: not how fast or if you can get out at all
[19:45] Aubergine Serpente: will you open it up to have workshops and things like that?
[19:45] Rocksie Slade: sure
[19:45] Aubergine Serpente: it would be nice to involve many people
[19:45] Aubergine Serpente: in the experience
[19:46] Rocksie Slade: yes
[19:46] Rocksie Slade: and would be helpful to me too
[19:46] Rocksie Slade: I need to feedback
[19:46] Aubergine Serpente: it helps doesn;t it
[19:46] Rocksie Slade: yes
[19:46] Aubergine Serpente: to know wht people think and how they use your work
[19:46] Rocksie Slade: yes.. absolutely

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Additional Resources:

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NMC: sparking innovative learning & creativity. (nd). <http://www.nmc.org/>

Second Life Education Wiki. (nd).

http://www.simteach.com/wiki/index.php?title=Second_Life_Education_Wiki

Virtual Presence: Weblog for the Virtual Communities and Libraries Member Initiative Group of the American Library Association. (nd).

<http://www.virtual.ala.org/virtualpresence/>

We're Virtually There: Understanding Technology, Social Networking, Intellectual Freedom, and Second Life, Phase II. <http://virtually-there.wikispaces.com/Phase+II>