

EPISODE 10 – ANALYZING AN ECU

Identify each element of the ECU. See Episode 10 for commentary and answers. This fine example of an ECU comes from Hailey Siracky's thesis, *Spiritual Journal Keeping: An Ethnographic Study of Content, Materials, Practice, and Structure* (2013). It is slightly altered and used with permission.

A. “I Won’t Journal if I Don’t Have the Right Pens”

A.

B. With spiritual journals, the choice of writing and drawing instruments is often deliberate, and expresses preferences for particular kinds of pens and colors of ink. **C.** As she explained in an interview, Charlotte prefers to al using coloured felt marker:

B.

D. “I love using markers, so lots of different colours. Markers are colourful, and it’s so much more fun. I like being able to switch—whenever I get bored of a colour, I just choose another one. And it just looks nicer.”

C.

E. Flipping through one of her favorite spiritual journals, Anne describes the preference she developed for particular pens:

D.

F. “With this journal, I became a pen snob. I don’t write in anything but ink, because it’s darker and bolder, and it writes well—it’s an aesthetic thing. I won’t journal if I don’t have the right pens. I like looking at link glistening on the page... I feel like I jumped out of Hogwarts and am using a quill. Sometimes I will just hold it up to the light and watch it glisten.”

E.

G. There are several aspects of these excerpts that are of interest. First, both Charlotte and Anne state that they like their journals to have a particular look. For Charlotte, this involves using a variety of colours, and for Anne it involves the ink being “darker and bolder.” But beyond desiring a certain appearance, these excerpts demonstrate that these writing instruments are also preferred because something about them contributes to a pleasing experience while writing, often stirring one’s imagination. Charlotte’s description of switching from colour to colour when she gets “bored,” and Anne’s description of watching black ink glisten on the pages of her journal, both illustrate that the choice of materials involves a desire to enjoy the *process* of journaling as much as it involves enjoying the appearance of the finished product.

F.

G.

H. Throughout information studies literature, it is common to focus on information in terms of its results or “outcomes” (Kari 2012), but rarely is there a focus on the pleasure one finds in the act of creation, or on the role certain materials in this enjoyment. A scholar who has done this is Fulton (2009), whose study of information seeking amongst genealogists revealed the power of positive affect in the pursuit of information. Her study focuses on the pleasure one finds in both the process of information seeking and in the “deepening of commitment and engagement” to the hobby of genealogy (p. 256). The examples above contribute a different dimension to the role of pleasure in interacting with information, which here is found in the act of creating, and through the experience of using particular materials.

H.

