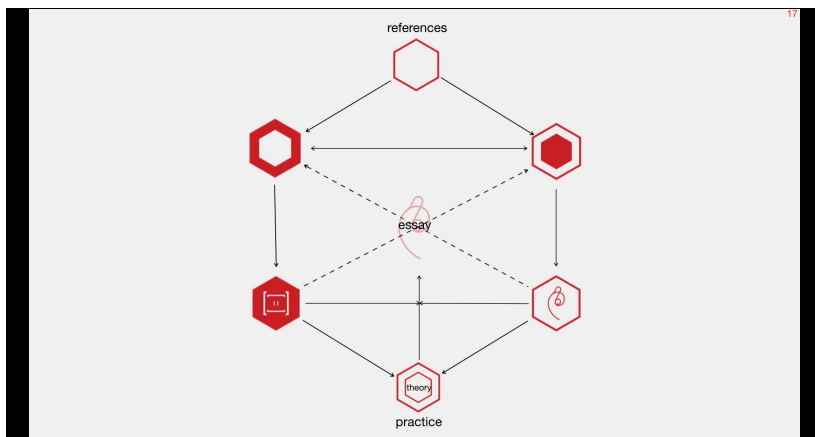


Ladies and gentlemen! We have now arrived at the culmination of the MDE 545 course Theory 2—*theory development*—where the dots are connected. Above you see the modules placed into a model. It is an active model designed for categorisation. The swirl in the middle is the ‘aha!-moment’.

It is a way of proceeding to move from a passive *research portfolio*, designed as an archive, to a generative portfolio. It is a way of gathering your assets, collected throughout the term, to get ready for the leaps you need to do in your MA. In the model experiment and narrative are opposed.

Not as love and hate, but at two ends of the pool: deep and shallow ends. They are both needed to have a pool. You mechanically learn a swimming technique (format) and you muster courage (scenario). You have some heroes (references) and theorise from *within* practice. The essay is the leap.



Of course, there are more than one leap in the two years of the MA. The essay is but one. The research portfolio is there to prepare you for *all* the leaps. The essay is there for you to get a sense of *that* particular leap. Because you are going to do your theory finals my during the next fall.

Your research portfolio—when the categorising job is done—is a device, *fed* by regular working habits, that will help you to do *this* particular leap, which is to to an essay. But it is also there to help you to prepare for other leaps, that are not part of this course. If so, you also will be prepared for theory 3.

So, here what is learned from doing this project—that is, the essay (the RP is not a project but a regular activity)—to doing a project like this: moving from the RP as collected interesting stuff, to the RP as a generative device, based on a relation between part and whole outlined on the front page.

The top model is closely tied to Rosalind Krauss' essay on [Sculpture in the Expanded Field](#). It is a method to work in a *specific* way—including detail and *precision*—in a wider *field* than what is your project at any time. It is a way of working with the field in a structured way that is consistent with it.

A structured approach to a wider field that is consistent with a given project, is what we understand by *context*. But not a context that added to make sense after the fact—in the wake of a project—as is often the case, but a context that has been developing alongside your projects all the way.

One that has been developing freely, but with a system. And also, which is important, one that allows you to bridge—or cross over—from your references to your practice, via your own work with the RP, as way to hatch theory from within your practice. See the lower diagram on the front page.

So this is a holistic model of your MA, which every element has a part to play. You cannot remove one element and expect the rest to work. They are completely inter-dependent. To do the crossover from the RP to the essay, you need to have done the RP. The essay will bring understanding to the RP.

Which is why your RP is your field-diary. And a companion to field-studies, site-surveys, project collaboration and placements you do while at school. This is the essence of what you are learning from me. The research portfolio and theory development are different things, but they are *one* in substance.

Some final words on the scenario. Looking at what you have in your RP you ask: *what have we here?* This is the key question that moves you from search to research (re-search). From here: *where can this go?*/where can it come from? When bringing in detail this question develops a scenario.

The scenario—in turn—will bring about a critical review of your references. What do you keep, what you do leave, and why? Then you are ready for the leap. Please note that this approach to developing theory from practice—for the essay assignment—is identical to any other leap you will do on the MA.